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Abstract

This thesis examines translation in English Canadian music of the late 20th/early 21st century and the challenges unique to song translation. It first explores this increasingly apparent trend in the light of Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) regulations, and then studies the history and background of Canadian music. It then looks at song translation as a form of poetry translation, to study the challenges faced in the process and the solutions found, focussing specifically on the translation of various poetic devices used in the corpus. Further, it examines the intentions that generate these translations and seeks to analyze the finished products in the light of these motivations. Do musical groups translate their work in order to expand their horizons and explore another culture, or do they do so primarily to expand the fan base and generate more revenue? And what methods are used to deal with all the inherent restrictions of song translation? What does the finished product tell the listener about the intention of the translation?

Résumé

La présente thèse étudie la traduction en musique canadienne anglaise de la fin du XXe / début du XXIe siècle, et les défis qui sont unique à la traduction des chansons. Premièrement, elle explore cette tendance, qui semble être de plus en plus évidente, basée sur les règlements du Conseil de la radiodiffusion et des télécommunications canadiennes (CRTC), et aussi elle discute l'histoire de la musique canadienne. Deuxièmement, elle examine la traduction des chansons comme un type de traduction de la poésie pour étudier les défis du processus et les solutions trouvées, en appuyant précisément sur des éléments poétiques dans les chansons du corpus. Dernièrement, elle étudie l'inspiration qui crée ces traductions et analyse les produits finis compte tenu des motivations. Est-ce que les groupes le font pour élargir leurs connaissances et explorer une autre culture, ou est-ce pour élargir leur cercle de fans et générer plus de revenus? Quels sont les moyens utilisés pour résoudre les difficultés de la traduction des chansons? Qu'est-ce que les chansons traduits disent aux auditeurs du l'intention de la traduction?

INTRODUCTION

"The poets let a generation down and modern music could be the healing sound"

- Hawksley Workman, *We Will Still Need a Song*

0.1 Motivation

In May 2001, while working in the gift shop at the Canadian War Museum, I heard a song on the radio that I recognized, *You* by Sky, but when I went to sing the lyrics, I was surprised to hear them in French! I had no idea that the same song existed in two languages. I then heard the chorus, which remained in English. Living in Ottawa and having access to both English- and French-language radio made me aware that there were several other Canadian bands who also had songs in both official languages.

I found this curious and began to speculate on the reasons why the band chose to translate the song and how they performed the translation, given constraints such as rhyme and the fact that the music remained constant. A few weeks later, in June 2001, I read an article in the *Ottawa Citizen* about the soon to be released original and translation albums by Big Sugar, and I was motivated to explore this trend in Canadian contemporary music.

Song translation is a fact; it is occurring in countries all over the world, not just Canada. However, these translations are receiving next to no recognition or study by academics or even the media. In fact, in the article announcing Big Sugar's upcoming translated CD, the *Ottawa Citizen* referred to the translated songs as "rewrites"

(Citizen, 21 June 2001, F5). The term "translation" does not appear in the short article at all.

In addition, the products of song translation are far from uniform. Some songs are adapted to account for cultural changes, some are not. Some songs maintain the chorus in English, some translate the chorus as well. Given the fact that the results vary, there must be more than one method used for song translation, and possibly more than one reason why songs are being translated.

0.2 Objectives

In the following pages, I plan to describe and study the phenomenon of song translation from English into French in contemporary Canadian music. Through a comparative study of the original songs and their translations, I will explore the translation process.

0.3 Methodology

As this is relatively uncharted territory, I will be basing my procedure on the strategies for the translation of poetry. Since poetry and songs share certain features, as discussed in Chapter Two, many of the problems and challenges that occur in the translation of poetry may also apply to the translation of songs, as may some of the various proposed solutions to those problems. I will be examining those issues and how they were addressed in my corpus. I will also be discussing certain strategies of the translation of poetry and how they relate to the translation of songs. I will be

using skopos theory to explore each band's motivation to translate, and polysystem theory to examine the songs through comparative analysis to establish any links and trends between the various songs.

0.4 Scope and Limitations

Gage Canadian Dictionary defines the term *contemporary* as: "of or having to do with the present time; current". (Gage, 254) *Popular* is defined as: "liked by a great many people; intended to appeal to the current tastes of the general public."(Gage, 876) I prefer the term *contemporary* as opposed to the more commonly used term *popular* because I believe that a song does not have to be contemporary to be popular, or popular to be contemporary; although artists would undoubtedly like their work to be both. The term *contemporary* encompasses a 'time' connotation, whereas *popular* carries a value judgment; therefore, I am using the term *contemporary* based on its temporal definition. The bands that I have chosen are both contemporary and popular. I chose them based on the criteria that both the original English song and the French translation were played on the radio. The detailed description of the corpus of songs used in this study can be found in Chapter 3.

