

El Ojo de Polisemo XI. Libros con imágenes: traducir más que palabras

[Ojo de Polisemo XI. Books in images: translating more than words]

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From the 21st to the 23rd of April 2019, the XI Ojo de Polisemo took place at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Córdoba and was organised by the Spanish association of editorial translators, ACE Traductores. It consisted of three days packed with talks and workshops on the topic of books with images and their relation to translation.

The speakers were professionals and/or professors specialised in several translation fields, mostly of them focused on image-related translation.

Thursday 21st

The congress started up with the inauguration of the act carried out by the dean of the faculty, Ricardo Córdoba de la Llave; the president of ACEt, Carlos Fortea; the organising member of the scientific committee, Francisco Rodríguez Rodríguez; and the director of the Department of Translation and Interpreting from the University of Murcia and previous host of this congress, Juan Goberna. All of them welcomed the participants and thanked the organisation, and then finished their intervention wishing us all a fruitful time.

Section 1.1 – Un problema muy gráfico. La traducción de la imagen

The opening conference was performed by Juan de Sola, a prolific art translator. He explained two different situations that can affect our work when translating the description of a painting, despite of having an image of it: in the first case, being a helpful guidance and in the second case, as an impasse that can be confusing. However, he highlighted that not having the whole image always limits our work.

He closed his speech with the following reflection: the problems may be graphic, but the solutions are always verbal.

Section 1.2 – Translation workshop: Cómic y novela gráfica

María López Villalba moderated a very interesting and dynamic workshop on the topic of graphic novels and comics translation and how we are always dependent on the image. She began by throwing a question to the public: why are we able to read images but we need some type of code to read texts?

María emphasized the importance of onomatopoeias in this type of translation, not only because they need to be translated but also because they are sometimes a part of the images themselves.

As it consisted of a practical workshop, she handed out two text-empty comics as an activity for the participants to try and understand how comic translation should be approached, both by understanding the different type of bubbles and the succession of actions in the strips.

Friday 22nd

Section 2.1 – La soledad del traductor de fondo. La traducción de catálogos y libros de arte

This was not a conference *per se*, but a dialogue between Pilar González and Carlos Gumpert, both translators working for the Prado museum. The dialogue was based on their personal experience as translators of art books and art catalogues. That is the reason why they presented several real cases such as the very limited deadline and how the subordination to the image is less than in other variety of texts. Other examples were how it is necessary to keep within the preferences of the client but at the same time be creative enough, as sometimes they ask you to suggest titles for the painting. They finished their

speech talking about how this may seem as a very simple task, but it is actually quite a specialized translation.

Section 2.2 – Helena Aguilà interviews Elia Maqueda

Helena Aguilà split the interview to Elia Maqueda, editorial and localization translator, in three parts. The first one, titled ‘books with images’, was about comics and her first experience in the field, which led to the insights of how to tariff translations.

In the second one, titled ‘from the image to the book’, Elia explained how having an interdisciplinary background helped her when translating a graphic novel based on a videogame and in other fields, such as audiovisual translation. And lastly, the third was titled ‘books that suggest images’, where she talked about her thesis on the translation of poetry.

She closed her intervention with the idea that translating this type of texts can help future translators synthesise and increase their creativity.

Section 2.3 – Round-table: Tebeos, comics y novelas gráficas

María Serna and Cristina Bracho, both editorial and audiovisual translators, majored in comic and graphic novel translation, gave a very interesting talk for all the assistants, especially students.

First, they talked about their academic background, focusing on how important is to be specialized in a type of translation. They encouraged the public to attend congresses, do face-to-face courses or master’s degrees in order to meet other professionals from translation or any other fields and build a network for yourself. They also named some publishing houses with which they have worked or are currently working with, such as Atriberri, Gallo Nero and Libros del Zorro Rojo. Finally, they closed their round table with some useful advice, for instance reading more translations and books, articles or anything that are out of our reading comfort zone and, more importantly, have passion and motivation for your work. And as María said, it’s important to straddle the screen.

Section 2.4 – Round-table: ¿Por dónde empezamos a dibujar? (Contratos, facturas, procesos, cómo hemos empezado a traducir, programa de mentorías)

During this round-table, two young translators, Inés Clavero and Clara Ministrál, imparted an express lecture on editorial translation, in which they

taught us every step of the way, from contacting a publishing house to putting your translation forward. At the beginning, they showed us the harsh reality of a literature translator. Then, they talked about how to offer your translation to a publishing house and how to find the perfect one. They continued explaining whereby you can proceed once you find the ideal publishing house and touched the topic of contracts and the commission stages. At the end, they told us about a less known option for young translators: mentoring programs, offered by the translation associations ASETRAD and ACEtt.

Section 2.5 – Traducir sin perderse en los surcos del azar

André Höchemer, German translator, focused his conference on his relation with Paco Roca, Spanish comic writer whose work is translated into German by André. He captured our attention by giving figures about how the comic market in Spain consists mainly of translated works. On the topic of comic translation, he remarked that, in order to start working in said field, you need to develop three essential attributes: a nose for potential sellers, initiative and patience. To prove his close relation with the author of the comics he mostly translates, he played a video interviewing Paco. In this video, they discussed the benefits of having a close relationship with the author you translate, for example, when agreeing to change the size of the bubbles or explaining the cultural background of a strip. André, once again, emphasized the importance and difficulty of translating onomatopoeias.

