The concept of the interpersonal in translation

Jeremy Munday

University of Leeds, UK

Abstract

Analysis from the perspective of Hallidayan (systemic functional) linguistics became popular in translation studies in the 1990s, though most work concentrated on the textual function and, to a lesser degree, the ideational function. This paper suggests greater importance be placed on Halliday's interpersonal function which is crucial for the writer-reader relationship and, consequently, for investigating the intervention of the translator. The particular focus is on recent monolingual work in the area of evaluation/appraisal theory (Martin and White 2005) and on the deictic positioning of writer/reader as expressed in pronoun choice and naming. Detailed examples are discussed from government documents and sensitive political propaganda (from Hugo Chávez and Barack Obama), leading to the suggestion, for future research, that there are certain key risk points which are most sensitive to intervention from the translator.

0. Introduction

Hallidayan linguistics provided the theoretical underpinning for a number of key publications in the translation studies boom of the 1990s, the most prominent of which were Hatim and Mason (1990; 1997), Bell (1991), Baker (1992) and House (1997), before being somewhat sidelined in the past decade as translation studies has expanded into new areas of technology and cultural studies. The current paper is part of a series that seeks to rekindle and advance the interest in translation-related discourse analysis of this type by focussing on the concept of the writer-reader (or speaker-listener) relationship in translation (see also, Munday 2004; Munday, in press; Munday forthcoming). It begins an investigation drawing on recent work on evaluation and appraisal within Halliday's systemic functional grammar.

1. Meaning potential, interpersonal meaning and evaluation

Halliday's model considers language as 'social semiotic' (Halliday 1978: 108-9), making and realizing 'meaning potential' at different levels (discourse, genre, Register, semantics, lexicogrammar) from the paradigmatic choices available throughout the text as a whole. Some thirty years ago, Halliday explained it in the following terms:

> The *text* is the linguistic form of social interaction. It is a continuous progression of meanings […]. The meanings are the selections made by the speaker from the options that constitute the meaning potential: text is the actualization of this meaning potential, the process of semantic choice. (Halliday 1978:122)

The crucial concepts of meaning potential, of choice and the relation to social structure, represent fundamental building blocks of the model. Meaning potential is "the range of options that is characteristic of a specific situation type" (therefore genre-specific) and the text itself is "actualized meaning potential" (ibid.:109) – that is, the choices that are made in a particular context from the range of lexical and grammatical ('lexicogrammatical', see Halliday and Matthiessen 2004:43) choices open to the writer at each point. These perform the meaning potential in each clause according to three discourse semantic functions (Halliday 1985, 1994):

(1) the ideational/experiential, which constructs a representation (of an external reality) through subject-specific lexis and transitivity patterns including nominalizations;

(2) the interpersonal, which facilitates an exchange between participants (and comments on its truth value) through mood, modality and pronoun choice and 'evaluative epithets'; and

(3) the textual, which sees the clause as a message that contextually organizes information through thematic structure, cohesive devices and logical coherence.

These three interlinked functions operate simultaneously and through the 'continuous progression of meanings' noted above, as each choice builds on previous selections in the text and contributes to future selections. Thus, in a political address, the decision to address the public using an inclusive first person plural form (*we are faced with a difficult challenge...*) rather than a first-person singular and a second-person (*I am speaking to you today*) or a more distancing formula (*The White House is seeking to allay concerns*), would define the positioning of the speaker and the audience as it unfolds.[1] Importantly, lexicogrammatical choices of interpersonal meaning represent an 'intrusion' by the speaker/writer into the communicative situation (Halliday 1979:66, in Martin and White 2005:19) and can be linked to his/her ideological orientation. For example, the inclusive first person *we* form "can be used to induce interpreters [i.e. receivers of a text] to conceptualise group identity, coalitions, parties, and the like, either as insiders or as outsiders" (Chilton 2004:56). Consistently selecting the *we* form would align the audience with the speaker as 'insiders' and would help the speaker to manipulate the audience towards a possible shared solution based on common values and beliefs ('ideology' in Paul Simpson's terms [Simpson 1993]; see also Hatim and Mason 1997:220).

The usefulness of functional analysis in translation has to do with the significance allotted to choice. Hence, the reader (and translator) approaches the ST in the belief that the ST writer's choice is meaningful, asking questions such as: Why this wording rather than another? What choices did the writer have at each point? What is the function of the writer's choice? And what form of communication is produced by this choice? The translator needs to uncover the ST writer choice and to re-encode that choice as appropriate in the target language. Thus, the translator's choices are also meaningful and represent conscious or unconscious decisions at the lexical level that, together, represent the translator's interpretation of the ST.

