The Concept of Fidelity in Comics Translation

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Brief History of Translation Fidelity

In the nineteenth century, Friedrich Schleiermacher proposed a distinction between translations that carry the reader towards the author—trying to create "the same image, the same impression that [the translator], who knows the original language, obtained through the work he now seeks to communicate to his readers"[2]—and translations that carry the author towards the reader—so that "the translation of a Latin author into German, for example, would speak as a German would have spoken or written to Germans"[3] (56). These are different translation strategies that lead to different concepts of *fidelity* and correspondence to the meaning of the source text. Schleiermacher preferred the first option: to be faithful to the author and lead the reader toward the foreign.

In the twentieth century, Walter Benjamin stated once again that word-for-word translations affect how meaning is understood, but also that sense-for-sense translations demand further provisions, as they may encourage "the unrestrained license of bad translators." His solution is presented in a metaphor:

> Fragments of a vessel that are to be glued together must match one another in the smallest details, although they need not be like one another. In the same way a translation, instead of imitating the sense of the original, must lovingly and in detail incorporate the original's way of meaning, thus making both the original and the translation recognizable as fragments of a greater language, just as fragments are part of a vessel. (260)

Antoine Berman, proposing that faithfulness is an element that wrestles with ethnocentrism—"capturing a sense always affirms the primacy of one language"[4] (45)—advocates a translator's ethics that consists in "recognizing and accepting the Other as an Other" (95) or "[the] desire to open the Foreigner as Foreigner to his language space" (97). Faithful translators would be those who acknowledge and brand the text as a foreign experience, presenting this

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[1] The author would like to thank Jeffrey Longard for the expert proof-reading of this text.

[2] *"Das nämliche Bild, den nämlichen Eindruck, welchen er selbst durch die Kenntniß der Ursprache von dem Werke, wie es ist, gewonnen, sucht er den Lesern mitzutheilen."* (Translations into English in this article, except where noted in the text or references, are my own.)

[3] *"… aber die Übersetzung ihren römischen Autor zum Beispiel reden lassen will wie er als Deutscher zu Deutschen würde geredet und geschrieben haben."*

[4] *"a captação do sentido afirma sempre a primazia de uma língua."*

foreign aspect to the reader. Berman's stance is very close to Schleiermacher's.

Eugene Nida takes an opposing position in the fidelity debate and opts to highlight his notion of "equivalence." The concept is broken into two tendencies: *formal equivalence* or being respectful of the form of the source language, and *dynamic equivalence*, in which "the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message" (Munday 1814-1818). As tendencies, the different modes of equivalence are not in opposition—they represent a spectrum ranging from a fidelity to the *form* of the source text (particularly applicable to Bible translation) to a *fluency* of the target text in the target language. George Steiner, in *After Babel,* proposed *degrees of fidelity* to be stipulated for each and every translation project—there could not be one and only one concept of fidelity for literary texts, business documents and church dogma.

Brazilian author Francis Henrik Aubert approaches fidelity in translation from a pragmatic standpoint, drawing on the ideas of "pursuit"—fidelity as a vector, as an ideal the translator should strive for—and of "(unstable) commitment" between translator and source text author:

> If not for the *pursuit* of fidelity, the systematic and stubborn search to fathom—even though in vain—what the original author "meant", to find means to express this supposed communicative intent, there would be no translation, no dialogue, no intertextuality, no intersubjectivity, but only several intercrossed, unconnected, mutually incompatible speeches. Fidelity in translation is, therefore, characterized by the merging of a certain degree of diversity and a certain degree of identity; it will be, not by any intrinsic or random incapacity, but by definition, by essence, an (unstable) commitment between these two seemingly antagonistic tendencies, which achieves its completeness in this commitment and this instability.[5] (77)

Lastly, Mathieu Guidère advocates that the balance between these types of fidelity depends on the translator's objective in each translation project:

