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Let's create what happens next: Translation as transformative experience

Alexandra Lukes, Anthony O'Connor, Hannah Auld, & Joseph Toolan

This article builds on a collective conference paper delivered at the 3rd International Scenario Conference in May 2024. The article discusses a final-year undergraduate class that took place at Trinity College Dublin in the autumn semester of 2023 entitled "Experimental Translation". It focuses on the experiences of the teacher and three students who took the class by analysing the relationship between experimentation, experience, and translation, and it presents examples of the creative work that the students produced for their end-of-semester assessments.

1 Introduction

This article builds on a presentation by the same title given at the 3rd International Scenario Conference at Trinity College Dublin on May 9–11, 2024 on the topic of *Presence in Performative Language Teaching, Learning, and Research*. The title of the talk was inspired by that of the workshop immediately preceding it on the programme convened by Manfred Schewe and Susanne Even, entitled "Nobody knows what's going to happen next: Exploring our (co-) presence". Schewe and Even's title contains three ideas that play an important role when thinking about presence: unpredictability, exploration, and collectivity. I held these three ideas in mind when preparing my own conference paper: I chose to focus on a final-year undergraduate module that I teach at Trinity College Dublin called "Experimental Translation" because experimentation is both exploratory and unpredictable; and I wanted to include in the presentation itself the students who had taken the class, in order to deliver a collective paper. Three students — Anthony O'Connor, Hannah Auld, and Joseph Toolan — agreed to join me at the conference, where I spoke about the class from my perspective and they described their experiences and creative work. The aim of the talk was to think about the connection between presence and translation not only in theory but also in practice, that is, we wanted to look at the theoretical role of presence in understanding how translation is a form of transformation, but we also wanted to show the first-hand results of that transformative experience, with the teacher and the students in each other's presence.

To this end, during my part of the talk, I addressed the unusual format of our collective presentation. I say unusual because, while researchers sometimes refer to their students'

experience of the class by including quotations from their feedback in their conference papers, they don't typically invite the students to participate in the conference presentation itself. There are a few reasons why I chose to do so. The most obvious reason was that having the students present in the room seemed like a fitting way to engage more deeply with the topic of the conference because it allowed us to explore the notion of presence not only on a theoretical level but also on a practical one. A second reason was that, as a researcher and teacher drawn to experimental topics (my specialty is avant-garde literature and translation), I was also interested in experimenting with form. But the main reason was because these particular students, more than any other group I have taught in the past, were willing to embrace experimentation and they were *present*: not only did they consistently show up to class, even though it finished at 6pm and took place in a building outside the main Trinity campus, but they grappled seriously with the material and pushed themselves outside their comfort zones with curiosity and open minds.

During the talk, we addressed many broad topics, including the relationship between presence and absence, translation pedagogy, student experiences and feedback, experimentation and creativity. For this article, I have chosen to focus on the pedagogical approaches that paved the way for the students' creative work. The text of this article is thus divided into two parts. In my section, I provide a theoretical contextualisation for the students' essays by describing the methodology I employed in the classroom to teach and think about translation, and by offering some examples. In the second section, the students discuss the creative work that they produced for their end-of-semester assessments.

1 Pedagogical approaches (Alexandra Lukes)

In this section, I would like to describe my aims for the module and how I taught it. I will begin by giving some background to contextualize how translation is typically used in foreign language teaching and to explain how, in my view, a class on experimental translation challenges conventions. I will discuss how I designed and taught the class and how the students responded. Throughout, I will reference the feedback that the students presented at the conference.

Broadly speaking, translation is typically seen as a useful tool that allows people to access texts written in languages they don't speak. In a language learning context, translation is often used to teach grammar and vocabulary, by taking the meaning of a text in English, say, and reproducing it in correct French. In this approach, translation has a functional role, that is to improve students' mastery of the grammatical structures of the language they are learning. However, as Susan Bassnett, one of the founding figures of the discipline of translation studies, observes, "[p]recisely because translation is perceived as an intrinsic part of the

foreign language teaching process, it has rarely been studied for its own sake" (Bassnett, 2002, p. 12). Thus, Bassnett argues, "[t]ranslation has been perceived as a secondary activity, as a 'mechanical' rather than a 'creative' process" (2002, p. 13).

