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WHAT WE TALK ABOUT WHEN WE TALK ABOUT IDENTITY IN SELF-TRANSLATION

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Identity has been a key issue of discussion in many studies in the social sciences. Yet, approaches to this concept in Translation Studies have been largely superficial and most lack a theoretical framework. Our approach, which is based on widely recognized psychosocial theories, is intended to provide a theoretical contribution to the question of identity from a translation perspective and, more specifically, as regards the intersection of self-translation and autofiction. If identity is a discursive practice in constant reinterpretation, then (self-)translation represents a significant tool for its (de)construction. The introductory theoretical approach will be applied to the self-translated, autofictional work of Miren Agur Meabe, a living Biscayan poet; the analysis of how identity is (re)interpreted through self-translation may serve as a point of departure for further empirical and descriptive studies.

La nozione di identità è stata un concetto chiave in molta ricerca nell'ambito delle scienze sociali. Nei Translation studies, invece, l'uso di questo concetto è spesso di carattere superficiale, poiché manca un chiaro quadro teorico. Il presente articolo intende per l'appunto fornire un contributo teorico sulla questione dell'identità dal punto di vista delle sue connessioni con la traduzione: in particolare, per quanto riguarda il ruolo dell'identità nell'autotraduzione e nell'autofiction. Se l'identità è una pratica discorsiva in costante reinterpretazione, allora l'atto di autotradursi può essere visto come un utile strumento per la sua (de)costruzione. Il quadro teorico che viene proposto nella prima parte dell'articolo, viene quindi applicato all'opera autofinzionale e autotradotta di Miren Agur Meabe, poetessa contemporanea basca. Tale analisi vuole fornire un punto di partenza per futuri studi di carattere empirico e descrittivo.

I “TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE”: THAT’S IT?

Before analysing the place identity holds in self-translation and the effect it could have, we will focus briefly on identity itself, as it has been discussed in almost every area of knowledge. In the social sciences, identity is seen as the set of points of view, qualities, beliefs, and discursive practices that constitute a person (individual identity) or a group (a given social group). According to Eduardo Apodaka,¹ identity is a special code created and negotiated, developed and lived consciously or unconsciously in everyday practices and in special rituals or events – i.e., a result of social practices.

In his research on Basque culture, Ibai Iztueta² offers an alternative definition of identity, according to which identity is a property of the individual or group, the *consciousness* to possess the attributes that differentiate us from others:

It is a special consciousness, though. It has two faces that, although similar, should not be confused: naming and being. Identity is therefore established when we name the being – the *something*. But alternatively, naming could be sufficient to cause being and identity to arise. So identity, as the consciousness of being, could be derived from a name or from naming.³

¹ EDUARDO APODACA, *Identitatea eta anomalia*, Iruñea, Pamiela, 2015, p. 31.

² IBAI IZTUETA AZURMENDI, *Cultura vasca vs Euskal kultura*, Donostia, Utriusque Vasconiae, 2015.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 217 (translation is mine).

Identity is a way to name practices we label the same (identical), and it comes from taking those practices as such;⁴ i.e., the interpretation given to practices. Naming will appear later, as language goes hand in hand with identity; that is another reason why identity should also be taken into account in the study of translation, given that it is a cognitive and discursive practice.

In order to construct identity, a distinguishing characteristic is needed; that is, a characteristic that begs for comparison with and differentiation from an *other*. Mechanisms of comparison and differentiation necessarily take part in identity construction. However, the individual him- or herself is not the only one to make that comparison, given that we create the definition of ourselves depending on the image that others have of us,⁵ and given that there may be multiple “others” as well. So it can be said that identity is a two-way street, or even that it is multidirectional; a social, variable, ideological construction based on relationships and not free of conflict. In other words, society, history and the groups involved in the narration and interpretation of identity directly condition the way we understand identity.

Along with the pair oneself/ourselves, the dichotomous division between individual and collective identities must be considered. These two perspectives are not unique, and even if this division remains deeply rooted in Western culture, it is false.⁶ Social psychology undermines this dichotomy and studies how the personal self relates to the social environment. In Margot Pujal’s words:

La identidad social y la identidad individual no son realidades separables, sino que se constituyen mutuamente; y lo hacen por medio de lo social, cultural e ideológico que es inherente al lenguaje que utilizamos cuando narramos cualquier aspecto relacionado con el yo.⁷

Identity is a social construction that the individual creates him- or herself by discursive practices, and should not be reduced to dichotomous approaches of doubleness as has usually been done in self-translation.

Self-esteem and discrimination are also called into question by psychosocial theories; individuals gain a sense of positive self-esteem from their identity groups, and they tend to favour those they consider members of their “in-group” over those considered to be outsiders.⁸ As structuralism would argue, difference relies on relations and meaning is derived from putting elements together in relation, from a state of opposition. The “differentiation” process could also be understood within that relation, which leads to choosing social and individual experiences; each space is organized depending on a specific logic, behaviour, culture and rules. Thus, when changing from one space to an-

4 APODAKA, *Identitatea eta anomalia*, cit., p. 61.

5 IZTUETA AZURMENDI, *Cultura vasca vs Euskal kultura*, cit., p. 223.

6 MARGOT PUJAL I LLOMBART, *La identidad (el self)*, in *Introducción a la psicología social*, Barcelona, UOC, 2004, pp. 93-138, p. 100.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 101.

8 *Ibid.*

other, the old *modus operandi* would not be transferable and the playing rules and codes of the new space, a whole system ruled by practices, must be acquired.⁹

Finally, social anthropologists have also concentrated on how the idea of community belonging is differently constructed by individual members. Identity is treated as a process and the reality of diverse and ever-changing social experience is taken into account. According to Stuart Hall,

In common sense language, identification is constructed on the back of a recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with the natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation. In contrast with the ‘naturalism’ of this definition, the discursive approach sees identification as a construction, a process never completed – always ‘in process’.¹⁰

On some level, Hall’s explanation reminds us of the two main tendencies in identity. On one hand, *primordialists* would argue that structures affect, define and determine people’s identities from the beginning, even unconsciously. On the other hand, *constructionists* do not accept identities; at most, they would accept processes of identity construction. Thus, the discourse and modes of behaviour will be different depending on which side we are on. Following that thread, we could speak about the limits of social construction, the natural-cultural dichotomy and the values and meanings attached to them (i.e., natural-real-truth and construction-invention-lie false sets); however, it would be impossible to address all these aspects here.

In contrast to what could be derived from Shakespeare’s verse quoted in the title (not to mention the “true” reference), there is no absolute or invariable self. So, in light of the observations above, we propose to take into account psychosocial theories and, more precisely, social categorization and social representation in order to contribute to the study of identity from a (self-)translation perspective.

