Fitting CULTURE into translation process research

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Abstract: This paper presents the design of an ongoing PhD project on the concept of CULTURE within cognitive approaches to translation research. The goal is to develop an approach to CULTURE that can be operationalised in empirical research within the framework of Cognitive Translatology. The point of departure is that the notion of culture is best understood as a dynamic construct. After a brief introduction to the *cultural turn* in translation studies, the paper outlines how CULTURE is conceived of and operationalized in some instances of Translation Process Research and also in some second-generation cognitive paradigms (social and situated cognition). Then the background, rationale and methodological grounds of the PhD project are sketched.

Keywords: culture, cultural turn, cognitive translatology, empirical translatology, situated cognition, social cognition, translation process research

1. Introduction

When Holmes (1972, 1988) introduced *Translation Studies* (henceforth, TS) as a comprehensive label to cover all scholarly approaches to translation, he put an end to the segregation of areas such as literary translation, as proposed by the Leipzig School. Holmes' approach promoted a wider understanding of the discipline by welcoming approaches based, among others, on comparative literature, philosophy, semiotics and linguistics, thereby 'expanding' the frontiers of the field from an *interlinguistic* to a *cultural* perspective, in line with the *cultural turn* of the nineties (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990; Dimitriu, 2006). Today the 'cultural aspects' of translation seem to comprise a large portion of TS research and scholarship. However, TS contributions on the concept of CULTURE are as varied as they can be (eg. literary, in Carbonell Cortés, 1999; Bandia, 2001; pedagogical, in Katan 2004; and empirical, in Conway, 2012) and they are sometimes difficult to reconcile.

Here, *translatology* refers to the subset of TS approaches that adhere to scientific empirical research, i.e., with research efforts focused on the description and explanation of translation and interpreting (Muñoz Martín, 2010a, p.1). Within *Translatology,* an expanding area of translation research in the last and in perhaps the next decades pertains to the relationship between translation and cognitive science (Tymozcko, 2005, p.1091). I will use *Cognitive Translatology* (Muñoz Martín, 2007a and 2007b; 2010a and 2010b) to refer to the subset of Cognitive Translation Studies that draw on second-generation cognitive paradigms and combine both quantitative and qualitative empirical research. This is the referential framework adopted in this research project.

Cognitive translatology (henceforth, CT) is developing as a theoretical frame based on the common tenets of several second-generation cognitive paradigms (situated cognition, embodied cognition, distributed cognition, among others). Its focus on the mental activities and processes of translators can help to reduce the variation within translation activities and circumstances. It may therefore yield a body of knowledge better fitted to survive social change (Muñoz Martín, 2010b, p.172). CT rejects linguistic reductionism, and acknowledges that its object of study is a social construct. Nevertheless, CT aims to offer an intersubjective, valid, realistic, detailed account of translation events (Muñoz Martín, 2010b). From this perspective, it seems necessary to review the concept of CULTURE to avoid some problems posed by the varied cultural approaches within TS (see Martín de León, 2003, 2005).

Also within the umbrella term of *Translatology,* Translation Process Research (henceforth, TPR) focuses on the analysis of translation processes and seeks evidence to model the architecture of comprehension and production, and their interaction with the bilingual lexicon. TPR adopts a behavioural/cognitive perspective on the study of gestures, speech, reaction time, eye movements (gaze data) and finger movements (keystrokes). Thus, TPR mainly studies reading and comprehension processes (e.g., through eye-tracking), the drafting and typing processes (e.g., alternations of pauses and typing periods), and the coordination of reading and typing. TPR has often drawn from linguistics, psychology, neuroscience, cognitive science, research in reading, writing, and in language technology (cf. O'Brien, 2013), but it is not a theory nor does it imply a certain referential framework by itself. Thus, insights borrowed from other disciplines may not always be mutually consistent. Perhaps for this reason, such insights do not seem to have caused an important impact on the various understandings of CULTURE in TPR.

Section 2 provides a summary on the implications of the *cultural turn* in different fields of TS. The goal of section 3 is to provide a brief overview on how CULTURE seems to be understood in TPR. Since CULTURE is a complex term bound to subjectivity and studied in different branches of cognition, some relevant conceptualizations of CULTURE in social and situated cognition are outlined in section 4. The ongoing PhD research project about CULTURE within Cognitive Translatology is sketched in section 5.

2. The *cultural turn* in TS

In 1990, Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere edited *Translation, History and Culture,* a collection of theoretical and comparative essays addressing topics such as manipulation, rewriting, ideology and power in literature and TS. The introduction to the volume (Lefevere & Bassnett, 1990, pp.1-13) is often considered a sort of manifesto of the so-called *cultural turn*, a paradigm that began to take shape in the 80s. For the first time, it was made explicit that texts were being studied within their cultural context, going beyond the traditional linguistic approach (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990, p.12). Snell-Hornby (2006, p.50) defines the *cultural turn* as the act of "abandoning of the 'scientist' linguistic approach as based on the concept of *tertium comparationis* or 'equivalence' and moving from 'text' to 'culture'"[1], i.e. translators cease to be linguists in the

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[1] This view is shared by Cronin (2007, pp. 253-254), who considers the *cultural turn* as a movement partly of *reaction* (to the hegemony of linguistics and the excessive influence of comparative literature in TS), and partly of *anticipation* (of the work in TS by scholars

traditional sense to become *intercultural mediators*. In the light of this turn, 'cultures' are considered as texts, while texts are considered to contain cultural representations (Buzélin, 2007, p.40), and bridges are built from TS to other disciplines and vice versa (Cronin, 2007, pp.253-254).