I will be dealing only with song translation from English into French, because, through my research, I discovered that it was more common for Anglophone bands to translate into French than for Francophone bands to translate into English. Although there are a few Francophones who have songs in translation, such as Roch Voisine, the usual practice is for Francophone artists, such as Céline Dion and Kevin Parent, to

simply write original songs in English. While there are some Anglophone bands, such as Great Big Sea and Moxy Früvous, who do not translate, but write original French songs the majority of French songs sung by Anglophones are translations. When I discuss "song translation", I am referring to the translation of the lyrics only. The music remains constant for both songs - only the language changes.

0.5 Outline

The first chapter includes an overview of Canadian music – its history, legislation and industry, as well as certain grants available to musicians.

While songs are not equivalent to poems, they share certain devices, which I will explore in chapter two. I will also examine the translation theories that I believe are most applicable to song translation.

In chapter three, I will introduce the reader to the bands being studied – their background, song style and thoughts on song translation.

Chapter four involves an analysis of the corpus in terms of translation problems and their solutions.

CHAPTER ONE – CANADIAN MUSIC

Contemporary Canadian music is a rapidly growing industry that is gaining greater international recognition with each passing year. In 1992-1993, revenues from sales of recordings with Canadian content were $71,479,000. In 2000, a mere seven years later, that number had increased significantly, to $137,969,000 (Profile). However, contemporary Canadian music has not been the object of extensive study in either the music or literary fields, and certainly not in the context of translation. As academics, we have the opportunity to take a serious look at this industry and claim our place within it. As Canadian translators, we have the ability to address the question of song translation, as it is a significant aspect of Canadian music. As stated by Eithne O'Connell,

> as our culture places increasing emphasis on oral, aural and visual communication, it seems appropriate that translation studies should devote more attention to the variety of ways in which audio-visual material can be rendered in another language. (O'Connell, 151)

By doing so, we can increase knowledge about the activity, and possibly foster the growth of song translation by making translators and artists aware of the option and possibilities of song translation. Possibilities include the financial aspect of the music business – greater fan base, access to other markets, more revenue – as well as the heightened presence and awareness of the band on a national and international level. This could be a lucrative field for both translators and artists, as both could increase their income through this venture.

The translation of contemporary song has existed for several decades. One of the most notable, and possibly one of the first examples is *She Loves You* by The Beatles, who had this song translated into German (*Sie Liebt Dich*). The single was recorded in Paris in

January 1964, and released in West Germany on March 5 of the same year (released in Canada in June 1964). They also recorded a German version *of I Wanna Hold Your Hand (Komm Gib Mir Deine Hand)* for that single. (Haber) Song translation in Canada dates back almost as far, with The Guess Who's French version of their hit *Believe Me (Croyez-Moi)* in 1966, (Einarson, 3) which was translated by lead singer Burton Cumming's high school French teacher. The field of song translation has only grown since then, both in Canada and abroad.

1.1 CANADIAN MUSIC INDUSTRY

The mandate of the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is to determine what is played on radio stations, in terms of Canadian content. The Canadian Content Regulations, or more familiarly, CanCon, were officially implemented by the CRTC on January 18, 1971, after much debate, criticism and praise from record producers, broadcasters and artists. That piece of legislation radically changed the Canadian music industry in ways that have affected the industry to this day. In the modern world of innumerable record stores and online shopping, the thought that Canadian music was difficult to buy is hard to believe. Yet a mere 30 years ago, that is, pre-CanCon legislation, that was exactly the case. It was challenging, even in Toronto, the music centre of English Canada, to walk into any record store and buy a record made by a Canadian band. If the record could be found, the chances that it was produced by a Canadian recording label were slim to none. (Grealis and Klees, 1)

The reason for this was simple. It was too expensive to produce an album and release it in Canada when only a very limited number of people would buy it. (Grealis and Klees, 1) One of the reasons few would buy it is because few would even know it existed. Canadian music was very seldom heard on the radio, because many broadcasters decided to stick with what was popular south of the border, and what was selling in record stores. In 1965, twenty full-length Canadian-produced records were released in the United States, compared to the 135 singles coming into Canada per week from the United States. (Grealis and Klees, 1) Many, both within the industry and without, felt that this situation was unfair, and that the time had come for reform within the Canadian music industry; otherwise, there would cease to be a Canadian music industry!

Two such men were Walt Grealis, an RCMP officer and a record promoter, and Stan Klees, a producer with Astro Records. In 1963, they decided "it was time to stop dreaming [about a vibrant Canadian music industry] and get something going." (Fischer, J1) They decided a magazine was the place to start. Their simple weekly magazine, *RPM Weekly (Records, Promotion, Music)*, (Grealis and Klees, 1) usually no more than 16 pages, was instrumental in the development of CanCon and the Canadian music industry as we know it today. The magazine was not aimed at the general listening public, but program directors, broadcasters and the government – those who controlled what went on the air.