2 IDENTITY IN AND BY SELF-TRANSLATION, A (GIVEN) PROPOSAL

In theorizations about self-translation, identity is often pointed out only in terms of the duality of language and culture. For instance, Paschalis Nikolaou claims that in self-translation, «the attempted exercising of (textual, at least) self-identity through what starts as linguistic transposition leads us to locations where we realise how far beyond both translation and self-identity we can find ourselves».¹¹ Thus, a complex identity emerges, by which the author knows the differences related to her/his participation and reference frameworks. Eva Gentes states that «self-translation is considered to be a way

9 IRATXE ESPARZA and JOSÉ MANUEL LÓPEZ GASENI, *El texto como lugar común de la transformación identitaria*, in *La identidad en la literatura vasca contemporánea*, ed. by Iratxe Esparza and José Manuel López Gaseni, Bern, Peter Lang, 2015, pp. 7-38, p. 16.

10 STUART HALL, *Who Needs ‘Identity?’*, in *Questions of Cultural Identity*, ed. by Stuart Hall and Paul Du Gay, London, Sage, 1996, pp. 1-17, p. 2.

11 PASCHALIS NIKOLAOU, *From the many lives of Self-Translation*, in «In other words: the journal for literary translators», xxv (2005), pp. 28-34, p. 29.

of balancing both of the self-translator's identities, since the preference given to one language is only temporary».¹² The bilingual writer would link a reference net and a whole imaginary to each language, including both personal (behaviour, feelings...) and collective references. As Iztueta¹³ notes, choosing a language could entail other choices, since emotions could affect reasoning. Consequently, on the question of self-translation, we could argue that when changing from one language to another, the attitude and emotional bonds linked to each language could have an effect on the choices we make and strategies we employ in the translation process.

Turning to the way Translation Studies uses identity, Aurelia Klimkiewicz focuses on the dialogue self-translation causes within the self, which she defines as «a complex web of tensions produced by its multilingual dialogue with itself».¹⁴ In this interpretation, translation would not be solely the relation between the source text and its translation, but rather the net of readers of the two versions would be part of the translation too. Klimkiewicz understands self-translation as broken, dynamic narrativity; far from a means of expressing identity, it is presented as an intercultural dialogue: «As a writing strategy, self-translation demonstrates the difficulty of locating and articulating the self, since two languages collide one with another and refuse to submit to each other, and consequently lead to a divided consciousness».¹⁵ As I understand it, both diglossia and bilingualism manifest at a personal and a social level, and two languages are connected by power relations both socially and intimately; even though it is not the author's or self-translator's wish, one of these languages might end up in a subordinate position. This is what happens in the case of Basque, when the relation between the two languages is asymmetric from the beginning.

Elin-Maria Evangelista wonders if a new self is created when writing in a second language. She focuses on «[t]he consequences to language, identity and voice when a writer “translates” him/herself by writing in a second language, in the presence of this sense of continuous duality».¹⁶ As she points out at the beginning, she speaks about “writing in a second language” to refer to self-translation. Thus, she questions the double identity of the bilingual/multilingual writer, and deals with the issue of the loss of one of the languages during the self-translation process. In fact, translation has been historically understood in terms of loss, just as self-translation has long been interpreted as a loss of self and a betrayal of the first language. Evangelista distinguishes between choosing the second language by choice or by force, given that the experiences one has had with the second language might condition the writing process (we have already noted that emotions may have an impact on reasoning).¹⁷ Regarding the interaction between

12 EVA GENTES, *Potentials and Pitfalls of Publishing Self-Translations as Bilingual Editions*, in «Orbis litterarum», LXVIII/3 (2013), pp. 266-281, p. 268.

13 IZTUETA AZURMENDI, *Cultura vasca vs Euskal kultura*, cit., p. 337.

14 AURELIA KLIMKIEWICZ, *Self-translation as broken narrativity. Towards an understanding of the self's multilingual dialogue*, in *Self-translation: Brokering originality in hybrid culture*, ed. by Anthony Cordingley, London-New York, Bloomsbury, 2013, pp. 189-201, p. 190.

15 *Ibid.*, pp. 191-192.

16 ELIN-MARIA EVANGELISTA, *Writing in translation. A new self in a second language*, in *Self-translation: Brokering originality in hybrid culture*, ed. by Anthony Cordingley, London-New York, Bloomsbury, 2013, pp. 177-187, p. 178.

17 Cf. *ibid.*

self and language, Evangelista refers to Besemeres: «Besemeres believes bilinguals live inside conflicting versions of selves and that a choice seems necessary between these two selves/languages».¹⁸ So again, according to that belief, there is only one self and, in the case of bilinguals, it has two opposing versions. Beyond that dichotomy, we have seen that identity is a narrative and dynamic construction in constant progress. Far from losing identity or betraying the “original”, Evangelista concludes that the self-translation process could be understood in terms of “gain”, which she defines in a list that includes, among other entries, the chance to free oneself from the bonds of the first language and to own a double perspective. Therefore, it could be said that self-translation provides an opportunity to examine other aspects of the self, as well as to constantly reinterpret it. For instance, according to Sara Kippur, Federman puts into question the static figure called “the Author” in his own play on self-representation while translating his texts: «the discrepancy across versions of this life story suggests a willingness to accept the lack of a dominant or authoritative narrative».¹⁹ Kippur points out that «the dynamic textual mobility of self-translation affords the perpetual *mouvance* of the author».²⁰ We will see later that even if self-translation *does* afford that *mouvance*, it does not always take place.

Along the lines of Evangelista’s hypothesis, I can see another example of “gain” in the dialogue between the self and the Other proposed by Katixa Dolhare-Çaldumbide,²¹ based on the self-translation process of Basque writer Itxaro Borda. Dolhare-Çaldumbide argues that there is no identity without that dialogue, and brings up the hermeneutics of distance proposed by Ricoeur: in order to translate one’s work, the author has to surrender her/his text, to notice otherness and then appropriate it again in a new present, offering the hospitality (*hospitalité*) of a new language.²² Thus, Borda would decide to translate her works not just to develop her writing but to delve deeper into the topic of her life’s work, «celle de la singularité profonde de toute identité (identité du moi, d’une langue, d’une culture, d’un peuple), qui n’existe paradoxalement que dans le choc de la rencontre superficielle avec l’altérité».²³ Yet there is always a clash in the relation between oneself/ourselves and the Other, and (self-)translation – as exemplified in Borda’s case – would simply make that conflict (more) visible.