Dimitriu (2006, p.13) writes about "the cultural turn in translation studies and the translation turn in cultural studies". She suggests that contextualizing translation within culture is a must, and that the paradigm can be used to analyse transfers between cultures (Draga Alexandru, 2012, p.298). Issues such as *cultural dominance*, *cultural assertion* and *cultural resistance* have led Tymozcko & Gentzler (2002, xvi) to redefine the *cultural turn* as a *power turn*. This has fostered an increasing attention for the relation between translation and ideology, e.g. works by Hermans, Venutti, and Gentzler, among many others (Aksoy, 2010).

Echoes of the *cultural turn* in TS approaches are varied, with vast consequences on literary translation and postcolonial studies. In this context, Simon (1997) discusses how the *cultural turn* contributes to the dynamics of cultural representation, and points out some relevant weaknesses of the concept of CULTURE in TS:

> [Culture] often appears in translation studies as if it had an obvious and unproblematic meaning. Translators are told that in order to do their work correctly they must understand the culture of the original text, that texts are "embedded" in a culture. (…) The difficulty with such statements is that they seem to presume a unified cultural field which the term inhabits; the translator must simply track down the precise location of the term within it and then investigate the corresponding cultural field for corresponding realities. (Simon, 1997, p.464)

On the contrary, Simon (1997, p.464) suggests that meaning is not within the culture itself, but in the process of negotiation the translators carry out. In the same line, Bandia (2001, p.124) places an emphasis on the role of *the Other* and states that CULTURE cannot be considered as a stable entity, but as dynamic process, a translation phenomenon ("culture as translation").

Some other areas where the *cultural turn* is vindicated are interpretation studies, translation pedagogy, and audiovisual translation. In interpretation studies, Cronin (2002) underlines the importance of historical research and argues for the development of a *cultural turn*. This turn would contribute to change the approach in historical work in interpreting, from descriptive to analytical terms and "would encourage scholars to address explicitly questions of power and issues such as class, gender, and race in interpreting situations" (Cronin, 2002, p.46). Whitfield (2005) advocates for a *socio-cultural turn* in translation pedagogy and translation curriculum. Whitfield correctly notes that, despite the *cultural turn* in TS scholarship, linguistic theories dominate translation teaching, hence consolidating the perception that CULTURE is mainly a characteristic of texts. In audiovisual translation, Díaz-Cintas (2012, p.281) points out to the fact that although audiovisual productions would seem to lend themselves to the principles of the *cultural turn*, the number of academic contributions are still in the minority.

Bassnett and Lefevere's call for attention to cultural aspects in TS has also influenced academic contributions in Asian countries, especially from China. In this framework, Wang reflects on the status of TS in academia from a cultural perspective (2006), and provides a complete historical review of current Chinese TS and the *cultural turn* imported from the West in 1990 (Wang 2009, reviewed by Liu, 2012).

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from other disciplines such as ethnography, postcolonial studies, feminism, and deconstructtionist philosophy).

As stated in Bassnett (1998, p.123), the change to a cultural paradigm meant a major move in TS, from a formalist phase to a broader consideration of issues of context, history and convention. I believe the *cultural turn* in the 1990s can help to trace the origins and the development of cultural orientations in the scholarly discourse of TS (section 5.1). In practice, the cultural turn also seems to often lead away from empirical research and into the realm of scholarly reflection. Although the implications of this phenomenon are not addressed or even mentioned in TPR, cultural aspects in TS seem to be the basis of some assumptions about CULTURE in several instances of empirical research (section 3). This may sometimes pose problems of internal coherence to the conceptual apparatus deployed to carry out empirical work in TPR.

3.   CULTURE in TPR

CULTURE is often implicit in TPR, although it seems rarely focused upon. It does not seem to be a central concern, although it impinges on the results of many experiments, i.e., culture is not a variable specifically present in the design of experiments in TPR. However, some experiments usually start with assumptions about the "cultural level" or educational profile of the informants. In this context, TPR researchers seem to approach culture either as *(a) knowledge*, or as *(b) academic training plus professional experience*.

3.1 Knowledge
Some TPR research applies notions such as *bicultural knowledge, encyclopedic knowledge*, *subject knowledge* (e.g., PACTE 2003, p.58; 2005, p.610; 2007, p.330; 2011a, p.33; PACTE 2011b, p.319), *pragmatic knowledge* and *domain competence* (e.g., Göpferich 2009, p.20). In so doing, it implicitly equates CULTURE with background knowledge, through some of the sub-competences that make up *translation competence*. PACTE's first holistic model (1998) of translation competence described it as a system of interrelated sub-competences: (a) linguistic; (b) extra-linguistic; (c) instrumental/professional, (d) psycho-physiological, (e) transfer and (f) strategic. The extra-linguistic sub-competence was defined as:

> Implicit or explicit knowledge about the world in general and specific areas of knowledge: knowledge about translation (its ruling premises: types of translation unit, the processes required, etc.); *bicultural knowledge*; encyclopedic knowledge and subject knowledge (in specific areas). (PACTE, 2003, p.48)

The importance of CULTURE is underscored by a sub-competence specifically devoted to *knowledge*. PACTE clarified the three kinds of knowledge quoted above, and stated the differences between them:

> [The extra-linguistic sub-competence comprises] predominantly declarative knowledge, both implicit and explicit, about the world in general and special areas. It includes: (1) *bicultural knowledge* (about the source and target cultures); (2) *encyclopedic knowledge* (about the world in general); (3) *subject knowledge* (in special areas). (PACTE, 2003, p.48)

In later formulations of PACTE's model of translation competence, some sub-competences are described differently and their number is reduced to five (bilingual, extra-linguistic, knowledge about translation, instrumental and strategic), with physiological components now placed apart (PACTE, 2005,

p.610). *Knowledge about translation*—which formerly featured as part of the extra-linguistic and instrumental/professional sub-competences—is now an independent sub-competence comprising "knowledge of the principles that guide translation (processes, methods and procedures, etc.) and the profession (types of translation briefs, users, etc.)" (PACTE, 2005, p.610). *Domain-specific knowledge* was later incorporated into this sub-competence (PACTE, 2011a, p.33).

This way of understanding CULTURE as different kinds of knowledge that can be compartmentalised is also present in Göpferich's model of translation competence, that suggests six sub-competences: (a) communicative competence in at least two languages; (b) domain competence; (c) tools and research competence; (d) translation routine activation competence; (e) psychomotor competence and (f) strategic competence. For Göpferich (2009, p.20), *pragmatic knowledge* includes "knowledge about genre and situation-specific conventions in the respective cultures" and it is a relevant part of the *communicative competence in at least two languages*. In other words, knowing the set of interaction traditions and understanding the communicative conventions of a culture is seen as a competence related to language command. When considering the features of source texts in the TransComp project (Göpferich, 2009, p.26), *culture-specific* problems feature in the selected sample, along with lexical, syntactic, pragmatic, and creativity-demanding problems, among others. In the same line, Prassl (2010, p.79) relates different translation behaviours in students to different *culture-specific* problems. Hence, CULTURE seems to be conceived of as part of language command but also external to it.

3.2 Academic training and professional experience

Academic training is used as a criterion to select informants in several TPR experiments (e.g., Harmer, 2007; Jensen, 2008). Of course, formal academic training does not necessarily lead to total homogeneity in the population samples under study. For example, Harmer (2007) explored the performance of trainees in simultaneous interpreting in relay mode. In this experiment, two "relay" teams used a small corpus of direct (into English) and relay (into German) interpreting samples of the same original French text (Harmer 2007, p.80). Teams were formed with students with similar training and different mother tongues, working languages and levels of bilingualism. Bilingual command was controlled through students' subjective opinions.

This emphasis on language command is also present in Jensen (2008), who carried out an experiment to test whether an eye-tracker and the associated software correctly identified which words in a text the readers fixated on. Four reading tasks were presented to eight subjects, all faculty staff or graduate students at the CBS. Only students or teachers of English were selected for the experiment, as the tasks involved reading English aloud, although it did not really require any text comprehension. In my view, perhaps a prior test to test reading comprehension and efficiency in a foreign language might have been in order, because presuming FL proficiency in students just because they are enrolled in a translation and/or interpreting course has often proved to be risky.

Professional experience is also related to knowledge and it is also a usual parameter to profile informants in TPR experiments. For example, Jakobsen, Jensen & Meer (2007) studied the processing of twelve English idiomatic expressions in two different texts translated into Danish by five professional translators and sight-translated by five professional interpreters. They all had *several* years of experience and worked regularly from English. The threshold number of years to be considered a professional translator/interpreter was not explicit, even though professional experience was used to explain the differences

in translation strategies adopted by translators and interpreters when rendering idioms (Jakobsen, Jensen & Meer, 2007, pp.233-235).

The minimum threshold to be considered a professional has quite a leeway when several research projects are compared. For Angelone (2010, p.26), professional translation experience should be defined as "translation work generating at least 70 % of annual income over a minimum period of three months". Research on translation competence reported in PACTE (2011b) established the greater degree of expertise in "more than 5 years of professional experience guaranteed" (PACTE, 2011b, p.320).

For Sjørup (2008, p.61), two years of experience in translating (from and into) English-Danish were deemed sufficient to participate in her experiment. Sjørup ran a pilot study with an eye-tracker to identify how professionals process linguistic metaphors in a translation task. The informants were three Danish professional translators with a minimum of two years of experience from and into English. The study assumed that these informants would have no problem in understanding the texts from *The Economist* used in the experiment because "their education and work as professional translators qualifies them as skilled readers, and therefore the lexical difficulty level of the article in *The Economist* was not expected to represent any major cognition problems" (Sjørup, 2008, p.61). In other words, cultural background is considered a parameter for subject-profiling. This might derive from the assumption of equating *professional education* and *experience* with hypothetical cultural levels of the informants.