The magazine included advertisements, promotions and, more importantly, articles and editorials discussing various opinions, comments, criticisms and suggestions about the

state of the Canadian music industry. Soon, *RPM Weekly's* "hit list" was being used by broadcasters the world over as an insight into what was happening in the Canadian music industry, and by Canadian broadcasters to promote Canadian music on the airwaves. (Grealis and Klees, 1) *RPM Weekly* also began the *Gold Leaf Music Awards* in 1964, which would become the Juno Awards in 1970, now considered the highest honour in Canadian music. (Grealis and Klees, 4) This magazine was created to promote Canadian music in Canada, and did so much more than that, by providing the push the government needed to create broadcasting legislation and make Canadian music known world-wide.

In the Canadian Content legislation, the CRTC defines Canadian music in terms of the MAPL system – Music, Artist, Production and Lyrics. (MAPL) The primary objective of the MAPL system is a cultural one. It endeavours to encourage increased exposure of Canadian musical performers, lyricists and composers to Canadian audiences. To qualify as "Canadian content", a musical selection must **generally** fulfil at least two of the following conditions:

M (music) – the music is composed entirely by a Canadian.

A (artist) – the music is, or lyrics are, performed principally by a Canadian.

P (production) – the musical selection consists of a live performance that is

(i) recorded wholly in Canada, or

(ii) performed wholly in Canada and broadcast live in Canada

L (lyrics) – the lyrics are written entirely by a Canadian.

These are the four criteria that the CRTC uses to establish whether a recording is Canadian. The legislation also dictates that "at least 35% of popular music selections

broadcast by commercial AM and FM radio stations each broadcast week must be Canadian selections. In addition, French-language radio stations must ensure that at least 65% of the popular vocal music selections they broadcast each week are in the French language." (Canadian Content) Therefore, Canadian radio stations broadcasting in French have an additional requirement to meet.

1.2 ORIGINS OF RADIO BROADCASTING IN CANADA

Canadian radio broadcasting, indeed, all radio broadcasting, began with Reginald Aubrey Fessenden, who was the first person to prove that voices and music could be heard over the air without wires. He was born in the Eastern Townships in Québec in 1866, and, while working with Edison, experimented with sound waves. He made history on Christmas Eve, 1906, when wireless operators of several United Fruit Company ships in the Atlantic heard Fessenden transmit a recording of Handel's "Largo", play "Oh Holy Night" on the violin, and read from the Bible before wishing them a Merry Christmas. (Canada Heirloom)

1.3 HISTORY OF CANADIAN MUSIC

The lack of a solid definition of Canadian music makes the job of a Canadian music scholar more difficult. For example, Geoff Pevere and Greig Dymond, authors of *Mondo Canuck: A Canadian Pop Culture Odyssey*, spend the better part of the three-page introduction to their book trying to define Canadian pop culture. In the end, they use their own definition as the basis for their work.

> In deciding what to include in the book, we applied what for us were the most reasonable of criteria. For the culture we were discussing to truly qualify as popular, it had to be both familiar and accessible to people across the country; while there have been a number of

> enormously successful regional TV and radio shows, for example, we have decided only to address those popcult products which were easily and affordably available to Canadians nationally. [...] Basically, if it reached our rec rooms, it's here. (Pevere and Dymond, x)

Therefore, for the purposes of my thesis, I define Canadian music as that which meets MAPL guidelines – Music, Artist, Production and Lyrics.

Using the definition provided by the CRTC, Canadian music really began with the legendary band, The Guess Who. These four musicians from Winnipeg were the first to show that it was possible for a band to sing about Canada and remain in Canada, and still be immensely successful world-wide. They also showed the world that Canadian music includes more than the ballads of Paul Anka or the folk songs of Gordon Lightfoot; it also includes rock. The Guess Who broke through many barriers to pave the way for other enormously successful acts such as Bryan Adams, Rush and Céline Dion, who also went on to international fame.

From these humble beginnings, Canadian music has exploded, both nationally and internationally, due in large part to CanCon and *RPM Weekly*. In the 1970s, Canadian music began "takin' care of business". (Bachman) It became increasingly easier for new Canadian bands to get their songs played on the radio. Therefore, more bands could remain in Canada and tour in Canada, as more people bought what they heard on the radio, and went to see concerts of the bands that they heard on the radio. However, quantity did not always equal quality, in terms of what Canadian audiences wanted to hear. While the 1970s produced such stars as Joni Mitchell and Rush, it also produced many one-hit wonders, including Crowbar and Dan Hill.

The 1980s were the age of the Canadian copycat. Rather than trying to find their own voice and sound, most Canadian bands of the 1980s mimicked the style of their southern counterparts. Glass Tiger and Men Without Hats are just two of many bands whose "primary motivation was the calculated replication of what was already successful". (Pevere and Dymond, 171) Many bands copied what was popular on American radios because they knew they could get their music played on Canadian radios thanks to CanCon. In that way, Canadian bands were able to provide the Canadian audience with music similar to American music, while making the music and the money in Canada. There were a few shining moments in Canadian music in the 1980s, with the arrival of Bryan Adams and Blue Rodeo, but many bands were quickly forgotten.