> The central issue of loyalty is "polarity": the text to be translated is incorrectly perceived as a combination of "background" and "form", or even of "words" and "sense", when it is actually a whole that must be apprehended in relation to a particular context and according to a specific purpose. If the general framework of the translation is well put, fidelity is no

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[5] *"Não houvesse a tentativa de fidelidade, a busca sistemática e obstinada de atinar—ainda que em vão—com o que o autor original 'quis dizer', de encontrar meios de expressão para essa intenção comunicativa suposta, também não haveria tradução, diálogo, intertextualidade, intersubjetividade, mas, tão-somente, discursos diversos, cruzados, desconexos, mutuamente incompatíveis. A fidelidade na tradução caracteriza-se, pois, pela conjuminação de um certo grau de diversidade com um certo grau de identidade; ela será, não por deficiência intrínseca ou fortuita, mas por definição, por essencialidade, um compromisso (instável) entre essas duas tendências aparentemente antagónicas, atingindo a sua plenitude nesse compromisso e nessa instabilidade."*

longer a problem: it becomes a choice among many within the range of conscious actions of the translator.[6] (31)

From this brief route through concepts of translation fidelity, we are able to summarize that: (1) the translator's *fidelity to the source text* spans a spectrum that goes from *word* fidelity (or Nida's formal equivalence) to *sense* fidelity. (2) The translator's *fidelity to the reader* constitutes an *ethical* stance (cf. Schleiermacher; Benjamin; Berman), that ranges from conveying the strangeness/foreignness of the source text in the target text, to erasing this strangeness/foreignness and domesticating the source text…(3) The translator's *fidelity to the author* is a commitment—an unstable one—and also a pursuit (cf. Aubert) to reproduce in the target language the reading experience other readers might have in the source text language. Conversely, the translator may not commit to or pursue this goal of reproducing a reading experience, but instead can aim to create a new one. (4) These three instances of fidelity are *relative* to each translation project (cf. Steiner; Guidère), in the sense that, according to the translator's understanding and working conditions (that is, who is commissioning the translation, the social-cultural-political context etc.), each translation will have different levels of fidelity to the source text, to the reader and to the author. These ideas also apply to comic book translation. The authors cited above are mainly focusing on literary translation, and comic translation has a set of particularities which singles it out as a translation practice. To understand them, we need first to understand the characteristics of comics as a medium.

The System of Comics

Thierry Groensteen argues that defining comics is doomed to neglect examples of visual narratives that, throughout history, were (or will be) considered comics—there are always efforts to include new visual narratives in the comics category, thus bending proposed definitions. Therefore, Groensteen catalogues visual narrative elements or expedients available to the medium, to describe what he calls "the system of comics." Panels, frames, and their functions (closing, separative, structuring, expressive, readerly), hyperframes (lines or decoration that encompass the grouping of panels on a page), site (the precise location of each panel on a page), double-page spreads, strips, speech balloons, insets and page layouts are some of these expedients. Although they are not present in every instance or may be used in a variety of ways in the full range of comics, these are elements that Groensteen considers generally representative in the medium's history.

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[6] *"La question centrale de problématique de la fidélité est celle de la 'polarité': le texte à traduire est perçu de façon erronée comme une combinaison de 'fond' et de 'forme' ou encore de 'mots' et de 'sens', alors qu'il est en réalité un tout qui doit être appréhendé dans sa relation à un contexte particulier et en fonction d'une finalité précise. Si le cadre général de la traduction est bien posé, la fidélité cesse d'être un problème: elle devient un choix parmi d'autres sur la gamme des actions conscientes du traducteur."*

The key feature or "foundational principle" of comics, according to Groensteen, is *iconic solidarity:* "I define this as interdependent images that, participating in a series, present the double characteristic of being separated (…)[but at the same time also being] plastically and semantically over-determined by the fact of their coexistence *in praesentia"* (18). The interdependence of images and meanings is the feature that constitutes a narrative among partitioned images on the same page or along many pages of the same comic story. According to Groensteen, iconic solidarity is developed during the making of a comic through image repetition and many types of connections between these images that the comic author determines in his or her work. These are the grounds for the notions of *spatio-topia, page layout, arthrology, breakdown* and *braiding.*

