

**Translating *Le coup de la girafe*:
A register analysis of fictional orality**

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Abstract

This thesis examines fictional orality through the lens of register theory, and the application of these concepts in translation. Fictional orality is created by the intersection of two registers that are quite distinct in some languages and cultures: the more formal, written literary register, and the informal, spoken register. This results in an entirely new hybrid register, which seeks to balance the spontaneous, informal language of natural speech with the conventions of formal, written language. I aim to explore this hybrid register in my translation of *Le coup de la girafe* by Camille Bouchard. The story is told in a first-person, present-tense narration, so fictional orality is ubiquitous in the novella, and it is an excellent text to use for this purpose.

In this thesis, I first lay out the theoretical framework for my translation by delving into register theory and fictional orality, and how these notions have been adapted to translation studies.

Then, drawing on this framework, I discuss how I applied these concepts in my approach to the translation of *Le coup de la girafe*, using specific examples from the text. After this, I conclude by presenting the translation itself.

Résumé

Cette thèse examine l'oralité feinte dans l'optique des niveaux de langue (« registres »), et l'application de ces concepts en traduction. L'oralité feinte est créée par l'intersection de deux niveaux de langue qui sont très distincts dans certaines langues et cultures : le niveau de langue littéraire écrit, plus soutenu, et le niveau de langue oral familier. Il en résulte un niveau de langue hybride entièrement nouveau, qui essaie de balancer le langage familier et spontané de la parole naturelle avec les conventions du langage écrit soutenu. Je vise à explorer ce niveau de langue hybride dans ma traduction de *Le coup de la girafe* par Camille Bouchard. Cette histoire est racontée à l'aide d'une narration dans la première personne et dans l'indicatif présent, alors l'oralité feinte est omniprésente dans le roman, et il est un excellent texte pour cet objet.

Dans cette thèse, je commence par exposer le cadre théorique de ma traduction en présentant la théorie des niveaux de langue et l'oralité feinte ainsi que la manière dont ces notions ont été adaptées à la traductologie. Ensuite, je puise dans ce cadre pour discuter de comment j'ai mis en œuvre ces concepts dans mon approche à la traduction de *Le coup de la girafe* à l'aide d'exemples particuliers du texte. Enfin, je conclus par la présentation de la traduction elle-même.

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1. Introduction

When I first read Camille Bouchard's *Le coup de la girafe*, I was struck by something that I have often noticed when reading French literature: the way the characters spoke to each other seemed off to me, but in a way I could not quite pinpoint. The dialogue did not seem quite authentic. Indeed, the novella is narrated from a first-person point of view, so not only the dialogue but the entire narration possessed this quality. While some of this can be dismissed as the author's choice of style and the narrator's particular idiolect, this seems to be widespread in French literature, with dialogue written in a level of language that is different from those levels of language that go towards its making; it does not come across as true spoken French, but it is not typically written in a pure literary French either. While certainly not all English literature has realistic dialogue, it does generally seem to me to be more natural in these books, likely because the divide between written and oral French is greater than that between written and oral English. In French, when these two channels come together in the form of dialogue, the resulting language tends to be more distinct, whereas in English, the language is less marked. I began to ponder this from a translation point of view, wondering how to best deal with this distinction. Was there a way to determine precisely what was "off" about the dialogue in this novella? I began to explore the scholarship surrounding the concept of fictional orality. The fact that the entire story is related in the first person means orality is pervasive throughout the text, and the realism of this orality was of particular interest to me. The particular register of fictional orality was a logical avenue of exploration for my translation.

Because this question has to do with level of language (i.e. register) and mode in particular, examining this dilemma through the lens of register theory seemed to be another obvious and logical way to approach my translation. Register theory also allows for a descriptive analysis,

which can help pinpoint the various features that hold sway over the language of a text. By examining register theory and how it has been absorbed into various translation models, I will be able to elaborate my own theoretical framework for my translation, founded on register theory and on the particular register of fictional orality.

In the following chapters, I will lay out the foundations of register theory, how it applies in translation theories, the theory surrounding the register of fictional orality, and finally how all of these apply to my translation of *Le coup de la girafe* in particular, before finally presenting this translation.

2. Register theory

Register theory takes into account language variation according to use and provides a framework for analyzing this variation, so it is a useful stepping stone for the analysis of the language used in *Le coup de la girafe*, and of the motivation behind this language. An understanding of this permits a more accurate translation, which considers the functional purpose of variation; as I aim to create a functional translation, this is critical, and a thorough understanding of the theory that allows for such an analysis is necessary.

2.1 Michael Halliday's register theory

Modern register theory was developed by the linguist Michael Halliday in the 1960s and 1970s, based on the work of several other linguists, particularly that of John Rupert Firth, as well as the work of anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski,¹ who distinguished “context of situation” and “context of culture.” Central to Halliday's theory is, of course, the concept of register, which he describes as “the configuration of semantic resources that the member of a culture typically associates with a situation type.”² Even more broadly, he adds, “it is the meaning potential that is accessible in a given social context.”³ Thus, in simplistic terms, register is the scope of language possible for a language user to use in a specific situation.

Halliday highlights the importance of register, explaining that all language not only functions in a context of situation, but also relates back to this context,⁴ and so it is “the necessary mediating concept that enables us to establish the continuity between a text and its sociosemiotic

¹ Robert de Beaugrande, “‘Register’ in discourse studies: a concept in search of a theory,” in *Register Analysis: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohsen Ghadessy (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993), 7.

² M. A. K. Halliday, *Language as Social Semiotic: The social interpretation of language and meaning* (Baltimore: University Park Press, 1978), 111.

³ Ibid.

⁴ M. A. K. Halliday, *Explorations in the Functions of Language* (London: Edward Arnold, 1973), 32.

environment.”⁵ Register is the link between a text and the situation in which it occurs, and is what ultimately gives it meaning. Halliday breaks register down into three parts that interact with each other to create an utterance: field of discourse, tenor of discourse and mode of discourse. With a grasp of these three components, he claims that “we ought to be able to make certain predictions about the linguistic properties of the text that is associated with it: that is, about the register, the configurations of semantic options that typically feature in this environment, and hence also about the grammar and vocabulary, which are the realizations of the semantic options.”⁶ Essentially, with a sound knowledge of field, tenor and mode of discourse, Halliday suggests that we can make fairly accurate predictions about what a speaker will say and how they will say it. For my project, I intend to look at register from the opposite perspective: by analyzing what was said and how it was said in my source text, I will work backwards to determine these values, and then project them into my target text.

While Halliday clearly attributes a great deal of importance to register, it is only one component of a much broader model he developed, the systemic-functional linguistics model. This model looks at language as a social semiotic system driven by metafunctions. That is to say, according to Halliday, language is shaped by what it tries to do and the metafunctions it must fulfill. He sees these metafunctions as components of grammar,⁷ as they are encoded into the *structure* of a language and are therefore expressed through this structure, i.e., its grammar.⁸ He identifies three such metafunctions, each of which he matches to a component of register: the *ideational* function

⁵ Halliday, *Language*, 145.

⁶ M. A. K. Halliday, *Learning How to Mean: Explorations in the Development of Language* (London: Edward Arnold, 1975), 131.

⁷ Halliday, *Explorations*, 99.

⁸ Halliday, *Explorations*, 36.

for the *field* of discourse, the *interpersonal* function for the *tenor* of discourse, and the *textual* function for the *mode* of discourse.⁹

2.1.1 Field of discourse

The field of discourse, for Halliday, is the “ongoing activity and the particular purposes that the use of language is serving within the context of that activity.”¹⁰ Thus, field covers the concept of subject matter in a given “text,” but it is broader than this; it also covers what the participants in the context of situation are actually doing. Halliday cites a story related by Jean Ure regarding a Russian study on register, in which people frying potatoes were recorded. However, neither the act of frying nor the potatoes themselves were explicitly mentioned, so the recording made little sense to anyone who had not witnessed the interaction.¹¹ The field of discourse in this case would comprise the activity of frying and the topic of potatoes, and the text supports this field without ever making a direct reference to either of these.

Field of discourse corresponds to the ideational function of language. This includes expressing “the processes within and beyond the self—the phenomena of the external world and those of consciousness—and the logical relations deducible from them.”¹² Thus, the field of discourse, which can very broadly be said to govern vocabulary and the way it is bound together, is intimately linked with the ideational function, which expresses experience.

⁹ Halliday, *Learning*, 17; Halliday, *Language*, 63.

¹⁰ Halliday, *Language*, 62.

¹¹ Halliday, *Language*, 33.

¹² Halliday, *Explorations*, 99.

2.1.2 Tenor of discourse

The next component in Halliday's system of register is the tenor of discourse. Tenor refers to the relations between participants, specifically status and role relationships.¹³ Halliday links the tenor of discourse to the interpersonal function of language; he calls this the "grammar of personal participation."¹⁴ This function expresses the roles taken and appointed by the speaker, his or her personal commitment, and the interactions within the speech situation;¹⁵ essentially it encodes the role relationships and the power dynamics within the situation.

This concept will be of particular relevance to my translation, as the way Jacob speaks to and about the various people in his life is quite distinct depending on his attitude towards them and the relationship they share. At first glance, some of this language seems odd in context, and the reader could dismiss it as an unfortunate stylistic choice, but an analysis of the tenor reveals that it is a motivated choice. For example, as will be discussed in section 4.2.2, when Jacob talks about his mother, he uses an elevated, literary language that is a stark contrast to much of the other language in the text. This reinforces the strength of his attachment to her, and adoration for her, which is made evident throughout the story. Tenor has a very strong sway on the language used in *Le coup de la girafe*.

2.1.3 Mode of discourse

The final component of Halliday's register theory is mode of discourse. Mode "covers both the channel of communication, written or spoken, and the particular rhetorical mode selected by the

¹³ Halliday, *Language*, 62.

¹⁴ Halliday, *Explorations*, 99.

¹⁵ Ibid; Halliday, *Learning*, 17.

speaker or writer.”¹⁶ Essentially, this “refers to what part the language is playing in the situation under consideration.”¹⁷ As well as channel, this covers the selection of options in the textual system such as theme, information and voice, cohesive patterns, reference, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction.¹⁸ Mode has a function of creating a text and making it operational within the situational context,¹⁹ and Halliday calls this the textual function. Mode is the channel through which the other elements of register are expressed, and it will be of particular interest to my project, as the concept of fictional orality falls under mode; I will be examining how the written and the spoken come together, and how language reflects this union.

Every utterance, according to Halliday, will fulfill one of the three metafunctions discussed above, primarily through its corresponding registerial aspect. He does acknowledge that this is at best an approximation,²⁰ as all utterances are plurifunctional,²¹ but most utterances will likely be governed more by one specific function, and thus the corresponding component of register will come into greater play within that utterance.

2.1.4 Dialect

Another component of Halliday’s systemic-functional linguistics system, which is clearly distinct from but dependent upon register, is dialect. Dialect is often one of the main channels through which fictional orality is typically expressed in literature, and it does appear in *Le coup de la girafe* (as discussed in section 4.3.2) so the distinction between the two concepts is of

¹⁶ Halliday, *Language*, 223.

¹⁷ Halliday, *Language*, 189.

¹⁸ Halliday, *Language*, 144.

¹⁹ Halliday, *Learning*, 17.

²⁰ Halliday, *Language*, 63.

²¹ Halliday, *Learning*, 42.

interest to my project. Halliday makes the difference very clear; dialect, which is dialectal and thus regional or social, is defined as variety according to *user*, while register, which is diatypic and thus functional, is defined as variety according to *use*. Dialect can vary along the lines of class, caste, geography, generation, age or sex.²² He explains that “[t]he dialect is what a person speaks, determined by who he is; the register is what a person is speaking, determined by what he is doing at the time.”²³ Nevertheless, the two concepts are innately linked in terms of function as well. People tend to have and use more than one dialect, but when switching dialects, this generally coincides with shifts in register.²⁴ Dialects have different meanings to speakers, and the choice of dialect becomes choice of meaning, reflected in register.²⁵ Thus, while dialect is distinct from register, it maintains a functional relationship with it, and it can be—though is not always—an important aspect of a text’s register.

It is clear that register and context are inextricably linked; by analyzing the contextual features of a situation, that is, the field, tenor and mode of discourse, and hinging off of these, the dialects used, the contents of an utterance or text can very reasonably be predicted. The components of register together create the basic conditions for a communicative event to take place.²⁶ By understanding the elements of register, we can more fully understand a text, and thus render it more faithfully in translation.

2.2 Register theory in translation models

While register theory has developed and evolved over the years, Halliday’s basic conception of it has remained essentially the same, and it has been embraced in translation studies as a core

²² Halliday, *Language*, 35.

²³ Halliday, *Language*, 110.

²⁴ Halliday, *Language*, 157.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Basil Hatim and Ian Mason, *Discourse and the Translator* (London: Routledge, 2014), 55, Taylor & Francis.

component of functional and pragmatic equivalence. The plethora of descriptive translation studies dedicated to register equivalence that have been published in recent years make it clear that register now has an established place in the field. Michael Gregory even goes so far as to say that establishing register equivalence is *the* main factor in translating a text.²⁷ While not everyone will agree with this statement, register equivalence is clearly worthy of further exploration. By comparing those translation models that incorporate register theory, I aim to arrive at a theoretical framework to analyze my source text and give me the ability to create register equivalence in my translation of *Le coup de la girafe*.

Despite its significance, very few translation models do give much time to register theory, with a few notable exceptions: Juliane House's translation quality assessment models, and the model of textual equivalence and text typologies expounded by Basil Hatim on his own, with Ian Mason, and with Jeremy Munday. Mona Baker also incorporates register into her model of equivalence, although it plays only a minor role, and as will be discussed below, her interpretation is rather reductive.

Register theory is clearly worthy of consideration in any translation theory, and several scholars argue that this is the case for literary translations—like the one I am undertaking—in particular,²⁸ as so much of the literary style and effect, as well as the portrayal of characters and their interpersonal relations, are built up using register. As Basil Hatim explains, “contexts tend

²⁷ Michael Gregory, “Perspectives on translation from the Firthian tradition,” *Meta* 25:4 (1980): 466.

²⁸ Josep Marco Borrillo, “Register Analysis in Literary Translation: A Functional Approach,” *Babel* vol. 46, no. 1 (2000): 2, Ingenta; Laurence Wong, “Translating Register with Reference to English, French, German, and Italian Versions of the *Hong lou meng*,” *Babel* vol. 48, no. 3 (2002), 263; Raluca-Nicoleta Balațchi, “Style et registre de langue en traduction,” *Echo des Études Romanes* vol. 8, no. 2 (2012), 20.

to shape and are in turn shaped by texts”;²⁹ this is especially of relevance in literature, where there is a “double contextual frame”³⁰ of the author-reader interaction and the context created completely internally. The models discussed below support this, but also acknowledge that, by itself, register theory is insufficient.