These understandings of culture as knowledge, academic training, professional experience and several combinations thereof feature in many other research efforts. Of course, the descriptions of the parameter CULTURE in the reports might be vaguer than in actual research, but information on their operationalisations is even more varied, thereby rendering such parameter next to useless in the profiling of informants, at least in terms of replicating experiments or comparing data sets from different projects. In order to redress the situation, a clear definition of culture on sound theoretical grounds seems necessary that may also be unambiguously operationalised. As for the theoretical foundations to develop it, I think they may lay in situated and social cognition.

4. CULTURE in situated and social cognition

Conceptualizations of CULTURE in situated and social cognition seem, a priori, good candidates for CT, because CT strives for coherence and it already draws from these frameworks, and also because they have devised some ways to operationalise it.

4.1 Situated cognition
Situated cognition covers those theories in cognitive science that emphasize the importance of environmental context for cognition (Reichelt, 2007, p.49). This approach relates social, behavioural/psychological and neural perspectives of knowledge and action, and claims that "every human thought and action is adapted to the environment, that is, situated, because what people perceive, how they conceive of their activity, and what they physically do develop together" (Clancey, 1997, pp.1-2). Situated cognition has challenged many academic disciplines related to the social and cultural environment, such as translation studies (Risku, 2002, 2010), artificial intelligence, linguistics, psychology, neuroscience, philosophy, anthropology and biology (Reichelt, 2007, pp.51-62).

Interesting contributions on the concept of CULTURE in situated cognition are

found in Oyserman & Lee (2007, 2008), Oyserman, Sorensen, Reber & Xiaohua Chen (2009), Oyserman & Sorensen (2009) and Oyserman (2011). For these scholars, a suitable concept of CULTURE should meet the following characteristics:

(1) Culture can be operationalised as a set of structures and institutions, values, traditions, and ways of engaging with the social and nonsocial world that are transmitted across generations in a certain time and place (…). It is located in a time and situated in a geographic and social place. (Oyserman & Lee, 2007, p.255.

(2) It is both *fixed* and *fluid*, both *situated* and *mobile*. (Oyserman & Lee, 2008, p.237)

(3) (…) culture is best understood as a multidimensional rather than a unitary construct. (…) This interpretation contrasts with the more common discourse on culture as single, unified, chronically accessible whole that is isomorphic with one's country of origin. (Oyserman & Sorensen, 2009, p.25)

(4) It is a human universal (…) It is also a specific meaning-making framework. (Oyserman, 2011, p.164)

In (1), CULTURE is related to the time and place where it happens: it is a *continuous phenomenon* specifically located in a *given place*. CULTURE is continuous, because it is neither perfectly transmitted to all members of a cultural group, nor is it perfectly uniform across all group members (Oyserman & Lee, 2007). This point also shows in (2): Oyserman & Lee (2008) argue that CULTURE is *fixed* because not all of its parts are transmitted over generations and it is *fluid* because it evolves and changes at the same pace the environment does. Hence, situated cognition envisions CULTURE as a shared, dynamic quality of a community of people located in a *given place* with geographical and social coordinates. Following (3), the culture of one person cannot be identified with a closed set of knowledge determined by birth. Rather, its multidimensional nature hints at aspects that will cross borders. Finally, (4) portrays CULTURE as a mental construct, a personal meaning-making framework, the glasses through which everyone sees reality and assigns meaning to it. It is also a *human universal*, in Brown's sense (1991, 2000, and 2004), in that everybody has one, however close or different to that of his or her neighbours. For human universals to work, a minimum sampling is required. In the case of culture, they are often the result of cross-cultural comparisons between two societies. Such comparisons (e.g., Americans are *individualists*, Japanese are *collectivists*) come from some sort of reification of CULTURE as a selection of isolated aspects. However, when directly linked to the nature of the experimental task and to the information dealt with in experimental texts and discourses, it may serve as a framework for operationalisation within situated cognition.

Some of the most relevant approaches to operationalise CULTURE within this framework rely on cross-cultural psychology to study how it influences the workings of the mind. To carry out this task, cultural psychologists use some basic organizing constructs that help them gain information on the *what* (content) and the *how* (process) of cognition. These constructs are usually conceived of as dimensions of cultural variation aimed at understanding the way CULTURE relates to social psychological phenomena (Triandis, McCuster & Hui, 1990, p. 323).

The most popular criterion today is *individualism* vs. *collectivism,* which assumes that cultures differ in the extent to which cooperation, competition, collectivist or individualist values are emphasized[2]. They are usually analysed

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[2] It is ironic that such parameter has gained prominence probably because of the growing interest on Japanese-American business communication in the 1980s. Now it enjoys some tradition; it is therefore culturally-bound in itself.

with two priming techniques: *conceptual priming* and *mind-set priming*. *Conceptual priming*, or *semantic priming*, implies activating specific mental representations such as traits, norms or goals that serve as interpretive frames in the processing of subsequent information. It activates —or contributes to (re)build—a concept or meaning structure. After a concept is primed, other concepts associated with it in memory are activated (Oyserman, Sorensen, Reber, & Xiaohua Chen, 2009). *Mind-set priming* activates procedural knowledge and involves the unconscious carryover of a previously stored mental procedure or way of making sense of the world (Oyserman, Sorensen, Reber, & Xiaohua Chen, 2009, p.219). A good example of *mind-set priming* would be one in which informants are asked to think about whether to engage in a goal and how to do it, to later find whether they all use the same thinking style in a second unrelated task. These processing strategies can be thought as part of a procedural toolkit used to thinking and reasoning about the world (Oyserman & Lee, 2008, p.250).