Spatio-topia concerns the spatial features of each panel, such as its format, size, and position on the page's surface, which determine its relation to other panels (Groensteen 21, 28-29). *Page layout* refers to the page framework and how panels are distributed; it fits into *spatio-topia* in accordance with desired narrative goals (21). *Arthrology* relates to the construction of connections between the elements of each page and within the comic as a whole. There are two types of arthrology: *restricted arthrology*, between contiguous images, and *general arthrology*, between "translinear or distant images," scattered throughout a comic story (22). *Breakdown and braiding* are two operations that aid these connections: one "breaks" the narrative into panels and pages, while the other "braids" extra connections that arise from repetition (of characters, objects, settings, linework, and colourwork) throughout the comic (Groensteen 23, 147).

The system of comics that Groensteen offers is an attempt to detail steps in comic book making and to simultaneously develop analysis frameworks for narratives in the comics medium. Among many authors who seek to treat comics from a theoretical stance (for instance: Will Eisner in *Comics and Sequential Art;* Scott McCloud in *Understanding Comics;* Neil Cohn in *The Visual Language of Comics;* Hannah Miodrag in *Comics and Language*), Groensteen has the most complex schema, and the closest to the semiotics-based approach applied to another visual medium: film. The comparison to film underscores the multiple elements of comics: [I]n an image-based story, as in film or comics, each element, whether it is visual, linguistic, or aural, participates fully in the narration. Christian Metz had the upper hand and one can't say it more clearly: "in a narrative film, everything becomes narrative, even the grain of the film or the tone of voice" (Groensteen 11).

By taking Groensteen's approach to comics, I seek to emphasize that there is a diverse array of operations that constitute *words* and *sense* in a comic narrative. As an image-based narrative which may or may not use linguistic signs (a coded language), the *words* and *sense* (in the literary context proposed by authors that discuss translation fidelity) of a comic book arise from all the image-connection procedures listed by Groensteen. When it comes to comics translation, these connections are the features that should be highlighted.

Comics Translation

One might think that linguistic signs—coded language—are the only aspects that matter for a comics translator, and should be considered apart from non-linguistic signs such as what is drawn. Operationally, yes, it could be said that comics translation consists in locating linguistic signs written over the page (in speech balloons, captions, onomatopoeia, other lettering spread throughout the background) and rewriting those in another language. The non-linguistic, picture portion of the page, is *usually* left unchanged.

Comics theory, though, posits that linguistic and non-linguistic signs cannot be considered apart in narrative terms. Groensteen, for instance, maintains that the connection between page elements is the foundational narrative principle of the comics medium. Therefore, when a comics translator thinks that he/she will engage exclusively with linguistic signs, in actual fact he/she is acting over the whole page composition, and thus disrupting the narrative connections that organize words and sense in a comic story.

Federico Zanettin considers comics translation from a multisystemic or multimodal stance:

[I]t seems important to stress that comics are primarily visual texts which may (or may not) include a verbal component, and that in the translation of comics interlingual interpretation ('translation proper') happens within the context of visual interpretation. Language is only one of the systems (in as far as we are happy with defining language as a system) involved in the translation of comics. […] The translation of comics into another language is primarily their translation into another visual culture, so that not only are different natural languages such as English, Japanese, Italian or French involved, but also different cultural traditions and different sets of conventions for comics. In other words, the translation of comics does not only imply the interlinguistic (or intralinguistic) replacement of verbal material. (12)

Zanettin's comment about translating between different visual cultures is part of a current discourse in Translation Studies that seeks to soundly bind the complementarity between linguistic signs and non-linguistic signs in multimodal expressions. José Yuste Frías emphasizes: "It is time to have done with the old opposition between text and image in translation in order to put an end to the assumption that the translator should only concern himself with text."[7] (299). By reinforcing the differences in how different cultures interpret lines, colours, gestures and other visual language elements, the same author argues:

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[7] *"Il est temps d'en finir avec la vieille opposition entre le texte et l'image en traduction pour cesser de croire que le traducteur ne doit s'occuper que du texte."*

> The text-image coupling in translation is not a "meld", nor a "hybrid" mixture in which text is "subordinate" to images or images only "illustrate" text. The new iconotextual entity that arises from the text-image union is mixed, crossbred, and in it the verbal element is 100% present, just as the picture element is 100% present.[8] (300)

Other authors, like Klaus Kaindl, Nadine Celotti and Michal Borodo, underscore the multimodality approach to translating comics. The latter, for instance, demonstrates how image-reading may lead to different interpretations of speech balloons and, therefore, effectively different translation decisions: Borodo analyses two differing Polish translations of the Franco-Belgian comic *Thorgal,* comparing "accurate" translation decisions in "purely linguistic terms" in one of these translations to another where the decisions are "more coherent and intelligible in the context of the multimodal nature of the comic book as a whole" (32). Kaindl not only underscores the link between the linguistic and pictorial modes, but also typography, "the interface between language and pictures" (274). This is what Celotti tries to sum up when she calls the comics translator "a semiotic investigator" (33).

To illustrate the complementarity possibilities, the two-panel sequence in Fig. 1, from Bryan Lee O'Malley *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World*, explores an ambiguity with the word *item*—which, in this instance, means both "couple" and the objects a player may collect in games. We understand that the goal is to create a comical situation due to how the male character misinterprets the word, thus setting up a conflict between what the first panel characters meant by *item* and the pictures in his thought balloons. Narration occurs in this complementarity between dialogue and pictures, and that is what constitutes *words* and *sense* in this excerpt.

Fig. 1: From Bryan Lee O'Malley's *Scott Pilgrim vs. the World.* (Source: O'Malley 173)

In Brazilian Portuguese, for instance, there is no easy way to capture the ambiguity of the

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[8] *"Le couple texte-image en traduction n'est ni un mélange ‹fusionné› ni un ensemble ‹hybride› où le texte serait ‹subordonné› à l'image et l'image simplement ‹illustrerait› le texte. La nouvelle entité iconotextuelle formée par le couple texte-image est une entité mixte, métisse, où l'élément verbal est présent à 100% et l'élément visuel l'est aussi à 100%."*

word *item* that the excerpt proposes. Among possible translation solutions for this scene, there could be another misunderstanding and comical situation using the same references: young couple, an absent-minded character, video games (*Scott Pilgrim* is a love story largely influenced by video games iconography and logics, so puns like this should be retained in translation). The misunderstanding that the translator creates, though, will still be harnessed to the non-linguistic signs that figure in the male character's thought balloon (*Super Mario* items); the preferable strategy is to leave the non-linguistic signs intact.

The reason why non-linguistic signs should be left unchanged are cultural, economical and, we might as well say, artistic. According to Valerio Rota, comics readers understand pictures as the direct contact to the original author's intentions. Even if the comic story comes from a different visual culture, the drawing component is highlighted as essential to comics and it would be considered an act of disrespect to the reader if it was changed. The drawn page itself is considered a plastic, artistic work, irrespective of its narrative function, and partly preserved for these reasons. This level of non-linguistic sign conservation, according to Rota, is present, for example, when manga reading direction (right to left) is left unaltered in translated comics or when a linguistic sign is not translated because of its own aesthetic expressiveness—as when it has particular linework or when it is part of the composition with the non-linguistic signs on the page: "Sometimes, these textual elements are considered an integral part of the graphics, and altering them is hardly tolerated by the mainstream reading public. Therefore, some Italian publishing houses keep the titles of the stories graphically unaltered, simply putting a translation of them at the bottom of the page" (Rota 85). Rota also highlights that this appreciation for "unaltering" non-linguistic signs is also dictated by economic criteria (84). Altering words is indispensable for the translation process and facilitated by graphic software, but altering non-linguistic signs would imply more work hours, more graphic skills and possibly the hiring of another professional, like a new artist, to perform these adjustments.