Interpretation, and shift in translation, can occur in any of the metafunctions but it is the interpersonal function that is most central to the construction of the writer-reader relationship. Halliday generally focuses on the speech acts of exchanging (giving and receiving) information and services and its realization through the mood system of language (Halliday and Hasan 1989:31-3; Halliday 1994:68; Halliday and Matthiessen 2004:107), but in more recent years research has moved towards investigating the interpersonal in more detail the concept of 'evaluation' (Hunston and Thompson 2000) or similar terms such as 'stance' (e.g. Biber and Finegan 1989, Conrad and Biber 2000) and 'appraisal' (e.g. Martin 2000, Martin and White 2005). In view of the terminological confusion, we follow Thompson and Hunston (2000:5) who adopt 'evaluation' as a general term for "the expression of the speaker or writer's stance towards, viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about". This is a potentially vast area, so in this paper, since our interest is primarily in approaching the question from the perspective of interpersonal meaning, we shall

---

[1] See also Ward (2004: 282-4), who discusses the various relationships triggered by we and notes that the relationship may shift throughout an utterance.

restrict ourselves to consideration of two of the most salient features of evaluation: lexical realizations of 'attitude' (see section 2 below) and the use of pronoun choice as a means for positioning the reader in political texts (see section 3 below).

2 Inscribed and invoked attitude

Attitude is a central plank of the appraisal system, itself a major development by Martin and White (see Martin 2000; Martin and White 2005, White 2002; White 2006, amongst others), and proposed as one of three systems for realizing interpersonal meaning and the writer-reader relationship.[2] Three types of attitude are described: (1) 'affect', typically expressed through feelings and emotions (*happy*, *mad*, etc.); (2) 'judgement', an ethical category that indicates the writer's evaluation of behaviour, capacity, etc (*honest*, *brave*, *noble*, etc); and (3) 'appreciation', which indicates an aesthetic or similar evaluation on a thing or phenomenon (*wonderful*, *ugly*, *valuable*, etc.).

The most obvious expression of attitude is by 'direct inscription' (Martin and White 2005:61), through 'evaluative epithets' (adjectival forms that provide evaluation, see Halliday 1994:184). Typical are promotional texts of various types (e.g. conventional advertising, tourist brochures, product brochures), which seek to laud the characteristics of a product or destination (Munday, in press). Such direct inscription can in fact be seen in many types of text. Example 1 is the beginning of an article on the regeneration of Britain's cities, published on 14 March 2007 in a supplement of *The Guardian* entitled 'Promised Lands':[3]

Example 1a

Despite the **extraordinary** revival of British cities, much more remains to be done. While urban centres are now filled with **gleaming** high-rise residential towers, **world-class** shopping and **bulging** office employment, the inner suburbs of these same cities need massive attention.[4]

Here, in the pre-crunch boom, the obvious inscribed appraisal is shouted by the extremely strong evaluative epithets *extraordinary*, *gleaming*, *world-class* and *bulging* that are all highly positive in their collocations with *revival*, *high-rise residential towers*, *shopping* and *office employment*, together forming a 'key' around the concept of economic development of British cities. An interesting point to note is the context-specific nature of some of these collocations − it is quite easy to envisage (and to find) alternative collocations of, say, *high-rise* that are very negative[5]. However, the evaluation in the text above stands out because it is not simply 'selling' a product but is part of a problem-solution pattern (cf. Hoey 1983) that starts from a negative description of situation in theme position (*Despite... , While...*), builds through the presentation of improvements made to date (*the extraordinary revival*, etc.) and leads to the new 'problem' information in the rheme (*much more remains to be done, the inner suburbs of these same cities need massive attention*). As well as being graded by the adverbial *much more* and the epithet *massive*, such structures demonstrate that evaluation also occurs at the higher-level of the sentence and the text as well as at the individual lexical level.

---

[2] The others are tenor and solidarity, see section 3.

[3] Tony Travers, The Journey to Transformation. Previously available at www. oldhamrochdalehmr.co.uk/hmr_ guardian_mar07.pdf , this document has recently been removed from *The Guardian* website. However, it can still be viewed at http://www.transformsouthyorkshire. org.uk/ documents/ Guardian.pdf

[4] In the examples, all bolded elements have been highlighted by the present author for the purposes of facilitating analysis.

[5] For example, 'High-Rise flats: Slums in the Sky', *The Economist*, 19 September 2005. URL www.economist.com/world/ britain/displaystory.cfm?story_id=4468679

In fact, evaluation is also present at the level of genre, since this proved to be a controversial hybrid text, masquerading as a journalistic report but actually being a Public Relations advertorial provided and sponsored by the government-funded Housing Market Renewal Fund scheme, presented as the 'solution' to the above problem in the continuation:

Example 1b

In recognition of this, the government has – since 2003 – funded improvements through the Housing Market Renewal fund, which is used to finance capital investment in the housing market and supporting infrastructure.

On other occasions, however, evaluation is less evident. It is 'invoked' or 'evoked' (Martin and White 2005: 206); that is, the evaluative word (or 'attitudinal token', White 2006) may cause a positive reaction not because of its inherently positive attitudinal qualities but because it triggers a latent contextual connection in the reader. To illustrate this, and to continue the theme of housing, Example 2 is taken from a general prospectus for a northern English University, used in the period 1998-2000, but still available online:

Example 2

The campus is **compact**, being less than half a mile across, **but** is attractively laid out using the natural contours of the land, to give a real sense of space. It is almost surrounded by **stone-built terraced housing**, much of which is available for rent to students in their second and final years.