Such a perception of translation as "secondary" and "mechanical" relies on a conception of foreign language learning that is also "mechanical" in the sense of being based solely on the acquisition of grammar rules. Yet, learning to speak a foreign language is so much more. For starters, it requires attention to what translation theorist and practitioner Douglas Robinson calls the "the embodied performance" (Robinson, 2003, p. 81) that is language use. Robinson notes:

> Part of learning a language well is watching what native speakers' bodies do when they speak it: how they move their mouths, how they gesture and shift their weight, how they stumble over words, where and how they pause, how they stress for emphasis – in general, how they stage their speech… You have to sensitize yourself to body signals, to project yourself imaginatively into the other person's body. In a sense, the foreign-language learner has to be at once a playwright, a director, and an actor, in the foreign language: he or she must generate out of fleeting impressions living, breathing images of native speakers inside his or her own body, create them as vehicles for identification – and then become them, grow into them, body them forth. (Robinson, 2003, p. 80)

Translation, then, is not merely a tool for demonstrating knowledge of grammatical rules, but it can also be a place "to learn to stage and restage language, to perform it in and with and through our bodies" (Robinson, 2003, p. 81). Translation can help us explore what it *feels* like to speak more than one language, how we change depending on the language we are speaking, and how languages are connected to emotions. My notion of experimental translation was intended to give material substance to these experiences, to lean into the performative dimension that is involved in learning a foreign language, with its focus on the physicality of the experience.

To this end, my pedagogical approach was guided by the work of translation theorist and practitioner Clive Scott, who is one of the most influential translators into English of French poetry of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. For Scott, translation is a form of deep reading that involves mind and body — in his words, translation, like reading, is "a whole-body experience" (Scott, 2012a, p. 11). Scott's approach is informed by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology in its attentiveness to what Scott calls "the psycho-physiological responses of reading, the dynamics of readerly perception" (Scott, 2012b, p. 1). When I presented Scott's ideas to the students early on in the semester, I chose to focus on one

example in particular that, I believe, illustrates what he means by "the phenomenology of reading" (Scott, 2012b, p. 17). I reproduce the quote here in full:

> Reading a piece of French prose, for example, I come across 'elle rougit'. I return to this observation after reading the whole work and write: 'at this point, her blushing reveals that she has become aware of her error, but it throws into question whether she will ever be able openly to admit it'. This is literary criticism, a metalanguage, an assignment of signification which, according to Merleau-Ponty, looks to take possession of its object, of the objects's meaning (1969: 128–29), so that linguistic experience is superseded by, translated into, conclusions; literary criticism is a withdrawal from the quick of reading. When I come to translate this passage, I render 'elle rougit' as 'she blushed'. My readers pass over it without comment. What could be less controversial, more standard? But while these clauses 'mean' the same, enjoy an unproblematic *structural* identity, they do not have a *substantial* identity. And it is with that substance that the phenomenology of reading is concerned. The /u/ of 'rougit' involves a rounding of the lips which gathers the colouring, the reddening, into a circle and calls up the roundness of the cheeks. The connection with cheeks is doubly endorsed by the fact that /uʒ/ is the reverse of 'joue'. The voicedness of the /ʒ/ makes this reddening a 'loud' or public manifestation of embarrassment. The accent on the final syllable '-git' produces a sharp, climactic heightening of colour. 'Blushed' on the other hand, begins with a sudden onset in the lips, in the voiced bilabial stop /b/; then, by focusing itself on '-lush-', it not only suggests attractive abundance, but directs our attention, not to cheeks, but to downcast eyes ('lash'), while the /ʃ/ phoneme, an unvoicing of the French /ʒ/, genders the blush in 'she' (ʃi:). In the monosyllable 'blushed', the reddening does not suddenly become more intense, in a two-syllable progression, but spreads out from the stressed centre, and the unvoicedness of /ʃ/ and /t/ not only lets the blushing gradually disperse, but also produces overtones of modesty and self-withdrawal. 'Elle rougit' and 'she blushed' do not both mean 'her face reddened'; they each present their own complex perceptual contact with the world, with different coordinates of consciousness, different experiences of facial behaviour. (Scott, 2012b, p. 63; emphasis in the original)

Scott's example gives concrete shape to a conception of translation that is not merely focused on rendering the same meaning from one language to another, but on *experiencing* the different ways in which each language constructs meaning and on exploring the effects of those differences. Ultimately, this approach may still use translation as a tool for learning language, but in the embodied sense I discussed above.