Section 2.6 – Intervention of Mateo Pierre Avit Ferrero, winner of the I Premios Complutenses

This young translator and first winner of the Premios Complutenses, told us how he approached his participation in the awards. He titled his intervention “The three states of literary translation”, adding a twist to the classical view of this type of translation. But before explaining the reason of this title, he introduced the author he chose to translate for the mentioned awards and his work: Marcel Schwob. Next, he described the above-mentioned states: solid, which is the recognised translation; liquid, which are the word plays; and gaseous, which are alliterations. He concluded by presenting other translation awards, such as Premio de Traducción Francisco Ayala, Premio de Traducción San Jerónimo and Premio de Traducción Andreu Febrer, and motivated us to participate in any of them.

Section 2.7 – The voice of the students

Four students of the University of Córdoba, Selene Muñoz Muñoz, Antonio Gómez Buenaño, Inés Torronteras Calmaestra and Guadalupe Muñoz Sánchez, took the stage to talk about their fear and uncertainty about the future. First, they started by remembering their favourite childhood book and, realizing they were all translations, leading to a discussion about the invisibility of the translator and how they all hoped this fact would change through time. Later, the students were asked if they knew this year's winner of the national translation award, Neila García, and, for their surprise, she was in the public and went on stage to talk about the said award. Despite touching these ominous topics, it was a light-hearted conversation between the public and the students to close the day.

Saturday 23rd

Section 3.1 – La traducción de libros de cocina (y no solo)

Beatriz Villena, editorial and commercial translator, gave a very friendly and enjoyable conference about translating cooking books. She expounded the characteristics and peculiarities of these type of books, such as the use of the imperative form, the trouble of translating “you” into Spanish for either the friendly “tú” or the formal “usted”, the mandatory previous knowledge about culinary verbs and the often use of synonyms and localisms. To finish off, she remarked, in contrast with what have been said during the rest of the congress, that images are not a limitation for translating in this case, but rather a support.

Section 3.2 – Workshops:

- *Retos de traducción del diario de Frida Kahlo del inglés : materialidad, imagen y juegos de la “gran ocultadora”*

M^a Luisa Rodríguez, translator and lecturer of English Translation and Interpreting, and Javiera Cano, master's student, talked about the challenges of translating the “diary” of Frida Kahlo into English and how it can be considered a cultural re-translation, which is a reinterpretation from another culture's point of view. To exemplify the diary's challenges, they gave two handouts with exercises in which they asked the assistants to think about possible translation problems and search for solutions. In general, the

workshop was filled with interesting information about whether this diary was a diary *per se* and its difficulties both understanding and translating the text.

- *La traducción de la literatura intercultural en alemán y el papel de la caligrafía árabe*

Pilar Castillo, translator and lecturer of German Translation and Interpreting, and Lourdes Bonhome, also translator and lecturer of Arabic Translation and Interpreting, centred their workshop on Rafik Schami, a Syrian author living in Germany. More specifically, on a tale from his novel *The Calligrapher's Secret*, focused on the Arabic calligraphy and on the famous calligrapher Ben Muqla. The assistants translated the calligraphies from Arab and German into Spanish and then compared their translations from both source languages. The lecturers paid special attention to specialized terms and the visual elements of the Arabic calligraphy.

- *Texto, paratexto e imagen en la traducción de álbumes infantiles*

In this workshop, Soledad Díaz and Francisco Rodríguez, both translators and lecturers of French Translation and Interpreting, presented albums as a new type of illustrated book, as well as their characteristics. The task given to the workshop participants was to translate into Spanish the album *Le secret du rocher noir*, by Joe Todd Stanton, translated into French by Isabelle Reinharez. Finally, the assistants compared and discussed their translations.

Section 3.3 – Round table : Para niños, para adolescentes y para jóvenes. La literatura infantil y juvenil ilustrada.

Goedele de Sterck and Isabel Llasat, both translators of children and young adult books, pointed out the restrictions of this kind of translation. Some of these restrictions for them are the cultural references, about which they debate on either adapt or maintain them, onomatopoeias, riddles, rhymes, “heritage of terminology” when it is a book series or the titles of the books themselves. They closed their speech defending the translator’s right to a contract and to receive benefits from the intellectual property.

Section 3.4 – El libro ilustrado no es solo cosa de niños.

Herme Moreno, from the bookshop Títère, and Estrella Borrego, editor from Libros del Zorro Rojo, changed the perspective of the editorial world we had

been talking about during the entire congress and did not focus on the translation aspect, but on the editorial and publishing process. Additionally, Herme talked about the difficulties of selling illustrated books in bookshops due to the prejudices adult buyers usually have about this genre.

Section 3.5 – Corrección y revisión: cuando una imagen no vale más que mil palabras.

The last conference of the congress was conducted by Rocío Serrano, translator and member of the “Unión de Correctores” (Spanish association of proofreaders). She provided a very light and enjoyable yet useful talk on the importance of the relationship between translator and proofreader, as rather than enemies, they are allies. This relationship seems to be underrated but is the key to a flawless text.

To conclude these wonderful and productive three days of congress, Carlos Fortea, president of ACEtt; Israel Muñoz, academic secretary of the Faculty; Ana Alcaina, representative of the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; and Soledad Díaz, representative of the scientific committee, farewelled the participants and announced that the next Ojo de Polisemo is going to take place in Barcelona and it will be focused on the topic of crime novel.