4.2 Social cognition

Social cognition is concerned with the ways people make sense of others and themselves. Scholars in this discipline view people as causal agents: like objects, people are perceived by others but, as opposed to objects, people perceive reality, and get closely involved with the observer's self. In social cognition, the concept of CULTURE has become highly sophisticated but it is not fully operational, since it lies at the crossroads of other disciplines, such as human cognition, cognitive neuroscience, sociology and psychology.

The definitions of CULTURE found in Tomasello (1999a, 1999b) and Vogeley & Roepstorff (2009) provide interesting insights for CT. Tomasello (1999a, p.509) envisions CULTURE as a frame for human adaptation, an *ontogenetic niche* (social environment) where human beings develop. Only humans engage in *cultural learning* (Tomasello, 1999b, p.6), a process made possible thanks to the ability of individual organisms to understand conspecifics in the "mental shoes" of close social members. People are able to learn not *just* from one another, but also *through* the other. In comparison with nonhuman primates, humans are often assumed to be the only beings that understand conspecifics as intentional agents like the self.

Social cognitive neuroscientists have started to consider the impact of CULTURE in their research about self-consciousness and intersubjectivity, which are relevant parameters for developing individual self-constructs and also for group formation. Vogeley & Roepstorff (2009) stress the growing need to build a concept of CULTURE that fits in potential empirical studies. In order to do so, they suggest two complementary definitions:

(1) We suggest that culture is not a rigid body of habits, beliefs and practices (that could be empirically sufficiently captured by mother language or nationality) but instead is a dynamical system of classification of individuals that is in continuous dialectic interaction and exchange with the individuals who constitute it and one that feeds back into social practices ('looping effect').

(2) (Culture is the) set of competences, practices and beliefs in groups that shapes and influences the group members and that is (via the looping effect) in continuous and dynamic exchange with its members (rather than being a rigid body of standardizations of language, habits or belief systems). (Vogeley & Roepstorff, 2009, p.511)

The notion of CULTURE is perceived as a dynamic and highly interactive system of concepts, rules and practices in a continuous interplay between collectivity and individuals. Conceptually speaking, the *looping effect* describes

the interaction of a cultural community and its individuals, who dynamically influence each other. That is, humans are shaped by CULTURE, but they also shape CULTURE themselves. In order to make these definitions operative, Vogeley & Roepstorff (2009, p.514) propose a model based on three axes: (1) references (self-other-differentiation and self-other-exchange), (2) levels of processing socially relevant information and (3) degree of cultural influences (variability). CULTURE is approached in two different views: 'universal' and 'particular.' The 'universal' view refers to the general features shared by all individuals (it influences and it is informative for the whole Homo Sapiens species), whereas the 'particular' view places emphasis on the specific features of each particular group and assumes that cognitive capacities vary across different cultural settings.

Some of the most relevant techniques to operationalise culture in social cognition research are priming procedures, which assess what is activated from memory by presenting some *attitude object*[3]. According to Fazio & Olson (2003, p.298), one of the best-known implicit measurement techniques is the Implicit Association Test (IAT). IATs basically measure differential associations of two target concepts with an attribute. This procedure seeks to measure implicit attitudes by measuring their underlying automatic evaluation. As in the case of situated cognition, a considerable amount of research using IATs is mainly concerned with "known-group" differences and preferences, e.g. positivity of Japanese-Americans and Korean-Americans towards their respective ingroups (Greenwald et al, 1998; cited by Fazio & Olson, 2003, p.307).

5. A research proposal

The aim of my project is to suggest a concept of *culture* that can be used in empirical research within the scope of CT. It thus needs to be coherent with the principles and assumptions common to second-generation cognitive paradigms and it must also be fairly easy to operationalise. For this reason, culture is conceived of as something dynamic, without the defined (metaphorical) borders suggested by functionalist approaches (cf. Martín de León 2008, p.8, on the division of *culture* into *paraculture*, *diaculture* and *ideoculture*). Coherent with situated and social cognitive accounts, CT envisions translation as an *interpersonal phenomenon* rather than as an *intercultural activity* (Muñoz, 1999, 2010a). In brief, this position assumes that translation takes place between *people,* not *between cultures*. *Cultures* involved in translation are just mental representations that writers, speakers, and also translators and interpreters construct in their minds to accommodate texts to the hypothetical expectations of the audience with regard to textual features, style, register, and the like. They are, therefore, informed by the specific backgrounds of participants and constrained by the specific, changing situation.

My project involves two steps: the first one is *metatheoretical,* as it aims to map the main strands of the study of culture in TS. The second step is empirical, for it will seek to look for experimental evidence on the resultant sketch of a definition.

