Translanguaging, Literary Multilingualism and Exophony in Translation

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Abstract

This article focuses on the new term of 'translanguaging', first developed in applied linguistics and then critically discussed in critical multilingualism studies. The term foregrounds language use as opposed to language competence. In this way, translanguaging is understood as shaking up the commonly received ideas about standardised language. With such a term, new avenues of thought and research open up to better understand multilingual practices. The new proposed way of regarding multilingual practices as more 'energeia', processual, and varied – instead of a fixed entity or tool – takes centre-stage in this article. I analyse the term 'translanguaging' by way of two practices, literary translation on the one hand and exophony on the other hand. In choosing these two practices, I ask how can translanguaging help bring down old-established epistemic walls such as clear-cut ideas about Jakobson's intra- and interlingual translation. These terminologies will thus be analysed by way of multi- and translingual texts to discuss the extent to which translanguaging practices can challenge current ideas about literary translation and multilingualism. In my discussion, I focus on two Brazilian authors; firstly, on Wilson Bueno's Mar Paraguayo alongside its translation Paraguayan Sea by Erín Moure, and secondly, on Geovani Martins's O Sol Na Cabeça alongside its translation The Sun on my Head by Julia Sanches. I show how a translanguaging approach does justice to the way in which these authors and narrators speak in their own languages as well as in and between other languages than their own (exophony). I draw on examples showing how the translators have gone about these particularities, at once reflecting on the process of creative writing and literary translation as an open-ended practice.

Keywords: multilingualism, translation; translingualism; exophony

Introduction: Multilingualism at a crossroads

Multilingualism can be scary. It makes monolinguals feel excluded, ostracised. It can be elusive, opaque, complicated, costly. Costly, in this case, refers to the existence of several languages for multinational corporations to communicate in or translate into carries an added cost to any transaction and business decision. At the same time, expanding to different languages increases profits and results in new business opportunities. Multilingualism is thus, even when seen as a positive, a complication. It is an added cost, as well as a complication, for publishing translations. Multilingualism creates demands which are expensive and time-consuming. As David Gramling proposes in his book *The Invention of Monolingualism*, we are currently living in the 'linguacene', that is,

> *an era in which large-scale discourse—translingually mediated—alters the planet in intensities and scalar trajectories unimaginable in the mid-twentieth century. (…) Twenty-first-century protocols for industrial distribution in the linguacene first project global saturation, and deal with the logistical and linguistic hurdles as a matter of course. Multilingualism is then the field of symbolic extraction upon which these protocols must necessarily succeed, by way of efficiently managed, increasingly auto-correcting translational monolingualism* (**Gramling, 2016: 215**).

To complicate matters further, multilingualism goes by several different names and can mean very different things. Glossodiversity, bilingualism, plurilingualism, polyglossia, and translingualism, among many others. How do we call these phenomena, these processes? To complicate matters even further, applied linguists, sociolinguists, translators, and literary scholars seldom agree on what precisely it means and on the way it is studied. In literary translation it can mean anything from a text in translation containing multiple languages at a surface level to a text that is multilingual even if written in mono/lingualist form. In this article, I intend to discuss the phenomena that can be deemed multilingual, as well as the terminological labyrinth any person dealing with the topic needs to go through to reach the end with perhaps a better understanding of what it is, and more importantly, what it can be. In the end, the aim is to understand multilingualism in literary translation within a spectrum, offering examples respecting the many different forms multilingualism can take in the creation and translation of literary texts.

Lingualism: Multi and Mono

The topics of multi- and monolingualism evoke a dyad, a binary, that is sometimes not effective in describing and doing justice to real-world diverse language phenomena. The concept of monolingualism is a recent one, and it is intensely tied to the many intellectual and societal movements which culminated in the creation of nation states in the 19th Century and beyond. For a while, the concept of Bilingualism was used for individuals who did not belong to one single nation and language. However, the term is binary and excludes the possibility of an individual *in transit* between more than two languages. It also has been used to describe a status of language acquisition rather than a process. Bilingualism in itself is a minefield, with some defending an open use of the term which refers to any person speaking two languages, at whatever level of fluency, and some with closed definitions of bilingual as a person who acquired both languages up to a certain age and are, in sum, two monolinguals in one person. This shows that even in discussions around language variety and multiple language skills in individuals, the standard against which a bilingual person is defined is, ultimately, the monolingual.