Preserving the non-linguistic signs, though, should be considered as a tendency, not as a rule. Moreover, it is a *contemporary* tendency, which does not encapsulate the whole history of comics translation. The artistic status of comics drawings, the accelerated translation rate, and technological development in graphic design come from the 1980s and 1990s. Most current comics adopt a production process in the source language where balloons, captions, onomatopoeia and other linguistic signs are digitally applied over the drawn page and may be digitally erased, relocated or altered with no harm to the non-linguistic signs on the page, thus encouraging and facilitating the tendency to leave non-linguistic signs unaltered.

Zanettin, Rota and Kaindl, though, present many examples of comics where the non-linguistic signs were altered to conform to certain visual cultures or public segments.

> When comics are translated, a change of genre, readership, publication format (or a combination of the three) may be involved which will govern primary translation choices

[…]. For example, a change in the form of production and distribution (e.g. serial to non-serial publication, publication in newspaper vs. publication in magazine) may lead to different translation strategies and audience design. (Zanettin 8)

Fig. 2: *Action Comics* n.1 (1938), p. 1 (Source: http://www.reading-room.net/Action1/Action1P01.html)

Fig. 3: *Action Comics* n. 1 (1938), p. 2 (Source: http://www.reading-room.net/Action1/Action1P02.html)

Fig. 4: *A Gazetinha,* 17/12/1938 (Source: http://museudosgibis.blogspot.com.br/2011/06/serie-primeira-aparicao-do-heroi.html)

Fig. 5: *Daredevil* **n. 231, n/p (1986)**

Fig. 6: *Superaventuras Marvel* **n. 66, p. 24 (1987)**

There are cases, however, where it can be argued that transformation of a non-linguistic sign is necessary to preserve coherence. Yuste Frías highlights a panel from the *Astérix en Hispanie* comic album in which one of the characters, lying on the ground after his defeat by the lead hero, lifts his right thumb (Fig. 7). Yuste Frías underlines that this gesture has no universal meaning and criticizes its non-translation—non-redrawing, for instance—when it is published in other countries:
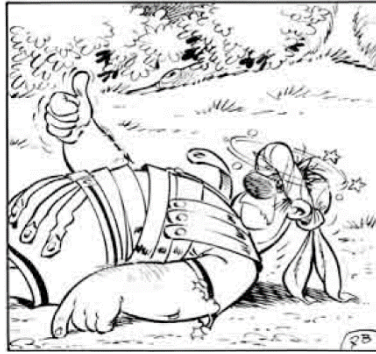

Fig. 7: From "*Astérix en Hispanie.*" (Source: Yuste Frías 264).

The current common meaning attributed to the thumb, specifically the raised thumb from a clenched fist, is approval, success, triumph. This could not be applied to the whole of Europe, as in Greece (as well as in the Middle East, West Africa and South America), to raise a thumb would be like raising the middle finger in France. Therefore, what looks like a universally positive gesture is extremely offensive in other cultures.[9] (Yuste Frías 264)

Valerio Rota also considers lettering and the physical dimensions of the comic as meaningful elements, echoing what Kaindl ("Thump, Whizz, Boom") refers to as "typography." Character morphology—or "graphic peculiarity," as Rota says—has its own meaning:

[Texts in comics] are not simply a comment on the picture, but are an integral part of it. Texts in comics are not the mere transcription of the characters' speeches: they are a graphic representation of them. Before being something to be read (i.e. texts), they are something to be seen: pictures themselves, which contribute to the visual equilibrium of the page. In fact, their graphic peculiarity comes before their textual quality. Far from being a mere 'simulation' of sounds and speech, balloons and onomatopoeic texts are graphic devices which can be (and are) employed to provoke specific effects on the reader.