The goal of the text is to attract potential students and their parents, reassuring them about the ease of movement within the campus and the availability of good accommodation. While there is certainly inscribed evaluation in the choice of items such as *attractively* and *real sense of space*, our interest is in the *invoked* subjectivity of the highlighted words and phrases, each of which is designed to trigger a positive response but in different ways. Thus, *compact* emphasizes the ease of travel within the campus (rather than its smallness). It is deliberately opposed to the second part of the sentence; the opposition is signalled by the adversative conjunction *but* which initially, and somewhat surprisingly, appears to contrast *compact* with *attractively laid out* and which ends with the positive new information *real sense of space*. For the text to function as presumably desired by the author, *stone-built terraced housing* must be taken to be positive; thus, the epithet *stone-built*, as a connotor of something traditional, crafted and full of local character, must outweigh any negative connotation attributed by its collocation with *terraced housing* (small, old, draughty, etc.). This is a good example of the context-specific nature of evaluation and the way in which a multiword unit or fixed expression operates as far more than the sum of its parts. Such contentions are borne out by a corpus-based search for *stone-built terraced housing* which shows its overwhelming association with northern English mill towns, Welsh mining towns, etc. Interestingly, the uses in the corpus seem to be predominantly descriptive and neutral in terms of evaluation, as in Example 3:

Example 3

The character of the village has two main components. A nineteenth century villagecore of **stone-built terraced housing** with its focus on Queen's Square, and peripheral modern housing developments in brick, mainly built during the 1970s.[6]

On the other hand, Example 4, from a local government paper on the environment, shows just how evaluation is affected by the surrounding context and the context of situation:

Example 4

Rossendale's built environment is characterised by the remains of its industrial heritage – there are over 260 listed buildings and eight conservation areas. **Stone-built terraced housing** constructed before 1919 forms a third of the housing in the borough; it is visually harmonious, but almost a quarter of these houses are unfit and many are occupied by low-income or elderly residents. Approximately 450 sites within Rossendale are potentially contaminated as a result of previous or current use.[7]

Here, the first sentence (*Rossendale's.... areas*) is a topic sentence that locates the theme of the section, stressing how the industrial history of the area has affected the development of its dwellings. Within its own clause, *Stone-built terraced housing* then seems to be purely descriptive, simply indicating its proportion of the housing stock in the Lancashire borough. However, the following clause first stresses the positive (*it is visually harmonious*) but then shifts to the main, negative, point (*almost a quarter of these houses are unfit*). The final sentence can only be understood with reference to the first – that is, that the legacy of local industry, notably textile mills and footwear manufacturers, has been to contaminate the land which, presumably, lies under some of the housing. Thus, the same item, *stone-built terraced housing*, is used neutrally, positively and negatively, the latter predominating.

A final instance, Example 5, adds a further subtle factor to the evaluation of the item. It is taken from a poetic, pastoral vision of the Peak District national park, again in northern England:

Example 5
Valley pastures with industry
A small scale, settled pastoral landscape on undulating lower valley
slopes. There are filtered views through scattered hedgerows and
dense streamside trees. **Stone-built terraced housing** on lower slopes
is associated with historic mills.[8]

This is clearly strongly positive evaluation, emphasizing the unspoilt, natural scenery and above all created by the wealth of epithets such as *small scale*, *settled*, *pastoral*, *undulating*, *filtered*, *scattered*, *streamside.* Each, individually, may not be inherently positive, but, as a group in conjunction with the pastoral nouns *landscape*, *valley slopes*, *trees*, they do create a strongly positive prosody or 'key' (Martin and White 2005:26). In order to fit into such a scenario, *stone-built terraced housing* must be viewed positively, reinforced by the positive

---

[6] Blackburn and Darwen Borough (1999?) Supplementary Planning Guidance, Village Appraisals, p. 10. URL http://www.blackburn.gov.uk/upload/pdf/village_appraisals.pdf

[7] Rossendale Borough Council (2007) *Environmental Strategy for Rossendale, or How Green is Our Valley?*, p. 5. URL www.rossendale.gov.uk/environmentstrategy