The prevalence of the monolingual ideal when thinking about multilingualism is also tied to the idea of 'Lingualism'. Lingualism is a term Gramling (**Gramling, 2021**) uses based on Jorgensen et al. (**Jorgensen et al., 2011**) as well as Dahlberg and Bagga-Gupta (**Dahlberg and Bagga-Gupta, 2019**), who all challenge the conservative conception of language as bounded entities. In this case, the term refers to those 'languages with a capital L', geopolitically imposed integrities and conceptions of language that largely ignore the many layers of linguistic experience and repertoire used among speakers. Lingualism, in simple terms, refers to languages with a capital L, dialects and varieties of a given language that were elevated into the position of national languages: British English, US English, European Portuguese, Brazilian Portuguese, Spanish, German, Swiss German, etc. There are, of course, several levels of Lingualism, and it can even be used as a tool against itself, when we capitalise varieties that have not been elevated to a national language (such as when defining different varieties within national languages: Hiberno-English, Rioplatense Spanish, African American English, etc.,). David Gramling defines Lingualism as:

> *a term invoked occasionally in Usage-Based Linguistics to critique the premise or belief, that languages are essentially coherent, stable, nameable entities that people can master and possess* (**Gramling 2021: 27***).*

The authors largely criticise a view of multilingualism that is still based on a multiplicity of these bounded entities, proposing for us to go 'beyond multilingualism' instead. As an alternative, some have proposed a 'languaging without languages' (**Sabino, 2018**) following Quijano (**Quijano, 2000**). In response to the limitations of thinking multilingualism based on a strict lingualist perspective, Applied Linguists such as Li Wei proposed the use of the term translanguaging, as a response to Claire Kramsch's call for an 'applied linguistic theory of language practice' (**Kramsch, 2015**). Being a 'practical theory', translanguaging is dialogic, experiential and its main objective 'is not to offer predictions or solutions but interpretations that can be used to observe, interpret, and understand other practices and phenomena' (**Li, 2018: 11**). In her definition of translanguaging, Wei explains that it comes from a translation of Williams's use of the Welsh term *trawsieithu* to describe language practices in the bilingual Welsh-English classroom (**Williams, 1994**), by Baker into English as translanguaging (**Baker, 2001**). Thus, the term is rooted in Applied Linguistics but especially in a language learning context. It is an empowering way of thinking about language pedagogy that breaks the divides between languages and identities, putting the meaning-making potential of multilingualism as an asset, an advantage, rather than something that must be erased or flattened out in the classroom. It follows the notion of *languaging*, which sees language not as an entity, but as a process, by using a verb rather than a noun to describe ever-changing languaging processes (for more on languaging, see **Maturana & Varela, 2012; Ortega & Gasset, 1957**; and for the concept of bilanguaging, see **Mignolo, 2012**).

Therefore, translingualism could be seen as the practical theory of multilingualism, one that goes against Lingualist and monolingual views of language practice. In literature, and more specifically, in literary translation, translingualism would see multilingual practices within a literary text, and its potential translation, moving beyond code-switching between national languages. This follows an idea of language as *energeia*, a process, rather than a fixed entity, and going further than only seeing language, and the knowledge of several languages, as only a desirable tool on the global stage, but rather as a continual meaning- and identity-making process.

Going further within a national language, one can see translingual practices more often than previously thought. For translation, this would also mean seeing potential subdirectionalities within a text. That means not only from French into English, but rather from Montreal Quebecois into Modern British English, and not only from these, but also from specific subdirectionalities such as class-based language registers or those tied to sexuality, for example. One translator can be a fluent user of Modern

British English but may not be a fluent user of South London English or of Queer Black British English. Similarly, as I aim to point out further in this article, a fluent user of Brazilian Portuguese might not be a fluent user or reader of Carioca Portuguese, Favela Portuguese, or Gaucho Portuguese. Thus, I believe using translingualism to see how multilingualism is realised in literary texts will also help us understand subdirectionalities in translation and see beyond Lingualism in literary translation.