If we consider identity as a discursive complex practice in constant reconstruction, (self-)translation would be a powerful means not only to express it but also to nurture and (de)construct it. From what we have seen thus far, it follows that we need tools in order to identify how identity is constructed in translation. Two theories developed in the field of psychosociology are proposed here for the purpose of providing a theoretical framework for our empirical analysis.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 179.

¹⁹ SARA KIPPUR, *Writing it twice. Self-translation and the making of a world literature in French*, Evanston, Northwestern University Press, 2015, p. 60.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 68.

²¹ Cf. KATIXA DOLHARE-ÇALDUMBIDE, *L’autotraduction dans l’œuvre polyphonique d’Itxaro Borda*, in *L’autotraduction aux frontières de la langue et de la cultura*, ed. by Christian Lagarde and Helena Tanqueiro, Limoges, Lambert-Lucas, 2013, pp. 93-99.

²² *Ibid.*

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

THEORY OF SOCIAL CATEGORIZATION

Social identity refers to the descriptions and discourses we make about ourselves and with which we identify.²⁴ The concepts and words we use in the narrative of the self have intrinsic connotations and social valuation, which are generally the result of the hegemonic ideology of a community or society and are rarely neutral, though they may be positive or negative. These valuations lead us to favour some identities over others; for instance, in present-day Western world, “local” has positive implications for many people, while “migrant” has negative ones.

Social categorization refers to how people see themselves and others in society. The theory describes the circumstances under which a person perceives collections of people (including her/himself) as a group, as well as the consequences of perceiving people in terms of groups. The creators of the theory,²⁵ first Henri Tajfel, followed by John C. Turner, analysed how we perceive people and what effect those perceptions have on our social selves. Categorizations are cognitive tools used to classify and organize the social environment, and that process results in various social actions carried out by the individual; it is useful not only to systematize the world, but also to identify (to make) one’s place in that space. It constitutes a cognitive process carried out within a relationship, and has social consequences. Tajfel and Turner distinguish three psychosocial processes, all of which refer to the way we perceive ourselves and others and which generally occur in the following order: categorization, social identification (mentioned above), and comparison. Based on the fact that people are part of groups, the sense of belonging to a given group affects the perception and representation of others.²⁶ Therefore, classifying individuals into categories gives us information about the members of each group, while consciously identifying oneself as part of a group leads one to act according to the rules attributed to that group. Tajfel and Turner²⁷ suggest that identification comes after categorization: the individual appropriates the identity of the group with which s/he associates her/himself, and during the identification process, self-esteem is bonded to group belonging. Finally, s/he compares the group s/he is part of with other groups, and if that self-esteem is to be maintained, one’s own group must come out the best in this comparison: «the mere awareness of the presence of an out-group is sufficient to provoke intergroup competitive or discriminatory responses on the part of the in-group».²⁸ Claiming oneself to be female, Basque, agnostic, and lower-middle class, for instance, expresses a sense of belonging to the social groups and positions one holds in society, as well as a feeling of attachment, because another person in the same circumstances might have defined herself by other categories (for example, heterosexual, white, and student). Each category is associated with certain roles, representations, and social characteristics which the members of that category share and which depend on one’s ideology.

24 CHRIS BARKER, *Televisión, globalización e identidades culturales*, Barcelona, Paidós, 2003.

25 HENRI TAJFEL and JOHN C. TURNER, *An integrative theory of intergroup conflict*, in *The social psychology of intergroup relations*, ed. by William G. Austin and Stephen Worchel, Monterey (CA), Brooks/Cole, 1979, pp. 33-47.

26 PUJAL I LLOMBART, *La identidad (el self)*, cit., p. 117.

27 *Ibid.*

28 TAJFEL and TURNER, *An integrative theory of intergroup conflict*, cit., p. 38.

In social categorization theory, “ideology” refers to the explanations society gives about the behaviour attributed to a group.²⁹ It is inaccurate to think that social categories exist *per se*, since they are heavily burdened. One example of this is the fact that not all social categories are visible on the same level: categories referring to minoritised, subaltern, or powerless groups are more common and visible than others. This is a practical tool for simplification, but not a harmless one, as groups that are powerful in society make use of it for social control and for the benefit of their own interests and values. Briefly, each society or people avails oneself of social categories in accordance with its history and context; social categories that will determine social identities. In fact, Apodaka³⁰ points out that Tajfel and Turner’s theory treats those factors as secondary, and stresses that categories are not permanent and naturally created “cognitive frameworks”, but rather “symbolic frameworks” that must be constantly created, negotiated, and constructed. This is why Apodaka³¹ addresses the works of Sheldon Stryker and Peter J. Burke,³² aiming for a more integrating identity theory. Stryker and Burke remark that roles (social positions) must be negotiated and that negotiation is done within social structures by people both from the in-group and from other groups. «Social roles are expectations attached to positions occupied in networks of relationships; identities are internalized role expectations».³³ Identity is linked to behaviour through the meanings they share.

Speaker communities constitute categories, constructed by discourse, emotional attachment, and a socio-cognitive process. In a diglossic or postcolonial context, belonging to one speaker community rather than another might not confer equal status or be conflict-free. I would suggest that an individual could be conscious of belonging to two (or more) speaker communities, but s/he will take part more actively in one of them (in terms of feelings, use, or both). On a broader level, every speech act establishes a social relationship between the speaker and the counterpart, which implies social categorization, either an in-group or out-group relation. Based on former French colonies in Africa, Paul Wald³⁴ has seen that, depending on the social circumstances in which French is used, the language may represent a quality by which one categorizes oneself and the Other. As Wald states, «Tout acte langagier comporte, ne serait-ce que par défaut, un acte de mise en place des rapports à autrui dans l’interaction».³⁵ In a sense, we can say that this happens in all languages.

Furthermore, in bilingual or multilingual contexts, when changing language, the speaker is always creating an image of her/himself.³⁶ Thus, through our use of language,

29 PUJAL I LLOMBART, *La identitat (el self)*, cit., p. 116.

30 APODAKA, *Identitatea et anomalia*, cit., p. 57.

31 *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

32 SHELDON STRYKER and PETER J. BURKE, *The past, present, and future of an identity theory*, in «Social Psychology Quarterly», LXIII/4 (2000), pp. 284-297.

33 *Ibid.*, p. 286.

34 PAUL WALD, *Catégories de locuteur et catégories de langue dans l’usage du français en Afrique*, in «Langage et Société», LII (1990), pp. 5-21 (quoted in GEORGES DANIEL VÉRONIQUE, *Catégorisation sociale et pratiques langagières : les analyses psychosociologiques de Paul Wald*, in «Langage et société», CXLII/4 (2012), pp. 11-22).