[8] *Dark Peak Western Fringe*, information on the Peak District, UK, p. 10. URL www.peakdistrict.org/lca-dark-peak-western-fringe.pdf

use of the epithet *historic* which triggers the connotation of tradition, craft and age-old value rather than the polluting nature of the mills of the eighteenth-nineteenth century industrial revolution which transformed and sometimes destroyed an imagined pastoral idyll. A translator would therefore need to recognize the key and recreate it appropriately in the target text in the choice of positive (or at least neutral) words for the terms mentioned above. However, it is important to bear in mind that the potential difference in the linguistic realization of culturally expected norms of evaluation. This would involve not only choosing appropriately positive attitudinal tokens but also ensuring that the scene depicted produced the desired reaction in the new audience. Kaltenbacher (2006), for instance, performing analysis on a small corpus of tourist websites in the US, Scotland and Austria, suggests that appraisal may be realized differently according to linguistic culture: Scottish websites highlighting national identity (*Scottish*, *Royal, Lothian*, etc.), Austrian websites using affect (*enjoy a winter stroll/beauty*, etc.) and US websites employing exaggerated words of appreciation (*beautiful*, *breathtaking*). Interestingly, in view of the findings in Example 5 above, Kaltenbacher finds the terms *historic*, *historical* and *old* used, more or less frequently, and generally positively, in the texts he analyses (ibid.:287).

3 Evaluation and positioning in political texts

White (2006) suggests that invoked attitudinal meaning is a key device used by news media to surreptitiously insert evaluation into their political reporting. But when it comes to sensitive political texts, perhaps more strategic for interpersonal meaning is the negotiation of deictic positioning (see Chilton 2004, section 1 above) as expressed through the choice of pronoun and the form of naming used to address and align the audience. Within interpersonal meaning, this falls partly within the system of tenor (as a negotiation of speech function) and partly within the system of solidarity (distancing or approximating the audience), the two systems that function in tandem with appraisal (see Martin and White 2005:35). In this section, we shall consider the problems this poses for translation using two very sensitive political texts from the Americas. The first is an extract from the speech delivered by Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez to the United Nations General Assembly in New York on 20 September 2006, where he directly and crudely attacks his arch enemy, the then President George W. Bush:[9]

Example 6

Yo tengo la impresión… **señor dictador imperialista**… que usted va a vivir el resto de sus días con una pesadilla, porque por dondequiera que vea vamos a surgir nosotros, los que insurgimos contra el imperialismo norteamericano… los que clamamos por la libertad plena del mundo, por la igualdad de los pueblos, por el respeto a la soberanía de las naciones…
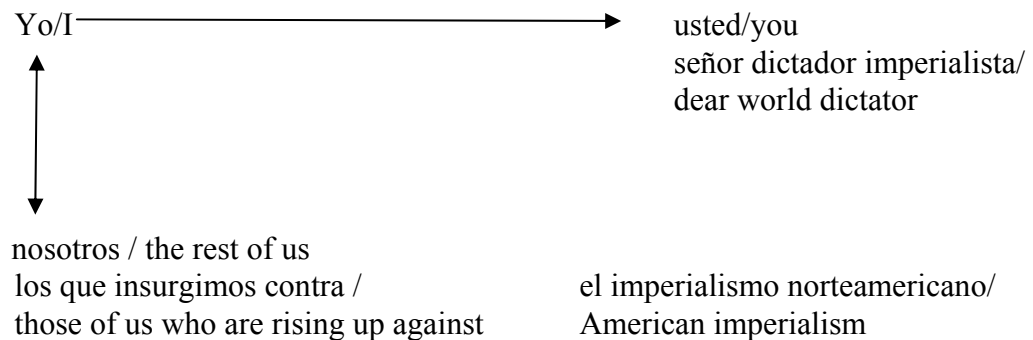
[Lit. *I have the impression… Mr imperialist dictator… that you [formal] are going to live the rest of your days in a nightmare, because wherever you look are-going to be appearing we, those/we who are rising up against North American imperialism... those/we who are clamouring for the complete freedom of the world, for the equality of peoples, for the respect of the sovereignty of nations*]

I have the feeling... dear **world dictator**, that you... are gonna live the rest of your days as a nightmare because the rest of us are standing up, all those of us who are rising up against American imperialism, who are... shouting for equality, for respect, for the sovereignty of nations...

Here, the deixis of the writer-reader relationship is clear: the first person singular *I* of Chávez's own opinion against the formal *you* of Bush and together with the *us* of those

peoples which oppose US hegemony. In Spanish this is a little more subtle, since the morphing of *I* to *us* is realized not just through the through the introduction of the pronoun *nosotros* [= *we*] but also through the repetition of the neutral plural pronoun *los que* [Lit. *Those who*] and with the first person plural conjugation of the verbs (*insurgimos*, *clamamos*). The interpreter maintains this deictic positioning as best she can through the use of *the rest of us... those of us who... who....* In addition, the strong naming strategy of the ST (*señor dictador imperialista* = Mr imperialist dictator) with the ironically polite *señor* is slightly tempered in the translation as *dear world dictator*, although it should be noted that other mentions of US imperialism and hegemony are rendered literally elsewhere in the text. The deixis of positioning, crucial for the speaker-listener relationship is therefore generally maintained in the interpreting:

Yo/I ⟶ usted/you
señor dictador imperialista/
dear world dictator

↕

nosotros / the rest of us
los que insurgimos contra /   el imperialismo norteamericano/
those of us who are rising up against   American imperialism