2.2.1 Functional translation and text typologies

Underlying register theory is the idea that all language is functional—whether motivated or not, the linguistic choices we make have a specific purpose. Therefore, it is easy to understand the role of register theory in functional-pragmatic translation models. Specific linguistic features are used to express specific communicative purposes in specific situational contexts;³¹ the use of these features is driven by the function of the utterance. As Leckie-Tarry explains, register theory “aim[s] to propose relationships between language *function*, (determined by situational or societal factors), and language *form*.”³² Pragmatics, which relates to being able to “do things” with words, is therefore of relevance here.³³

In this vein, Basil Hatim draws a parallel between register analysis and *skopos* theory, which advocates for a functionalist translation. *Skopos* theory focusses on the interactional dynamics and pragmatic purpose of a translation, and stresses a translation’s function as the most critical element in shaping it.³⁴ Hatim refers to Katharina Reiss’ text typology, developed in order to

²⁹ Basil Hatim, “Translating Text in Context.” In *The Routledge Companion to Translation*, ed. Jeremy Munday, (New York: Routledge, 2009), 37.

³⁰ Marco Borrillo, “Register,” 2.

³¹ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 2.

³² Helen Leckie-Tarry, “The specification of a text: register, genre and language teaching,” in *Register Analysis: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohsen Ghadessy (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993), 28.

³³ Hatim and Mason, *Discourse*, 57, 87.

³⁴ Hatim, “Translating,” 40.

identify this purpose, and which divides texts into three categories: informative texts, whose purpose is to inform; expressive texts, whose purpose is to express creatively; and operative texts, whose purpose is to persuade.³⁵ Different kinds of texts require different translation approaches, and this perspective is an important element of Hatim's model. In fact, Hatim and Munday argue that the most concrete (and thus practical) criteria for decision-making in translation are based on text type.³⁶

Juliane House agrees with the notion of text types based on function, and indeed says that her model can only function if a translation has the same function as the source text,³⁷ but she finds *skopos* theory impractical, as it is rather dismissive of the importance of the source text, and does not make clear how a text's function is operationalized.³⁸ She also makes an important distinction between *language* function and *text* function, which is not made in the *skopos* model. She criticizes models that do not differentiate the two, like Halliday's metafunctions or Reiss' text types, as overly simplistic. In creating a text typology, it is the *textual* function (that is, the use of a text in the particular context of a situation³⁹), and not the *language* function that must be the foundation, but even this must be flexible enough to accommodate for plurifunctionality.

2.2.2 Juliane House's textual profile

To arrive at a suitable text typology, House determined that for each individual text, a textual profile must be created. She adapted a model developed by David Crystal and Derek Davy as a

³⁵ Katharina Reiss, *Translation Criticism: The Potential and Limitations*, trans. E. F. Rhodes (Manchester: St. Jerome, 2000), cited in Hatim, *Translating*, 40.

³⁶ Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday. *Translation: An Advanced Resource Book* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 55.

³⁷ Juliane House, *Translation Quality Assessment: Past and Present* (London: Routledge, 2015), 63.

³⁸ House, *Translation*, 11.

³⁹ House, *Translation*, 22.

guide in building this profile.⁴⁰ Her model incorporates both dimensions of language user, and dimensions of language use, as summarized in Table 1.⁴¹ The dimensions of language user align with the concept of dialect laid out by Halliday, while the dimensions of language use can all be categorized in terms of his concept of register and its components.

Table 1 Juliane House’s textual profile elements

Dimensions of language user	Dimensions of language use
1) Geographical origin 2) Social class 3) Time	1) Medium: simple/complex 2) Participation: simple/complex 3) Social role relationship 4) Social attitude 5) Province

Dimensions of language use

- 1) Medium: Medium aligns with the Hallidayan concept of mode. House further divides medium into simple and complex in order to account for the mixing of mediums (e.g. written to be read aloud).⁴²
- 2) Participation: This refers to the level of interaction in a situation, and falls under the Hallidayan concept of tenor. House distinguishes simple and complex participation, with complex participation being a mix of different levels of interaction.⁴³

⁴⁰ David Crystal and Derek Davy, *Investigating English Style* (London: Longman, 1969), cited in House, *Translation*, 27.

⁴¹ House, *Translation*, 28-30.

⁴² House, *Translation*, 28.

⁴³ House, *Translation*, 29.

- 3) Social role relationship: Social role relationships, which also reflect Hallidayan tenor, can be symmetrical, whereby the addresser and addressee are equals, or asymmetrical, whereby they are not.⁴⁴
- 4) Social attitude: This refers to the degree of social distance and formality, and is also an aspect of tenor. This dimension borrows Martin Joos' style typology, which identifies five different levels of formality or mixes thereof: frozen, formal, consultative, casual and intimate.⁴⁵
- 5) Province: This dimension subsumes the addresser's occupational activity, as well as the field or topic of the text in its widest sense of language activity and details of the text production.⁴⁶ It is roughly interchangeable with Halliday's field of discourse.

By analyzing these situational dimensions, a textual profile can be built and used as the standard against which a translation is measured. While House does not reference register in this model, developed in 1977, it is clearly present, and she revised her work in 1997, modifying it so that register became an important component by grouping both dimension of language user and of language use under the concept of register. In this revised model, she also subsumes the text producer's temporal, geographical and social provenance under the concept of tenor.⁴⁷ This is in contrast to the approach used by Halliday, who distinguishes dimensions of language use and language user; however, as discussed in section 2.1.4, he does see the fundamental link between language use variation and language user variation, and the use of specific dialects is indeed interpersonally motivated, so this is not a faulty interpretation. House's model provides a structured framework for analyzing a text—whether to judge a translation's quality or help guide

⁴⁴ House, *Translation*, 29.

⁴⁵ Martin Joos *The Five Clocks* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961) cited in House, *Translation*, 29.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ House, *Translation*, 64.

the translation process—and indeed, due to its practicality, I loosely based my own register analyses in chapter 4 on House’s model.

2.2.3 Mona Baker’s typology of meaning

Mona Baker also developed a typology that takes register into consideration, but hers is based on different kinds of meaning, rather than functions, although the two are interrelated here. This typology is also specifically meant to be used at the lexical level, rather than at text level, which can be problematic, as meaning can often only be ascertained by considering the broader text and context in which a lexical unit finds itself. Baker does realize this though; she points out that starting at the word level is a naïve approach, but that even these levels are influenced by source and target function and purpose, and therefore affect the overall text.⁴⁸

Baker’s model begins with a strategy for analyzing components of lexical meaning in specific, drawn from the work of D. A. Cruse (1986),⁴⁹ as well as Michael Halliday’s register theory.

Following Cruse, she identifies four main types of meaning for words or utterances:

propositional meaning, expressive meaning, presupposed meaning, and evoked meaning.

Propositional meaning “arises from the relation between it and what it refers to or describes in a real or imaginary world, as conceived by the speakers of the particular language to which the word or utterance belongs.”⁵⁰ It is the objective meaning by which an utterance’s validity or truthfulness can be ascertained, roughly equivalent to the denotative meaning. This kind of

⁴⁸ Mona Baker, *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 5.

⁴⁹ See D. A. Cruse, *Lexical Semantics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

⁵⁰ Baker, *In Other Words*, 13.

meaning has parallels with Michael Halliday's ideational function; when a language user is trying to inform, their language has an ideational function, and ultimately a propositional meaning.

In contrast to the propositional meaning, the expressive meaning of an utterance cannot be deemed true or false; this is the meaning relating to the speaker's feelings or attitude, and arises from the connotation of an utterance.⁵¹ This meaning draws obvious parallels with Halliday's interpersonal function, which also relates to feelings or attitudes, as well as interpersonal relations, which are intimately linked to these.

The third meaning type in Baker's model is presupposed meaning. This kind of meaning is the result of co-occurrence restrictions, which can be selectional (words that can be logically used together based on their propositional meaning) or collocational (semantically arbitrary and conventional).⁵² These restrictions can be related back to Hallidayan field of discourse, as it is also restricted by which words can be used together in a specific situational context.

Baker's fourth meaning, evoked meaning, is the type of meaning in which she finally brings register into the equation. This is the meaning that comes from variations in dialect and register, as defined by Michael Halliday. Baker divides dialect into geographical, temporal and social categories, and breaks register down into field, tenor and mode of discourse. She underlines the importance of matching register expectations in a translation, but she does not otherwise delve

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

any further into register.⁵³

While distinguishing the four types of meaning explained above, Baker also realizes the impracticality of separating types of meaning in an utterance, or even determining its absolute propositional meaning. She attributes this to the fuzzy nature of language that results in “blurred edges” of words; “their meanings are, to a large extent, negotiable and are only realized in specific contexts.”⁵⁴ Different kinds of meaning can also be achieved in a text at the same time, but Baker argues that it is still a useful distinction for the translator, who must endeavour to transfer meaning as accurately as possible.⁵⁵

In their treatment of register theory, both House and Hatim (with Mason, and with Munday) flesh out the various elements of register and the corresponding metafunctional components, highlighting the importance of these metafunctions and, by extension, of text typologies. They see register as a key component of text that can act in both broad and specific ways to shape an utterance. Baker, on the other hand, has a very simplistic view of register, considering it only on the most basic lexical level. Register is generally accepted as acting on a much broader scope than this, though. As Krein-Kühle explains, register operates at *all* text levels.⁵⁶ Biber and Conrad point out that a specific register will reveal itself in a text’s “*pervasive* linguistic features,”⁵⁷ that is, its recurring elements; it must be examined at a macro-structural level. While a register feature can appear at any level of language, it is the extent of its usage that identifies its

⁵³ Baker, *In Other Words*, 17.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ Monika Krein-Kühle, “Register Shifts in Scientific and Technical Translation: A Corpus-in-Context Study,” *The Translator* vol. 17, no. 2 (2011): 399.

⁵⁷ Douglas Biber and Susan Conrad, *Register, Genre, and Style* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 6.

specific register.⁵⁸ For example, as will be discussed in the following chapter, fictional orality presents a specific register, which can be identified through the *repeated* use of various orality markers such as informal and vague language, slang, false starts, etc. Thus, breaking register down to such a basic level, as Baker does, is ill-advised because it does not allow for an examination of the wider picture. A single lexical item could very well be attributed to several different registers, but it is only in conjunction with other elements in the text that the specific register can be identified. Therefore, Baker's approach to register in this sense is problematic. However, her identification of register as one of four types of meanings is interesting in that this too reflects back to the notion of text typologies and metafunctions. Baker's propositional meaning draws parallels with informative texts and the ideational metafunction, and her expressive meaning with creative texts and the interpersonal metafunction. Evoked meaning and presupposed meaning do not have corresponding text types, but they do have corresponding textual macrostructures that are given significance by both House and Hatim. Evoked meaning corresponds to register, as Baker explains, and on a broad level, presupposed meaning corresponds to genre. The restriction of words to only certain collocations reflects arbitrary conventions that are reinforced within genre, so this parallel can be made between the two concepts. For example, "once upon a time" is a set phrase within the fairy tale genre, and replacing any one of those words would violate the genre convention as well as the collocation restriction. Thus, presupposed meaning is expressed in the restrictive norms of genre.

⁵⁸ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 56.

2.3 Genre

Baker is not the only one to allude to genre in her model. In fact, she explicitly references it only in a superficial manner in her general discussion of collocation and cohesion, mentioning that specific genres tend to use specific kinds of linkages.⁵⁹ Thus, while the notion of genre equivalence is not discussed in her work, she nevertheless does acknowledge that genre operates on a text in a restrictive manner. The concept is a far more significant factor in the other two models. Hatim and Munday define genre as “a conventionalized form of speaking or writing which we associate with particular ‘communicative events.’”⁶⁰ Strict norms regulate a text’s membership in a certain genre;⁶¹ when these norms are violated, the intertextual link is lost, and the result is a genre shift. Genre is intimately linked to discourse and ideology in this model, and is used as a vehicle of these things. However, the conventions of genre are culturally specific and the way these genres are encoded in texts is therefore also culturally specific.⁶² Genre provides rough guidance in the development of a text or translation, and forces a translator to take into account certain textual norms that might not otherwise be considered. However, in advising on how to prioritize elements for translation, Hatim and Munday consider genre as the least important aspect of text to be rendered, along with any other extra-linguistic factors.⁶³ They recommend translating these elements only if possible, and do not consider their translation a requirement. The Hatim model puts semiotic and pragmatic equivalence above all else, so linguistic structures that are purely conventional, as those of genre are, and that do not necessarily have a function in and of themselves (although genre does admittedly reinforce other functions such as spreading a specifically genre-bound discourse) will not be as critical to

⁵⁹ Baker, *In Other Words*, 114.

⁶⁰ Hatim and Munday, *Translation*, 88.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² Hatim and Mason, *Discourse*, 70.

⁶³ Hatim and Munday, *Translation*, 136.

equivalence in this framework.

House, who did not incorporate genre into her earlier model but did in her revised 1997 model, takes a decidedly different approach to genre. In fact, while she sees register as something that should be adapted to the target culture in a covert translation, rather than necessarily made equivalent, she sees genre equivalence as required; genres are made up of texts bound together by their communicative purposes or functions, and these purposes are one of the factors driving the text.⁶⁴ Therefore, as long as the function of the text remains the same in both source and target cultures, the genre should do so as well. On a practical level, however, House does acknowledge that it can be problematic to identify a genre; genre-specificity is “fuzzy,” and the only way to determine the features of a specific genre is through corpus studies, which she also introduces into her model.⁶⁵ While corpus studies are an invaluable tool, and one also advocated for by other scholars as the only accurate way to determine both features of genre and features of register,⁶⁶ it is simply impractical and unrealistic to expect a translator to create an entire corpus against which to compare each and every different translation undertaken. Therefore, while in an ideal world, this is sound advice, in a practical setting, it cannot easily be applied.

These models clearly reflect the importance of genre in register theory. In fact, many scholars see the two concepts as going hand in hand, incomplete without each other, and the concepts even tend to overlap.⁶⁷ Genre is complementary to register, in that register helps shape the context of a situation, but this situation is part of a broader cultural context, which shapes and is

⁶⁴ House, *Translation*, 67.

⁶⁵ House, *Translation*, 70.

⁶⁶ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 74–75.