35 WALD, *Catégories de locuteur et catégories de langue dans l’usage du français en Afrique*, cit. (quoted in VÉRONIQUE, *Catégorisation sociale et pratiques langagières : les analyses psychosociologiques de Paul Wald*, cit., p. 15).

36 MYRIAM SUCHET, *L’Imaginaire hétérologue. Ce que nous apprennent les textes à la croisée des langues*, Paris, Classiques Garnier, 2014, p. 274.

we position ourselves occupying a specific subject-position and we create images of ourselves and the Other. In Linda Alcoff's words:

In speaking for myself, I (momentarily) create my self – just as much as when I speak for others I create their selves – in the sense that I create a public, discursive self, which will in most cases have an effect on the self experienced as interiority. [...] The point is that a kind of representation occurs in all cases of speaking for, whether I am speaking for myself or for others, that this representation is never a simple act of discovery, and that it will most likely have an impact on the individual so represented.³⁷

In the case of autofiction, the construction of the self, the representation of one's own image, i.e. categorization, is clearer. When self-translating an autofictional work, the author faces the image of him/herself that s/he has created. Identities are thus practices for creating sets of meaning,³⁸ which brings us to the second theory under consideration, the Theory of Social Representation, which is described below.

With respect to self-translation, we might wonder whether the role-taking of the author changes when rewriting a text to target another community of speakers, that is, aiming to attract a readership from a group or category that may be different from the initial one. The self-translator might consider him/herself to belong to both categories; however, belonging to two face-to-face categories is a source of trouble and competitiveness. I might hypothesize that in the translation process a change or adaptation of category occurs, lessening the chances of conflict by means of domestication techniques; for example, by reducing the foreignness of the Other (source category) and approaching the potential self (target category). On the macro level, where there is no sign of the authorship of the self-translation and the work is presented as another original, a positioning might be seen, as the author places him/herself in the category of the target speaker community. In the case of autofiction, that positioning is even more visible, since one's image and construction of self are also at stake.

THEORY OF SOCIAL REPRESENTATION

Serge Moscovici first discussed social representation in 1961, when dealing with psychoanalysis. Since then, his theory has attracted many followers and contributors, and no fewer critics.³⁹ Moscovici took Durkheim's concept of "collective representations" as a starting point but, finding it too heterogeneous and static,⁴⁰ he proposed the term "social representations" which he defined as follows:

³⁷ LINDA ALCOFF, *The Problem of Speaking for Others*, in «Cultural Critique», XX (1991-1992), pp. 5-32, p. 10.

³⁸ APODAKA, *Identitatea eta anomalia*, cit., p. 58.

³⁹ One of the main criticisms claims that representations are depicted exclusively as cognitive phenomena (CRISTINA PALLÍ and LUZ M. MARTÍNEZ, *Naturaleza y organización de las actitudes*, in *Introducción a la psicología social*, Barcelona, UOC, 2004, pp. 183-254, p. 197). However, even if this is true, social representation is a result of social construction and has been generally understood as a practice. These are concepts, metaphors, and explanations constructed through interaction and based on relations between the members of a community, either explicitly or implicitly negotiated and, moreover, they are often apparent only in action (CAROLINE HOWARTH, *A social representation is not a quiet thing. Exploring the critical potential of social representations theory*, in «British journal of social psychology», XLV (2006), pp. 65-86, p. 72).

⁴⁰ SERGE MOSCOVICI, *Social Representations. Explorations in Social Psychology*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2000, pp. 30-31.

[A] system of values, ideas and practices with a twofold function; first, to establish an order which will enable individuals to orient themselves in their material and social world and to master it; and secondly to enable communication to take place among the members of a community by providing them with a code for social exchange and a code for naming and classifying unambiguously the various aspects of their world and their individual and group history.⁴¹

Thus, the individual (as well as the group) does not directly relate with an objective world, but with its social representations which are constantly interpreted and resignified by a community. Pragmatic theories showed long ago the performativeness of words, which bring connotations and understanding as well. It is possible to construct, develop, or reinterpret social representations by the meanings of words and, therefore, by (self-)translation. That meanings compete every day is particularly evident in power structures: «Meanings become a battleground between and among folk cultures, class subcultures, ethnic cultures, and national cultures; [...] The sign is no longer inscribed within a fixed cultural order. The meaning of things seems less predictable and less certain».⁴² Members of a group, in order to communicate (by both words and behaviour), need a common system of understanding, a set of ideas and concepts with specific meaning to that group. One of the novelties of the theory is the idea that meaning is a construction resulting from social negotiation, not an absolute, fixed, invariable thing, and that the interpretation of meaning might require an understanding or knowledge of other aspects of the social environment.

Most authors who have worked in this area agree that «representations have to be seen as alive and dynamic – existing *only* in the relational encounter, in the inbetween space we create in dialogue and negotiation with others».⁴³ Different representations compete with each other to claim reality, and other realities are defended, limited, and refused. In fact, social dispute, criticism, and resistance⁴⁴ are present both in the origin of dynamic elements of knowledge and in practices of representations. What is real depends on the constructed hegemonic social discourse: «Thus the problem of defining what is real relates to our ongoing and contested identities, interests and hopes».⁴⁵ According to Moscovici, social representations make reality: «shared representations, their language, penetrate so profoundly into all the interstices of what we call reality, that we

41 SERGE MOSCOVICI, *La psychanalyse, son image et son public*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, 1976 (quoted in MOSCOVICI, *Social Representations*, cit., p. 12).

42 JUSTIN LEWIS, *The Meaning of Things: audiences, ambiguity, and power*, in *Viewing, Reading, Listening: Audiences and Cultural Reception*, ed. by Jon Cruz and Justin Lewis, Boulder, Westview Press, 1994, p. 25 (quoted in HOWARTH, *A social representation is not a quiet thing*, cit., p. 71).

43 *Ibid.*, p. 68.

44 The possibility of resistance remains to be determined according to Howarth, who points out that resistance, critique and ideology should go hand in hand: «social representation theory provides the tools with which to broach the possibilities of resistance, particularly in the context of the co-construction of self-identity. However, I would agree with Billig, Moloney and Walker in so far as the conditions of resistance within social re-presentation need to be further articulated. In order to do this, we need to turn to the role of social representations in the *ideological* construction of social realities for we cannot present a comprehensive understanding of social reality without the recognition of the political» (*ibid.*, p. 79).

45 MAURICE GODELIER, *The mental and the material*, London, Verso, 1986 (quoted in HOWARTH, *A social representation is not a quiet thing*, cit., pp. 70-71).

can say that they constitute it».⁴⁶ That is why different power relations compete and negotiate meaning, that is, reality, which leads to conflict. I must note that, speaking about categorization, it is said that roles must also be negotiated, and that translation is often referred to as a negotiation process. Finally, social representations are also used to maintain power discourses: «the reproduction of power relations depends on the continuous and creative (ab)use of representations that mystify, naturalise and legitimate access to power».⁴⁷ So representations affect not only the way we structure and interpret the world, but also the way the world “makes” us.