5.1 Mapping *culture* in TS
Rejecting all TS understandings of culture beforehand would not be reasonable or scientific. A meta-analysis on the notion of culture in Translation Studies has been

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[3] "the thing (e.g. idea, person, behavior) that is accorded a favourable or unfavourable attitude" (Hewstone, Fincham & Foster, 2005, p.361).

designed[4]. It departs from the following assumptions:

1. There is no single, clear definition of *culture* in TS.
2. Not all definitions are equally valid for the purposes of empirical translatologies.
3. A comprehensive analysis of approaches to culture both within and without TS should help to set the grounds of a non-reductionist approach to culture that better fits the needs of empirical research within CT.

A *multilingual special corpus*[5] has been compiled, with articles from several TS journals. Most of them are indexed in ERIH and/or SJR (Scopus). Five journals (*Hermeneus, MonTI, Quaderns, Sendebar* and *Trans*) are published by Spanish universities (Table 1). Indexed journals are the main focus, the non-indexed Spanish journals being a subcorpus of obvious, special interest for this researcher.

Table 1. Journals of the corpus

Journal	Published since…
Babel	1955
Meta	1966
Target	1989
Sendebar	1990
Perspectives	1993
The Translator	1995
Interpreting	1996
Trans	1996
Quaderns	1998
TTR	1998
Hermeneus	1999
Across Languages and Cultures	2000
Translation & Interpreting Studies	2006
The Interpreter & Translator Trainer	2007
Translation Studies	2008
MonTI	2009

The time span for the articles is between 1990 and 2014. For the purposes of this project, using the so-called *cultural turn* (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990, section 2) as a landmark should allow tracing of the origins and the development of cultural orientations in the scholarly discourse of TS.

Years, languages and the combination of general and special issues make this

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[4] A methodological precedent can be found in Dong (2010, 2011) on mapping *cultural turn* and *transcultural concepts* in abstracts of Taiwanese journals, master and doctoral theses and abstracts of papers published in international journals listed in the Web of Science (WOS) database.

[5] "[…] this type of corpus is clearly different to *subcorpus*, as they do not have the main characteristics of a general corpus and they are not representative of any general linguistic use" (Pérez Hernández, 2002, my own translation). Retrieved from http://elies.rediris.es/elies18/232.html

corpus necessarily heterogeneous[6]. In exploratory studies, the relatively large amount of articles included much documentary noise, since *culture* is a common word in TS related articles. For this reason, all articles were analysed with a concordancer and the sample needs to fulfil the condition of including the word root *cultur** (covering Catalan, French, English and Spanish) or Kultur* (for German) either in their titles or in their abstracts. Some papers (mainly, early ones) do not include abstracts. In such cases, their introductory sections are being taken into account instead. The approach to building the corpus is based on Tymozcko's (1998, p.7) recommendations:

> In building for the future, CTS must take care not to diminish itself, falling into the fetishistic search for quantification that plagues many "scientific studies" and makes them ridiculous, empty exercises. Researchers using CTS tools and methods must avoid the temptation to remain safe, exploiting corpora and powerful electronic capabilities merely to prove the obvious or give confirming quantification where none is really needed, in short, to engage in the type of exercise that after much expense of time and money ascertains what common sense knew anyway.

Concordance lines are not being quantified but used as indicators of the relevance of the information in each article. Discourse patterns are not analysed; rather, data is used to build a complex conceptual system based on textual evidence in two steps: (a) compilation of citations, cocitations, context and co-text with the help of the concordancer and (b) analysis and study of each one, in order to fit them into wide *categories of departure* (Table 2). An analysis of cocitations and references is applied to trace the intellectual paths, e.g., references to anthropological works of Asad (Bahadir, 2004, p.819) or definitions of *culture* by scholars like Goodenough (Nord, 2005, p.869), Kussmaul, Göring (Lee, 2006, p.361), Newmark, Hoefstede, Trompenaars, Vermeer (Jeon & Brisset, 2006).

Table 2. Categories of departure, with some examples

DEFINITIONS	☐ Culture *(anthropological, social, philosophical, psychological approaches)* ☐ Translation *(cultural, intercultural translation)*
CONCEPTUAL METAPHORS	☐ Culture + translation *(bridge between cultures, cultural activity, cultural gap, cultural distance)* ☐ Culture + the role of the translator *(mediator, cultural filter, bridge, intercultural communicator)*
CULTURAL COMPETENCE	☐ *Knowledge of cultures and languages* ☐ *Encyclopaedic knowledge* ☐ *The bicultural translator*
CULTURAL REFERENCES	☐ *culturemes* ☐ *cultural bumps* (Leppihalme, 1997)
TRANSLATION PROCEDURES	*cultural adaptation, transliteration, cultural substitution, loans, cultural assimilation, acculturation, etc.*

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[6] For example, in *Meta*, volumes devoted to translation and interpreting in all the world are numerous: Hispano-Portuguese speaking areas (vol. 35/3, 1990), Russia (vol. 37/1, 1992), Northern Canada (vol. 38/1, 1993), Belgium (vol. 39/1, 1994), Brazil (vol. 41/2, 1996), Israel (vol. 43/1, 1998), China (vol. 44/1, 1999), Canada (vol. 45/1, 2000), Arab-speaking world (vol. 45/2, 2000) and Korea (vol. 51/2, 2006).