⁶⁷ Leckie-Tarry, “The Specification,” 30.

shaped by genre, which restricts linguistic choices to specific norms. Genre becomes conventionalized through the repeated use of specific registers, and the two concepts act in symbiosis. Register, with its focus on the specific situation at hand, relates to incomplete texts (specific instances within broader texts), while genre, with its focus on the broader cultural context, relates to complete texts.⁶⁸

In my translation, genre provides a very broad contextual frame within which I can work. *Le coup de la girafe* belongs to the genre of young adult literature, and the sub-genre of young adult realism. As discussed in section 4.1, the conventions of these genres does not particularly restrict my translation choices, because these conventions tend to relate more to the story itself than the language used within it, and appear to be quite similar in English and French. The only real restriction I must consider in my translation is one of audience: because young adult literature as a genre has a specific audience of young adults, I am restricted in what kind of language is appropriate and relevant to that audience. However, my translation is not restricted by genre more specifically than that.

2.4 Translating register

These models make it clear that in considering the register of a translation, many factors that seem only indirectly relevant must be taken into consideration. At its most basic, register equivalence can be summed up essentially as the use of “an equivalent speech event” in the target text as the source text.⁶⁹ Arriving at this equivalence, however, can be a challenge, as

⁶⁸ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 2; Leckie-Tarry, “The Specification,” 39.

⁶⁹ Bahaa-Eddin Abulhassan Hassan, “A Translation Quality Assessment of the English Translation of the Hilali Epic,” *Journal of Arts and Humanities* vol. 4, no. 12 (2015), 67, Ingenta.

languages are not symmetrical in their registers and the use of these.⁷⁰ In fact, in creating comparable corpora, register variation is a factor that can often undermine the very comparability of the corpus.⁷¹ Some cultures will make distinctions between registers that do not exist in other cultures,⁷² or features that are specific to a situation in one culture will vary in another. Baker offers the example of tenor between parents and children; American teenagers tend to have a highly informal tenor with their parents, but this this would be quite inappropriate in many other cultures.⁷³ Translating such a situation leads to a dilemma for the translator—indeed, the age-old dilemma for translators—who must decide whether to remain faithful to the source text and risk something unnatural in the target text, or whether to instead adapt the register to suit the new cultural context.

Juliane House's solution to this asymmetry is what she calls a "cultural filter."⁷⁴ This filter, which is used specifically for translations that have the status of an original source text in the target culture, accounts for cultural differences in expectation norms and stylistic conventions.⁷⁵ Essentially, this filter is a modification of the elements of register to suit what is natural to the situation in the target culture; it is a domestication of the situation. Due to the cultural filter and the translation's status in the target culture, it does not need to maintain equivalence with the original in language/text and register, but it must be equivalent in genre and individual textual

⁷⁰ Miguel Ángel Jiménez-Crespo and Maribel Tercedor Sánchez, "Lexical variation, register and explicitation in medical translation: A comparable corpus study of medical terminology in US websites translated into Spanish," *Translation and Interpreting Studies* vol. 12, no. 3 (2017) 407.

⁷¹ Belén López Arroyo and Roda P. Roberts, "Genre and Register in Comparable Corpora: An English/Spanish Contrastive Analysis," *Meta* vol. 62, no. 1 (April 2017): 116, Érudit.

⁷² Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 34.

⁷³ Baker, *In Other Words*, 16.

⁷⁴ House, *Translation*, 57.

⁷⁵ House, *Translation*, 68.

function.⁷⁶

This notion was significant in my translation, as the very issue I wanted to explore was what I perceived as an asymmetry in the French register of fictional orality and the same register as it tends to appear in English literature. Since I aimed to create a functional translation, with the same status in the target culture as in the source culture, this led me to apply a cultural filter at times. For example, French and English have certain different markers of orality, so at times, my translation had to convert these or compensate for them in other ways when they were present in the source text but could not be replicated in the same place in the target text.

2.5 Limitations of register theory

Register analysis is clearly a valuable tool for any translator, but it does have its limitations and its critics. In a field where terms are constantly redefined by every scholar, the term itself is often confounded with “genre” and “style,”⁷⁷ which can create confusion and a lack of standardization. French scholar Françoise Gadet questions the very concept of register, pointing out that people do shift registers in speech even when there is no change to the external situation.⁷⁸ Brian Mossop feels that register also implies an “unconscious switching” between styles when the situation changes, ignoring conscious, motivated style choices, so he prefers to use the term “style.”⁷⁹ Belén López Arroyo and Roda P. Roberts do not distinguish these terms at all, defining register specifically as style; it is “the level and style of writing which is dictated by the situation

⁷⁶ House, *Translation*, 67.

⁷⁷ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 21.

⁷⁸ Françoise Gadet, “Niveaux de langue et variation intrinsèque,” *Palimpsestes* 10 (1996): 31.

⁷⁹ Brian Mossop, “The Missing Style Problem and the Translation of French Erotica into English,” *Meta* vol. 62, no. 2 (August 2017): 334, *Érudit*.

one is in.”⁸⁰ Biber and Conrad differentiate the two in terms of functionality, explaining that linguistic variation in terms of register is functional, but in terms of style, it is not.⁸¹ However, style could be argued to be functional specifically in terms of its aesthetic effect, as this can significantly impact the interpretation of a text. Halliday makes it clear that register encompasses *all* possible permutations of language within a specific context, so it does very much still give speakers free reign in terms of choosing that language. De Beaugrande even points out that register is “directly subject to the current motives and aspirations of both potential and actual users, of both outsiders and insiders.”⁸²

Another significant problem with register theory is specificity. A situation and its register can be described in terms either very specific or incredibly vague. House takes issue with the “fuzziness” of genre, but the same could be said about register. There is no formal method to standardize how a situation is defined, and even the different elements examined in terms of field, tenor and mode vary. De Beaugrande points out that “society itself has no exact criteria for deciding what the necessary and sufficient conditions of a register must be.”⁸³ Additionally, although “the significance of a register relates to groups and the social roles that make them up,”⁸⁴ even in these groups, there is not always consensus on what is appropriate, for example in the case of scientific writing, where the use of the first person singular can be either perfectly acceptable or perfectly damning, depending on who you ask.⁸⁵

⁸⁰ López Arroyo and Roberts, “Genre,” 116.

⁸¹ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 18.

⁸² De Beaugrande, ““Register,”” 21.

⁸³ De Beaugrande, ““Register,”” 23.

⁸⁴ Christian Matthiessen, “Register in the round: diversity in a unified theory of register analysis,” in *Register Analysis: Theory and Practice*, ed. Mohsen Ghadessy (London: Pinter Publishers, 1993), 240.

⁸⁵ De Beaugrande, ““Register,”” 23.

There will also be characteristics of a register that its users will not be consciously aware of, which can lead to inaccurate register descriptions and analysis.⁸⁶ The lack of specificity in register analysis allows a translator to tailor their register analysis to suit their needs, but it also means they have a lack of guidance in terms of what linguistic structures should be incorporated into this analysis. Like Juliane House, Biber and Conrad advocate for corpus studies to address this problem,⁸⁷ but this is rather unfeasible for the average translator.

2.6 Methodology

Ultimately, register theory is descriptive, rather than prescriptive, and it can provide guidance for a translator, but not specific instruction. Each of the models discussed above makes it clear that to fully understand and convey a text's register (or as close an equivalent as possible in the target culture), the function and purpose of the utterance must first be determined, alongside its conventional semantic meaning. This purpose can be subsumed as an element of mode, and after it has been determined, other factors such as field, tenor and genre can be considered and incorporated into the translation. It is important to also replicate cohesion, coherence and intertextuality in expressing these values, as they allow the elements to work together and express themselves. Considering all of these factors, I can approach my own translation within a register-oriented framework, with a special emphasis on the very broad register of fictional orality, which has a significant presence in my source text. To do this, my methodology is simple: I will first use a contextualizing model, whereby I analyze the source text through the prism of Halliday's three components of register to arrive at an understanding of the text's registers. I will pay particular attention to the orality of the text, identifying the specific markers of fictional orality. In my translation, I will then use my register analysis to work backwards

⁸⁶ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 39.

⁸⁷ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 51.

towards recreating the communicative situation; I will operationalize the field, tenor and mode, with a particular focus on the markers of fictional orality to recreate the register of fictional orality in the English text. Before delving into my translation, we will turn our attention to this very unique register, which merits further examination.

3. Fictional Orality

One of the more striking features of *Le coup de la girafe* is the use of oral language throughout the novel, present in both the oralized, stream-of-consciousness style of narration employed by the writer, indirectly addressing the reader, and in the actual dialogue between characters. As this is prevalent throughout the story, this rather unique register requires additional exploration in order to fully understand the register of the novella itself. Many languages make a clear distinction between the standards of acceptability in the written and the oral form, so the notion of a written oral creates an odd conundrum. Do the rules of the spoken language or of the written language apply? As discussed in the previous chapters, mode can be quite fluid and varied, and distinctions can be made between categories such as written to be read conventionally, written to be read aloud, or written to sound like it is spoken aloud but meant to be read conventionally, among others. This leads to questions of how such subtle differences can be represented, and how different these registers can be from each other. Fictional or prefabricated orality is one such mode, written to sound like it is spoken aloud, but that is still constrained by its written form and the rules that apply to this form. It can be seen as a distinct text type within a broader text type, as the language of fictional orality is unique. Perhaps more aptly, Brumme sees fictional dialogue as the link that joins the literary text to the multimodal text;⁸⁸ it can be seen as a mode within a mode, and the way it functions is different from the way other kinds of literary text function.

While there are striking similarities with the fictional orality of theatre and that of audiovisual translation, both of which are also made to sound like spoken language, the fictional orality of literature can be distinguished from these on a very fundamental level. The fictional orality of

⁸⁸Jenny Brumme, "Introduction," in *Translating Fictional Dialogue for Children and Young People*, Martin B. Fischer and Maria Wirf Naro, eds. (Berlin, Frank & Timme, 2016), 8.

theatre is ultimately meant to be spoken aloud so even in script form, it is not restricted to the written code in the same way that dialogue in a novel is, and it is accompanied by the actions of the characters and the set, which can offer a great deal of context without needing explanation. Similarly, the fictional orality of subtitling and other audio-visual translation is accompanied by visual elements that help contextualize utterances, as well as the actual oral speech, which can still express extralinguistic features such as pitch, intonation and emotion. These all offer additional context that is not inherent to dialogue in a novel. Fictional orality in literature is unique in that it is oral language relegated to the written form, and the only paratextual element is the descriptive narration provided along with the dialogue, which must create and explicitly express some of the elements that are naturally present in other kinds of fictional orality. Thus, to create a sense of orality, authors must “evoke” elements of true speech while still constrained by the conventions of written speech.

3.1 The written-oral divide

Peter Fawcett relates a story in which a French colleague refused to translate the word “kids” in a newspaper headline as the equivalent “gosses,” because he firmly believed that this word could be used only in informal, spoken French.⁸⁹ This anecdote reveals how strong the taboo of crossing the written-oral divide can be in some cultures, and this taboo can often be seen in fictional orality, where the dialogue is so constrained by the written norms that it cannot be said to resemble a real conversation such as the one it tries to represent. Brumme describes the use of the graphic code to represent an oral conception as a paradox;⁹⁰ the two modes, when viewed specifically as channels, are incompatible by nature, each able to convey information in very

⁸⁹ Peter Fawcett, *Translation and Language: linguistic theories explained* (London: Routledge, 1997), 78, Taylor & Francis.

⁹⁰ Jenny Brumme, “Prólogo,” in *Construir, deconstruir y reconstruir: Mimesis y traducción de la oralidad y la afectividad*, eds. Gemma Andújar and Jenny Brumme (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2010), 7.

different manners. However, the very existence of fictional orality indicates that this line can, and indeed should, be crossed. Assis Rosa sees oral and written speech not as completely separate modes, but as two extremes of a continuum in which there can be significant overlap.⁹¹ The idea of a continuum as opposed to discrete categories is recurrent in descriptions of language, and is a useful approach to the problem of fictional orality. Looking at these modes from a different perspective, and categorizing them according to different standards may help better understand this text type.

Many texts touching on fictional orality rely on a model developed by Peter Koch and Wulf Oesterreicher.⁹² Koch and Oesterreicher use the terms *konzeptionelle Mündlichkeit* (conceptional orality) and *konzeptionelle Schriftlichkeit* (conceptional literacy) to distinguish between the notion of written-like and spoken-like texts, without necessarily defining the texts by their actual medium.⁹³ In their model, they do not perceive language through its medium, but rather they perceive it on a continuum, with one pole being *Sprache der Nähe* (the language of communicative immediacy) and the other being *Sprache der Distanz* (the language of distance).⁹⁴ Generally, spoken, spontaneous language typifies the language of communicative

⁹¹ Assis Rosa, Alexandra, "Translating orality, recreating otherness," *Translation Studies* 8, no. 2 (2015): 211, Taylor & Francis.

⁹² See Victoria Alsina, "The translation of idiolect in children's literature: *The Witches* and *Matilda* by Roald Dahl," in *Translating Fictional Dialogue for Children and Young People*, eds. Martin B. Fischer and Maria Wirf Naro, 145–164; Berlin, Frank & Timme, 2016; Jenny Brumme and Anna Espunya, eds., *The Translation of Fictive Dialogue* (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi: 2012), Proquest; Stefanie Dose, "Describing and Teaching Spoken English: An Educational-linguistic Study of Scripted Speech." (PhD diss., Justus-Liebig-Universität Gießen, 2014), GEB (11000); Andrew Read, "Translating and Adapting Fictional Speech: the Case of Philip Pullman's *Northern Lights*," (PhD diss., University of Manchester, 2013), Escholar (215079).

⁹³ Peter Koch and Wulf Oesterreicher, *Dimensionen lernersprachlicher Performanz: Theoretische und empirische Untersuchungen zum Zweitsprachenerwerb* (Tübingen: Narr, 1990), 12 cited in Dose, "Describing," 16, and in Brumme, "Introduction," 11.

⁹⁴ Peter Koch and Wulf Oesterreicher, "Sprache der Nähe – Sprache der Distanz: Mündlichkeit und Schriftlichkeit im Spannungsfeld von Sprachtheorie und Sprachgeschichte," *Romanistisches Jahrbuch* vol. 36 (1985), 15–43, cited in Brumme and Espunya, "Background," 10.

immediacy, while planned, written language typifies the language of distance, but seeing language through this paradigm allows for written language to have communicative immediacy and spoken language to have distance; it allows for the existence of text types like that of fictional orality. Communicative immediacy is determined by several different factors, which all interact with and impact each other: the physical proximity (both spatial and temporal) of addresser and addressee, social immediacy (how private or public the interaction is), the level of intimacy or familiarity between participants (tenor, in Hallidayan terms), the participants' levels of emotional involvement and attitudes towards the utterance, context embeddedness (how much the speakers can relate to the actual present context of the interaction), deictic immediacy (how much deictics can be and are used), the communicative cooperation of participants, dialogue (as opposed to a speech or monologue, which is more typical of the language of distance), free topic development and spontaneity (how thought out an utterance is).⁹⁵ These factors must all be analyzed to determine where a given text will fall on the language continuum, from language of communicative immediacy to language of distance.