From a critical perspective, Caroline Howarth shows that we use representations to claim common identities and to confront stigmatizing practices.⁴⁸ She claims the need to understand identity in order to explain why and how representations are used with different objectives (for example, to negotiate, to transform, to legitimate).⁴⁹ Given that social representations are variable elements used to build history and reality, it is possible to resignify them and, consequently, change (the collective perception of) reality.

Even if Moscovici’s theory is due for some fine tuning and updating, it is nevertheless worthy of consideration. It remains a significant theory on the study of (self-) translation since it analyses, among other things, how common sense or shared views of the world are created and how they lead to action. Social representation is a *stock* of values, ideas, metaphors, beliefs and practices, shared by the members of a group or community. Therefore, in translation and speaking about identity, it is relevant to ask whether the same social representation (the same common sense) is created with the stock of one linguistic community and with the stock of another. With regard to self-translation, we could ask whether the translator appropriates the social representation of the target-language community, or if instead, the social representation is always the same for the self-translator with no need to adapt it (even though the need might be imagined).

To sum up this theoretical approach, it is worth noting that the Theory of Social Categorization and the Theory of Social Representation were developed independently in the field of psychosociology and they mostly explain behaviour, but it is useful to combine them in order to get a more detailed insight. Precisely, they will be applied to the study of texts that result from a cognitive-interactive process of constant interpretation and negotiation. I have brought them together here because, as I have tried to explain, both could be effectively applied to the study of identity in self-translation. In order to illustrate this, an autofictional literary work and its self-translation are compared below to see which new insights can be gained when applying these theories to the analysis of self-translation.

3 AN AUTOFICTIONAL CASE IN BASQUE LITERATURE

Miren Agur Meabe (*1962) is a Biscayan poet, novelist and translator in Basque. She has translated more than 20 literary works, including both her own works and those of other writers. I have identified more than 14 self-translations of which 13 are children’s

46 SERGE MOSCOVICI, *Notes towards a description of social representations*, in «European Journal of Social Psychology», XVIII (1988), pp. 211-250, p. 245.

47 HOWARTH, *A social representation is not a quiet thing*, cit., p. 79.

48 Cf. *ibid.*

49 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 78.

and young people's literature, and another self-translation done in collaboration.⁵⁰ Her only individually self-translated book for adults is her last novel, *Kristalezko begi bat*⁵¹ ["A Glass Eye"], which will be discussed here, along with the self-translation into Spanish, *Un ojo de cristal*,⁵² which was released a year after the Basque text. It should also be mentioned that the target text is a transparent⁵³ or explicit⁵⁴ self-translation. On the first page, under the title, it says «Traducción de la autora», and the credits confirm the existence of the initial book in Basque. As previous studies have shown,⁵⁵ transparency is not always in evidence, especially in the case of self-translations. This may be due to the low prestige of translation compared to that of supposedly original works, as well as to the desire of authors to see their work and name within a more powerful system. In fact, self-translation in the Basque country relies on an endogenous bilingualism,⁵⁶ and almost all literary self-translations regarding Basque are supra self-translations⁵⁷ – i.e., the directionality is always from the minority language (Basque) into the hegemonic one (Spanish/French). In the summary of the back cover of Meabe's self-translated book, it is presented as a novel, and it has been referred to as autofiction⁵⁸ by critics and by the author herself:

En las páginas iniciales hay una frase de Coetzee que dice: "But what if we are all fictioneers? What if we all continually make up the stories of our lives?". Esas

- ⁵⁰ I have created a catalogue called EUSAL "Euskaratik Autoitzulitako Literatura" (Self-translated literature from Basque) where I have collected 325 publications in Basque which has been self-translated by 125 authors-translators. The catalogue is part of my PhD research (which is planned for defence in early 2018), and it is not yet available online.
- ⁵¹ MIREN AGUR MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, Zarautz, Susa, 2013.
- ⁵² MIREN AGUR MEABE, *Un ojo de cristal*, Iruñea, Pamiela, 2014.
- ⁵³ Cf. XOSÉ MANUEL DASILVA, *La autotraducción transparente y la autotraducción opaca*, in *Aproximaciones a la autotraducción*, ed. by Xosé Manuel Dasilva and Helena Tanqueiro, Vigo, Academia del Hispanismo, 2011, pp. 45-67.
- ⁵⁴ Cf. JULIO CÉSAR SANTOYO, *Autotraducciones: ensayo de tipología*, in *Al humanista, traductor y maestro Miguel Ángel Vega Cernuda*, ed. by Pilar Marino Alba, Juan A. Albaladejo, and Martha Pulido, Madrid, Dykinson, 2014, pp. 205-222.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. ELIZABETE MANTEROLA, *Euskal literatura beste hizkuntza batzuetara itzulia. Bernardo Atxagaren lanen itzulpen moten arteko alderaketa*, Bilbao, Universidad del País Vasco, tesis doctoral, 2012 and DASILVA, *La autotraducción transparente y la autotraducción opaca*, cit.
- ⁵⁶ RAINIER GRUTMAN, *Autotraduction, asymétrie, extraterritorialité*, in *L'autotraduction aux frontières de la langue et de la culture*, ed. by Christian Lagarde and Helena Tanqueiro, Limoges, Lambert-Lucas, 2013, pp. 37-42, p. 41.
- ⁵⁷ RAINIER GRUTMAN, *Diglosia y traducción "vertical" (en y fuera de España)*, in *Aproximaciones a la autotraducción*, ed. by Xosé Manuel Dasilva and Helena Tanqueiro, Vigo, Academia del Hispanismo, 2011, pp. 69-91.
- ⁵⁸ I would refer to *autofiction* here as the seeming combination of two types of narratives, where the limits are not always clear: fiction and autobiography. According to Ferreira-Meyers²⁰¹⁵, autofiction is a narrative based, as autobiography, on the principle of the "three identities" (the author is also the narrator and main character), which however claims to be fiction in its narrative and in terms of its peritextual allegations (title, back cover). As reported by Serge Doubrovsky who coined the term in 1977, autofiction is the answer to classic autobiography by a literary world trying to solve the ontological instability of the postmodern era (KAREN FERREIRA-MEYERS, *Autobiography and Autofiction. No need to fight for a place in the limelight, there is space enough for both of these concepts*, in *Writing the Self: Essays on Autobiography and Autofiction*, ed. by Kerstin W. Shands et al., Huddinge, Södertörns högskola, 2015, pp. 203-218, p. 206).