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[9] *"L'acception commune donnée actuellement à la symbolique du pouce, seul doigt levé d'un poing serré, est l'approbation, le succès, la réussite. Or, cela ne vaut pas pour toute l'Europe, car en Grèce (comme d'ailleurs au Moyen-Orient, en Afrique de l'Ouest et en Amérique du Sud), lever le pouce correspond à lever le majeur en France. Par conséquent, ce qui semble être un geste universel positif se trouve être extrêmement offensant dans d'autres cultures."*

> That is, words in comics are first of all employed to represent and evoke feelings through the modulation of elements like their size, shape, colour and disposition in space, all of which are graphic and extratextual elements. Even the colour and shape of balloons, which are the physical containers of words, contribute to the creation of particular effects. All these elements pave the way for the effect of the text itself; that is, words as such play their role only subsequently, when their graphic quality has already created a certain atmosphere in the mind of the reader. (Rota 80)

Concerning page format, Rota provides information on the established print sizes in different global comics markets—the American *comic book* (17x26 cm, 32 pages), the French *album* (23x30 cm, 48-96 pages), the Italian *bonelliano* (16x21 cm, 96-160 pages), the Japanese *tankobon* (12x18 cm, 200-400 pages)—and how these physical dimensions have direct impact on expression and narrative. In the American graphic novel market—comics mostly intended to be sold in bookstores—there is a great variety of formats, generally determined by the author according to his intentions in terms of expressiveness and narrative. When it is translated, the comic may be subject to graphic format changes that impact on these expressive and narrative intentions.

> The page, then, imposing artistic restrictions and potentialities, is not just an incidental feature, but rather a fundamental creative element in comics. This element, with its proportions and characteristics, cannot be easily modified in translation through editorial processes without altering the original work substantially; therefore, changing the size of the original publication is an operation which has important consequences for the translated comic and its enjoyment. (Rota 83)

While Groensteen highlights the connection elements within the page and within page sequences, saying that these connections are the most essential feature of comics, Zanettin, Rota and Kaindl add that this connection is also related to graphic format and typographic expression. For the translator who is interpreting a comic and adapting it to a foreign language, this requires a semiotic investigation (cf. Celotti) or a multimodal reading (cf. Borodo). This network of connections will establish meaning—or words and sense—in comics, in such a way that all these elements are relevant to translation and, therefore, to the discussion of translation fidelity in this medium.

Fidelity in Comics Translation

Concerns about translation fidelity, as seen at the beginning of this paper, pertain mostly to literary translation. By its nature, the graphic configuration of prose will be completely changed in translation. Therefore, topics like layout, illustration positioning, typography and other graphic aspects are hardly considered when it comes to fidelity. In comics, though, visuals are prevalent, so all of these aspects should be considered if we are talking about translation fidelity.

This does not mean, however, that we should forget the basic tenets of fidelity in literary

translation. The concept of fidelity levels in different instances (source text fidelity, target text reader fidelity, source author fidelity) still stands, as well as the point that these variables are relative to each project or working conditions of the translator. These instances, however, should be analysed according to the following chart:

	SOURCE TEXT FIDELITY	SOURCE AUTHOR FIDELITY	TARGET TEXT READER FIDELITY
Linguistic signs fidelity	*word - - - - - - - - - sense*	*uncommitted - - - - committed*	*foreignizing - - - domesticating*
Non-linguistic signs fidelity	*word - - - - - - - - - sense*	*uncommitted - - - - committed*	*foreignizing - - - domesticating*
Spatio-topia fidelity	*word - - - - - - - - - sense*	*uncommitted - - - - committed*	*foreignizing - - - domesticating*
Typography fidelity	*word - - - - - - - - - sense*	*uncommitted - - - committed*	*foreignizing - - - domesticating*
Format fidelity	*word - - - - - - - - - sense*	*uncommitted - - - committed*	*foreignizing - - - domesticating*

Linguistic signs fidelity: "Typical" fidelity, concerning equivalences between two codified languages, tends to be at the *sense* end of the source text fidelity spectrum; in comics we should add concerns over connections between linguistic and non-linguistic signs.