3.2 Crossing the divide

Seen through this paradigm, fictional orality can be perceived as representing a language of immediacy, as opposed to a language of distance. Of course, it is not truly the language of immediacy, as it is premeditated and carefully crafted to have a certain effect; many of the above-mentioned parameters can be manipulated to reflect this kind of language, but there is no true spontaneity. While some features of spontaneous speech can be intentionally replicated, this kind of text is not truly spontaneous, and this mimesis does not faithfully reflect all features of true spontaneous speech; as Walpole points out, this would make for a very cumbersome reading

⁹⁵ Koch and Oesterreicher, *Dimensionen*, cited in Brumme and Espunya, "Background," 11, and Dose, "Describing," 19.

experience.⁹⁶ Anyone who has ever had to transcribe spontaneous speech, or even read such a transcription, can easily see that it would be mentally taxing to the reader to have to slog through repeated pauses, reformulations, repetitions and false starts. Thus, their faithful inclusion in a fictional dialogue for the sake of authenticity would problematically draw attention to their existence, and greatly hamper the effortlessness that normally comes with processing oral speech; the effect would be precisely the opposite of what is intended. Authors must therefore be judicious and strike a balance, choosing to mimic only those elements that will not affect the natural flow of the narrative (unless this is the intention) and even some of these, only in restricted forms. Luzzati and Luzzati state that an oralizing *effect* is the goal of fictional dialogue, rather than the use of true oral structures.⁹⁷ Alsina explains that “fictive orality makes a controlled use of certain features of spoken language not with the object of faithfully imitating it but in order to evoke orality.”⁹⁸ It is not a mimesis but an evocation of oral speech that tends to occur in fictional dialogue, to varying degrees. It is a “rhetorical representational strategy”⁹⁹ that allows the reader to make the connection to real oral speech, in the same way that intertextuality links to other texts and text types.

3.3 Evoking orality

Actual spoken speech is characterized by a variety of features, many of which we are not consciously aware of, even as we use them.¹⁰⁰ Each language has its own specific set of orality

⁹⁶ Jane Raymond Walpole, “Eye Dialect in Fictional Dialogue,” *College composition and Communication* vol. 25, no. 2 (May 1974): 191, JSTOR.

⁹⁷ Françoise Luzzati and Daniel Luzzati, “Oral et familier : Le style oralisé,” *L’information grammaticale* vol. 34 (1987): 15, Persée.

⁹⁸ Alsina, “The Translation,” 147.

⁹⁹ Dorothee Hofmann, “Teenage talk in German young adult fiction and their Spanish translations,” in *Translating Fictional Dialogue for Children and Young People*, Martin B. Fischer and Maria Wif Naro, eds. (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2016), 205.

¹⁰⁰ Claire Blanche-Benveniste, *Approches de la langue parlée en français* (Paris: Éditions Ophrys, 2010), 17; Dose, “Describing,” 217.

markers, but many characteristics of oral or spontaneous language appear to be universal to all languages.¹⁰¹ While these are not all faithfully replicated in fictional dialogue, they tend to be represented, in order to create the intertextual link to actual oral and spontaneous speech. As Elise Nykänen and Aino Koivisto point out, “dialogue makes use of the norms and conventions of everyday talk as resources for meaning-making.”¹⁰² Thus, the characteristics that define “everyday talk” also operate in fictional speech. The following are those universal features that distinguish such speech:

- 1) Oral discourse markers: These are optional elements that create coherence in texts. They have no grammatical function but serve to mark transitions between different parts of a conversation.¹⁰³ These generally mark the introduction of a new topic or the beginning or end of a speaker’s turn.¹⁰⁴ They also help ensure a message has the correct “tone” and that speaker and audience are on the same page.¹⁰⁵ There are a great many oral discourse markers, but some common ones in spoken English are “well,” “anyway,” “so,” “by the way,” “now,” etc.
- 2) Contact markers: Also called backchannel signs,¹⁰⁶ contact markers are phatic elements used by speakers to maintain listener attention and by listeners to signal that they are still paying attention. Most of these are extralinguistic, such as intonation, gestures (e.g. nodding), eye contact, etc.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰¹ Dose, “Describing,” 30; Koch and Oesterreicher, *Lengua Hablada en la Romania: español, francés, italiano* (Madrid: Gredos, 2007), 73.

¹⁰² Elise Nykänen and Aino Koivisto, “Introduction: Approaches to Fictional Dialogue,” *International Journal of Literary Linguistics* vol. 5, no. 2 (2016): 7.

¹⁰³ Charlyn M. Laserna et al., “Um... Who Like Says *You Know*: Filler Word Use as a Function of Age, Gender, and Personality,” *Journal of Language and Social Psychology* vol. 33, no. 3 (2014): 329.

¹⁰⁴ Douglas Biber et al., *Longman Grammar of Written and Spoken English* (London: Pearson Education Limited, 1999), 1086; Read, “Translating,” 41.

¹⁰⁵ Dose, “Describing,” 218.

¹⁰⁶ Assis Rosa, “Translating,” 211; Read, “Translating,” 41.

¹⁰⁷ Koch and Oesterreicher, *Lengua*, 81.

- 3) False starts and reformulations: Also called “retrace-and-repair sentences,” these occur when a speaker begins to express themselves and then restarts to add additional details or alter what they are saying.¹⁰⁸ For example, in “I’m going... well, I’m thinking about going to London...” “I’m going” is a false start and the statement has been reformulated to add “I’m *thinking* about going.”¹⁰⁹
- 4) Hesitations: Hesitations allow the speaker to slow down the process of formulating their discourse, and are ubiquitous in spontaneous speech.¹¹⁰ Hesitations can be expressed in various ways, including:
- a. Pauses:¹¹¹ Pauses can be divided into filled pauses, usually expressed by a vowel sound, sometimes with nasalization (e.g. “ah” or “uh), and unfilled pauses, which are moments of actual silence, often followed by discourse markers.¹¹²
 - b. Repetitions: Often, while trying to “buy time” while they formulate their speech, a speaker will repeat themselves, in the same or different words.¹¹³
 - c. Filler words: These are words or phrases that have no semantic value, and function specifically to give the speaker time to formulate what they are saying, but also to signal that they mean to continue speaking.¹¹⁴ Examples include “well,” “you know,” “you see,” “basically,” etc.¹¹⁵ Some discourse markers can also be considered filler words.¹¹⁶

¹⁰⁸ Biber et al., *Longman*, 1062; Blanche-Benveniste, *Approches*, 30.

¹⁰⁹ Read, “Translating,” 41.

¹¹⁰ Koch and Oesterreicher, *Lengua*, 86.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Biber et al., *Longman*, 1053–1054.

¹¹³ Biber et al., *Longman*, 1055; Koch and Oesterreicher, *Lengua*, 86.

¹¹⁴ Dose, “Describing,” 31.

¹¹⁵ Read, “Translating,” 38, 41.

¹¹⁶ Charlyn M. Laserna et al., “*Um...*,” 329.

- 5) Interjections: These are self-explanatory; generally emphatic in nature, they have an exclamatory function.¹¹⁷ They are marked by exclamation marks or interrogation marks, and are used to express the speaker's strong emotions in relation to the audience or object of communication.¹¹⁸ Examples of interjections include "Oh!", "Ah!" and "Ow!"
- 6) Turn-taking markers: In a conversation, a speaker will often use extralinguistic elements such as variation in sound intensity, gestures and miming to express that it is the audience's turn to speak. Interruptions and interventions also act as turn-taking markers, albeit coming from the audience, rather than the speaker.¹¹⁹
- 7) Frequent use of deictic forms: Deictics are words or phrases whose meaning can be determined only by the situation in which they are uttered.¹²⁰ For example, if someone points at something and says "What's this?" the word "this" is a deictic.
- 8) High presence of ellipsis: In unplanned speech, conventional grammatical structures are often neglected, and certain information is omitted, as the speaker takes for granted that the audience understands the reference, and less effort is then required by the speaker.¹²¹ The ellipsis of the subject is common;¹²² for example, a speaker might say "Don't know" instead of "I don't know."
- 9) Contractions and reduced forms: During conversation, speakers tend to use contractions (e.g. "don't" instead of "do not") or other "morphologically reduced" forms that require less effort for the speaker to produce, especially in rapid speech.¹²³ Read refers to these

¹¹⁷ Biber et al., *Longman*, 1083.

¹¹⁸ Koch and Oesterreicher, *Lengua*, 91.

¹¹⁹ Dose, "Describing," 30; Koch and Oesterreicher, *Lengua*, 78; Nykänen and Koivosto, "Introduction," 5.

¹²⁰ Assis Rosa, "Translating," 211; Dose, "Describing," 30.

¹²¹ Alsina, "The Translation," 146; Dose, "Describing," 30, 152.

¹²² Read, "Translating," 40.

¹²³ Dose, "Describing," 152.

reduced forms as “allegro forms.”¹²⁴ An example of an allegro form is “I’m gonna” instead of “I am going to.”

10) Vague terminology and simple, generalized vocabulary: Spontaneous speech is often marked by non-specific vocabulary such as “and stuff,” “the thing,” etc. Simple, vocabulary is also preferred over more complex vocabulary, which tends to be associated more with formal speech.¹²⁵

These are the core universal features that distinguish conventionally oral speech (spontaneous or immediate speech according to Koch and Oesterreicher’s model), but there are also several other characteristics that have been noted in many languages, including English; stressing (emphasizing certain words or phrases), hedging (mitigating the effect of an utterance, for example through politeness), a lower lexical density than that of a written text,¹²⁶ a lack of independent clauses or predicates, broken and unfinished clauses, limited subordinated clauses with excessive coordinated clauses, particularly using “and” as a loose continuation marker, and subject dislocation.¹²⁷

3.4 Language-specific markers of fictional orality

In addition to representations of the universal features of spontaneous speech, there are other elements used to evoke orality that are specific to each language. Because there is less stratification between written and oral English, there are not as many features specific to the oral form in English as there are in French, where the formal and informal are much more distinct. The characteristics listed above generally cover the features of English fictional orality, but this

¹²⁴ Read, “Translating,” 42.

¹²⁵ Read, “Translating,” 40.

¹²⁶ Assis Rosa, “Translating,” 211.

¹²⁷ Rebecca Hughes, *English in speech and writing: investigating language and literature* (London: Routledge, 1996), 87, ProQuest; Read, “Translating,” 39–42.

text type is also distinguished by simple constructions, longer sentences coordinated with “and,” informal vocabulary prominently featuring idiomatic expressions, vague language and phonetic spellings.¹²⁸

Like English, the French language also has its own specific characteristics that can be used in dialogue to evoke orality, and because there is normally such a divide between the written and the oral, these features can be identified more specifically. Batty-e et al. explain that “where the prestige of the written word and the weight of the purist tradition have for so long equated *bien parler* with *parler comme un livre*, certain lexical items or grammatical structures may be excluded from writing as too colloquial or taboo.”¹²⁹ Sylvie Durrer identifies vocabulary in particular as the most striking element evoking orality in texts, and states that it can be used entirely on its own to this effect in texts.¹³⁰ This is primarily through the use of words such as slang, which evoke the oral register, but more generic lexical characteristics can also be identified. Some of these include the informal demonstrative “ça” instead of “cela” and “on” instead of “nous.”¹³¹ Omissions and reductions are also common, such as the omitting “ne” in negation,¹³² reducing “il y a” to “y a,”¹³³ reducing subject *il* to “i”¹³⁴ or deleting unstressed silent “e” (e.g. when “ce que” becomes “sk”).¹³⁵ Parts of speech can also be exchanged to function as other parts, for example when adjectives used as adverbs.¹³⁶ In terms of structure, oral French,

¹²⁸ Hughes, *English*, 83, 87; Read, “Translating,” 42.

¹²⁹ Adrian Batty-e et al., *The French Language Today: A Linguistic Introduction*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 1992), 296.

¹³⁰ Sylvie Durrer, *Le dialogue romanesque* (Geneva: Librairie Droz S.A., 1994), 49.

¹³¹ Durrer, *Le dialogue* 50; Luzzati and Luzzati, “Oral,” 17; Read, “Translating,” 44.

¹³² Read, “Translating,” 44.

¹³³ Read, “Translating,” 44.

¹³⁴ Batty-e et al., *The French Language*, 297.

¹³⁵ Batty-e et al., *The French Language*, 297.

¹³⁶ Batty-e et al., *The French Language*, 301.

and therefore fictional orality, tends to use paratactic constructions more often¹³⁷ and, like English, clause coordination instead of subordination.¹³⁸ Finally, dislocated constructions such as fronting (e.g. “Il restait là Gustin”)¹³⁹ are also prevalent in spoken French.

3.5 Secondary functions of fictional orality

Most of the features discussed above, or at least representations of them, do find their way into literary dialogues to a certain degree in order to evoke orality. However, in the case of features that “stall” the dialogue, such as hesitations, pauses, false starts, or overlaps in turn-taking, they tend not to be used simply to reflect the orality of the utterance, but to serve a different communicative purpose.¹⁴⁰ They are often used to specific effect to express a certain persona or scene.¹⁴¹ The audience will interpret these as having a “meaningful function”¹⁴² such as showing a character’s nervousness, awkwardness or unfamiliarity with a topic.¹⁴³ This is of course true in real speech as well, but the distinction here is that the inclusion in pseudo-spontaneous speech is *motivated*. Therefore, it is important to not only recognize markers of orality and the functions they carry as such, but also to be able to understand additional functions they may carry.

There is another important, secondary function of fictional orality in literature. From a pragmatic perspective, it is often a tool used to convey ideology and to express characters’ class and education, usually pejoratively. It can be both narratively and ideologically and motivated.¹⁴⁴

¹³⁷ Luzzati and Luzzati, “Oral,” 15; Read, “Translating,” 44.

¹³⁸ Read, “Translating,” 44.

¹³⁹ Durrer, *Le dialogue*, 47–48; Luzzati and Luzzati, “Oral,” 15.

¹⁴⁰ Nykänen and Koivisto, “Introduction,” 7.

¹⁴¹ Hatim and Mason, *The Translator as Communicator* (London: Routledge, 1997), 84.

¹⁴² Read, “Translating,” 37.

¹⁴³ Nykänen and Koivisto, “Introduction,” 7.

¹⁴⁴ Alsina, “The Translation,” 147.