The interdisciplinary nature of TS yields a corpus with an interesting and varied landscape of approaches to culture within TS, such as those associated to postcolonial studies, translation historiography, literary translation, and translator and interpreter training. The notion of CULTURE in these areas is mainly approached from sociological, ethnographical and anthropological perspectives. Within more formalist translation theories, functionalist views are also central, and they lead to a wide range of studies focused on *culturemes* (Nord, 1997) or *cultural references* as a problematic or controversial factor in the study of translated products (Hagfors, 2003, Nord, 2003, Ku, 2009) and problem solving (Leppihalme, 1994, 1997). Definitions and their dependent concepts are then analysed from the perspective of CT to determine their goodness-of-fit and their potential for operationalisation in empirical research. Based on these analyses, a cognitive translatological definition of *culture* will be suggested and put to the test.

5.2 Can CULTURE be operationalised in CT?

Within CT, culture is mostly used in subject-profiling, so the ways it is operationalised should also consider at least that goal. An exploratory study is being planned where the informants of conjectured different cultural levels and/or configurations will be tested in various ways to profile their cultural level and idiosyncrasies. They will also carry out four translation tasks and three revision tasks. Informants will receive translation and revision briefs and other task or test-related information in writing. Data from tests and tasks will then be cross-referenced to try to determine which ones better correlate with text scores.

The informants will be at least 30 advanced translation students and 5 professional translators. Advanced translation students are enrolled in a translation workshop on texts for the general public at the University of Las Palmas de Gran Canaria School of Translation and Interpreting (third year of the current four-year degree program). The professional translators should have, at least, four years of professional experience (as of the length of their B.A. studies in Spain) and should work regularly from English into Spanish.

The sociolinguistic questionnaire by Presas and Martín de León (2014, pp.298-300) will be used to collect information on common parameters being used in TPR, such as years of experience, education, and stage in training, and also collect other potentially relevant and linguistic information. For the purposes of this project, several questions on personal definitions of culture are included at the end of this questionnaire. This information should help to correlate the different profiles with final results, and also with their personal views on culture and its role in translation.

Tests to profile informants as to their culture will be the information subtest in the WAIS3, and a test inspired by IAT methodologies (see also the last translation task). Together with these tests, informants will be requested to complete two brief tasks in order to identify their implicit theories about translation (Martín de León & Presas, 2011; Presas & Martín de León, 2011; Martín de León y Presas, 2014; and Presas & Martín de León 2014) and the analysis will focus on those instances where *translation* and *culture* are explicitly stressed. This additional information will be contrasted with main theoretical underpinnings in TS, CT, situated and social cognition.

The first translation task will be straightforward: translating the text *The iceberg that sank Titanic* (*BBC,* 308 words) with two keyloggers: one to record keystrokes and another one to record web searches. The TTs will only be evaluated in terms of quality by the researcher and used as a baseline for the other

translation and revision tasks. The use of the keyloggers in these tasks is only meant as training for the next four tasks. The remaining translation tasks will involve translating one text each of ca. 400-500 words with both keyloggers. One of the STs will be a review of Borodin's *Prince Igor* (Hall, 2014, *The Guardian*, 432 words)*,* specifically chosen due to its "high cultural content". The second one will be an extract from the User Manual of a mobile phone, chosen because of its innovative characteristics in style and register (*Fairphone*, 408 words). The three revision tasks will be carried out on (real and low quality) pre-translated texts from STs similar to those in the translation tasks, albeit with different topics (Aberdare National Park in Kenya, history of a company, information about the CIA, 1538 words in total)[7]. The last translation task will include ten segments with 'cultural' contents: four of them will be taken from the STs of the previous translation and revision tasks, two will be examples of 'cultural references' from the corpus (see section 5.1., and segments 2 and 5, Appendix II), while the rest will include names of institutions, puns, jokes, etc. Each segment is around 40-60 words. No instruction or hints about the supposed 'cultural' difficulties ('rich points' in Agar 1991, p.168; 1994, p.231; Nord, 1997, p.25) will be provided beforehand, but the subjects will be conceptually primed in advance. There will be no translation brief for this task (Translation Task 4, Appendix II). After completion, the subjects will be requested to write a brief comment about their perceptions on difficulty of the segments.

These activities will be carried out in class, and have been designed to fulfil the requirements of the curriculum. Translation and revision tasks will be graded and convenient feedback will be handed to the subjects at the end of the experiment. They can choose not to participate at the beginning of the experiment. On the other hand, professional translators will be asked to participate voluntarily.

Translation and revision outcomes will be blind evaluated by three unrelated raters in terms of quality, and the researcher will also analyse them in terms of ST comprehension, TT accuracy, polysemic terms and concepts. Information management and audience orientation will be determined through Choice Network Analysis (Campbell 2000a, 2000b; Hale & Campbell, 2002) and macro translation units (Alves & Vale, 2009). Log files from the keyloggers will be analysed in terms of pauses and corrections in TT stretches whose corresponding ST segments are assumed to include some "high cultural content." This information will be contrasted with the report on web searches by the second keylogger. All sources of data will be cross-referenced and statistically analysed to determine co-variance.