The other main form of attack from Chávez is through the striking extended conceptual metaphor of the Devil that is part of a crude and almost childish naming strategy:

Example 7

Ayer vino el Diablo aquí… Ayer estuvo el Diablo aquí…… en este mismo lugar. Huele a azufre todavía… esta mesa… donde me ha tocado hablar. Ayer señoras, señores, desde esta misma tribuna… el Señor Presidente de los Estados Unidos, a quien yo llamo "El Diablo"… vino aquí… hablando como dueño del mundo…. como dueño del mundo…

[Lit. *Yesterday came the Devil here… Yesterday was the Devil here, in this very place. Smells of sulphur still this table where it is given to me to speak. Yesterday, ladies, gentlemen, from this very rostrum Mr President of the United States, whom I call "The Devil", came here speaking as owner of the world.*]

And the Devil came here yesterday…... Yesterday the Devil came... here!… Right here!... Right here... And it smells of sulphur still today!... This table that I am now standing in front of.... Yesterday, ladies and gentlemen, from this rostrum,... the President of the United States, the gentleman to whom I refer as ... a ... "the Devil", came here... talking as if he owned the world … truly, as the owner of the world…

The Devil metaphor is outrageous in the original for its religious and ethical links, but it is also rather humorous too, as is conveyed in the body language (Chávez pauses theatrically in order to cross himself) and the incredulous intonation of the American interpreter working at the conference. In the transcription above, the exclamation marks are my own interpretation of the rising intonation and clear astonishment of the interpreter as she conveys, quite literally, Chávez's words to the international audience.

The metaphor made the press headlines the next day, using in many instances the interpreter's English rendering of the speech.[10] Evaluation from the interpreter is introduced not in any interpretation or distortion of the words used, but in the rising intonation that seems to serve to distance herself from liability for the words uttered, offensive as they may be for the President of the host nation. In this context it is also interesting to consider her self-correction at the third mention of 'devil', where initially she seems to be using the indefinite article (*to whom I refer as a devil*), but corrects to the definite article (*the Devil*). This is a strongly evaluative move since it directly relates Bush to the evil religious entity rather than allowing an interpretation of the word more metaphorically such as 'he is a devil' (one of many, who share those characteristics).

Distancing is a strategy that is adopted elsewhere too, at other critical points in the speech, such as the following where the key evaluative terms of Judgement, *cynical* and *hypocritical*, are rendered as evaluative epithets (more conclusive than the more diluted *full of* + abstract noun of the ST) and stressed by the separate and sarcastic enunciation of each syllable:

Example 8

El discurso del Presidente "tirano" mundial, lleno de cinismos, lleno de hipocresía, es la hipocresía imperial

[Lit. *The speech of the "tyrant" world President, full of cynicisms, full of hypocrisy, is imperial hypocrisy*]

The world tyrant's statement… cy-ni-cal... hy-po-cri-ti-cal... full of this imperial hypocrisy

Our second political example is another sensitive text, this time involving translation into Spanish from English. The text in question, the 49-page *Latino Blueprint for Change*, was the central policy document in the Obama 2008 presidential campaign relating to the key minority of 9.2 million Hispanic voters. It was published online in the English original (Obama'08 2008a) and in Spanish translation (Obama'08 2008b), the introduction being signed by Obama himself. It begins:

Example 9a

Thank you for taking a look at this booklet. **I believe** it's critically important that **those of us** who want to lead this nation be open, candid, and clear with the American people about how **we will** move forward. So **I hope** this booklet gives **you** a good sense about where **I** stand on the fundamental issues facing **the 44 million Hispanics who live in our country today.**

In this text, the deictic positioning is *I* (Obama)/*we* (those of us who want to lead) addressing *you* (the American people) to propose a plan so that progress can be made in the common ground of *this nation*/*our country* (the United States). The *I* of Obama predominates (three occurrences in the extract). Curiously, however, *the 44 million Hispanics who live in our country today* are positioned as outsiders despite being the subject of the booklet. Evaluation is highest in Appreciation (*critically important*; *fundamental issues*) and in Judgement (*open, candid and clear*), central to the ethical stance of the campaign.

The Spanish text is a generally close translation:

---

[10] For example, the BBC, 'Chavez tells UN Bush is 'devil', http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/5365142.stm ;
CNN, 'Chavez: Bush "devil"; US "on the way down"', http://edition.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/americas/09/20/chavez.un/index.html

Example 9b

Gracias por leer este folleto. **Creo** que es de importancia vital que **los que queremos** guiar los destinos de esta nación **seamos** abiertos, francos y claros con el pueblo estadounidense sobre la manera en que **vamos** a avanzar. Así que **espero** que este folleto **les** sirva para entender **mi** postura ante los asuntos fundamentales que afrontan **los 44 millones de hispanos que viven en nuestro país**.