Orality often signals a deviation from the standard language used elsewhere in the text, and when this orality is marked, the contrast is even more striking. The way this marked deviation is expressed is also of interest. While phonetic transcription is one strategy, and a logical one for the expression of dialects or accents conveyed through distinct pronunciation, there is also a pseudo-phonetic transcription strategy that is common in English. This is through the use of “eye dialect.” This term, coined by George P. Krapp, refers to spellings that offend the eye, rather than the ear.¹⁴⁵ This strategy involves misspelling words to suggest a non-standard pronunciation, while not actually changing the pronunciation of the word, for example by spelling “was” as “wuz” or “said” as “sed.”¹⁴⁶ Walpole explains that such a misspelled word “represents ignorance,” while the correct spelling, even if phonetically incomprehensible, “represents normality.”¹⁴⁷

Such non-standard speech can be used to express a character’s personality or background, but it also serves to alienate the character; it distances them from both the reader and any other characters who do not use marked speech.¹⁴⁸ As Gambier and Lautenbacher point out, we all have our preconceived notions about certain sociolects and the elements they represent; the writer brings theirs to the table in using these sociolects to reflect these values, and the reader brings theirs when interpreting them.¹⁴⁹ In French, Blanche-Benveniste refers to “grammar tricks” (i.e. unconventional spellings) as often used to stigmatize people from the lower

¹⁴⁵ George P. Krapp, *The English Language in America* (New York: F. Ungar Pub. Co, 1966), 228.

¹⁴⁶ Victòria Alsina, “Issues in the translation of social variation in narrative dialogue,” in *The Translation of Fictive Dialogue*, eds. Jenny Brumme and Anna Espunya, (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2012), 141, Proquest.

¹⁴⁷ Walpole, “Eye Dialect,” 193.

¹⁴⁸ Alsina, “Issues,” 138.

¹⁴⁹ Yves Gambier and Olli Philippe Lautenbacher, “Oralité et écrit en traduction,” *Glottopol* vol. 15 (July 2010): 7.

classes.¹⁵⁰ Walpole calls this treatment a “conventionalized snobbery,”¹⁵¹ as it encourages the reader to make a judgment about the character. Assis Rosa explains that “orality [...] is here considered as literary representation of spoken discourse to show (vs. tell) a character’s marginality by giving him/her a specific voice”¹⁵² Thus, the writer need not even explicitly state a character’s marginality, but rather uses orality as a discursive tool through which to communicate it. Regarding eye dialect in particular, Krapp explains “the spelling is merely a friendly nudge to the reader, a knowing look which establishes a sympathetic sense of superiority between the author and the reader as contrasted with the humble speaker of dialect.”¹⁵³ This “discursive otherness” is widely used in English literature to encourage a moral judgment from the reader and indicate a character’s marginality,¹⁵⁴ as shown by studies of characters in *Oliver Twist*,¹⁵⁵ *Pygmalion*¹⁵⁶ and *The Red Badge of Courage*,¹⁵⁷ among others.

Indeed, this holds even when the simulated orality does not correlate to a lower class in actual speech; in some cases, the very act of using orality in the written form is enough to make this point about a character. Even-Zohar notes that in Hebrew children’s literature, elements of the *educated* vernacular speech are integrated into standard literary Hebrew to represent the speech of undereducated children.¹⁵⁸ Because the language deviates from the *literary* norm, regardless of its actual status in speech, it is used to represent socially deviant language. In France, where

¹⁵⁰ Blanche-Benveniste, *Approches*, 26.

¹⁵¹ Walpole, “Eye Dialect,” 193.

¹⁵² Assis Rosa, “Translating,” 209.

¹⁵³ Krapp, *The English Language*, 228.

¹⁵⁴ Alsina, “Issues,” 147.

¹⁵⁵ See Assis Rosa, “Translating.”

¹⁵⁶ Hatim and Mason, *The Translator*, 83.

¹⁵⁷ See Walpole, “Eye Dialect.”

¹⁵⁸ Basmat Even-Zohar, “Translation Policy in Hebrew Children’s Literature: The Case of Astrid Lindgren,” *Poetics Today* vol. 13, no. 1 (Spring 1992): 239.

the written and spoken forms of French tend to be distinct, Lindgren sees a “long cultural tradition” of confounding the spoken language and the popular language in literature to this effect.¹⁵⁹ Dargnat agrees with this, finding that vernacular language is generally used as a “catch-all label” used to “depreciate” anything non-standard.¹⁶⁰ Thus, the colloquial can also be considered vernacular if it deviates from the norm.

This ideological use of dialect does appear in *Le coup de la girafe*, in which Jacob’s bullies are the only characters to use joul when they speak. The joul does have an oralizing effect in the text, but it has an additional function of being used to cast the bullies in an unfavourable light. The fact that they are the only characters to use this dialect makes it very clear that the author is making a deliberate choice in using it in his character portrayals, and it is intentionally used to cast them in an unfavourable light. This will be further discussed in my register analysis in section 4.3.2.

One important exception to the othering effect of non-standard speech in fiction is its use by teenagers. In fact, teenagers tend to use non-standard speech intentionally to create in-groups and out-groups.¹⁶¹ Since teenage readers are generally meant to identify with these characters, this is a situation where the marked speech—while still meant to distinguish the individual from other non-teenage characters—would actually have the intention of making the reader relate to the character more. Specific markers of this kind of speech include intensifying language, insult and

¹⁵⁹ Charlotte Lindgren, “He speaks as children speak: More orality in translations of modern Swedish children’s books into French?” in *Translating Fictional Dialogue for Children and Young People*, Martin B. Fischer and Maria Wirf Naro, eds. (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2016), 174.

¹⁶⁰ Mathilde Dargnat, “Textual stratification and functions of orality in theatre,” in *The Translation of Fictive Dialogue*, eds. Jenny Brumme and Anna Espunya, (Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 2012), 84, Proquest.

¹⁶¹ Hofmann, “Teenage Talk,” 204.

swear words (as vocatives), neologisms and playful language, informal language or “slang,” special greetings, foreign words and abbreviated forms.¹⁶² There is not a significant amount of specific “teen language” in *Le coup de la girafe*, with the exception of the nicknames used by several of the characters (e.g. Jacob is “le pacom,” while his bullies are “les colocus,” and are additionally called “Morve” and “Bobette”) but what language there is has a double function of revealing the role relationships between characters and helping to reinforce the notions of in-groups and out-groups.

3.6 Translating fictional orality

It is clear that fictional orality has unique characteristics that must be taken into consideration when analyzing a text, and this consideration must further be extended to its translation.

Significantly, in literary fiction, dialogue and register have an inverse relationship to that had in most communicative settings: normally, the register helps determine what will be said. However, in the case of fictional orality, the audience must read the dialogue in order to develop a sense of the register and its elements. Marco explains that in literary texts, “there is no situation except the external situation of ourselves as readers, and we have to construct the inner situation entirely from our reading of the text.”¹⁶³ As Brumme and Espunya point out, in this case, “the linguistic forms create the communicative situation.”¹⁶⁴ Thus, in writing, dialogue is an important tool in shaping the register of the text. In translation, however, Brumme and Espunya warn, there can be difficulties particularly in translating from a language in which there is a significant breach

¹⁶² Jan Van Coillie, “Cool, geil, gaaf, chouette or super. The challenges of translating teenage speech,” in *Translating Fictional Dialogue for Children and Young People*, Martin B. Fischer and Maria Wirf Naro, eds. (Berlin: Frank & Timme, 2016), 220.

¹⁶³ Marco Borrillo, “Register,” 2.

¹⁶⁴ Brumme and Espunya, “Background,” 14.

between the oral and written codes, such as French.¹⁶⁵ Translations tend to use more neutral language than originals in general,¹⁶⁶ so when translating from a language that is already fairly normative and censors more marked speech, this can be especially problematic. Fictional orality is not necessarily acceptable in languages with stricter written codes, and writers may have less recourse to traditionally oral elements. Especially in the case of minority languages, the creation of any fictional orality is complex;¹⁶⁷ those written standards that do exist encourage conformity, and the ever-present encroachment of dominant languages such as English incites authors (or publishers) to adhere to these norms.¹⁶⁸ The standards of the normative written code will bleed into the dialogue, and the register will ultimately not be a particularly realistic representation of real oral speech. This pseudo-orality creates a kind of pseudo-context; where normally in fiction, the register helps to create the communicative situation, in a language with a normative literary form that extends to dialogue, the interpretation of this situation will be skewed. As a result, the translator will have to look elsewhere in the text to determine the register and find an equivalent one in the target culture.

In translating From French into English in particular, due to the lesser distance between the formal and informal forms, English orality is more codified and permissible in the written form than it is in French. Thus, in a case where the French dialogue seems to adhere more to written norms than a similar text would in English, orality markers can be an invaluable tool for the translator. Applying English orality markers can help a translator develop an appropriate target-

¹⁶⁵ Brumme and Espunya, "Background," 26.

¹⁶⁶ Naroa Zubillaga Gomez, "La traducción del discurso oral de la literature infantile y juvenile alemana: las partículas modales ja y eben/halt al euskera," *Meta* vol. 60, no. 3 (2015), 626.

¹⁶⁷ Zubillaga Gomez, "La traducción," 623

¹⁶⁸ Batty-e et al., *The French Language*, 43.

culture register. This will create a “cultural filter,” as Juliane House calls it, and help make the dialogue sound idiomatic in the target culture. Ultimately, understanding and using orality markers is a critical component in building the register of fictional dialogue in translation, and it greatly helped me in my own translation.

4. Register Analysis

Having established the theoretical framework for my translation, based on register theory, genre theory and fictional orality, I will now perform analyses on a specific scene in *Le coup de la girafe*, incorporating these concepts, and justify my translation choices through this lens. I chose to do an analysis of a single scene because, as discussed in previous chapters, texts can exist within texts and have widely different functions and registers than their greater macro-text. However, there are also significant patterns within the macro-text, so I will also do a broader analysis of the entire novel, identifying register themes that occur throughout the narrative. My analysis model is based very loosely on that developed by Juliane House,¹⁶⁹ with a specific focus within mode on the orality of the text.

4.1 Genre

Genres express a text's communicative purpose. I will not determine a specific sub-genre for the scene analyzed below, as these essentially reinforce the overall genre of the book, so this broader genre will be considered instead. *Le coup de la girafe* falls under the genre of young adult realism, which is defined by adolescent protagonists, narration from their point of view, a realistic, contemporary setting, and subject matter that affects this demographic, and that may have previously been considered taboo.¹⁷⁰ This book complies with all of these criteria: it is about a teenager, Jacob, it is told from his point of view, it has a contemporary setting, and it deals with Jacob's struggle with bullying and acceptance. The communicative purpose is essentially to entertain, to elicit an emotional response from the reader, and have them ultimately relate to Jacob, even though he is “different.” This genre does have another communicative

¹⁶⁹ See Chapter 7 in House, *Translation*.

¹⁷⁰ Catherine Sheldrick Ross, “Young Adult Realism: Conventions, Narrators, and Readers,” *Library Quarterly* vol. 55, no. 2 (1985): 174, JSTOR.

purpose: all children's literature—and by extension young adult literature, which can be considered a sub-category of children's literature, still written by adults to be what they think these demographics should be reading—is essentially pedagogic.¹⁷¹ As Hatim and Mason point out, genre is linked to the expression of ideology,¹⁷² which, here, is linked to the pedagogic function. This function is already made clear as early as the first chapter. Despite his intellectual disability and outward simplicity, Jacob is depicted as a complex character, capable of using a highly literary vocabulary, expressing deep insights and experiencing very human emotions. What the author is trying to express through Jacob is that, despite his intellectual disability, he is capable of as much complexity as anyone else, and should not be defined by this disability. From a pedagogical point of view, this story can also be interpreted to carry a message that it is wrong to bully people, even if they are different. This genre has the same essential function and communicative purpose in both English and French, so creating a translation that complied with English genre conventions was not an issue.

4.2 Introductory scene (chapter 1) analysis

4.2.1 Field

Chapter 1 makes up a single scene, with an embedded memory depicting a second scene within it.¹⁷³ The ideational function of this scene is to introduce us to Jacob and his life, revealing in specific his close relationship with his mother Sylvie (also making clear that they do keep unnamed secrets from each other though), his intellectual disability, and the fact that he has no friends. The scene is engineered to first suggest that Jacob is a child, by opening on his viscerally

¹⁷¹ B. J. Epstein, *Translating Expressive Language in Children's Literature: Problems and Solutions* (Bern, Peter Lang AG, 2012), 5.

¹⁷² Hatim, "Translating," 49.

¹⁷³ All references in the following section can be found in Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 1 : Chibou.

emotional response to his toy, a stuffed animal called Chibou, and the tantrum he throws. This creates an effect of surprise when the narration reveals that he is in fact 15 years old.

There is significant variation in the lexis used, with Jacob expressing himself in generally conversational, oral language throughout the text, except when he has a strong emotional connection to the subject at hand, in which case he uses more vulgar terms or more literary terms, depending on the direction of his feelings (to be discussed in sections 4.2.2 and 4.3.2).

4.2.2 Tenor

On an interpersonal level, this scene makes the relationship between Jacob and his mother emphatically clear. The way he speaks about her shows his adoration and admiration for her. He describes her using highly literary imagery, reminiscent of love poetry which creates a marked contrast with the surrounding text, such as the following:

- Ses cheveux pendent devant mon visage en distillant le parfum doux de son shampoing.
Un rideau de soie qui fleure la lavande.
- Elle a des yeux qui confrontent le ciel d'hiver par leur immensité, leur profondeur et leur couleur.

This is not the language a reader would expect from someone with an intellectual disability, which makes the language all the more striking. Jacob uses such language only to describe what he idealizes, which is his mother in this case. This kind of variation is not random, and indeed, Josep Marco Barrillo argues that it is important to maintain variation in levels of speech in

translation, as this variation is motivated.¹⁷⁴ In Jacob's case, his literary vocabulary when talking about Sylvie can be contrasted not only with his everyday vocabulary when describing his life, but also with his more vulgar vocabulary when describing those he hates, such as, in this scene, Chibou (calling him "un salaud" and "une merde"). The distinction is so extreme that it could almost be described as a contrast between the sacred and the profane. This extreme contrast makes his attitudes towards both his mother and his stuffed animal all the clearer.