I created my module with these ideas in mind and with the intention of broadening the students' understanding of what translation can be. I went back to the etymology of the term, from the Latin *translatio*, which means "to carry across", and I noted that nowhere in the definition does it say *what* is carried, nor *where* it is carried across to or from, nor *who* does the carrying. Traditionally, we have assumed that the object of that carrying is the meaning of a text, but it does not have to be. Instead, we can carry over the form of a text by, for instance, translating its sounds or its syntax; we could also translate words into their opposites; or play with typography and punctuation; and we can decide to translate a written text into another medium (image, song, or dance). This expanded idea of translation resonated with the students, as Joseph noted in his feedback: "From the first moments of the class when we discussed what translation means, Alexandra had me and the rest of the class hypnotised".

I designed my module to explore these various possibilities. Each session was a two-hour block, so I divided it equally between theory and practice. In the first hour, we discussed theoretical readings, and in the second hour, students translated in groups a text that put into practice the theory we had just discussed. Joseph noted that the combination of "a grounding in theory and a focus on hands-on practice allowed us to exercise what we had just learnt, rather than just passively absorbing it"; and he observed that the choice of texts and translation exercises were thought-provoking: "The material had me thinking about translation in a way I had never before. I realised that there is a host of different translation techniques and perspectives which completely shifted my opinion on translation once I realised what it can be if you open your mind".

The topics we covered were varied. For instance, we explored homophonic translations of nursery rhymes, that is, the translation of sounds only, illustrated by examples such as Luis d'Antin van Rooten's book *Mots d'Heures: Gousses, Rames* where a nursery rhyme like "Humpty Dumpty" is translated into the French sound-alike "Un petit d'un petit" (van Rooten, 1967, n.p.), which, if back-translated into English, literally means "a little of a little". We translated children's picturebooks by experimenting with different target audiences, such as transferring the story from a French context to an Irish one, or translating the book for an adult readership. And we practiced antonymic translations, namely, translating words into their opposites. I wanted the students to have fun with these activities and explore their creativity. This involved allowing them to play with different possibilities with a trial-and-error mentality. Such a perspective is particularly pertinent for antonymic translation where there is no right or wrong answer: indeed, what is the opposite of "knife"? Is it "fork", "spoon", or something else? Is the opposite of "shoes" "hat" or "bare feet"?

Each exercise was devised as a means to study broader theoretical questions. For instance, one of the activities involved producing a literal translation of idiomatic expressions such as

"to jump on the bandwagon" or "it's raining cats and dogs". The theoretical point that this exercise was designed to explore was Walter Benjamin's essay "The Task of the Translator" (Benjamin, 1923/1996), which the students read in advance of the class and which is one of the founding texts of translation studies. In the essay, Benjamin proposes a counterintuitive theory of translation that, roughly put, foregrounds syntax over semantics, with the aim of drawing attention to how languages differ in the way they construct meaning. By translating idiomatic expressions literally, the students discovered these differences and could thus explore broader questions pertaining to how language(s) work. To this point, Anthony stated in his feedback: "This module gave me an entirely new perspective not only on language learning, but also on the question 'what is language?'".

In terms of teaching methods, I went back to Scott's work and adapted the translation processes he describes using in his own practice, which foreground the translator's responses to the text they are translating. According to Scott, when we read a text, there are a host of reactions and sensations that are set in motion by our encounter with that specific text in the moment in which we encounter it. In addition to the words on the page, we are affected by the font in which those words are written, the layout of the words, including blank spaces and line breaks, as well as punctuation marks. Scott calls this chain of responses "the kinaesthetics of reading" (Scott, 2012a, p. 12) which, as the term "kinaesthetics" indicates, involves the perception of movement (from the Greek, *kinein*, "to move" and *aisthēsis*, "perception"). Translation belongs to this process because the translator is first and foremost a reader who not only "register[s] the text in [their] body" but then also "inscrib[es] in text [their] bodily responses" (Scott, 2012a, p. 12). To explain how this works, Scott gives the following example:

> This translation of the kinaesthetics of reading is easier to understand when it involves the palpable gestures of the 'reader's' body. I hear a piano-piece. I go about humming it. I give more relief to certain passages, increase rubato, get a few notes wrong for my own convenience. I am practising a kind of kinaesthetic empathy; my body weds and enacts the energies, the impulses, the hesitations let loose in the music, translates the music towards my own viscera. I am reading *and* translating the music as a single, undivided act. I have translated a piano into a vocal organ, into different timbres, different respiratory patterns, different degrees of tonal definition. As I pass the music through my body, I write an arrangement of it. I am not describing or analysing the piece, I am humming it. Translation provides us with the opportunity to insert our reading back into the text, our humming back into the music. (Scott, 2012a, p. 12; emphasis in the original)

In Scott's description, translation is a transformative experience: it is the place in which the reader of the original text can show how the process of reading that specific text has changed

them. But translation is also experimentation, in the sense of trial-and-error: in Scott's example, by humming the song, he is testing how it feels in his body, and by getting some notes wrong, he is discovering something new about himself in his encounter with that individual piece of music. Scott ties this discussion to performance, arguing that translation studies has much to learn from performance studies. He notes:

> All students of literature [and, by extension, literary translators] should have a training in practical drama, for perhaps three reasons: first, in order to understand clearly the symbiotic relationship between the linguistic and the somatic […]; second, in order to master the arts of improvisation […]; third, and most important of all, to understand the gulf that exists between the written text (the script) and the performed/oral text (the dict). (Scott, 2012a, pp. 86–7)

The students in my class discovered that, by paying attention to how texts spoke to them and by engaging their imagination, they were not limited to reproducing the meaning of a text through verbal language; rather, they could use painting, dance, or any other artistic form of expression that *performed* their personal reading of the text they were translating. So, for instance, when we translated idiomatic expressions, the students came up with creative renditions for "to jump the gun", where one group drew a gun on a piece of paper, placed it on the ground, and jumped over it, while another group performed it as a song.

In addition to encouraging students to notice different aspects of textuality and their individual responses, I asked them to pay attention to how they experienced themselves in the classroom space. I wanted them to reflect not only on *what* they were learning but also on *how* they were learning, in a physical sense. Susanne Even and Manfred Schewe describe "the shift from the *what* to the *how*" as characteristic of "a performative orientation of pedagogy" which, they argue, "opens up rooms for the perception of aspects that have long flown under the pedagogical radar—e.g. the connection of language and body in the process of meaning making" (Even & Schewe, 2016, p. 178; emphasis in the original). In this spirit, I brought physical movement into the learning process — which was also a way of incorporating into the practice of translation its etymological origins as movement. For instance, in each class, I asked the students to move around the classroom and pay attention to how moving their body changed their perspective. If they sat in the same place in each class, I encouraged them to change seats the next time, and I invited them to talk to someone they didn't know. I also asked them to notice something new about their surroundings.

In their feedback, the students remarked upon the positive effects of these techniques in creating an environment that fostered new connections: Joseph noted that the class was "a relaxed environment where we were all free to engage with the material and discuss it. We

bonded while working on our translations in class"; Hannah said that "the class was taught in a very relaxed manner, we were encouraged to ask questions and engage with each other as a group. We moved around a lot so we could discuss with everyone in the class"; and Anthony remarked, "I didn't think it was possible to see such a drastic shift in which elements of language learning I valued the most so late in my degree, but I did. And this was entirely as a result of the way Alexandra conducted the class i.e. the hands-on workshop approach, and the friends I made in that class".