preguntas plantean la idea de que cualquier vida es susceptible de ser contada, y además, validan la posibilidad de crear versiones libres sobre ella. Creo que reflejan bien el espíritu de esta obra: he escrito una historia en la que soy el personaje principal, no basada en un registro exacto de los hechos, sino creando una ficción en la que la clave es la imitación de la realidad, no la fidelidad a la misma.⁵⁹

The story follows the main character, the author-narrator, as she deals with an emotional break-up and spends two and a half months in a house in the region of Landes, where she writes this book. It makes explicit the writing space (Vieux Boucau), and the exact period of time (from 09/09/2011 to 22/11/2011). Meabe's plan is to write the book there, «Orrialde bat egunero. Neurri hori ezarri diot neure buruari».⁶⁰ The narrator also mentions that she took notes before writing the text: «apunte-mataza bat, karpeta batean ekarri dudana hona».⁶¹ In some sense, the Basque text is a rewriting, though more complete and structured. Metaliterature covers an extensive part, and so does the writing process: «Ez dakit nora eramango nauen 2011ko irailaren 9an hasitako esperimendu honek. Ez dakit, ezta ere, zer epetara arte luzatuko den eta zer beste kontagai bilduko dituen».⁶² It also includes references to the text she is writing: «Esan dezagun self-imitation bat dela».⁶³ And, almost at the end, she refers to the image she has created of herself: «Ezen eta pertsonaia ere bihurtu naiz orriotan, ezinbestean: ni neu izanik, ez naiz neu erabat (nahita edo nahi gabe). Horra hor autoimitazioaren mugak eta onurak. Nire beste *ni* bat sortuz joan da hemen».⁶⁴ Regarding the question of identity, we could ask whether the self-translation into Spanish is, apart from being the rewriting of a rewriting, an occasion to create “another me”, or whether it is the same «beste *ni*»⁶⁵ of the Basque text.

The book is structured in fragments: those with a more clinical style are interspersed with more poetic ones. In the clinical pieces Meabe writes about her glass eye, which has a double dimension: first, it has a real value, «neure identitate-marka delako»;⁶⁶ second, a metaphoric one, symbolizing other losses in life.⁶⁷ There is also a “you” from the beginning, appealing to the reader and making clear the writer-reader split: «Neuretzat idazten ari naiz, beraz, baina zeuretzat ere bai akaso, akaso zeu ere bazarelako maitasunak

59 MIREN AGUR MEABE, “Somos lo que vivimos, pero también lo que imaginamos, lo que habríamos querido vivir”, in «Noticias de Álava», x/3 (2014), p. 67.

60 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 17 («Una página al día. Esa es la medida que me he impuesto», *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 18).

61 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 25 («un lío de apuntes que me he traído aquí en una carpeta», *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 25).

62 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 86 («No sé a donde me conducirá este experimento iniciado el 9 de septiembre de 2011. Ni sé hasta cuándo se dilatará, ni cuántos argumentos abarcará», *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 77).

63 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 113 («Digamos que es una *self-imitation*», *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 97).

64 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 157 («Porque, ineludiblemente, me he convertido en un personaje en estas hojas: aun siendo yo, no soy yo del todo (queriendo o sin querer). He ahí las limitaciones y las ventajas de la autoimitación. Aquí se ha ido creando otro yo», *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 135).

65 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 157. “Other me” (my translation).

66 *Ibid.* («ya que es una señal de identidad propia», *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 77).

67 *Ibid.*

jo eta egundaino akabatu ez duen norbait».⁶⁸ Even if the author speaks about herself, the Other is present. According to the approach to affectivity used by Meri Torres,⁶⁹ the account of emotions takes on a collective nature here as personal and collective identities, besides representing a false opposition, merge in the book. The second person appears here and there from beginning to end – «Hitzez hitz sinetsiko al duzu kontatu dizudan guztia?»⁷⁰ – and through this device, the writer-narrator questions once again the limits of reality and fiction.

Some fragments are followed by notes about that given piece specifying in italics the parts that are subject to checking or development. As Meabe says at the very end,⁷¹ she took the idea from J.M. Coetzee's *Summertime*. These intertexts give the impression of an unfinished, open work, one that we could relate to postmodernist trends.

In light of the above, one might think that the author would rewrite or develop the story during the translation process, as she writes in the notes of her Basque text. It has been argued that the self-translator is a privileged translator⁷² who uses his/her position to take certain liberties in translating that would most likely not be accepted if they were done by any other translator.⁷³ However, in the present case study, the author reproduces the text in Spanish, maintaining not only the space and time references but also, as we will see, the social categories in which she placed herself in the Basque text. She makes a clear distinction between the traditional authorial and translatorial roles, which are (still commonly) associated with writing and creating, and with translating and “copying”, respectively.

In order to address the faithfulness of the author I have to specify that Miren Agur Meabe's two texts are part of a wider research project in which I have created a multilingual parallel digitalised corpus containing twenty-four texts in prose by ten Basque authors. Briefly, the corpus was created within my PhD research on self-translation from Basque, under the supervision of Ibon Uribarri Zenekorta, and it is a compilation of ten Basque literary texts for adults along with their self-translations into French/Spanish. From that corpus, Meabe's autofiction has been chosen in order to offer an in-depth case study to this approach on identity. The comparison of the structure of all source texts and target texts shows that Meabe's self-translation most closely follows its source text with regard to both number of sentences (11 less in the self-translation), and number of words (8615 more in the self-translation). Even if this seems like a big difference, it is worth mentioning that some of those 11 sentences have disappeared, while others have been joined to the previous sentence or the following one. Regarding words, all

68 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 12 («Así que escribo para mí misma, pero quizás también para ti, pues tal vez también tú seas alguien a quien el amor golpeó sin llegar a rematar», *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 14).

69 MERI TORRES, *Cuando el cuerpo de la autora traza la poética emocional del corpus*. *Un ojo de cristal, de Miren Agur Meabe (oral Communication)*, Instituto Cervantes, Warsaw, 2016.

70 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 158 («¿Vas a creer literalmente todo lo que te he contado?»), *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 136).

71 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 159.

72 Cf. HELENA TANQUEIRO, *Un traductor privilegiado: el autotraductor*, in «Quaderns. Revista de traducció», III (1999), pp. 19-27.