In the English translation, I tried to maintain the lexical variation found in the French that reflects Jacob's attitudes. The highly literary style Jacob uses when talking about Sylvie is problematic in English, as it is such a marked contrast to the surrounding text that it seems unnatural, especially coming from a fifteen-year-old with an intellectual disability. Indeed, my first instinct was to neutralize this language, until a closer examination of the text revealed the motivation behind it. To mimic this effect, I tried to use words with poetic connotations in English. For example, in the sentence "Ses cheveux pendent devant mon visage en distillant le parfum doux de son shampoing," I translated "parfum doux" as "subtle aroma"; "aroma" has a more positive, romantic connotation than the more neutral option "scent," but not as strong an effect as the word "perfume." However, the effect of the word is heightened by translating the fairly neutral "doux" as "subtle," which has a slightly more literary connotation.

The next sentence, "un rideau de soie qui fleure lavande," is also highly literary, and I translated this as "a cascade of lavender-scented silk." The effect has been subdued in the translation, but the English text still expresses the intensity of Jacob's admiration for his mother. To heighten the

¹⁷⁴ Marco Barrillo, "Register," 8.

literary effect of the sentence, I chose to translate “rideau” not as the literal “curtain” but rather as “cascade,” which is more literary and romantic, and suggests more vivid imagery. The modifier “qui fleure lavande” could not be translated literally, as it would sound very out of place and unidiomatic if translated as “that exudes lavender,” so this proved to be an issue. The more idiomatic “that gives off the smell of lavender” would also be problematic as the use of the collocation “gives off” brings the text back down to a more informal level of language. Therefore, I settled for changing the verbal clause into a nominal one as “lavender-scented silk.” This still conveys a sense of romanticism, evokes the English literary register, if to a lesser degree, and has the benefit of also sounding idiomatic, which is critical in a functional translation such as this one.

The other marked description of Jacob's mother is “Elle a des yeux qui confrontent le ciel d'hiver par leur immensité, leur profondeur et leur couleur.” This would sound almost farcical in English (“She has eyes that compare to the winter sky in their immensity, their depth and their colour”) so this sentence had to be restructured. I chose to simply use a comparative clause and translated this as “She has eyes as huge, as deep and as blue as the vast winter skies.” The verb “confronter” has a greater impact in French than the simple “have” in English, and “immensité” sounds more poetic than “huge,” but I added “vast” to describe the winter sky, to strengthen this comparison. “Vast” means great in size, degree or intensity,¹⁷⁵ so this repetition (i.e. essentially saying “greater than the great sky”) strengthens the impact of the statement. I also pluralized “sky” to the more poetic “skies,” which is a more abstract and literary term, as there is technically only one sky, and it is used specifically when the “great extent” of the sky is being

¹⁷⁵ *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “vast,” accessed September 25, 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/vast>.

contemplated,¹⁷⁶ so it is particularly apt here. By making these differences, I hope to have compensated for the neutralization of the marked speech in my translation.

On the other end of the spectrum, Jacob's more vulgar language is also problematic. He describes Chibou as "un salaud" and "une merde." These are both swear words in French, but have a milder impact than the English equivalent swear words. I hesitated to use such strong language in English, but it is simply a fact of life that teenagers are already exposed to this kind of language among their peers, as well as from films, music, video games and other media. It also has a presence in many books, but is not as prevalent in young adult literature as a genre. Nevertheless, its presence in English young adult literature has been documented,¹⁷⁷ so its inclusion is not completely taboo. I also considered the mature subject matter of the novel—the fact that there is a rape scene and a disembowelment later in the book makes the foul language seem fairly trivial. Therefore, I chose to include it as long as it is functional. The function in this case is to express Jacob's strong feelings about Chibou. Therefore, I opted to translate "salaud" as "bastard," and merde as "a piece of shit." This is strong for a children's novel, but any less emphatic equivalents such as "jerk" and "a piece of crap" would not have conveyed the depth of Jacob's feelings. These terms do convey this, and create the necessary divide between the language he uses to describe Chibou and that used to describe his mother.

Sylvie's attitude towards Jacob is also made very clear in this passage. She clearly dotes on him

¹⁷⁶ *Oxford Learner Dictionaries*, s.v. "sky," accessed September 25, 2018, https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/sky_1.

¹⁷⁷ A study by Sarah M. Coyne et al. found that in books targeted at 12-to-13-year-olds, profanity was present every seven pages, while in books for 14-year-olds and up, it was every four pages. See Sarah M. Coyne et al., "'A Helluva Read': Profanity in Adolescent Literature," *Mass Communication and Society* vol 15 no. 3 (2012): 374, Taylor and Francis.

and treats him as one would expect a younger child to be treated. Power relations are often expressed through forms of address,¹⁷⁸ and this is precisely the case here. She refers to him simultaneously as Jacob and “bébéouchet,” a diminutive, affectionate nickname that one would typically expect for a much younger child—the presence of the word “bébé” directly in the term makes it all the more explicit that this is almost an element of baby-talk. She still treats him as a younger child, who needs comforting more so than discipline. She humours his inexplicable tantrum, and comforts him through his it, as a parent would comfort a toddler.

Finding an equivalent for “bébéouchet” presents an interesting translation challenge. This non-sensical baby name conveys both affection and infantilization, and the reader can easily imagine Jacob’s mother saying it in a pitched “baby-talk” voice. The word’s relation to the word “bébé” is clear but the meaning of “ouchet” is purely based on its phonetic value as an element of baby talk; it has no semantic value on its own. To translate this, I opted for “my little munchikin.” The word “babykins” was also an option, but this is an actual word present in the dictionary, and often employed specifically for young women,¹⁷⁹ so this has an entirely different connotation. “Munchikin” has a similar ring to it, and also connotes the word “munchkin,” referring to a small person or a child, and often used endearingly.¹⁸⁰ The addition of the “i” to the word adds to the diminutive effect, as does adding the possessive “my little,” which also creating a connotation of affection.

¹⁷⁸ Marco Barrillo, “Register,” 9.

¹⁷⁹ *Oxford Living Dictionaries*, s.v. “babykins,” accessed September 26, 2018, <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/babykins>.

¹⁸⁰ *Merriam-Webster*, s.v. “munchkin,” accessed September 30, 2018, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/munchkin>.

In the memory Jacob describes of the doctors talking to his mother, there is also a marked contrast between the authority expressed by the doctors, and Jacob's disrespectful attitude towards them. The fact that the doctors are informing Jacob's mother of a decision they have made despite her protests bolsters the sense of their authority in this scene, but their vocabulary also goes towards this impression; they solely use “nous,” instead of the more oral “on,” seen elsewhere in the dialogue, which is in line with a more official, standardized French, and they use the kind of language associated with such a professional setting, such as “nos effectifs sont limités,” and “nous réévaluerons ses résultats.” The use of the professional, authoritative language in this scene is a direct contrast to Jacob's narration contextualizing it. He does not take these people seriously or respect them. He spends the appointment laughing into his hand, and dismisses the doctor's assessment of him, suggesting that the doctor is the one who is not smart. He also refers to the specialists disrespectfully as “le moustache” and “le groin,” further undermining their authority.

In this passage, I mimicked the few instances of more authoritative language, and maintained Jacob's casual, disrespectful attitude in his narration. For the epithets he gave the doctors, I chose to translate “groin” as “piggy-nose” instead of “snout” because, while it is not as strong a word (“piggy-nose” has a connotation of cuteness, whereas “snout” is simply rude), it is more childish, and Jacob's mental age is another important aspect being highlighted in this passage. The function of this scene is to reveal Jacob's intellectual disability, and his obliviousness to its severity. He thinks the doctor is the one who lacks intelligence, not him, and ironically uses a

very child-like logic to make his case for this. Using more child-like language reinforces this irony and helps drive the ideational function of the scene.

4.2.3 Mode

This story is told from the first person point of view, so it is written in an oralized, very spontaneous stream-of-consciousness style. The reader is made privy to Jacob's personal interpretation of events, as well as his opinions and attitudes. This style creates a complex participation, with an indirect dialogue between Jacob and the reader. Because the narration follows Jacob's thought process, it mimics spontaneous speech, and is highly expressive. To express this textual function, orality markers are scattered throughout the scene. These include sentence fragments, ellipses, marked vocabulary (both “familier” and “populaire”), exclamations, lack of subject inversion in questions, repetition, and phatic question tags. There is also a distinct graphological marker, which indicates *how* something is said (e.g. pitch, tone, enunciation) or whether it should be set off somehow from the rest of the text, when Jacob yells "Noon!" and the word is lengthened to evoke the drawn-out cry. The scene is narrated primarily in the present tense, which expresses the immediacy of the situation. The only exception is the memory related by Jacob of the specialists telling his mother he cannot stay at elementary school. The use of the past tense creates a contrast and distances the scene from the here-and-now of Jacob's present-tense narration.

Some of the oral characteristics mentioned above are apparent in the following extract from the text:

Je ne comprends rien à ce que ma mère raconte. J'accepte son bisou sur ma joue. Je note qu'elle se lève sur le bout des pieds. Je suis plus grand qu'elle. Normal. Je suis un homme.

J'ai quinze ans.¹⁸¹

In this paragraph, the orality of the text is evoked through the short, simple sentences, with no coordination, whose linkages are left entirely paratactic, as well as through the use of the sentence fragment “Normal.” The abruptness of these absent links creates a sense of spontaneity in the prosody of the language that is characteristic of unplanned speech. These patterns are mimicked in the English translation:

I don't understand anything my Mom is saying. I let her kiss me on the cheek. I notice that she's on her tippy toes. I'm taller than she is. That's normal. I'm a man. I'm fifteen years old.

I did change the sentence fragment into a complete sentence, as in English, it did not sound as natural; however, it was made into complete sentence by adding the deictic “that,” which is another common feature of spoken language, so this modification does not detract from the oral quality of the text. The inclusion of the informal terms “Mom” and “tippy toes” also contribute to this oral quality.

The lines immediately following use entirely different characteristics to create this kind of language:

Le docteur dit que, dans ma tête, j'ai six ans. En ce cas, comment se fait-il que je sois en première secondaire, hein? Il en connaît beaucoup, lui, des six-ans en première secondaire?¹⁸²

Lexically, the inclusion here of the interrogative discourse marker “hein” suggests informal speech, but also that Jacob is addressing this rhetorical question indirectly to the reader as if in conversation, signalling his attitude regarding the doctor's assessment. He then follows up with his next question, which again suggests a complex participation, as if he is addressing the reader again. The use of “six-ans” as a noun also reflects informal, oral speech. Structurally, the lack of

¹⁸¹ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 1 : Chibou.

¹⁸² Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 1 : Chibou.

subject inversion in the second question also suggests orality, in which questions are often signalled only by rising pitch. The emphatic repetition of the subject as “lui,” further suggests spontaneous, unplanned speech.

The English translation of these lines also reflects elements of oral speech:

The doctor says that, in my head, I’m six years old. Well, if that’s the case, then how come I’m in the seventh grade, huh? Does he know a lot of six-year-olds in the seventh grade?

The orality here is expressed primarily through the same markers as in the source text. Lexically, the use of “how come” instead of “why” is reflective of informal, spoken language, the word “a lot” also appears more in informal usage, and the interrogative discourse marker “huh” works in the same way as the French “hein.” The orality evoked by the non-inverted subject in the second question in the source text is lost here, but an additional oral discourse marker, “well,” has been added at the beginning of the first question, signalling the contrast between the doctor’s opinion and Jacob’s opinion.

The extracts discussed above represent elements that are present throughout the scene, helping to drive its primary textual function, which is to evoke the language of communicative immediacy.

4.3 General register analysis

4.3.1 Field

Overall, this novel tells the story of Jacob’s life as a contemporary young adult in Quebec struggling with acceptance. It relates several scenes in Jacob’s life over a short period of time during the winter semester. The ideational function of most of these scenes is specifically to show Jacob’s interpersonal relations with the other characters: the closeness of his relationship with his mother Sylvie, the development of his friendship with Chloé and Romain, his dislike of

and scorn for his bullies, and his seemingly irrational anger with his stuffed animal, Chibou. The novel also aims to create a nuanced portrayal of Jacob's intellectual disability, showing he has a childlike innocence, but is still capable of depth of thought and perception. He becomes distracted at every mention of giraffes, exhibiting a childish delight and innocence (e.g. "J'aime les animaux. Les girafes et les wapitis. Les otaries et les kangourous. Et les girafes aussi. Ah? Je l'ai déjà dit."¹⁸³), but he also reveals throughout the book that he is more astute than people realize; the allusions to his mother's profession as a "masseuse" become gradually more detailed throughout the book, signalling to the reader that Jacob is not as oblivious as he seems. Despite this, his childish conflation of Chibou with the real lions he encounters are what ultimately lead to his death. Even in trying to take control of his life, by understanding reality this way, Jacob is a victim of his circumstances.

As mentioned above, this novel is set in contemporary Quebec, in an unnamed city or town. Overall, there are relatively few cultural markers in this book that make it clear it is set specifically in Quebec or even in a Francophone culture. Jacob tells the reader his mother is from Saguenay, implying this is the exact opposite of exotic, so this situates the story geographically in Quebec. The only significant Quebec-specific cultural markers are the references to the Quebec school system: Jacob is in "première secondaire"¹⁸⁴ and mentions "troisième secondaire,"¹⁸⁵ "cinquième secondaire,"¹⁸⁶ "premier cycle,"¹⁸⁷ and "deuxième cycle"¹⁸⁸ as well. The critical element of the story's setting is that it is in a contemporary middle and high school;

¹⁸³ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 6 : La poursuite automobile.

¹⁸⁴ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 1 : Chibou.

¹⁸⁵ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 4 : Le grand-père d'Afrique.

¹⁸⁶ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 3 : L'arrivée à l'école, chap. 5 : La girafe, chap. 8 : La proposition.

¹⁸⁷ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 10 : Un zoo l'hiver.

¹⁸⁸ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 12 : Sous les griffes des fauves.

the fact that the school is in Quebec is secondary to this. To a reader who is unfamiliar with the system, it is not immediately evident what “secondary I” is—or, more importantly, its significance when Jacob mentions he is in this grade despite his alleged mental age. Therefore, I have adapted these references to the standard K–12 grade system used in the rest of Canada and the United States to make the text more accessible to the average North American audience.

In terms of lexis, “bobettes,”¹⁸⁹ “déjeuner”¹⁹⁰ to mean the first meal of the day, “blonde”¹⁹¹ to mean girlfriend, and allusions to specifically French foods such as creton and foie gras are also indications that Jacob is from Quebec. The first three of these do not have marked equivalents in English so they were neutralized by default, but I opted to adapt the references to creton and foie gras to something more functionally appropriate in English. Jacob’s bullies ask him in disgust if his peanut butter sandwich is creton, so functionally, an equivalent spreadable food that the audience can recognize as often considered unappetizing was required. I chose hummus, which can be a polarizing food choice, and which is a common enough food that the audience should be familiar with it. The other food reference, to fois gras (“foira”),¹⁹² is used in an insult when one of Jacob’s bullies says his hat is the same colour as this food. Since the average North American teenager is not necessarily familiar with the colour of foie gras, I adapted this to the more recognizable tofu.