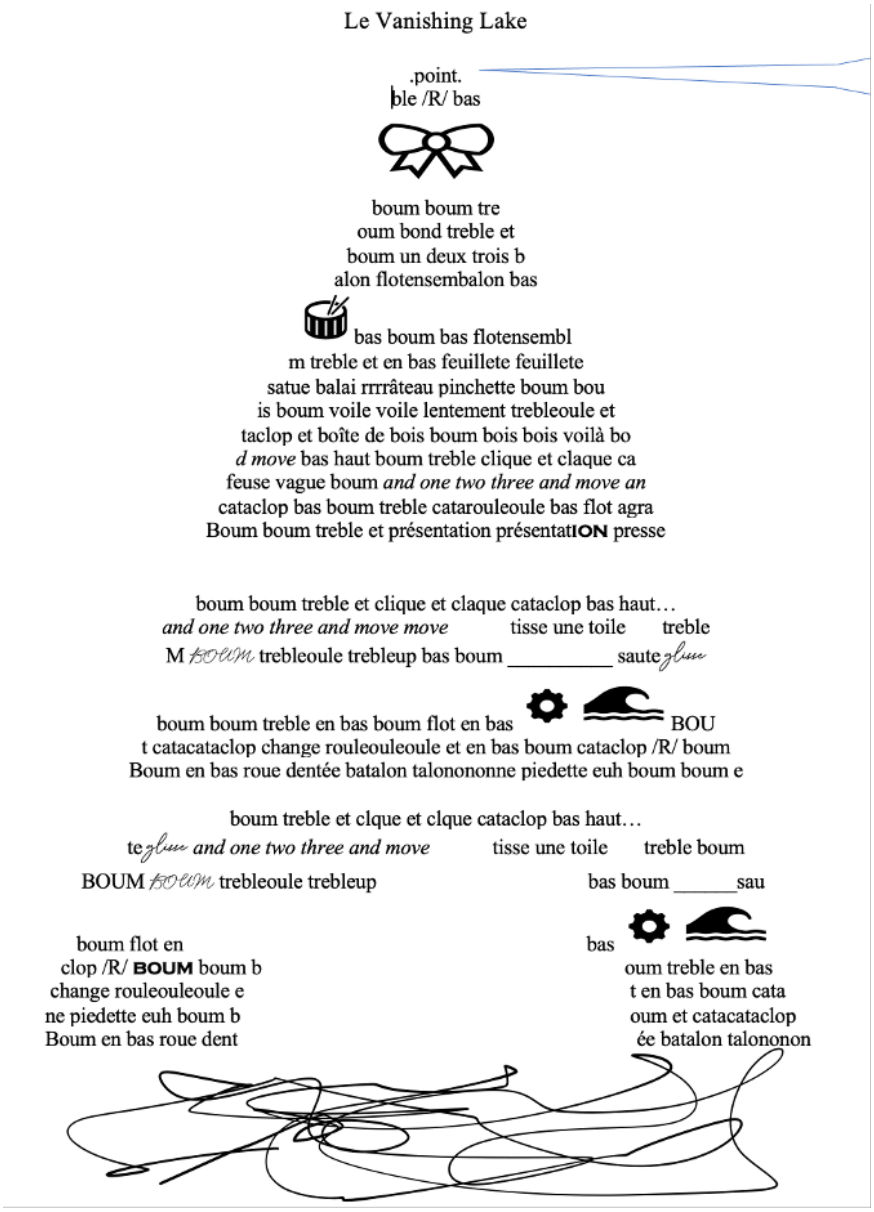
As the semester progressed, the students became gradually more comfortable exploring their personal responses to the material and expressing their creativity. By opening themselves to the performative dimension of language learning, they also became more present to themselves. As Joseph notes in his section below, "imagination ties in well with 'presence' because you must be with yourself and really reflect on what you want to communicate". As a result, each student produced an end-of-semester essay that was both original and personal. The three examples below illustrate the impressive range of the students' work. Anthony translated into a visual poem an Irish traditional dance that he had choreographed and performed at an Irish dance competition. Hannah translated a poem by poet and jazz critic Jacques Réda, which was inspired by an improvised jazz piece by musician Bill Evans. Joseph chose to play with children's literature and produced an antonymic translation of Dr. Seuss's *Green Eggs and Ham*. Here are their projects, in their own words.

2 Anthony O'Connor's creative work

For my assignment, I completed an intermedial translation of a modern Irish set dance into a visual poem and wrote a commentary on the poem. In this section, I will focus specifically on the elements of my translation relating to structure and form, as well as the coining of new words. With that in mind, here is a snippet of the video or "source text" to be watched before I discuss the translation: https://youtu.be/T5LBpwrbNOg (00:30–1:00).