Canadian music went through an identity crisis in the 1980s, which made way for the music explosion that occurred in the 1990s when over 200 Canadian recording labels were created. Canadian bands began to explore and exploit the fact that they could produce a sound different from that of others, and that that sound could sell. The Barenaked Ladies sold an unprecedented 85,000 copies of their self-produced 5-song demo tape before signing a record deal. Canada also became aware of its differences in the 1990s. The 1990s produced the "Celtic craze", and many bands from Canada's East Coast profited from this craze, such as Great Big Sea and the Rankin Family. The 1990s also saw the growth of music by Aboriginal Canadians such as Susan Aglukark and Tom Jackson.

1.4 REACTIONS TO CANCON

Contrary to what the name may suggest, CanCon has nothing to do with the actual content of the production. This is why CanCon met with mixed reception from the start. The CRTC claims that CanCon is important because it gives voice to Canadians, their talent and their shared experiences. CanCon was created to ensure access for Canadian artists to Canadian airwaves, and provide support to a Canadian-based music and recording industry, which it does. (Commercial Radio) However, CanCon does nothing to support Canadian culture. Competition law expert Dr. William Stanbury states,

> the present CanCon regulations have almost no redeeming social value. They are based largely on citizenship, not on the substantive Canadian content of TV programs or musical recordings. After several decades, there is no evidence of any link between CanCon regulations, national identity, and cultural sovereignty—the key stated objectives in the Broadcasting Act. (Stanbury)

Charles Adler, in an article for the *Winnipeg Sun*, wrote:

> As a former disc jockey, I grew up loathing Canadian content regulations. It forced me to play records (no CDs back in 1974) that were on the air simply because they were recorded or produced or written or sung by Canadians. Doing a late night show in Calgary, I knew full well that many Albertans were smart enough to find American radio stations on the AM band that didn't have to 'protect their cultural industries.' I always felt I could not give my listeners the best possible music, because the government was handcuffing me. (Adler)

At the other end of the scale, Alan Doyle, of the Newfoundland band Great Big Sea, feels very strongly about the identity of his music and states, "Canada is the only country that Great Big Sea could be successful in, as a starting band. The rest of the world doesn't treat its regionalities and differences as well as they like to treat the national norm. Canada is fascinated with its regions, and always will be." (Doyle) CanCon fuels this fascination. Another member of the band, Darrell Power, commented that CanCon allows Canadians to hear, buy and see Canadian music. Canadian music is supported by Canada

and by Canadians; they do not turn their back on their musicians. (Power) Daniel Lanois, producer/musician believes that "in 5 or 10 years, we will reach the point where borders in music won't matter. That's when you're going to hear the good, natural records, because when we stop talking about CanCon, we won't constantly be reminded of our cultural insecurities." (Lanois, quoted by Pevere and Dymond, 158)

1.5 GRANTS

While legislation on Canadian content is not the only assistance the government gives to Canadian artists, there is not much more available. From the Canada Council for the Arts, there are a few grants available for musicians; those that are available are mostly in the form of travel grants. There is the Sound Recording Development Program (SRDP), which provides direct assistance to the production and marketing of Canadian musical products. (Communications, 1) There are also grants available for professional musicians (individuals), which "offer emerging, mid-career and established professional Canadian musicians in classical and non-classical music of all world cultures an opportunity to pursue their individual artistic development." (Grants) These grants are not meant to subsidize an artist, but supplement other income.

There is also a grant called Interdepartmental Partnership with the Official Language Communities (IPOLC), whose objective is to "facilitate the access of official language minority communities to federal programs that can contribute to their development." (Guide) Artists do not apply for this grant, but are automatically considered when they submit their application for other grants. For example, if an English grant application

originates from Québec, that artist will automatically be considered for the IPOLC grant. This may prompt some artists to submit their applications in the other official language in order to be considered for the grant. According to Ms. Danielle Sarault, Information Officer of the Arts Service Unit at the Canada Council for the Arts, "the Canada Council does not offer assistance for the translation of songs from one language to another." (Sarault) The only translation grants available from the Canada Council are for literary works.

1.6 CONCLUSION

Since January 18, 1971, Canadian music has grown and expanded and made a place for itself in the world. It cannot be exhaustively defined, but includes, among many other genres, Alberta country, Newfoundland drinking songs, Nunavut throat-singing, Ontario folk and Québec rock. The songs of these genres include hundreds of instruments, at least two languages and translation. Of this list, only the last has not been studied, something which I plan to rectify in the following pages.