Translanguaging and Exophony

Exophony, from the Greek ἔξω (éxō), 'out, external', and φωνή (fōnē), 'sound, voice', is a term that has been recently used to refer to authors who write in a language other than their mother tongue. Exophony, as a term, is at the same time broad and specific. As a wide-ranging term, it includes various contexts. Exophony is a phenomenon that is increasingly fashionable nowadays, due to the new migration waves of the twenty-first century and globalization, contributing to a context in which multilingualism and multiculturalism are more valued, at least on surface levels. This reality favours the so-called transnational literatures, a more general term that includes the study of exophony. Notions of exophony and extraterritoriality are important for the study of Comparative Literature in a twenty-first century context, where geographical and linguistic boundaries are more fluid, and the traditional notions of art and literature seem to be going through a process of deconstruction, in which different media, voices, languages and tongues are in a constant dialogue. A recent term, exophony is still not part of a strong terminological tradition in many countries.

The term exophony deserves a more profound analysis and a well-rounded defence of its use as a substitute for other terms and paradigms used to define cases such as Yoko Tawada's, for example. Chantal Wright offers a rich argumentation for the adoption of the term (**Wright, 2008**), contrasting it to other ways in which these authors and their works have been defined and studied, in this grey zone between different languages and cultures. In the article, Wright presents a few terms that could be used to describe exophonic writing but which fall short for not being inclusive enough, or not doing justice to formal features of exophonic writing. She concludes with a defence of the term exophony and the adjective exophone/exophonic as a novel approach which focuses on the text. According to Wright:

> *in focusing on style and how meaning is generated by it, the term 'exophonic' represents an important shift in how we approach writing by non-native speakers, and a return to the of late somewhat neglected relationship between form and meaning in literature* (**Wright, 2008: 39-40**).

The concept of exophony is especially important to authors who did not have their exophonic *oeuvre* studied as such and who do not fit in the traditional literary categories which are heavily dictated by the author's mother tongue or nationality. The term 'exophony', however, exists and has emerged in a world where strong national identities linked with a national language have been created and sedimented, a context in which we try to break free from these shackles. By considering exophony through a stylistics point of view which, therefore, does not limit the themes; it is a valid concept, even at times in which national identities like we know today, were not yet fully formed or in existence, and even more considering the fact that these national identities are also regularly contested.

Exophony, however, focuses more on the creative outputs of these nation-less authors, rather than in defining their level of fluency in the literary language used. Translingualism connects with exophony on several levels. In fact, some might even argue that they can be used to describe the same phenomenon. However, the movement that the prefix 'trans' implies is different than 'exo'. Both imply a literature that is in motion, either outside of a mother tongue expectation, or through different languages. Li Wei, in her defence of the term Translingualism, proposes that:

> *Translanguaging is using one's idiolect, that is one's linguistic repertoire, without regard for socially and politically defined language names and labels. From the translanguaging perspective then, we think beyond the boundaries of named languages and language varieties including the geography-, social class-, age-, or gender-based varieties* (**Wei, 2018: 19**).

Therefore, it appears that in those terms exophony is still within the boundaries of named languages. This does not mean that exophonic writing cannot be also translingual, but rather that these are diverse ways of looking at a text. Not only that, translingualism looks more into the power relations of the many languages and varieties within a multi- or translingual text, whereas exophony looks at more thematic issues of being outside, of adopting an unnatural stance, or something that goes against norms of what language to choose for literary endeavours, and with regard to how both thematic and stylistic aspects can be approached in exophonic texts. The two terms together would offer a more complete analysis and a more robust theory of translation.

Translating Multitudes

Before thinking and projecting as to what multilingualism in translation can mean, we need to take a closer look at examples of multilingualism in literature that might pose a challenge to translation in diverse ways. I have devised a spectrum of literary multilingualism ranging from strict Lingualist multilingualism in a literary text (that is, two or more languages with a capital L mixed in a text) from a morphological to a syntactical level, to examples of multi and glossodiversity within a text that seems to be monolingual but which presents multi and translingual challenges for its possible translations. These are examples I have taken from multiple languages and source cultures, in trying to present a broader spectrum. However, they are informed by the languages and contexts I have a more confident knowledge of, and the possibilities are truly endless if we include other minority languages and even 'peripheral' national languages.