Non-linguistic signs fidelity: As seen above (cf. Rota), current comics translation tends to leave non-linguistic signs unchanged. This may lead to difficulties in translation or even questions of appropriateness to some target language readers. As also seen above, in figs. 5 and 6, this commitment was not always present in comics translation history.

Spatio-topia fidelity: In the source comic, each panel has its own place on a page and in relation to a page sequence. This spatial location and its relationship to other panels is meaningful. Relocating panels may be detrimental to the *spatio-topia.*

Typography fidelity: The word morphology (words as images) is also meaningful in a comic, since it expresses and connects to what is being stated by linguistic signs and non-linguistic

signs.

Format fidelity: The physical dimensions of the comic book prescribe different reading situations. Enlarging or shortening images leads to different meanings, given that the comics artist designed his page while thinking of specific panel and print sizes and their communicative impact upon the reader.

Concerning the "source text fidelity column", it may sound counter-intuitive to propose a word-sense spectrum when we are dealing with non-linguistic signs—*spatio-topia*, typography and format; but these can in fact be linked to linguistic signs in the sense that, balloons and captions can, for instance, feature onomatopoeias. More generally, the linguistic and the non-linguistic are inextricably linked through the choice of font and font size or any other typographical choice. There are therefore various ways of dealing with all visual aspects that may fall into the word-sense spectrum. A fidelity approach that tends to the "word" pole would preserve these visual aspects in the target text as they were in the source text. The fidelity approach that tends to the "sense" pole, on the other hand, would alter these aspects (by redrawing, rearranging panels, or choosing a new font and publication format). In comparing Figures 2-3 (ST) and 4 (TT)—the Superman origin story—for instance, all of these visual aspects have been changed: panels were rearranged, shortened or enlarged, typography options are completely different and a two-page sequence was rendered in one page with a different print size. However, ST and TT essentially tell the same story.

It should be noted once again that these considerations of fidelity correspond to *levels,* by which I mean we are not talking about being only "faithful" or "unfaithful": there are spectra, as represented in the chart above. Linguistic signs, non-linguistic signs, *spatio-topia,* typography and format, in translation, will each have its own level of fidelity relative to any given comics translation project and working conditions[10].

Final Remarks

This paper has sought to apply some of the considerations regarding fidelity in literary translation to the specific and distinctive issues in comics translation. Comics translation studies are still new, while effective comics translation for books and magazines is about a 100-year-old—and currently growing—market. To consider aspects of fidelity is an attempt to contribute to reflections on the comics translation craft.

When applying the ideas of literary translation fidelity to comics translation, questions

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[10] We may also think about fidelity and economical instances: for example, the format a translated comic book (and its printing run) will have in another country may lead to a printing cost that is greater or less than the source comic had, which makes this comic cheaper or more expensive than the source comic was in relation to its source country economy. The price of the comic book would lead to different modes of appreciation and reading conditions in two different regions—and this could also be thought of as a fidelity level. Similarly, the reading experience of the same comic in print and digital formats is up for discussion.

could be raised about literary translation itself. While non-linguistic signs are usually dismissed in the discussion of literary translation fidelity, recent studies on paratranslation—a concept proposed by José Yuste Frías (261)—highlight meaningful aspects of text presentation that impact how the text itself is appreciated. To think, then, about *paratranslation* fidelity in literary translation may be a fruitful endeavor.

In comics, the non-linguistic sign is not a paratext, since it is the core (or sometimes the only) "text." The translation of media mainly based on non-linguistic signs—in addition to comics, there are movies, TV, videogames, illustrated books, websites etc.—is already prevalent and concerns booming markets, but it still lacks the extensive scholarly investigation we find applied to literary translation.

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