CHAPTER TWO – TRANSLATION THEORIES AND STRATEGIES

In this chapter, I will discuss various translation theories and strategies that may apply to song translation, using examples. My purpose is to prepare the groundwork for the analysis of the songs in my corpus. I will argue that songs are comparable to poetry and I expect that problems related to the translation of poetry will also apply to the translation of songs. I will also discuss the differences and similarities between a song and a poem in terms of content and form to argue that the strategies used in the translation of poetry may be applicable to song translation.

2.1 THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE

Although the practice of song translation is increasing, it has been largely overlooked in academic studies. In this section, I will examine some articles and publications on song translation. Unfortunately, there have been no articles written about contemporary music and translation. Nevertheless, it may be interesting to explore some approaches to and ideas behind the translation of other types and genres of songs.

Peter Low, of the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, has recently written a short article on the translation of "poetic songs", which he refers to as "Art Songs". He is referring to poems that have been set to music, in which music has been composed for a pre-existing poem. In other words, the music has been composed around the words, rather than with the words. He discusses the purpose and function of song translation, stating that "skopos may have particular relevance to the situations that arise where poetic texts are set to music."(Low, 94) He believes that Art Songs are translated for five main

purposes - a performer's crib, a recording insert, a programme text, a spoken text and a sung text. As the last purpose is most relevant to my thesis, I will look a little more closely at Low's approach.

Low states that when creating a singable translation of a song, the translator is subject to huge constraints imposed by the pre-existing music, such as rhythm and stress. Although he does not expand on the particular challenges a translator faces, he states that "singable versions are more common in popular commercial music than in the classical field". (Low, 105)

However, not all who write about song translation consider it feasible. For instance, Arthur Graham, a professional singer turned college professor, has also written on song translation. Like Peter Low, he focuses on poems that have been set to music to be performed, such as Schubert's "Die Forelle" and "Erlkönig". He believes that song translation results in two main losses: the sounds of the original language, and the fit of the words and the music composed by the author. He believes that much translation for the recital repertory is distracting and bland. (Graham, 36)

Relatively rare mentions of song translation are found in the introductions and prefaces to collections of translated songs, and are usually directed at music scholars rather than translation scholars. Low (Low, 97) comments on such prefaces, quoting them, as well as translator's notes, to express the translator's position regarding song translation. In the

preface, the author of such translations will focus on the culture and context of the original songs and often neglect the process and the goals of the translation.

In the preface to his work *Schubert and Schumann; songs and translations*, Robert Garran defends his belief that song lyrics can be translated. He believes that "there is an advantage in singing in the English language songs set by the composer to works in another language." (Garran, 7) His "ideal" translation is one

> which reads like an original; which expresses the meaning and spirit of the original, with all its grace and charm; which fits the melodic line and the rhythm and phrasing of the music as naturally as if the composer had been inspired, not by the original, but by the translation – as if the music had grown out of the English words; and lastly, which comes naturally to the voice and puts the singer at ease. (Garran, 7)

He goes on to say that there are those who feel that songs should never be translated – that there is a "marriage" between the lyrics and the music that should never be divorced. However, according to Garran, "a song is musical speech; understanding of the words is important to the appreciation of the music." (Garran, 8) To him, it is not only right, but essential that songs be translated in order for the audience to fully experience the music of great composers such as Schubert and Schumann, and "anything that may be lost by the limitations set to the translator is more than offset by the aid given to the audience, and through the audience [...]." (Garran, 8) He does not provide examples of the "limitations", however, or state whether they are set by the text, the audience/client, or the translator.

Unfortunately, although Garran devotes two full pages to the defence of his decision to translate, he accords only three lines to his method of translation, and then provides only the briefest of details. He reiterates what every translator learns in the practice of their art:

"all songs are not equally amenable to translation. Some yield themselves up at the first approach, others only after long suing and wooing. A few remain obdurate to the last." (Garran, 9) Granted, his work is aimed at musicians and music scholars, and not at translators, but one would think that musicians would also be curious as to which songs remained "obdurate to the last", and why.

The preface to *Greek Lyrics – Translated by Richard Lattimore* is written by the translator, yet it contains only a brief mention of "translation". Lattimore states "The following lyrics are offered here in translation in the hope that they may give some notion of what this poetry was like." (Lattimore, iii) This short statement raises a multitude of questions for the translation scholar. Does the translator mean that he took a source-oriented approach to the text, and did not compensate for any cultural or linguistic differences between the source and target cultures and languages? Is he presenting the texts as they would have been presented in Ancient Greece? Did he present them so that they would evoke the same response in the target audience as was invoked in the source audience? In short, this simple statement is of little use to the translation scholar, except to identify the translator (Richard Lattimore) and the audience (music scholars, scholars of Ancient Greece). Therefore, while the reader knows that he/she is reading a translation, as indicated in the title, the reader knows nothing about the process or the goal of the translation.