[Lit. *Thank you for reading this booklet.* **I believe** *that it is of vital importance* **that those of us who wish** *to guide the destinies of this nation* **should be** *open, frank and clear with the United States people about the way in which* **we are going** *to proceed. Therefore,* **I hope** *that this booklet is sufficient* **for you** *to understand my position on the fundamental issues* [Object] *that face* **the 44 million Hispanics** [Subject] **who live in our country**].

The realizations of Appreciation and Judgement are maintained. Also maintained is the deictic positioning, the readers being referred to using the plural indirect object pronoun *les* ('to you'). However, there is some ambiguity around the later third person plural verb form *viven* [= live]. This could possibly be read as including the readers with the Hispanics, but the phrasing of the rest of the text strongly suggests that the Hispanics remain as outsiders even in a text addressed in Spanish for them as readers. This is an important question since the relationships presented in this communicative situation indicate the relative power relations and the locus of decision-making: are the Hispanics to be involved in planning their future or are they to be 'guided' by the political leader(s)?

A second example, in the main body of the booklet, reinforces the interpretation that Hispanics are not closely involved:

Example 10

U.S. Policy Toward Latin America Has Failed

George Bush's policy in the Americas has been negligent toward **our** friends, ineffective with **our** adversaries, disinterested in the **challenges** that matter in **people's** lives, and incapable of advancing **our** interests in the region. (p. 41)

La política estadounidense hacia América latina ha fracasado

La política de George Bush en las Américas ha sido negligente hacia **nuestros** amigos, ineficaz ante **nuestros** adversarios, desinteresada en los **problemas** que les importan a los **latinoamericanos**, e incapaz de avanzar **nuestros** intereses en la región. (p. 47)

[Lit. *US policy toward Latin America has failed*

The politics of George Bush in the Americas has been negligent toward **our** *friends, ineffective in the face of* **our** *adversaries, disinterested in the* **problems** *which matter to* **Latin Americans**, *and incapable of advancing* **our** *interests in the region*].

Here, the ST writer's position is retained, with the translation of the possessive pronoun *our* three times as *nuestros*. It is the *our* of the United States as a nation – the friends, adversaries and interests of the nation as a whole, contrasted to the policies followed by George Bush which, by implication, are presented as against the national interest. However, the TT explicitation of the non-specific ST *people* (*the challenges that matter in people's lives*) proves to be crucial in the positioning of the TT reader. First of all, it is pertinent to consider why, in the ST, *people* has been used rather than *our*, which would have brought together all Americans in a common goal. The answer is most probably because the intention of the text is to connect to the 'ordinary' voters who may, economically, politically and socially, be at a

distance from the Democratic political elite and whose day-to-day challenges may be somewhat greater, or at least different. By rendering *people's* as the specific *latino-americanos*, the translator has achieved what did not occur in Example 9b, targeting the audience and tailoring the message to suit their situation: in this case, that George Bush was out of touch with Latin Americans, while Obama is speaking directly to them. However, the choice of the term *latinoamericanos* is somewhat strange, since the booklet typically prefers the more culturally specific *latinos* or *hispanos* for those of Latin American descent living in the US. Is the writer/translator talking about those within the US or about Latin Americans living in central and South America countries? In this respect, the specification *latinamericanos* ironically raises the possibility of a gap between the audience and the *our* of the writer: Latinos are understood as being included in the US national *our*, or are perceived to still be alien outsiders, addressed in this section but who have different day-to-day *challenges*, a word that is rendered by the far more passive and negative *problemas* in the TT.

In the translated text, the writer-reader relationship is thus interrogated in subtle nuances of pronoun choice and naming. However, there are other places where the shift in evaluation is much more striking and these are not those where evaluation is necessarily obviously pronounced in the ST. In Example 10, this is revealed by the translation of the very word *challenges* as *problemas* [= problems], the English suggesting obstacles to be overcome, the Spanish difficulties that are necessarily pessimistic. An even clearer illustration is Example 11, from the conclusion of Obama's preface:

Example 11

But despite all the progress we have made, we know that there is more work to do. If there's a child **stuck** in a **crumbling** school who graduates without **ever** learning how to read, it doesn't matter if that child is a Hispanic from Miami or an African American from Chicago or a white girl from rural Kentucky – **she** is our **child**, and **her struggle** is our **struggle**.

Pero a pesar de cuánto hemos progresado, sabemos que aún queda más por hacer. Si hay un niño **atrapado** en una escuela **ruinosa** que se gradúa sin haber aprendido a leer, no importa si ese niño es un hispano de Miami o un afroamericano de Chicago o una niña blanca de la zona rural de Kentucky: es nuestro **niño** y sus **problemas** son nuestros **problemas.**

Once again, the translation is quite literal and the deictic positioning is uncontroversially maintained. There is perhaps a slight loss of graduation in the choice of the more standard *atrapado* [= trapped] for *stuck* and *ruinosa* [= ruinous] for *crumbling*, a loss of intensity in the omission of a translation of *ever* (*without ever learning how to read*), but it is the end of this section that is most arresting. Here, the potentially sensitive area of race-specific terminology is dealt with unproblematically in the translation (*Hispanic = hispano*; *African American = afroamericano*; *white girl* = niña blanca); the politically correct and gender-specific *white girl from rural Kentucky*, however, changes her gender to what would be a normally unmarked male form *niño* [= 'child' but also 'boy']; and, most surprisingly, the emotive ST noun *struggle* (*her struggle is our struggle*) is rendered as *problemas* [= *problems*] in the TT. This last is a crucial shift in evaluation of the social situation and alters the perspective from the active process of struggling against fate and circumstance to a negative and more passive statement of problem.