73 Cf. MENAKHEM PERRY, *Thematic and Structural Shifts in Autotranslations by Bilingual Hebrew-Yiddish Writers. The Case of Mendele Mokher Sforim*, in «Poetics Today», II/4 (1981), pp. 181-192, p. 181.

self-translations in the corpus have more words than their source texts, and in Meabe's case, the gap is one of the smallest. It could be thought that these differences are related to languages' construction and characteristics rather than translation strategies; for instance, Basque is an agglutinative language, which might result in a minor word number comparing other non-agglutinative ones (sentence number wouldn't be affected). However, as a hypothesis, I would say that it is not only a matter of formal resources and constraints, but rather that there lies a stylistic propensity to linguistic amplification in translation from Basque into French/Spanish. In further research, it would be more than significant to compare texts in Basque and in other languages (both translations and source texts) from a macro level approach, in order to corroborate or refute this hypothesis. It could also be thought that in autofiction the author is more explicitly involved in the story than in fiction, because s/he is both the narrator and the main character,⁷⁴ and this could lead to modifications such as a bigger gap in the word or sentence number. However, the opposite has been found in our corpus, where *Kristalezko begi bat* is the only autofictional book (all others are works of fiction) and its self-translation contains the smallest gap on a macro level. As a consequence, our data show that Meabe is more than usually "faithful" to the structure of the source text, at least compared to other Basque self-translators and on the basis of our corpus.

At the micro level and with respect to identity theories, Meabe mostly maintains the categories and social representations of the source text in the target text. In the book, self-image is constantly interpreted and constructed (there is even a piece called "Autoerretatua"⁷⁵ – "Self-portrait" –, in which the narrator describes herself physically and emotionally), as well as questioned («Zer zen "ni bezalako emakume bat"?»⁷⁶). In fact, we could say it is an exercise in self-observation, and writing practice empowers Meabe, the main character of the story, through a permanent search for sense.⁷⁷ The act of self-translating, thus, could be seen as a deepening of that search for sense, although we would not find any indicator of that deepening in the textual analysis, leaving aside the (optional or mandatory) willingness to make the self-observation in another language.

Through exploration of her character, body, and relations, the narrator positions herself both in the source text and in the self-translation in the following social categories: writer, woman, Basque, one-eyed, fond of literature, menopause-aged, multilingual, active employer, mother, daughter, sister, separated. Starting with the title, the one-eyed category remains remarkably present from the beginning to the end (the word *begi* "eye" appears almost one hundred times), and the narrator seems to review lack of an organ⁷⁸ every time she presents other categories she belongs to. Through self-translation, those categories are maintained; it could even be said that the category of Basque writer is underlined in the Spanish text, since what in the Basque text is given by the writing language is explicitly rendered in the Spanish text. In this sense, the "writer" category is repeatedly and explicitly constructed, while there is only one reference to translation («Esan diot

74 FERREIRA-MEYERS, *Autobiography and Autofiction*, cit., p. 203.

75 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., pp. 38-42.

76 *Ibid.*, p. 80 («¿Qué era eso de «una mujer como yo»?»), *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 72).

77 TORRES, *Cuando el cuerpo de la autora traza la poética emocional del corpus*, cit.

78 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 155 and *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 72.

itzultzailea naizela»)⁷⁹ and no reference to the translated text or the translating process in the target text, even though it could reasonably have been expected, considering the metaliterature in the source text.

There are many cultural references in Meabe's work, both to Basque culture and to globally known artwork, artists and toponymy. As regards the expressions bound to the Basque collective worldview, most references are maintained in the translation, with a couple of exceptions. On the one hand, in a list of one-eyed people in history, the mythological Basque character Tartalo disappears. On the other, there is a popular phrase from a song by Basque musician Anari («eskerrak ahulak garen (hamar puntu, Anari)»),⁸⁰ which is translated into Spanish without any other specification/reference to the song or the author («menos mal que somos débiles (diez puntos, Anari)»).⁸¹ Basque readers might easily link the phrase with the lyrics, or at least know that Anari is a musician and conclude that the phrase must come from a song, but Spanish readers most likely will not make these connections. Another example is that the narrator, at a certain point in the story, calls herself «euskal geisha»⁸² – “Basque geisha” –, and in the Spanish translation, Meabe maintains the same words instead of using the adjective “vasca” or other solutions. In addition to that occurrence of the word «euskal», there are several other words in Basque without translation in the target text, which remind the reader of the narrator's primary language. They are explained at the end in a glossary: «*aita*: padre. *ama*: madre. *amabitxi*: madrina. *aitita*: abuelo. *amuma*: abuela. *gaztetxe*: local juvenil. *txiqui*: pequeño-a, chiquito-a. *txoko*: rincón. Por extensión, sociedad gastronómica. *zulo*: agujero, orificio, cavidad».⁸³ Two other Basque words – *ikastola* (Basque school) and *bidegorri* (bikeway) – that also appear in the Spanish text are not in the glossary, possibly because a Spanish reader residing in the Basque Country could be expected to be acquainted with them (they might be acquainted with those in the glossary too). In fact, it should be mentioned that Meabe's self-translation was released by a publisher settled in the Basque country, so it is reasonable to assume that its potential readership would be familiar with Meabe's references to the Basque world since they minimally share the same geographical space. In an article on *in mente* self-translation, Helena Tanqueiro points out that the glossary is the resource most used in postcolonial works by African writers, who intend to express their linguistic reality and suggest that the language(s) in which the characters speak is/are not the same as that in which the book is written.⁸⁴ The same resource and objective can be seen in the works under consideration here, even if, in contrast with *in mente* self-translations, we *do* have a published source text.

In the Spanish text, the author maintains the collective imaginary and net of references constructed in the Basque text, placing all references, local and global, at the same

79 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 53 («Le digo que soy traductora», *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 47).

80 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 151.

81 MEABE, *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 129.

82 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 54.

83 MEABE, *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 139.

84 Cf. HELENA TANQUEIRO, *Sobre la autotraducción de referentes culturales en el texto original. La autotraducción explícita y la autotraducción in mente*, in *Aproximaciones a la autotraducción*, ed. by Xosé Manuel Dasilva and Helena Tanqueiro, Vigo, Academia del Hispanismo, 2011, pp. 245-259, p. 254.

level. The only adaptation is made when talking about a word's meaning or about terminology: when looking up a word in a dictionary, the target text adds a definition from a Spanish dictionary, but without replacing the one in Basque:

son muy significativas las acepciones que nos suministra el diccionario de Plazido Mujika, editado en 1965, para la palabra *climatérico*. A saber: *gaitz*, *gaizto*, *galgarri*, *arriskuzko*, *galbidezko*; es decir, *mal*, *malvado-a*, *pernicioso-a*, *peligroso-a*, *corruptor-a*. Propone dichas palabras como traducción del vocablo castellano *crítico*.⁸⁵