The Vanishing Lake was composed by Francis Ward in 2011 and was inspired by the Loughareema lake of County Antrim in Ireland. This lake is peculiar geographically speaking, as it has three lakes flowing into it, yet due to the limestone terrain it often fills and then vanishes. The number three stood out to me as Irish dancers perform three routines at competitions and most of these routines have three steps. Additionally, the set dance round is commonly acknowledged as the "showpiece" round. With this in mind, I decided to translate this dance into a poem which takes the form of the Eiffel Tower (Figure 1), as not only does it have three levels, but it also has the power to encapsulate the "wow factor" of the set dance. You will have noticed that while Irish dancers move their feet quite rapidly, our arms remain by our side, demonstrating how movement and non-movement can coexist: just as you can

climb the Eiffel Tower to get a view of the city, the tower itself does not move. Moreover, the structure of this poem also serves as a "translation" of an Irish dancer's physique which is usually quite slim on top, with muscular legs allowing them to root their feet into the ground. The dickie bow icon thus acts as a visual cue for the statuesque body of the dancer.



Anois, iomatheoir céad is a cúig ag damhsa 'An Loch a Rith Amach' ag seasca a hocht.

Moi!, Moi! *Moi!* Soi sûr de toi!, Sois confiant!, 20 octobre 2023, p. Sois présent! - Présente-toi!

Figure 1: Anthony O'Connor's translation.

One of the readings from the class that stuck in my mind was Clive Scott's discussion of translating "she blushed" to "elle rougit" (Scott, 2012b, p. 63). For me, "blushed" is very soft and shows how embarrassment slowly takes over the face, turning it red. With this you can almost feel yourself going red. However, the use of the French /R/ in "rougit" is a lot sharper. It portrays embarrassment as a feeling that is sudden, sharp and intense. So yes, while you

might open a dictionary and the verb "to blush" is translated as "rougir", I don't feel they evoke the same emotion. For this reason, I created many of my own French words. This allows the reader to almost sing the poem in time with the music and taste the words; thus, the unification of song and dance enables the reader to be present with the dancer on stage. The poem starts at the bottom of the page and the beginning "boum en bas" is loud with the broad vowel sounds forcing you to use your mouth. However, the following "roue dentée" adds a softer quality being a feminine noun. Furthermore, any time a movement relies on planting the toes into the ground, I translated this as "bas" (down) as opposed to the French word for toe which is "orteil", as I felt this was more impactful. Therefore, movements where the weight is shifted from the toe ("bas") to the heel ("talon") are translated as "batalon". Other examples, such as "catacataclop", show the repetition in the horse-like "clip-clop" sound. The same can be said for the continuous spinning and rolling of the ankles in "rouleouleoule". By forcing the reader to use their mouth to enunciate each word and, thus, join the dancer on stage for each step, there is an allusion to the homophonic translation of "presence" and "presents". Otherwise put, the congruence of the mind, body, and soul through all these artforms is recognised as a gift to ourselves and to the audience.

To conclude, I would like to note that my translation functions as a standalone poem where each reading demonstrates something new about the ways in which we use and don't use language. It is important to recognise that this whole project relied on the *presence* of an audience, musicians, teachers, classmates, and many more individuals. As a final year student, the translation of choreography from studio to stage also captures the large focus placed on the relationship between theory and practice and the applications or *translations* of the material covered in my language classes to the real world. Furthermore, as it is not possible to recreate the exact performance in the video, the translation can be deemed in some ways "time sensitive". The question of time calls for a reflection on the personal, professional, and academic growth that I have experienced since coming to Trinity College Dublin and how in many ways my classmates and I have been *experimenting* and *translating* for many years in our own ways. Thus, this project was a way to unlock, thanks to Alexandra's help, the full potential of skills that we were already implementing whilst simultaneously challenging our creativity. While my degree was composed of numerous translations, essays, written exams and oral exams, each one of those assessments started with a single letter. Therefore, this poem serves as a reminder that those letters which formed countless words mirror the steps of an educational dance that captivated me and gave me the gift or "present" of new experiences, knowledge, and friendship.