Also setting the novel within a broader Francophone context are the lyrics of a Jacques Brel song, and a Jacques Prévert quote, which plays a significant role in the narrative. I considered

¹⁸⁹ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 2 : Le « pacom ».

¹⁹⁰ Ibid.

¹⁹¹ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 5 : La girafe.

¹⁹² Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 2 : Le « pacom ».

exchanging the Jacques Brel song for an English-language song, but ultimately could not find one that would have the same ideational function as the original, so instead, I simply translated the lyrics and changed the reference to Jacques Brel as simply “an old song.” Lines of poetry, on the other hand, often cross linguistic borders and the Jacques Prévert quote can be found in many English-language references, so I did not see the need to domesticate this.

Another significant element of field within the novel is how Jacob talks about his body. Within the narrative, he often describes his body and what he is doing with it, generally reflecting his discomfort, and also his lack of agency regarding it. He always tries to be unobtrusive, describing how he shrinks into himself, “Je rentre la tête dans les épaules,”¹⁹³ and always has his nose passively directed at the floor or his knees, unable or unwilling to make eye contact. He tells us “Quand je ne sais plus quoi penser, ma tête ne s’occupe plus de mon corps et lui, il fait ce qu’il veut.”¹⁹⁴ There is one scene in the middle of the story in which Jacob does attempt to retain some agency in his life by slamming his head repeatedly against the floor; the only control he feels he has is negative. As a rape survivor, as well as someone who endures daily bullying from his peers, Jacob’s feeling of powerlessness is understandable. In fact, this story could be seen as an ideological narrative of a rape victim taking back his bodily autonomy. Ironically, when Jacob finally does do this by facing down the lion at the zoo, the lion literally takes away his physical control over his body, disembowelling and dismembering him before he finally dies.

To convey this powerlessness in translation, I made a motivated choice to make Jacob’s body or body parts the active subject, as opposed to Jacob himself. For example, he says “Le mauvais

¹⁹³ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 2 : Le « pacom ».

¹⁹⁴ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 8 : La proposition.

cuir de mon sac d'école couine sous mes doigts trop crispés.”¹⁹⁵ I initially translated “sous mes doigts trop crispés” as “as I clench my fingers too hard,” but as this is an involuntary reaction, I changed this to “as my fingers clench down on it too hard.” In other instances, I changed the subject from that in the source text to reflect Jacob’s state of mind. Throughout the text, we are sometimes told “Je me balance”¹⁹⁶ when he starts to rock back and forth, but we are also told “mon corps se met à balancer,”¹⁹⁷ “sinon mon corps va se remettre à balancer,”¹⁹⁸ and “Mon corps cherche à se balancer.”¹⁹⁹ Semantically, this reinforces the notion that Jacob has no control of his body, and I opted to repeat this structure in scenes where Jacob expresses that he does not know what to say or do, even in places where it was not initially present, to reinforce his loss of control. I did retain the original active structure in the scene when Jacob’s teacher tells him he must leave the giraffe area, because his rocking is not a result of his not knowing what to say, but rather of him not wanting to comply; the rocking is an intentional act of defiance in this case, and therefore one where he retains his control.

4.3.2 Tenor

A significant element of the novel is Jacob’s interpersonal relations with Chloé and, to a lesser degree, Romain. When Chloé first initiates conversation with Jacob, he reacts with mistrust, refusing to answer or make eye contact with her. It is clear that he is unused to this kind of friendliness. When they laugh, he tells us, “Pendant une seconde, je m’assure qu’ils ne se moquent pas de moi. En général, c’est ce qui arrive lorsque les mots se forment entre mon crâne

¹⁹⁵ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 8 : La proposition.

¹⁹⁶ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 5 : La girafe, chap. 9 : Le lion et la girafe, chap. 10 : Un zoo l’hiver.

¹⁹⁷ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 9 : Le lion et la girafe.

¹⁹⁸ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 8 : La proposition.

¹⁹⁹ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 11 : Dans les coulisses du zoo.

et ma langue.”²⁰⁰ As Jacob comes to trust that these overtures of friendship are sincere, he opens up. He feels warmly towards Romain, but this is very peripheral compared to his admiration for Chloé, which becomes as intense as his admiration for his mother. This is expressed through language that is similarly marked to varying degrees, such as:

- Elle rit. On dirait un oiseau qui chante.²⁰¹
- Si son rire se voyait au lieu de s’entendre, je crois qu’il serait un ensemble de cristaux grésillant de lumière pareils à une pluie d’étoiles filantes. Un ciel trop noir qui explose soudain en milliards de...²⁰²
- Elle est douce, Chloé. Elle est belle. Comme une girafe.²⁰³
- Et quand elle pleure ainsi, une beauté... vaporeuse s’ajoute. Un peu irréaliste. Qui la rend pareille à un ange.²⁰⁴

The language Jacob uses to describe Chloé is rife with poetic imagery. Therefore, I channelled specific English poetic imagery in my translation. In the first example here, I translated “un oiseau qui chante” as “the song of a nightingale.” The nightingale is often used in poetry to symbolize love, so comparing Chloé to this bird is apt, and its inclusion creates a more romantic, literary effect. In the second example, a direct translation already renders a fairly literary text. The only addition I made was to set off “too dark” between commas, and to keep it in its post-noun position, which is a standard strategy in poetry to suggest emphasis. In the third example, I did not use subject dislocation in translation as it detracts from the literary effect, but instead used the repetition of Chloé’s name for “elle”: “Chloé is gentle. Chloé is beautiful. Like a

²⁰⁰ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 5 : La girafe.

²⁰¹ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 8 : La proposition.

²⁰² Ibid.

²⁰³ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 9 : Le lion et la girafe.

²⁰⁴ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 13 : Le bruit du bonheur.

giraffe.” This evokes the poetic convention of repeating a structure to create emphasis. In the final example, I elected to translate “vaporeuse” as “ethereal,” which is a very literary word, and works well with the comparison of Chloé to an angel.

The way Chloé and Romain view Jacob is more complex. They do make overtures of friendship, particularly Chloé, but their attitude is more the attitude one would have towards a small child or someone to be humoured than the attitude one would have towards a peer. For example, Chloé refers to Jacob as “notre ami” before she knows his name, which is an unusual way to sincerely refer to someone, particularly as Jacob has so far reacted with confusion and not enthusiasm to her attempt to befriend him. Romain, meanwhile, addresses him as “le grand,” and “mon Jacob.” “Le grand” in particular is especially patronizing, as this is a term used specifically to address children—but Jacob is actually a year older than Romain. “Mon Jacob” expresses a familiarity to which even teenagers, known for their informal use of language, would not generally leap during the first conversation with someone. I translated “mon grand” as “bud,” which also conveys familiarity and is generally used to address younger children, rather than peers. In fact, I used the same term to translate “mon chum,” when one of Jacob’s bullies is pretending to be friendly to lure him towards the lion cage; it functions in the same manner as a word that is too friendly for the actual relations between the characters, and which is used to try to make Jacob let his guard down. The other term of address used by Romain, “mon Jacob,” was rendered in English as “Jacob my friend.” In English, the possessive in front of a name suggests a romantic or parental link, and is only used in the third person, not the first. By modifying this term with the inclusion of “friend,” Romain is still being overly friendly with Jacob, but in a way that sounds more natural.

The artificiality of the tenor expressed by Romain and Chloé continues throughout this scene. The entire passage can be seen as an act put on for Jacob's benefit. Romain and Chloé are sincere in wanting to be friends with him, but they speak to him in a style that would be termed "consultative-casual" in Martin Joos' style typology, used by Juliane House.²⁰⁵ The consultative style is neither formal nor informal, and it makes no assumptions about the audience's background knowledge.²⁰⁶ Therefore it is characterized by a degree of explicitation that is not present in most informal situations, where participants can assume an implicit understanding. Casual style is marked by this implicitness, but the assumed familiarity between participants also encourages the use of contractions and less formal lexical items and collocations.²⁰⁷ This conversation is consultative-casual because it is marked by the explicitation used, while elements of spontaneous, informal speech are still present in lexis, syntax, etc. For example, when Romain introduces himself to Jacob, he explains "Je suis en troisième secondaire, mais on se croise souvent dans l'école. Sauf que tu ignorais peut-être mon prénom." He expects that Jacob does recognize and know him, so it seems illogical that he would have to explain to Jacob that they do know each other. This can again be seen as representative of a patronizing attitude; because of Jacob's intellectual disability, it is possible that Romain is unsure of how aware he is of his surroundings. Nevertheless, the way he worded his statement suggests that he is explaining something to Jacob that he already knows. The entire dialogue suggests this attitude from both Romain and Chloé, who periodically use explicitly hypotactic constructions while speaking, to

²⁰⁵ House, *Translation*, 29–30.

²⁰⁶ House, *Translation*, 29.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*

ensure the relationships between clauses are clear. For example, when Jacob asks if Romain and Chloé are romantically involved, Romain explains:

Moi, j'ai déjà une blonde qui va dans une autre école [...] Si on se connaît, Chloé et moi, ça ne fait pas longtemps. Son grand-père, par contre, je le croise depuis que je suis tout petit, vu qu'il vit dans la même rue que mes parents.²⁰⁸

There are several explicitations in this text, including markers that make the relations between the clauses clear. He begins by specifying “moi,” and clarifies unnecessarily that yes, he does have a girlfriend but she goes to a different school. He specifies “*Si on se connaît*,” and clarifies the subject “Chloé et moi,” and then uses a contrastive marker, “par contre” to indicate he does know Chloé’s grandfather. He concludes with a subordinating conjunction, “*vu qu’il vit dans la même rue que mes parents*.” This explicitation is neutralized to a degree in the translation, to allow for a more natural-sounding text:

And I already have a girlfriend who goes to another school [...] Chloé and I haven’t known each other for very long. Her grandfather, on the other hand, I’ve known him since I was little, since he lives on the same street as me.

There is still some explicitation in the text, primarily the elements that are critical to the semantic meaning of the utterance, but the hypotaxis has been replaced by parataxis in “Chloé and I haven’t known each other for very long.” Parataxis is prevalent in the language of immediacy, so this sounds more natural in the sense of spontaneous conversation.

Overall, there is an odd degree of artificiality in the tenor of this scene, which seems to detract from the realism of the communicative setting, but ultimately this reflects Romain and Chloé’s attitude towards Jacob, of whose intellectual capabilities they are unsure. This artificiality is attenuated in some parts of the translation, but its presence in the narrative itself means it still

²⁰⁸ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 5 : La girafe.

appears in the target text.

Jacob's relationship with his bullies and the power imbalance that exists between them and him is another prominent theme in the novel. Their attitude is made very clear by their harassment as well as their nickname for him, "le pacom," the meaning of which is derived from the fact that he is "pas comme les autres."²⁰⁹ A similar word could not be gracefully crafted out of "not like" in English, so I had to rely on a more creative solution. I ultimately opted for "Snowflake," as this has long been a term used to explain to children that they are all "unique," just as every snowflake is unique. In recent years, the term has taken on a negative connotation, being used in particular to describe millennials who are seen as too thin-skinned and easily offended, as well as used in the political arena by the right to describe left-leaning individuals they also perceive as easily offended.²¹⁰ It does nevertheless still retain its original implication of "uniqueness," but is no longer meant positively. Therefore, it does convey the same connotation as "pacom," albeit not as cleverly.

As well as harassing him for being different, Jacob's bullies also abuse him because of his close relationship with his mother, and his mother's job as a "masseuse."²¹¹ They make a point of denigrating his mother and making crude comments about her body. In English, I opted to evoke baby talk to render this harassment. This is a common bullying trope, and it suited the situation well. To ensure this was conveyed, I translated "ta mère" as "your mommy"; the bullies are clearly mocking the closeness of Jacob's relationship with his mother, as well as his child-

²⁰⁹ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 4 : Le grand-père d'Afrique.

²¹⁰ Rebecca Nicholson, "'Poor little snowflake' – the defining insult of 2016," *The Guardian*, 28 November 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2016/nov/28/snowflake-insult-disdain-young-people>.

²¹¹ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 2 : Le « pacom ».

likeness, so using the younger child's word for mother is infantilizing and helps convey their mockery. I also decided to translate "boules" as the stronger "titties," as the vulgar language better conveys the emotional violence of the bullying than the more neutral equivalents "boobs" and "boobies." I chose "titties" over "tits" as the diminutive ending also better conveys the infantilizing tone of the bullies. I again hesitated to use a stronger swear word, but as it has a function specifically to offend, it seemed to be the most appropriate course.

Jacob's dislike and scorn for his bullies is equally clear, through his negative descriptions of them, as well as his own pejorative nicknames. The reader is told that Jules Imbeault's two lackeys are called "les colocus" because "ils se tiennent toujours derrière Imbeault. Ils lui collent le cul, quoi."²¹² Translating this into English was particularly challenging, as I could not find a solution that would have the same connotation and that would sound as natural. I ultimately opted for "buttheads" and then adapted Jacob's explanation of the term to explicitly convey the logic of this: "because they've always got their heads way up Imbeault's butt. They're stuck right up his ass." "Coller au cul" and "up someone's ass" are equivalent expressions, so this sense is still present in the English, but there is no possible noun that can be made from this expression without sounding overtly sexual, so I used the attenuated "butthead," which is an established word, instead. It still conveys the same sense; the only drawback is that it is overtly offensive, as opposed to "colocus," whose meaning is not obvious unless it is explained.

Another significant element in the portrayal of Jacob's bullies is their use of joulal. They are the only characters in the novel to speak in this dialect, and its use is meant to be an indication of

²¹² Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 2 : Le « pacom ».

their social status as “miscreants.” In an authentic speech situation, this kind of language could be used by any speaker in an informal setting, but its use here is as a social marker. This not only makes the language all the more marked, but limits its authentic use by characters not meant to be socially judged. Some of the language used by these characters is not even strictly speaking joul, but is merely eye dialect, that is, words written phonetically even though the phonetic spelling does not alter the pronunciation (for example, “marde”²¹³ instead of “merde”). The function of this marked language is to signal the speakers' otherness. While joul is widely spoken in Quebec, here it is used to contrast the bullies with everyone else, who speaks standard oral French. Regardless of its status in Quebec, its deviation from the norm is used to mark them as not just linguistically different, but also socially different.