In that sense, all references to other languages or words/phrases/quotes in other languages – mostly English and French – appearing in the source text (i.e., L₃ according to Corrius and Zabalbeascoa)⁸⁶ are maintained in the target text without translation or modification; e.g., «Vanitas vanitatum omnia vanitas»,⁸⁷ «“Attention, madame, c'est fragile”»,⁸⁸ and «lip-gloss».⁸⁹ There are some words in Spanish in the source text, such as «guapa»⁹⁰ and «fulanita»,⁹¹ that appear in the self-translation without comment. It should be mentioned that most Basque readers would understand those Spanish words in the source text; in fact, *guapa* is quite regularly used in spoken familiar Basque. Nevertheless, the second word might be incomprehensible to Basque readers in Iparralde (Northern Basque country), where French and not Spanish is the other (and only official) language. Due to space limitations, it is impossible to examine here other motivations and categorizations for heterolingualism⁹² that might be analysed in further research; however, it is worth noting that the target text is even more heterolingual than the source text due to the Basque words in the Spanish text mentioned above, a choice made intentionally. Changing the language does not lead to any effort to adapt, domesticate, or complete the worldview presented in Basque in the first place, but on the contrary, this worldview is maintained and even made more visible in the self-translation. Considering that readers complete and give meaning to a text beyond the author's will and intentions, I would say that physical, social and symbolic distance of the target audience might condition their position in relation to the author's worldview. For instance, the implications of introducing Basque words in the Spanish text might not be the same for an audience from the Basque country and for another from abroad who has no relation with or is not aware of the sociolinguistic context. The scope of this paper, however, is restricted to the worldview linked to what the author considered of herself, and the assumption of reader's interpretative construction would be subject of further research. Meabe's *Kristalezko begi bat* has recently been translated into Italian and into English.

85 MEABE, *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 61.

86 MONTSE CORRIUS and PATRICK ZABALBEASCOA, *Language variation in source texts and their translations. The case of L₃ in film translation*, in «Target», xxiii (2011), pp. 113-130.

87 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 148 and *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 127.

88 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 145 and *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 124.

89 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 128 and *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 110.

90 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 55 and *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 49.

91 MEABE, *Kristalezko begi bat*, cit., p. 90 and *Un ojo de cristal*, cit., p. 80.

92 Cf. RAINIER GRUTMAN, *Les motivations de l'hétérolinguisme : réalisme, composition, esthétique*, in *Eteroglossia e plurilinguismo letterario, Atti del XVIII Convegno interuniversitario di Bressanone*, ed. by Furio Brugnolo and Vincenzo Orioles, Roma, Il Calamo, 2002, pp. 329-349, p. 335.

In future studies, it would be interesting to determine whether their translators followed the author's translational tendencies, whether they consulted the Spanish translation and whether different target audiences construct a certain identity of the author.

The present case study of Miren Agur Meabe's works provides an example of no substitution or modification in the target text of the categories and representations presented in the source text. Self-translation therefore does not lead directly or necessarily to the creation of another imaginary, even in autofiction. However, I suspect this may be an uncommon case; as mentioned above, the number of cases showing a greater tendency to distance themselves from the source text and, consequently, to adapt categories and reconstruct social representations, is notably higher. For example, in research on Bernardo Atxaga's (self-)translated and collaborative work, Elizabete Manterola shows that the Basque writer identifies himself as belonging to two literary systems and tends to adapt his translations to the Spanish reader.⁹³

It has been already said that, at least in diglossic contexts, the kind of public/consumer that publishers seek may well be a factor in self-translational choices and techniques, and might vary, for example, when publishing in Madrid (as Atxaga does) or somewhere in the Basque country, whether these choices are the result of the author's decision or the editor's requirement. Even so, based on our corpus, we could see that, for instance, Ixiar Rozas⁹⁴ published, with minor changes, the same self-translation in Spanish in both Mexico DF and the Basque country, and that Eider Rodriguez⁹⁵ made more significant changes when she published her self-translation in the Basque country when compared to the first translation (a bilingual edition) released in Madrid. Different behaviours can thus be observed. We should keep in mind that Miren Agur Meabe is a professional translator, and this could be another determining factor to explain her self-translational choices. In addition, some authors (such as Atxaga, or Borda) write in Basque knowing or considering the idea of translation, and that knowledge will necessarily condition – if not determine – creativity and identity projections (social representations) in the first writing process (in Basque), as they tend to place in both literary systems (social categorization), items that would generally cause neutralization of the initial text. For example, in a recent review of the book *Elkarrekin esnatzeko ordua*⁹⁶ by Kirmen Uribe, literary critic Alex Gurrutxaga noted that the basic level of some observations is surprising,⁹⁷ as if the reader that the author had in mind would not know some notorious sociocultural facts of Basque recent history. It has to be said that the book was to be released at the same time in Basque and in Spanish, as well as in Galician and Catalan, but in the end the

93 Cf. MANTEROLA, *Euskal literatura beste bizkuntza batzuetara itzulia*, cit. and ELIZABETE MANTEROLA, *Escribir y (auto)traducir en un sistema literario diglósico: la obra de Bernardo Atxaga*, in *L'autotraduction aux frontières de la langue et de la culture*, ed. by Christian Lagarde and Helena Tanqueiro, Limoges, Lambert-Lucas, 2013, pp. 61-67.

94 The works are IXIAR ROZAS, *Negutegia*, Iruñea, Pamiela, 2006, *Negutegia / Invernario*, México DF, Itaca, 2010) and *Negutegia / Invernario*, Iruñea, Pamiela-Diario de Noticias, 2014.

95 The works are EIDER RODRIGUEZ, *Eta handik gutxira gaur*, Zarautz, Susa, 2004, *Eta handik gutxira gaur. Cuatro cicatrices*, Madrid, Centro de Lingüística Aplicada Atenea, 2006 and *Y poco después ahora*, Donostia, Tarttalo, 2007.

96 KIRMEN URIBE, *Elkarrekin esnatzeko ordua*, Zarautz, Susa, 2016.

97 ALEX GURRUTXAGA, *Istorio itzelak ukitzen*, in «Berria», MMMXXV (2017), p. 37.

Spanish translation was published and presented in Madrid some days earlier than the Basque text, which had been written first.⁹⁸ The idea of an almost simultaneous publication in Spanish by a publisher set outside the Basque country could be a reason for the excessive explanation mentioned above.

Clearly, further discussion of all of these potentially determining factors (i.e., the geographical conditions of diglossia, the experience of the author as a professional translator, or the editorial constraints) might provide a more incisive understanding of the relation between identity and self-translation beyond dichotomous perspectives. Nevertheless, the present case study reasserts the complexity and diversity of self-translation. In future research on identity from the perspective of translation, the present framework is worth taking into consideration.

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