3 Hannah Auld's creative work

I did my essay for "Experimental Translation" on a poem written by Jacques Réda about a solo jazz instrumental piece by Bill Evans called "Peace Piece", improvised at the end of a recording session in 1958. This piece is my favourite of all time, and I was delighted to discover Réda's poem to go along with it. The song itself is gentle and soulful and, personally, what it evokes for me is a feeling of loneliness, especially at the beginning. It is played in C major, a fundamental music key, highlighting the simplicity of "Peace Piece". Despite many requests to play the song at performances, for Evans, it was unique, and he didn't want to play it again, it was an improvisation. Jacques Réda, the poet and jazz critic, published a book called *Jouer le Jeu* in 1985, which features a series of essays on different jazz pianists, ranging from Duke Ellington to Oscar Peterson, and includes a poem, almost hidden at the very end of the book, called "Peace Piece" (Réda, 1985, p. 207). When I read it, it encapsulates the feeling that is evoked in me when I listen to Evans' song.

My aim was to translate the poem into English, keeping the rhyme and the message of peace, while maintaining the timeless feeling of loneliness evoked by both Evans and Réda. I translated it line by line, I moved the syntax around a bit, and tried very hard to keep the rhyme.

> Comme ces longs rayons dorés du soir qui laissent
>
> Le monde un peu plus large et plus pur après eux
>
> Sous le trille exalté d'une grive, je peux
>
> M'en aller maintenant sans hâte, sans tristesse:
>
> Tout devient transparent. Même le jour épais
>
> S'allège et par endroits brille comme une larme
>
> Heureuse entre les cils de la nuit qui désarme.
>
> Ni rêve ni sommeil. Plus d'attente. La paix. (Réda, 1985, p. 207)

> Like the long and golden evening rays which leave
>
> The world greater and purer along their way
>
> Below the excited song of a thrush, I may
>
> Go now with no rush, no grief:
>
> Everything becomes clear. Even the daily heaviness must cease
>
> And somewhere a teardrop sparkles bright
>
> Happily, among the eyelashes of the enchanting night.
>
> No more wishing, no more sleeping, no more expectations. Peace.
>
> (Hannah Auld's translation)

The last line is, for me, a synopsis of both the poem and the music, so I maintained the repetition, and ended with the very important last word, peace.

I also decided to experiment with movement, and I pasted my English translation of the poem onto an image of the keyboard of a piano, dividing each line onto a different key (Figure 2). This makes the reader turn their head and move their eyes up and down, mirroring the way a piano key is played. The reader turning their head is also a homage to Bill Evans, as he was known for leaning his head very close to the piano when he played, while also turning it to one side, as if in deep, emotional pain. I also experimented with typography, using a similar font that is used in sheet music for the dynamics. My language and image choices together aim to present a full visual and active experience, which is important in paying homage to Evans.

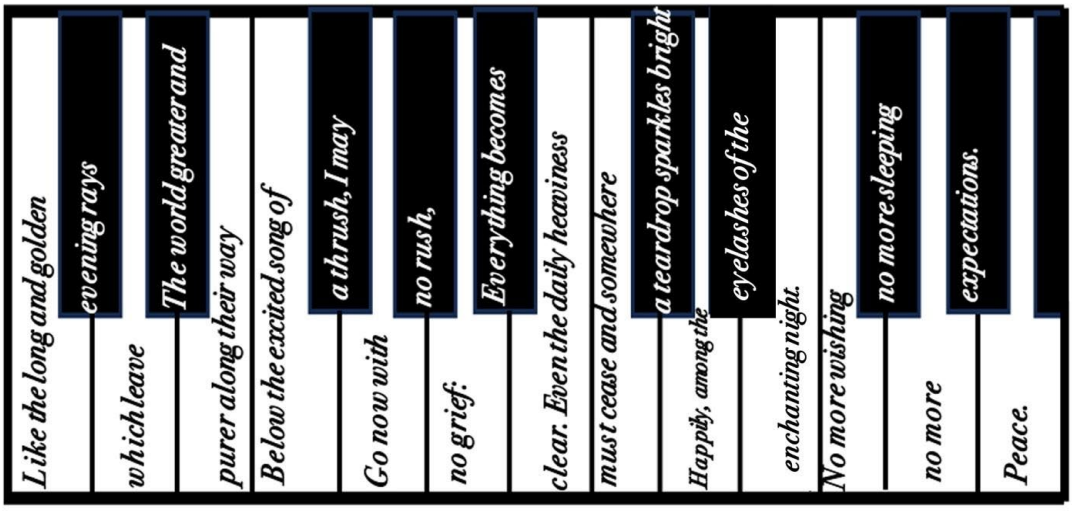


Figure 2: Image of a piano with Hannah Auld's English translation dispersed among the keys.