This shift is not an isolated one, as we saw in Example 10 where *the challenges that matter in people's lives* had been rendered as *problemas*. There are also other very similar instances that create a pattern in the same text, such as in the section on predatory loans:

Example 12

In the Illinois State Senate, Obama called attention to predatory lending **issues**. (p. 9)

En el Senado del estado de Illinois, Obama llamó la atención al **problema** de los préstamos abusivos. (p. 13)

[Lit. *In the Senate of the state of Illinois, Obama called attention to the **problem** of abusive loans*]

and on the immigration system:

Example 13

Obama believes we must fix the dysfunctional immigration bureaucracy and increase the number of legal immigrants to keep families together and **meet the demand** for jobs that employers cannot fill. (p. 15)

Obama cree que debemos reparar la burocracia disfuncional e incrementar la admisión de inmigrantes legales para mantener unidas a las familias y **resolver el problema** de los puestos de trabajo que los empleadores no pueden llenar. (p. 19)

[Lit. *Obama believes that we must repair the dysfunctional bureaucracy and increase the admission of legal immigrants to keep families together and **solve the problem** of jobs that the employers cannot fill*.]

The result is that a range of ST words in the lexical field (*challenges that matter*; *her struggle is our struggle*; *predatory lending issues*; *meet the demand for jobs*) which relate to the path to improvement (or, in the case of *issues*, are neutral) are rendered as 'problems' and create a negative evaluative key and therefore a negative mindset in the reader, differing greatly from that of the ST.

4 Concluding thoughts: Risk and evaluation in translation

The examples we have selected have outlined various ways in which evaluation is introduced into a text. By way of conclusion I should like to pose two related questions for further exploration. One concerns the fact that more invoked evaluation is likely to trouble translators more than directly inscribed attitude but that there is a range of possible responses from translators. Martin and White (2005:206) describe three possible reader responses to a text: compliant, resistant and tactical. What is the most likely reading by a translator? Compliant, by reproducing the ideology of the source (and its writer-reader relationship), resistant by opposing it or, perhaps the most likely, tactical by consciously or unconsciously both reproducing and reworking, with an unavoidable repositioning of the audience in relation to the writer/speaker? Here seems to me to be a most interesting potential for future research into evaluation and interpersonal, to understand the ways in which evaluation alters in translation and the effect this has.

It may also be profitable to link such analysis to the notion of 'risk', defined rather loosely by Anthony Pym (2004), as "the possibility of not fulfilling the translation's purpose". Pym gives the example of the translation of a birth certificate, where it is crucial not to make a mistake with the name and date of birth of the person born since these are central to the function. A mistake in such 'high-risk' items would mean that the certificate could not properly function in its target locale since it would fail to correctly and uniquely identify the individual concerned. On the other hand, some other features are 'low-risk' since they are not central to the function – as, in Pym's example, the name of the midwife or reporting officer. A mistake in these items will probably pass unnoticed since they are incidental to the function. For those reading the translated text all that is required is for the birth to have been

officially recorded by the post rather than the name of the officer/midwife, etc. Importantly, Pym claims that a linguistic analysis often identifies "particularly "difficult" or "untranslatable" passages [that] are quite often of little relevance to success conditions." That is because translators have conscious strategies and procedures for avoiding such problems, which are similar to the cultural 'rich points' proposed and discussed by anthropological linguist Michael Agar (1994). My contention is that high-risk items may perhaps be linked to those rich points in a text where either evaluation by the translator/interpreter is specifically required (e.g. in order to disambiguate, to fill a lexical lacuna in the target language, or to recognise an example of invoked attitude), where evaluation leads to an unnecessary deviation from a literal translation strategy (perhaps to achieve greater idiomaticity or, based on the *problemas* example, where a different mind-set has been triggered in the translator) or where the source text item itself is highly sensitive and potentially controversial in the target context, as in a political speech or policy document. Of course, the more sensitive and prominent the communication context, the greater the risk.

References

Agar, Michael (1994) *Language Shock: Understanding the Culture of Conversation.* New York: William Morrow.

Baker, Mona (1992) *In Other Words: A Textbook on Translation*. London and New York: Routledge.

Bell, Roger (1991) *Translation and Translating: Theory and Practice*. Harlow: Longman.

Biber, Douglas and E. Finegan (1989) Adverbial Stance Types in English. *Discourse Processes*, 11(1), 1−34.