Sometimes, the translator does not have the opportunity to speak about their translation. As stated by Lawrence Venuti in 1992, "translation continues to be an invisible practice,

everywhere around us, [...] but rarely acknowledged, almost never figured into discussions of the translations we all inevitably read." (Venuti, 1) The preface to *Popular Songs and Ballads of Han China* is not written by the translator, Anne Birrell, but by Professor Hans Frankal of Yale University. He states that "She [Anne Birrell] is one of the few translators able to combine scholarly accuracy with idiomatic fluency and poetic flavour in English. [...] Unlike many translators (we are not told who), Dr. Birrell conscientiously renders every phrase and every image, rather than skirting difficult passages, 'smoothing over' rough spots and 'tidying up' poems that seem incoherent. She takes great pains to preserve the word order and syntactic structure of the Chinese as far as possible, without doing violence of English syntax. But while she is uncompromising in her fidelity to the Chinese text, her translations are eminently readable, and will give pleasure and enlightenment to a wide circle of readers for many years." (Frankal, ix)
In the preface to his work *Russian Songs and Lyrics*, John Pollen stated that he strove "to translate faithfully, and to avoid adding anything of my own. In doing so, I have followed the general principles for the translation of poetry into a foreign language so ably set forth by Earl Curzon who says:

> The Translator should, I think, remember that the work is not primarily his own, but that of another man of whose ideas he is merely the vehicle and interpreter; and while endeavouring to convert them into the idiom and metrical form of another language, often with some loss – rarely with any gain – in the process, he should, as far as possible, subordinate himself to the conception and thought, and even defer, where possible, to the technique of the original writer." (Pollen, citing Curzon, iv)

While this short statement mentions what the translator felt the final result of translation (in this case, poetry and song) should be, the author does not mention how to deal with specific issues and translation problems in the translation of poetry. Nevertheless, this brief preface, written in 1916, demonstrates that song translation is not just a recent

phenomenon, but has been practised for decades, if not centuries. It also shows that song translators have turned to the translation of poetry for guidance in their work.

Poetry scholar Nicolas Ruwet, however, sees nothing desirable in song translation. In discussing the role of speech in songs, he states

> Une oeuvre chantée dans une traduction a des grandes chances d'y perdre, tant sur le plan linguistique que sur le plan musicale: sur le plan linguistique, les nécessités musicales, les problèmes d'accentuation par exemple, rendront presque inévitablement la traduction pauvre et souvent plate; sur le plan musicale, la phonétique de la langue originale, notamment le timbre de la voix, devient partie intégrante des structures musicales. (Ruwet, 152)

There are many collections of translated songs, but few actually discuss the process of song translation. Some authors, like Robert Garran, go to some lengths to defend their decision to translate songs, while others, like Anne Birrell, let others speak for them. Still others, like Nicolas Ruwet, criticize song translation, labelling it a loss on all levels.

Although these writers are not discussing my topic specifically, that of contemporary song translation, they still provide useful information nonetheless. Low also used the idea of Skopos in determining the reason and purpose for song translation, and acknowledged the practice of commercial song translation. Graham offered a negative opinion toward the practice from a songwriter's point of view, demonstrating what could go wrong.

Although the prefaces ignore the process of song translation, they provide insight into the product. Garran staunchly defends his belief that song translation is achievable, presumably in response to those, like Graham, who resolutely reject it. Lattimore shows that, as in the case of many contemporary song translations, there is a tendency to gloss

over the fact that they are translations. At best, they are referred to as "French versions" by reviewers and DJs. While Frankal praises the translator's product, he says nothing about the process. In this case, the translator, Birrell, is not given a voice at all. Pollen sets forth his approach and justifies it. He also turned to the aspects of poetry translation. Ruwet offers a negative opinion of song translation from a poet's point of view.

Overall, these excerpts demonstrate the many ways in which song translation is discussed: positively, negatively, defensively or disparagingly. It provides varied opinions on song translation from various points of view. The differences between what they have studied and what I am studying are that the songs in my corpus were intended for mass media to the general public, not for art or the stage. They were intended to make money, thus one purpose of the translations was to appeal to the masses.

2.2 ARE SONGS POEMS?

I believe that songs can be compared to poems; they share some of the same structural elements. Indeed, in discussing The Beatles and their music, sociologist Clive James states the "songwriter's art is to hear the spoken language as a poem." (Frith citing Clive James, 122) In addition, in his book *Sound and Sense: Introduction to Poetry*, Laurence Perrine devotes an entire chapter to the musicality of poetry.

> The poet, unlike the person who uses language to convey only information, chooses words for sound as well as for meaning, and uses the source as a means of reinforcing meaning. So prominent is this musical quality of poetry that some writers have made it the distinguishing term in their definitions of poetry. Edgar Allan Poe, for instance, describes poetry as "music combined with a pleasure idea." [...] verbal music, like connotation, imagery and figurative language, is one of the important resources that enable the poet to do something more than communicate mere information. (Perrine, 165)

Not only have songs been referred to as poetry, but poets have commented on the musicality of the poems they write. This "musicality" may create complications for the translator of songs.