From the strict surface-level end of the spectrum, we have texts that do code-switching on the word level, but not those that have some foreign words peppered here and there. In non-fictional contexts we have the famous example of Gloria Anzaldua's multilingual text that informs many code-switching Latinx writers in the US context and abroad. However, I will start this spectrum with more radical examples of this kind of switching, one that does not involve switching between two or more languages but rather blending them together and thus creating a different one. One understudied example of this is the work *La Divina Increnca* by Juó Bananaré (**Bananaré, 1924**). This is a collection of satirical poems written in the Ítalo-Paulistano patois of Italian immigrants in São Paulo, Brazil. In the cover, the author (pseudonym of Alexandre Ribeiro Marcondes Machado) claims 'this is not a bilingual edition'. By making sure this work was not seen as bilingual but rather as representing Italian-paulistano patois, Bananaré established a boundary to those trying to see is work as code-switching. And in fact, Bananaré himself was from the state of São Paulo but did not have any Italian ascendency. When moving to the capital of São Paulo he was inspired by the patois of the many working-class Italian immigrant communities in the city, thus writing *La Divina Increnca* (Divine is a parody of Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and Increnca is a variation of the word 'encrenca', which means 'trouble), presenting itself as a collection of satirical poems written in this patois. In it, Bananaré offers not only original work in the language but also parodies and translations of other famous works of Brazilian literature. A famous nationalist poem by Gonçalves Dias, *Canção do Exílio* ('Song of Exile'), praises Brazilian fauna and flora, spoken by a poetic persona who is exiled and misses their homeland. A famous verse goes:

Minha terra tem palmeiras

Onde canta o Sabiá;

As aves, que aqui gorjeiam,

Não gorjeiam como lá.[i]

('My land has palm trees

Where the Sabiá sings.

The birds that sing here

Do not sing as they do there.')

Bananaré, in *La Divina Increnca*, offers a parody of the famous poem, ending with,

Na migna terra tê parmeras

ove ganta a galigna dangola;

Na migna terra tê o Vap'relli,

Chi só anda di gartolla.[ii] (**Bananaré, 1924**)

Evidently, the poet adapts certain written forms into something reminiscent of Italian, with 'gn' for sounds which would be written as 'nh', but which would otherwise be pronounced the same (e.g., *migna/minha {mine}*, *galigna/galinha {chicken/hen}*). These are words that are entirely Italian and not an italianised version of Portuguese (such as *dove* or *chi*), some traces of orality, such as writing *tê* instead of *tem*, *di* instead of *de*, as well as traces of the specific Italian pronunciation of Portuguese words, like *gartola* for *cartola {top hat}*, *ganta* for *canta {sing}*. As we can see, there are several ways in which a work like this challenges the norms of literary language and brings multi and translingualism to the fore by mixing orality and orthographic deviations to destabilise normative forms of the language. These techniques of defamiliarization used in the writing of the multilingual text can also be used in its translation, as we will see below.

An illustrative example is given by Ellen Jones in *Literature in Motion: Translating Multilingualism across the Americas* (**Jones, 2022**), where she analyses the translation of Wilson Bueno's multilingual 'portunhol' work *O Mar Paraguayo* into Canadian Frenglish by Erin Moure (translated as *Paraguayan Sea*). In the case of this work, the translator chose a different language mix and shifted the axis of the text from a southern to a northern perspective, keeping multilingualism in translation but creating a new text that challenges assumptions and works differently in the context into which it was translated. As Jones puts it in her analysis of Moure's translation: 'Translation need not erase the difficulty or ingenuity of