4 Joseph Toolan's creative work

During the module "Experimental Translation", we looked at translating children's literature and the difficulties it can pose. The idea of translating children's literature was particularly interesting for me because children are much more open to an experimental approach to literature, so it was a natural choice. I chose one of the most influential children's authors, Dr. Seuss. He sought to write children's books that were easy to understand and he wanted to make reading fun, starting with the famous *The Cat in The Hat* which he wrote using around 250 simple words, then *Green Eggs and Ham* with just 50. He himself used these kinds of constraints in his writing so I felt his work was perfectly suited to an experimental translation.

I decided to do an antonymic translation of *Green Eggs and Ham*, putting everything into the opposite. This allowed me to get imaginative with my translation and push the limits of language and logic. So, naturally I called this *Poulet rouge sans fromage* (red chicken without cheese). This resulted in some interesting renderings of the original text. For example, I decided that the opposite of a fox would be "un hippopotame" (hippopotamus). Obviously, there is no logical reason as to why the opposite of a fox is a hippopotamus, but I tried to use my imagination and see it the way a child might. Of course, imagination ties in well with "presence" because you must be with yourself and really reflect on what you want to communicate. Not only did this make the translation more dynamic and interesting, but most importantly, it was fun!

Another element that I had to contend with while doing this translation were the illustrations. I am no artist, so illustrating my own translation was not an option. My solution to this was to try and get a similar effect to that of the pictures by using just the text. So I played with typography, using different fonts, font sizes, positions on the page, and colours to maintain the word-image interplay created by the original illustrations (Figure 3).

> I would not, could not, in the rain.
>
> Not in the dark. Not on a train.
>
> Not in a car. Not in a tree.
>
> I do not like them, Sam, you see.
>
> Not in a house. Not in a box.
>
> Not with a mouse. Not with a fox.
>
> I will not eat them here or there.
>
> I do not like them anywhere! (Seuss, 1960/2019, n.p.)

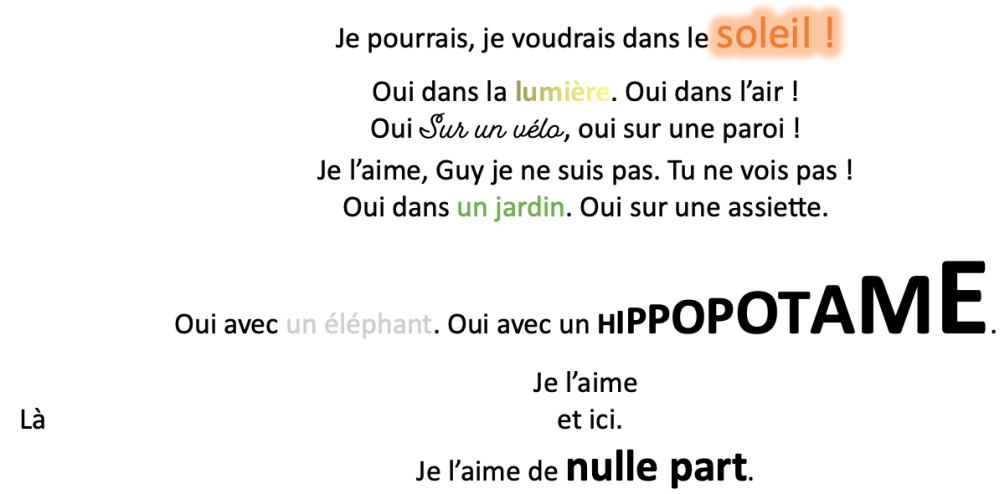


Figure 3: Joseph Toolan's translation.

Let us take the example of "hippopotame". You can see how the letters grow on the page conveying the large, imposing sense of a hippopotamus. Furthermore, when you look at the word "soleil" (sun), you can see how the letters glow like the sun itself. This way of formatting the text sparks the imagination and manages to translate the "sense" of the illustrations into the words themselves. This allowed me to play with language and to show what you can achieve when you push the limits of conventional writing and translation rules.

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