I will approach the analysis of song translation as poetry translation. One main difference between songs and poems is that while poems may be enjoyed both through reading and through listening, songs are usually meant for performance and are listened to. This aural aspect may reduce the number of poetic and literary devices available to the songwriter: those that can be recognized and analysed by the ear, such as alliteration, rhyme or clichés, will doubtless occur more often than homonyms, intentional ambiguity (as it could be confusing to the listener of a short, three-minute song), sight rhymes (words that rhyme only when read, not when spoken).

As Paul Selver states in *Art of Poetry*: "[...] as regards verbal melody, it is obvious that, when a poem is transmuted from one language to another, its actual sounds, including such musical effects as they produce, must almost inevitably undergo radical changes. What emerges will, more often than not, be different, admirable, perhaps, but different."(Selver, 22) It may occur that the translator of songs needs not only to find an adequate translation of the line, based on whatever criteria they have set forth for "adequate", but also to make that line fit the music and the singer's mouth. In addition, the song translator is constrained by the line or metre of the song. As the music, with its rhythm and beat remains a constant, the lyrics must be made to fit.

While the chorus may seem like a blessing to the translator, as it is repeated and therefore only needs to be translated once, it, in some ways, represents the whole song. It is the focal point of the song, as well as its selling point, as it is the chorus that remains in people's minds. The translator may have to compress a lot of information into the few short lines of the chorus, as it centres the song and reinforces its main themes, often also rhyming. For example, in the song *Fréquenter l'oubli*, by Kevin Parent, the chorus involves not only end rhyme, but also internal rhyme (boire and soirs), as well as several elements of the song. There is the element of "ennui", "boire" and "passer ma vie", which are heard throughout the song:

> Y as-tu d'autre choses à faire pour chasser l'ennui
> Au lieu de boire tous les soirs en regardant passer ma vie? (Parent, 1998)

In the English version, the translator decided to keep both the internal and external rhymes and the echoes of the song themes. However, some changes had to be made to respect the rhythm and stress of the song.

> Is there something else I can do to chase away these blues
> Instead of snoozing and abusing as my life gets drowned in booze?

The term "snoozing" echoes the idea of the singer wasting his life away and the terms "abusing" and "booze" echo the aspect of substance abuse mentioned in the original with the terms "trippeux" and the numerous references to alcohol. As "snoozing" and "abusing" as well as "blues" and "booze" rhyme, both internal and external rhymes were maintained.

To handle the form of the song, the translator may turn to the translation of poetry for guidance. A song and a poem present many similar challenges, such as rhythm and metre, and use many of the same devices, such as rhyme, repetition and metaphor. In the preface to their work *Unfinished Dreams: Contemporary Poetry of Acadia,* Cogswell and Elder stated "Translators must choose whether and how to respect semantic precision, cadence, rhyme, plays on words, phonetic patterns, recurring images, anglisicms, neologisms, ambiguities or whatever other elements mark the work, and determine their place in the textual hierarchy."(Cogswell and Elder, xvi) These decisions cannot be made lightly. Each affects the entire song, from the rhythm and structure of the line to the balance of a rhyme to possibly even the content of the song. The translator may need to change the line in order for it to fit the music and have some resemblance to the original. In some of the songs I have studied, the translators have used archaisms, neologisms, padding or clichés to meet the constraints of a line. These devices can make the songs sound odd and outdated.

In his work *Translating Literature: practice and theory in a comparative literature context*, André Lefevere puts forth several problems that occur when translating at the 'illocutionary level', that is, the level at which language is used mainly for effect. As many of his examples involve poetry, I will now explore those elements that also occur in songs.

2.3 THE POETRY IN SONGS

André Lefevere has written extensively on the practice and theory of translating literature, with special reference to poetry. Lefevere believes that both the illocutionary and locutionary levels of language require attention from the translator. He also states that no rules can be taken as absolute. For Lefevere, it is important to alert translators to problems arising at the illocutionary level of language use.

In his text *Art of Translating Poetry*, Paul Selver outlines the main ingredients of what, to him, is presumably a 'good' poem:

a) its actual contents or subject-matter

b) its rhythmic structure

c) its verbal effects, including musical qualities, subtleties of style, etc.

He believes that the quality of a poem's translation is based on the extent to which these ingredients are reproduced, (Selver, 21) though he is not very optimistic that these ingredients can be reproduced. He states that "the most that the translator, by luck, cunning or some higher skill, can hope to bring about is an occasional faint echo of what the original poem sounds like." (Selver, 23) Like other researchers of the translation of poetry, he does not provide any guidelines to help the translator reproduce his poem 'ingredients'. A song has these ingredients as well. To what extent they are reproduced in the translation is usually determined by the translator and the constraints of the song. This is something I plan to explore through the analysis of my corpus.