multilingual writing; it, too, can be linguistically playful and challenging, a creative practice to be valued in the same way as any other writing' (**Ibid: 167**). Jones draws several conclusions from her analysis of Moure's translation, as I will try to summarise here. Firstly, there is a fundamental difference in the relationship between Spanish and Portuguese, and French and English. Moure's text aims to be somewhat readable in English, more than it is readable in French, whereas Bueno's source text is readable in both Spanish and Portuguese. That is, in part, because Spanish and Portuguese are much closer to each other linguistically than English and French. Moure makes use of several compensatory techniques in her translation, to either bridge the gap between languages, replicate Bueno's language plays or to create gaps of her own. Linguistic strategies used by Moure include taking advantage of French-English homographs and cross-lingual homonyms, writing words in the way they are pronounced, highlighting dialectal and accent varieties, defamiliarization techniques through rhyme and repetition and generally creating ambiguity and wordplay where these do not exist in the original, to compensate for certain instances of needing to flat out or monolingualise the text. According to Jones, Moure uses a feminist approach of 'womanhandling' which involves a type of highly interventionist translation approach, where paratexts and nonstandard writing are key (**Ibid: 179**). In Mar Paraguayo's impossibility of translation Moure finds a creative opportunity, by making the text even more multifaceted and multilingual, and this is key to the translation of multilingual texts: unfinished. In fact, Jones uses the example of Erín Moure's translation of a multilingual text as a type of translation that is 'productive and original, rather than derivative and secondary' (**Ibid: 167**). This is perhaps the 'solution' to the 'problem' that a multilingual text poses for its possible translations: that of making the translation an additional creative practice in conversation with the source text, but not as a derivative piece. For that purpose, I would argue that the translator needs to be a multilingual user themselves. In both the example of Moure and of Sanches, which I will analyse below, the translators have a strong authorial voice but, more importantly, are multi or translingual users of language, more than the Anglo-monolingual translator which is the idealised translator of the majority of anglophone Translation Studies.

Focusing on a both thematic as well as formal translanguaging in literature, we find the example of Xiaolu Guo's *A Concise English-Chinese Dictionary for Lovers* (**Guo, 2007**), in which the author-narrator performs a broken English that is slowly assimilated and domesticated through the main character's experience living in London and learning English. The book follows a Chinese woman who moves to London in order to learn English and gets in a relationship with an Englishman and thus learns the intricacies of English culture from the second language classroom to

experience them in romance, friendships, and sex. Guo's translingualism can be perceived both at surface-level as well as thematically, while the novel is centred around language learning and cultural differences. In a German-speaking context, Yoko Tawada does similar literary language plays. Guo's other works also thematise language and translation, showing that multi and translingualism seem to be a stylistic feature of the author's work. The alienation in Guo's broken English performance can be seen clearly in the beginning of the novel:

> *Is unbelievable. I arriving London, 'Heathlow Airport'. Every single name very difficult remembering, because just not 'London Airport' simple way like we simple way call 'Beijing Airport'. (...) Sign in front of queue say: ALIEN and NON ALIEN. I am alien, like Hollywood movie Alien, I live in another planet, with funny looking and strange language* (**Guo, 2007: 9**).

In poetry, it is possible to see many examples of translingualism at play. From simple code-switching to more complex multi-layered translingualist uses of poetic language. Poets such as Daljit Naghra, Juana Adcock, Mary Jean Chan, in the UK context, and the new poetry collection *Postcolonial Love Poem* by Natalie Diaz in the US, among many others, all use translingualism in different ways, with a mixture of code-switching and peppering of words in a foreign language that disrupt the English poetic form. As examples of the more radical, code-switching type, Karina Lickorish Quinn, with her poem *Spanglish*, mixes Spanish and English at a word level. The poem starts with:

> *Oye, you. Yes, tú.*
>
> *¿Have you ever alguna vez mordido your lengua?*
>
> *Duele like una mierda fucker.*
>
> *El impaling de tu tongue on your diente stings like una picadura de un maldito*
>
> *escorpión del infierno.* (**Lickorish Quinn, 2016)**.[iii]

For someone not fluent in Spanish, would this poem be understood? And how could it be translated, say, into Spanish? Viable solutions would imply a switch in that the words in Spanish would be in English and the words in English would be, in turn, translated into Spanish. Does such a translingual practice not defy our traditional idea of translation? Quinn applies here, consciously, or not, the notion of a metonymic gap. The poet does not work to make the reader understand. The gap is there and can be ignored, and glossed over, but cannot be easily surpassed. The metonymic gap, according to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin is:

> *The 'cultural space' is the direct consequence of the metonymic function of language variance. It is the 'absence' which occupies the gap between the contiguous inter/faces of the 'official' language of the text and the cultural difference brought to it. Thus the alterity in that metonymic juncture establishes a silence beyond which the cultural Otherness of the text cannot be traversed by the colonial language. By means of this gap of silence the text resists incorporation into 'English literature' or some universal literary mode, not because there is any inherent hindrance to someone from a different culture understanding what the text means, but because this constructed gap consolidates its difference* (**Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 2004: 53**).