Chávez, Hugo (2006a) *Discurso de Hugo Chávez ante la ONU*, New York, 20 September 2006. Original Spanish video recording. URL http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-8876014454896856889

— (2006b) *Hugo Chávez address to the UN*, New York, 20 September 2006. Audio recording of English interpreting. URL http://www.archive.org/details/Hugo_Chavez_UN_Sept_20_2006_eng_trans%20etc

Chilton, Paul (2004) *Analysing Political Discourse: Theory and Practice*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Conrad, Susan and Douglas Biber (2000) Adverbial Marking of Stance in Speech and Writing. In: Hunston, Susan /Geoff Thompson (eds.) *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse.* Oxford: Oxford University Press. 56−73.

Halliday, Michael (1978) *Language as Social Semiotic: The Social Interpretation of Language and Meaning*. London: Arnold.

— (1979) Modes of Meaning and Modes of Expression: Types of Grammatical Structure, and their Determination by Different Semantic Functions. In: Allerton, David/Carney, Edward/Holdcroft, David (eds.) *Function and Context in Linguistic Analysis: Essays Offers to William Haas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 196−218.

— (1985) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. First edition. London: Arnold.

— (1994) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. Second edition. London: Arnold.

— and Ruqaiya Hasan (1989) *Language, Context and Text: Aspects of Language in a Social-semiotic Perspective*. Second edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

— and Christopher Matthiessen (2004) *An Introduction to Functional Grammar*. Third edition. London: Arnold.

Hatim, Basil and Ian Mason (1990) *Discourse and the Translator*. Harlow: Longman.

– (1997) *The Translator as Communicator*. London and New York: Routledge.

Hoey, Michael (1983) *On the Surface of Discourse*. London: George Allen & Unwin.

House, Juliane (1977/1981) *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment*. Tübingen: Narr.

— (1997) *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited*. Tübingen: Narr.

Hunston, Susan (2000) Evaluation and the Planes of Discourse: Status and Value in Persuasive Texts. In: Hunston, Susan/Thompson, Geoff (eds.) *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 176−207.

— and Geoff Thompson (2000) (eds.) *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kaltenbacher, Martin (2006) Culture Related Linguistic Differences in Tourist Websites: The Emotive and the Factual. In: Thompson, Geoff/Hunston, Susan (eds.), *System and Corpus: Exploring Connections*. London: Equinox. 269−292.

Martin, James R. (2000) Beyond Exchange: APPRAISAL Systems in English. In: Hunston, Susan/Thompson, Geoff (eds.) *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 142−175.

—. and Peter R.R. White (2005) *The Language of Evaluation: Appraisal in English.* Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Munday, Jeremy (2004) A Comparative Analysis of Evaluation in Spanish and English World Cup Reports. *Revista Canaria de Estudios Ingleses*, 49 (November): 117−133.

— (in press) Critical Points of Evaluation and Intervention in Translation. In: Calzada, María/Olohan, Maeve/Baker, Mona (eds.) *In the Footsteps of Ian Mason*. Manchester: St Jerome.

— (forthcoming) *Evaluation in Translation: Critical Points in Translator Decision-making*. Abingdon and New York: Routledge.

Obama'08 (2008a) *Latino Blueprint for Change: Barack Obama's Plan for America*, obama.3cdn.net/0d94ca010d1549effb_ttm6i26ne.pdf , accessed 20 August 2009.

— (2008b) *Proyecto latino para el cambio: El plan de Barack Obama para Estados Unidos*, obama.3cdn.net/f3fe74c297f597139d_e4m6i2awh.pdf , accessed 20 August 2009.

Pym, Anthony (2004) *Test and Risk in Translation*. URL www.tinet.org/~apym/on-line/translation/risk_analysis.pdf

Simpson, Paul (1993) *Language, Ideology and Point of view*. London and New York: Routledge.

Thompson, Geoff and Susan Hunston (2000) Evaluation: An introduction. In: Hunston, Susan/Thompson, Geoff (eds.) *Evaluation in Text: Authorial Stance and the Construction of Discourse*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1−27.

Ward, Maurice (2004) *We* Have the Power – Or do We?: Pronouns of Power in a Union Context. In: Young, Lynne/Harrison, Claire (eds.) *Systemic Functional Linguistics and Critical Discourse Analysis: Studies in Social Change*. London: Continuum. 280−95.

White, Peter R.R. (2002) Appraisal – The Language of Evaluation and Stance. In: Verschueren, Jef/ Östman, Jan-Ola/Blommaert, Jan/Bulcaen, Chris (eds.) *The Handbook of Pragmatics*, Amsterdam: Benjamins.

— (2006) Evaluative Semantics and Ideological Positioning in Journalistic Discourse: A New Framework for Analysis. In: Lassen, Inger/Strunck, Jeanne/ Vestergaard, Torben (eds.) *Mediating Ideology in Text and Image*. Amsterdam: Benjamins. 37−67.