6. Conclusions

The review of the implicit notions on CULTURE in TPR yielded some vague operationalisations as knowledge (declarative, procedural), academic training and professional experience. These operationalisations do not seem very appropriate to sustain quantitative research and might lead to data misinterpretations. In order to determine whether this is a potential problem, a research project is in progress where different concepts and operationalisations of culture within Translation Studies, Translatology, and Cognitive Translatology in particular, will be identified and mapped by using the *cultural turn* of the 90s (Bassnett & Lefevere) as a starting point.

Pending the results of the meta-analysis, social cognition and situated

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[7] References for these materials in Appendix I.

cognition are hypothesised to be optimal sources to develop a definition and operationalisations of culture for empirical research purposes within CT. This will be tested experimentally with a battery of tests and translation and revision tasks. Results are expected by the beginning of 2016.

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Appendix I. References of materials (Translation and Revision Tasks 1-3)

Translation 1. *The iceberg that sank Titanic.* (n.d.). BBC History. Retrieved September 30, 2014 from http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/topics/iceberg_sank_titanic

Translation 2. Hall, G. (2014). *Prince Igor: Kolobov Novaya Opera Theatre of Moscow – review*. The Guardian. Retrieved September 30, 2014 from http://www.theguardian.com/music/2014/apr/02/prince-igor-kolobov-novaya-opera-theatre-moscow-review

Translation 3. *Your rights: a summary* (n.d.). This is your User Guide (Fairphone). Retrieved September 30, 2014 from https://fairphone.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/article_attachments/200370623/User_Guide_English.pdf

Revision 1.

ST. *Aberdares National Park* (n.d.). Retrieved September 30, 2014 from http://classicsafaris.co.ke/en/travelguide/top-destinations/38-aberdares-national-park-.html

TT. *Parque Nacional de Aberdares* (n.d.). Retrieved September 30, 2014 from http://classicsafaris.co.ke/es/guia-turistica/los-mejores-destinos/38-aberdares-national-park-.html

Revision 2.

ST. *Company History (Atritor Ltd.).* (n.d.). Retrieved September 30, 2014 from http://www.atritor.co.uk/en/history

TT. Historia de la empresa *(Atritor Ltd.).* (n.d.). Retrieved September 30, 2014 from http://www.atritor.co.uk/es/history

Revision 3.

ST. *About CIA*. (n.d.). Retrieved September 30, 2014 from https://www.cia.gov/about-cia/todays-cia/what-we-do

TT. *¿Qué hacemos? (Página web informativa de la CIA).* Retrieved September 30, 2014 from https://www.cia.gov/es/about-cia/todays-cia/what-we-do

Appendix II. Translation Task 4 Translate the following segments

1. Academics and writers have reacted angrily to plans to drop classic American novels including To Kill a Mockingbird and Of Mice and Men from the GCSE curriculum as a result of the insistence by the education secretary, Michael Gove, on students studying more British literature. *(45 words)*

2. Uncle Vernon stayed at home again. After burning all the letters, he got out a hammer and nails and boarded up the cracks around the front and back doors so no one could go out. He hummed 'Tiptoe through the Tulips' as he worked, and jumped at small noises. *(49 words)*

3. In 1909, Ilulissat was producing just one or two of these huge icebergs each year. The iceberg that sank Titanic would have been up to a mile long, displacing around a billion tonnes of seawater. It would have taken the iceberg over a year to edge its way down the 40-mile fjord. *(52 words)*

4. An American couple get hopelessly lost while driving through Canada. Over the objections of her husband, the wife calls out to a pedestrian, "Hey buddy, can you tell us where we are?" The pedestrian smiles sympathetically and says, "Saskatoon, Saskatchewan." After she rolls up the window, her husband says, "I told you it wouldn't do any good. They don't even speak English up here." *(64 words)*

5. Lou: Are you gonna order something, kid?
   Marty: Yeah, gimme a Tab.
   Lou: l can't give you a tab unless you order something.
   Marty: Right, gimme a Pepsi Free.
   Lou: You wanna Pepsi, pal, you're gonna pay for it. *(39 words)*

6. The US Congress has had oversight responsibility of the CIA since the Agency was established in 1947. However, prior to the mid-1970's, oversight was less formal. The 1980 Intelligence Oversight Act charged the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) with authorizing the programs of the intelligence agencies and overseeing their activities. *(60 words)*

7. It's an unlucky strike for congressional smokers. While female representatives may have been pleasantly surprised by Rep. John Boehner's decision to build a more convenient bathroom for them near the House floor, the speaker-in-waiting's fellow smokers won't gain any such conveniences. *(41 words)*

8. The Aberdare National Park covers the higher areas of the Aberdare Mountain Range of central Kenya. The Aberdares are an important water catchment area providing water to the Tana and Athi rivers and part of Central Rift and Northern drainage basins. *(41 words)*

9. The reason to read "Out of Order" is to get Justice O'Connor's succinct, snappy account of how today's court — so powerful, so controversial and so frequently dissected by the media — evolved from such startlingly humble and uncertain beginnings that it initially seemed like a jerry-built enterprise constructed on entirely ad hoc principles. *(52 words)*

10. On their first visit to the UK, the Kolobov Novaya Opera Theatre of Moscow bring with them a major 19th-century work that British companies seldom tackle. Despite its position close to the heart of the Russian repertory, Borodin's Prince Igor is a problematic piece. *(44 words)*

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