Therefore, by leaving this cultural space open, in the elements of another language or something not readily accessible or available to an anglo-monolingual texts that are translingual also resist incorporation by the global lingua franca, or rather by the colonial language. However, this is done in a unique way that the resistance a metonymic gap in a postcolonial text poses, precisely in the case of the poem *Spanglish*, the two languages at play are colonial languages: Spanish and English. In this case, the gap is being created against the monolingual reader, and thus the power play is slightly different. Some translingual or multilingual texts, as they are often referred to, erase, or translate such a gap, by facilitating the reading experience to an anglo-monolingual mind.

However, going beyond Lingualist assumptions, what could be said of works that are multilingual, or translingual, within a national language? These works are not, like the famous example of Tolstoi's *War and Peace*, which is written in Russian with a heavy presence of French throughout, but that is, without a doubt, written in one national language. Some examples from Brazilian literature include the leviathan *Grande Sertão Veredas* by Guimarães Rosa (**Rosa, 1956**). Translated into several languages, the only translation into English of this novel was a collaborative translation published in the 1970s, that has been heavily criticised and never been re-edited. As I write this, Australian translator Allison Entrekin is working on a retranslation of the work, this time trying to do justice to Rosa's masterpiece. The work is written in Brazilian Portuguese that mirrors the regional speech and vocabulary of the *Sertão* region, a Centre-Northeastern Brazilian geosocial ecosystem, the result of centuries of erosion of an earlier lush terrain. The *sertão* way of living and speech is an important tenet of Brazilian culture, albeit a disputed and difficult topic in the way it is represented and treated in the more culturally central areas of Brazil (namely the Southeast region of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro). In Brazilian literature, works that are strongly regional in tone and form are usually also not encompassed by the Southeastern culture of São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. This would be the case of *Grande Sertão* if

Guimarães Rosa himself was not from the state of Minas Gerais, one that has geopolitical and historical privilege in the Brazilian context and being himself a highly educated multilingual diplomat with access to many literary circles. This means that, even though *Grande Sertão* is highly multilingual in that it is written with the orality of the Sertão dialects in mind, the work is studied and regarded widely in Brazilian literary circles, at least more widely than other regional literary works.

Works from other Brazilian regions which do not fit this mould are often undervalued and under-researched. In the South of Brazil, the gaucho of Rio Grande do Sul is usually excluded from more traditional gaucho narratives. Often when talking about Gaucho culture and language/literature, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay are mentioned, and the Brazilian Gaucho is largely forgotten. Similarly, works of literature written in the Brazilian Gaucho dialect, that is, Brazilian Portuguese with slang and slight grammatical variations, as well as some code-mixing with Spanish, is by and large ignored. One such work is Simões Lopes Neto's *Contos Gauchescos* (**Lopes Neto, 1912**). Attempts at translating it were limited to the academic community in Southern Brazil, and mostly focused on attempts at finding cultural and linguistic equivalents in the target languages. This seems to be the case in most examples of translingual texts that are still within one national language. Doctoral candidate Richard Huddleson is currently engaged in a project to translate queer plays from Catalan into Irish English, finding the otherness of Catalan queer an equivalent in a similarly contested territory of Irish in Northern Ireland and English. These are but a few examples of where a multilingual text can inform its translation and that such texts, in a way, both refuse to be translated and also are born translated (**Walkowitz, 2017**) while also being inherently an act of translanguaging. By keeping the otherness in one way or another, translations of these texts are possible and, in fact, creatively rich. In the section that follows, I will go into more detail on one specific example: that of Julia Sanches's translation of Geovani Martins's *The Sun on My Head* (**Martin, 2019**).

Translating Carioca/Favela Portuguese into English: the case of The Sun on My Head

The book *O Sol Na Cabeça* (*The Sun on My Head*), by Geovani Martins, has become a literary and commercial sensation in Brazil. Published in 2017, the book consists of 13 short stories with varying styles of narration and pace. The main marketing point of the book, however, is that it captures the lives of people living in Rio's favelas. The author, Martins, went on to participate in poetry slams and short story workshops and prizes. His debut, *O Sol Na Cabeça* is a welcome breath of fresh air into the

contemporary Brazilian literary scene, which has been, in recent years, slowly integrating other narratives into its canon.