To render the bullies' joul in English, I relied primarily on very oral expressions and phoneticized spelling (e.g. “ya” instead of “you,” “whatcha” instead of “what did you”). However, these characteristics are more scattered and the effect is generally attenuated. Nevertheless, the ultimate purpose of the joul is to set the bullies apart from everyone else in the novel, and the fact that these strategies are not used for the other characters helps achieve this purpose. The source text conveys an ideological message about the status of joul as opposed to standard French that is omitted in the target text—as well as being impossible to convey this status in translating a text into another dialect, this is a message I consciously wanted to avoid because it is a negative ideology with which I disagree. By choosing to use informal language that is not geographically or socially marked in English, I avoided propagating the same ideology about a different dialect as well.

²¹³ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 2 : Le « pacom ».

Another important relationship is that between Jacob and the reader, which is one of intimacy. He addresses the reader indirectly through his conversational tone and use of rhetorical questions, and the reader has a window into his most intimate thoughts. In Martin Joos' style typology,²¹⁴ this text would be deemed intimate, marked by extraction, which is an extreme form of ellipsis assuming that the participants already have the background knowledge required to understand a statement. The fact that the reader does not have this knowledge (for example, the reason for Jacob's antipathy towards Chibou is not revealed until the end of the book, although Jacob makes explicit allusions to it) leaves the reader wondering, and this is part of what drives the novel.

4.3.3 Mode

The patterns present in chapter 1 in terms of spontaneous, oralized speech are prevalent throughout the novel. They appear in Jacob's internal dialogue as well as his external dialogue, however, there is a marked difference between the two. He has very few lines of actual speech in the novel, but when he does, the simplicity of the language is a direct contrast to his internal speech, which varies in its length and complexity. He speaks in short, simple sentences marked by ellipses and, when he is upset, repetition (e.g. "Et ça les enrage! Ça les enrage!",²¹⁵ "Il faut le punir. Le punir!",²¹⁶ or "Pas la frousse. Pas la frousse."²¹⁷). This helps create the dichotomy between his public persona, or how the rest of the world sees him, and his internal persona, or how he sees himself and how he really is. Meanwhile, while his internal dialogue does feature

²¹⁴ House, *Translation*, 29–30.

²¹⁵ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 8 : La proposition.

²¹⁶ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 9 : Le lion et la girafe.

²¹⁷ Ibid.

many elements of oral speech, it is still constrained by the conventions of written narrative, and sometimes this style emerges more strongly than the orality. For example, regarding the song *Katyusha*, he says, “Je ne comprends pas que les clients affectionnent le rythme quasi militaire de cette mélodie russe quand ils s’abandonnent aux mains de ma mère.”²¹⁸ The only orality marker in this sentence is the use of “que” beyond what it is conventionally used for in standard, written French. The use of longer words not generally used in general vocabulary such as “affectionner,” which belongs specifically to the literary register,²¹⁹ “quasi militaire” and “s’abandonnent” reflect the written medium here. This sentence is structurally fairly simple, with only one subordinating clause, but there are other instances of complex sentences in the novel, which also reflect that this is not true spontaneous speech but simply an evocation. When Romain tries to offer Jacob the stuffed animal giraffe, he says “Je la saisis rapidement afin que Romain puisse la lâcher puis, avec délicatesse, je la retiens par le corps.”²²⁰ This sentence has one subordinating clause and one coordinating one, making it fairly complex for oral speech. The use of “puis” reflects the oral nature of the language, but the use of “afin que” rather than simply “pour” also suggests a more literary quality. There is a constant tension in the text between these two mediums, with the stream-of-consciousness style and Jacob’s child-like personality pulling the text more towards the oral and side of the spectrum with the language of communicative immediacy, and the repeated use of more complex and literary vocabulary, specifically when Jacob talks about his mother or Chloé as well as sentences structured with discourse markers primarily used in writing (“toutefois,” “cependant,” etc.) pulling it towards the written side of the spectrum, with the language of communicative distance.

²¹⁸ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 6 : La poursuite automobile.

²¹⁹ *Larousse*, s.v. “affectionner,” accessed September 29, 2018, <https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/affectionner/1425?q=affectionner#1422>.

²²⁰ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 9 : Le lion et la girafe.

As would be expected, orality also has a significant presence in the conversations between the other characters. The conversation in the cafeteria between Chloé, Romain, and Jacob is an excellent example of this. When Romain approaches the table, he says “Dis donc, Chloé, t’as pris de la lasagne?”²²¹ This simple sentence displays several elements of orality. “Dis donc” is a discourse marker functioning here as an informal greeting. The use of the second person singular, natural among teenage peers, also reflects the informality and the immediacy of the situation. The use of elided “t’as” instead of “tu as,” which furthermore forms a non-inverted subject for a question, is also an orality marker. The utterance altogether is rather abrupt—there is no segue into the question—and this is typical of conversational language as well. The interrogative nature of the sentence also invites a response from Chloé, thus it can be categorized as a turn-taking marker, another significant element of spontaneous language. This single sentence on its own introduces Romain as a peer on a level of familiarity with Chloé, and opens the conversation up. When the conversation turns to Chloé’s grandfather and she begins to relate the story about him and the lions, there is also a very marked orality present:

Ne fais pas attention à lui. Écoute : mon grand-père, il est fantastique parce qu’il est comme toi, un *pacom*! Voilà au moins vingt ou trente ans, en tout cas, bien avant que je sois née, il vivait en Afrique. Au Kenya. Ma grand-mère est décédée assez jeune et je pense que papy avait, à cette époque, une nouvelle conjointe africaine. Enfin, de ça je ne suis pas certaine... et ça n’a pas d’importance. Donc, mon grand-père, il aidait à construire des ponts et des chemins de fer... C’est un homme dont tout le monde apprécie les talents et la gentillesse.²²²

In terms of prosody, Chloé’s narrative meanders and gets off track, precisely as unplanned, spontaneous speech does. She begins to talk about her grandfather’s African wife, clearly carried away by her excitement in talking about her grandfather, and then trails off before returning to

²²¹ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 4 : Le grand-père d’Afrique.

²²² Ibid.

the subject at hand. A bit further, she feels the need to include an aside about how appreciated her grandfather is, which, again, is not germane to her narrative, but reflects her attitude towards her grandfather. She addresses Jacob directly using an imperative form and the informal second person. She also uses vague language when she mentions rather unspecifically when her grandfather lived in Africa, which is typical of spontaneous speech. Other features of spontaneous speech here include the use of an exclamation, a sentence fragment, the informal “ça,” the discourse markers “enfin,” and “donc,” pauses signalled by ellipses and subject dislocation. Many of these elements were replicated in the English translation:

Just ignore him. Listen: my grandfather is awesome because he’s like you—a Snowflake! At least twenty or thirty years ago now, a long time before I was born anyway, he was living in Africa. In Kenya. My grandmother died pretty young and I think that back then, Grandpa had a new African wife. I mean, I’m not sure about that... but it doesn’t matter. So, my grandfather was helping them build bridges and railroads... he’s one of those people that everybody loves because he’s just so nice and so talented.

The meandering rhythm of the source text is present in the target text as well. The orality here is effected similarly through discourse markers, a sentence fragment and pauses. Some of the specifically French orality markers were dropped here, but this loss was countered by using discourse markers specific to oral, spontaneous text (“anyway,” “I mean,” and “so” used to signal the resumption of a narrative) whereas those used in the source text were more conventional, and often used in the written medium as well.

In terms of cohesion, there are several passages marked by syntactic parallelism. For example, when Jacob first talks about his mother, he uses the same sentence structure at the beginning of three paragraphs in a row (“Elle sent bon, ma mère.”, “Elle est belle, ma mère.”, and again “Elle est belle, ma mère.”²²³) creating emphasis on the statements and cohesion between the different

²²³ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 1 : Chibou.

paragraph. This structure also parallels what he says about Chloé later on: “Elle est douce, Chloé. Elle est belle.”²²⁴ This repetition creates an intertextual link signalling a parallel between his feelings for his mother and his feelings for Chloé. In translation, while this parallelism was maintained, the subject dislocation was omitted, making the statements less emphatic. While subject dislocation is present in spoken English, it is more natural in French, and in English would have ultimately detracted from the poetic, literary quality of Jacob’s language when he speaks about his mother and Chloé. Thus, the effect of the parallelism was attenuated but this was done to comply with the effect of the literary language.

Another important element of textuality is graphical markers. In the novel, these include dashes to indicate speech, quotation marks to indicate responses Jacob thinks but does not say, italics, phonetic lengthening of words and ellipses. Ellipses in particular are used heavily, and with several functions. A common feature of the language of immediacy and spontaneity, these are used throughout the novel to indicate Jacob’s thoughts trailing off, pauses and interruptions, as well as the unheard side of a telephone conversation. These are a convention of both English and French texts so they can easily be replicated in the translation. However, in some cases, the last word before the ellipsis is modified by the word coming after it, so the English translation has no flexibility in terms of structure. For example, when Jacob’s mother comes to see why he is upset and finds Chibou, he says “Je ne veux pas lever le regard vers ma garde-robe et apercevoir de nouveau ce fichu...” and his mother exclaims “Chibou!” The pause after “fichu” followed by his mother’s exclamation creates suspense and dramatic effect. This dramatic effect is part of the textual function, and should thus be replicated. However, to do this, the word “fichu” *must* come

²²⁴ Bouchard, *Le coup*, chap. 9 : Le lion et la girafe.

at the end of the English sentence as well. This is not a problem in terms of sentence structure, except that the modifier “de nouveau” in English would most naturally come in this position. The structure created by the ellipsis prevents this, leaving two alternative options:

- 1) I don't want to again look up at my closet and see that awful...
- 2) I don't want to look up at my closet again and see that awful...

The first option, while grammatically sound, detracts significantly from the orality of the text. In spontaneous speech, the modifier “again” comes at the end of a clause unless a very particular emphasis is intended, which is not the case here. In the second option, there is a shift in the semantic meaning; the “again” is a repetition of looking up at his closet, not of seeing Chibou. Therefore, this is not an option either. Ultimately, I simply omitted the word “again” altogether. Seeing as Jacob just saw Chibou, it is implicit in the context of the situation that if he looks up at his closet, it would be for a second time.

A similar problem is caused when Romain is describing Chloé's grandfather as “ce bonhomme qui a soixante ans...” and Chloé interjects “Cinquante-sept!” In English, the age modifier would come first as “that sixty-year-old man” but for coherence, Chloé's interjection just come immediately after the modifier. This had a simple solution in the creation of a substantive noun from the modifier, so “sixty-year-old man” simply became “sixty-year-old.”

The mode is expressed in various ways throughout the text, but orality, graphical markers, cohesion and parallelism are among the more significant, as discussed above. These help drive the text type as a literary text told from Jacob's first person impressionistic, stream-of-conscious point of view.

4.4 Summary

Ultimately, it is difficult to sum up an entire macro-text's field, tenor or mode into discrete types, as these factors exist more on a cline than segregate categories. Additionally, as Juliane House has pointed out, there tends to be a great deal of overlap in the analysis of each of these components,²²⁵ as the concepts themselves are not entirely discrete either, acting rather in symbiosis. Nevertheless, the above micro- and macro-analyses have made it clear that there are recurring themes throughout *Le coup de la girafe*: the field reflects the ideational function of relating Jacob's life as a contemporary teenager with an intellectual disorder, and his feelings of powerlessness within this life; the tenor fulfills the interpersonal function of reflecting Jacob's relations with others and revealing how the vocabulary he used in talking about them varied widely depending on his opinion of them, while the author's opinion also reveals itself through the use of joul as a social marker rather than a geographical one; and, the mode fulfills a textual function of expressing orality through a variety of means, as well as a function of creating cohesion within the text. It is evident that what has the widest influence on language in this novel is ultimately the tenor, which affects both the field and the mode as well. Since the story is told in the first person, it is narrated entirely in Jacob's ideolect, and this varies specifically in terms of his attitude about the topic and his relationship with other participants in the interaction. While the novel is scattered with a significant number of orality markers, tenor also critically affects the realism of the dialogue, as exemplified by the cafeteria conversation discussed above. When I undertook this project, I expected orality markers to have the greatest sway in creating realistic spoken language, but these analyses have revealed that tenor, which can be realized through

²²⁵ House, *Translation*, 126.

orality markers, is equally critical in creating a text founded on orality, and drives the realism of the conversations within a text.

5. Translation: A Giraffe Tale by Camille Bouchard

The translation of *Le coup de la girafe* does not appear in the open-access version of this thesis for copyright reasons.

6. Conclusion

I undertook my translation of *Le coup de la girafe* as an open exploration of register, and of the question of whether the particular register of fictional orality was parallel in French and English; I came to the conclusion that it is not parallel but there are certainly similarities in the use of several shared orality markers. I ultimately determined that what had initially struck me about the language in this novella was not a lack of orality markers per se, but rather that it uses a distinct register, for which there is not a specific equivalent in English.

By approaching my translation within the context of a register analysis, I was able to perceive that significant stylistic choices in this novella—which did impact the register—were motivated and functional, and therefore would need to be replicated in my target text. The main character, Jacob, has a very distinct voice, expressing a unique worldview through a mixture of adult and child-like language, and using different registers to speak about the other characters, depending largely on how he feels about them. Because he is narrating in the first person and the present tense, his language further reflects the communicative immediacy of the situation, and is characterized by spontaneity and a variety of orality markers. I mimicked these characteristics in my translation, depending upon orality markers to help convey Jacob's personality and his voice and create an adequate translation.

There are, of course, limitations and shortcomings to my project. Those limitations of register theory listed in section 2.5, primarily the lack of precise guidance in developing a register analysis, the fuzziness of the concept in relation to the concepts of genre and style, and the

possibility of overlooking significant register markers due simply to ignorance of their existence, are front and centre in this area. However, in addition, the lack of precise guidance in register analysis allows the analyst to be biased in their interpretation and selectively use only those textual elements that support what they may be looking to find. My own register analysis, furthermore, was not based on any particular academic foundation but rather solely on my own interpretation, which could very well be flawed, and indeed was focused particularly on the orality of the text and the tenor, which may have led me to overlook other elements. The scope of my project did not allow for the use of corpus studies, as advocated by certain scholars,²²⁶ but comparing *Le coup de la girafe* to other novels in the contemporary young adult realism genre would have permitted me to perhaps identify linguistic genre conventions, or further register markers that I have not examined. As I stated in previous chapters, corpus studies is not practical for the average translator, but when used, it can offer new insights. I also did not address the concept of style; as mentioned above, this is sometimes conflated with register, but style does act on texts in its own way, using various registers to literary effect.

Regardless of these potential shortcomings, I did find the answer I set out to find regarding the asymmetry of registers in English and French, and I am satisfied with what I found. Based on this, I translated *Le coup de la girafe* within a framework of what I considered the most significant elements of the novel: register and orality, and specifically how these are reflected in translation.

²²⁶ Biber and Conrad, *Register*, 74–75; House, *Translation*, 70.

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