The opening story in the collection is titled 'Rolezim', translated as 'Lil Spin', and one which we will focus on at this juncture. We are lucky to be able to tap into the process of translation that Sanches went through by looking at her essay *Sun and Slang: On Translating Geovani Martins' 'The Sun on My Head',* published in the online magazine *Words Without Borders*. In it, she talks about how:

> *I decide that I will pepper the text with Portuguese that can be easily understood contextually, or that does not get in the way of the sentences' meaning, grounding it ever more securely and sonorously in Rio de Janeiro. These words are not selected on the merit of sense or their importance to the text, but on how effectively they can be understood in x, y, or z situation. Some of them are: 'bolação', 'panguando', 'marola', 'mano', 'pô'. Unitalicized, they pussyfoot through the text. I will not gloss unless absolutely necessary, because it seems to me that Geovani has made a similar decision: to not explain; to let certain readers in and keep others out; there is something for everyone here, but more for some than for others. This is something I have identified as part of his intention, a thing that rests somewhere around the text's asthenosphere or hypodermis, invisible on the surface and yet elemental. Part of a translator's task is to identify this, I think* (**Sanches, 2019**).

Unlike the example of Erin Moure's translation of *Mar Paraguayo*, Martins's text is not multilingual by a 'Lingualist' definition; rather, it is intra-multilingual. It contains slang and a specific class and regional register of Brazilian Portuguese that keeps 'certain readers in and others out'. With this in mind, Sanches made a conscious choice to also keep her readers out, making it more acute that all texts have the potential for dual or multiple audiences, and more so if the text refuses to fill in the metonymic gaps. Sanches's decision to ground the text in its original context, refusing to find an equivalent in the Northern Hemisphere is a different solution to that of Moure's, who did find a Northern Hemisphere equivalent while also maintaining the instances of Guaraní from the original text. In the case of Sanches, finding an equivalent would completely remove Martins's prose from its context, which is extremely important. Not only that, Moure's career as an academic and writer foreshadows her translation approach and the specific publication context of *Paraguayan Sea*. Published by Faber & Faber, Sanches's translation was meant for a wider audience than Moure's, and the translator did not have the privilege of adding footnotes and glossaries to her translation. These often-overlooked factors are however incredibly impactful in how

rebellious a translation can be. Sanches did not have the same liberty to 'womanhandle' the text through a performative interventionist translation like Moure, but her choice of unitalicizing slang words and, in fact, not translating a substantial number of them, was in a way a compensatory strategy.

Conclusions

Multilingual writing has often been deemed untranslatable. Yet, as some scholars like Ellen Jones argue, an 'untranslatable' text and its multilingualism already 'invokes, demands, and invites translation' (**Jones, 2022: 183**). Through her analysis of Moure's translation, Jones proves that a translation of a multilingual text in its unfinished status, in fact, 'can open up a work to new readerships while allowing meaning to proliferate' (**Ibid: 184**). It is in thinking interstitially, on the margins, that we can approach a multilingual text in its translatorial potential to open up meaning and avenues of poetic potential. Using the example from Moure to think further about the translation of multilingual texts can also be employed in thinking about the translingual and the exophonic text. If creativity and form are the base of the theory of exophony, then exophonic writings invite and demand a creative translation that also plays with formal features of a text. In that way a multilingual, a translingual, and an exophonic text are not that different, and especially not when seen through the translation lens. There are several examples of multilingual texts and the attempts at translation than the scope of this paper allows me to show, however, with the examples presented here one can see that it is not necessary to erase or flatten out the preffix 'multi' and feature of a text in its translation. On the contrary, these 'impossible' texts can change our way of thinking of translation towards a more open-ended approach, of a text that is always changing and always open to change, instead of the idea of a text as finished product, immutable, closed in itself.

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Endnotes

[i] Published in 1857, and available at various online locations including, for example, https://www.todamateria.com.br/cancao-do-exilio-de-goncalves-dias/.

[ii] In contrast to Gonçalves Dias, there is no English translation of Bananaré's poem. A tentative translation could be the following: 'In mine land-uh there are-a parmtrees / Wher the chicken singz / In mine land-uh theres a Vap'relli / Dat-uh only walks with a top hat'.

[iii] A tentative translation in which English and Spanish are mixed the other way around could be: 'Hey, tu. Si, you / ¿Alguna vez ha bit your tongue? / Hurts como a shit cabrón / The impala of your lengua en tu tooth duele como the sting of a / motherfucking shitfucker scorpion.'