There are many opposing ideas and approaches to the translation of poetry, and not all are amenable to song translation. As different approaches produce different results, the choice of approach is dependent on the purpose of the translation and on the band's goal.

Peter Low states that most songs were intended to communicate with audiences both verbally and musically. (Low, 105) Song lyrics are born into the song; they are designed to interact with the music. That said, there are many similarities between song lyrics and poems; both use many of the same devices, although not always in the same way. I will now examine some of these shared devices, and study their occurrence in song lyrics. I will then discuss the translation problems that these devices may cause.

2.3.1 Metre

Whether in prose, in verse or in singing, human utterance is necessarily governed by the rhythm of breathing; that is to say, by the interval of time that elapses between two inspirations or the number of syllables that can easily be pronounced in one emission of the breath. (Berthon, xix) The rhythm of breathing has an important role in songs. The singer's breath may be held for more than one beat, or a quick tempo may require quick breaths, known as a catch-breath (a half or partial breath taken to supply enough air to enable completion of a line) (Christy, 33), so as not to disturb the flow of the song. The number of syllables or beats in a line must allow the singer to breathe, which is something that affects the translation, as this is not a standard stipulation in translation, as least in prose translation.

In his work, *Translating Poetry*, Lefevere discusses translating metre. He states that

> The translator is not rigorously bound by either sound or sense, and yet can claim 'fidelity' by staying within the metre of the source text, thus more or less preserving its outward form. (Lefevere, 37)

In other words, Lefevere is saying that as long as the translator respects the metre of the text, any shifts in semantic or illocutionary sense can be overlooked.

One way to fill out a line without mutilating the sense, but which has more far-reaching consequences is known as "padding". This occurs when a translator adds words that do not affect the sense of the line, but help to fill it out by adding syllables. For example, rather than saying, "I will do it", the translator may choose to write, " It will be done by me" or "It shall be me that does it". This transforms a simple four-syllable line into a six- or seven-syllable line, moves it into a higher register and lengthens the line.

French verse is traditionally written in alexandrine, which is composed of 12 syllables. Marcel Braunschvig states:

> Si l'alexandrin a été regardé comme le 'vers type', c'est parce qu'il correspond à la fois à l'amplitude de notre respiration et à l'étendue de notre mémoire auditive, c'est-à-dire, physiologiquement, à l'intervalle moyen de deux mouvements respiratoires successifs, et psychologiquement, au nombre moyen de syllabes que nous sommes capables d'embrasser en un seul acte auditif de manière à en saisir l'unité métrique. (Berthon, citing Braunschvig, xxi)

Another advantage of the alexandrine is that it offers the greatest number of possible rhythmical groups, since 12 is equally divisible by two, three, four and six. However, this form is not used consistently in French songs.

Much English verse is written in iambic pentameter, composed of a series of 10 stressed and unstressed syllables. (Steele, 55) Sometimes this stressed/unstressed pattern is reversed; this is known as a trochee. This often occurs at the start of a line, with the regular iamb foot beginning directly after the trochee.(Steele, 56) Many English songs are likewise written in iambic pentameter.

Despite these traditions – alexandrine and iambic pentameter – many songwriters, both English and French, do not prescribe a set pattern to the song, but merely use any number of syllables and any pattern of rhyme, seemingly arbitrarily.

2.3.2 Rhyme

Lefevere sees the translation of rhyme as a question of luck. He states,

> If the rhyming translator is lucky enough to end his lines with fairly acceptable rhyme words and without having to indulge too much in the various subterfuges he finds at his disposal, his problem is only half-solved. Ending the line is one thing; filling it with the right number of stresses is another. (Lefevere, 52)

Filling a line appropriately without having to resort to padding, archaisms or clichés while maintaining the rhyme seems almost an impossibility to Lefevere. In addition, it is not necessarily just the end word of the line that rhymes. There could be internal rhymes that the translator may also have to deal with. For example, in Kevin Parent's song, *Fréquenter l'oubli*, the third verse includes an internal rhyme in addition to an end rhyme:

J'ai toujours été trippeux, j'ai besoin d'émotion forte

J'ai toujours été curieux, la conséquence n'importe (Parent, 1998)

The translator may choose to ignore the internal rhyme and focus solely on the end rhyme; however, this particular version maintains the internal rhyme:

I was always flying high, I need a new experience

I was always wondering why, no matter the consequence

With this approach, the rhyming translator enters into double bondage, with the problems of both metre and rhyme. The demands of metre and rhyme, individually and combined, impose themselves, and problems inevitably ensue that are difficult to resolve:

> In the absence of a completely satisfactory rhyme word, the translator may settle for a very poor rhyming second best, which in the best case, rises to the level of assonance and in the worst, only manages to exhibit some faint resemblance to the sound at the end of the previous line. To avoid the use of assonance, or the admission of defeat explicit in the use of 'poor rhyme', the rhyming translator often slightly changes the communicative value of one of the rhyming words. (Lefevere, 49)

For example, in the song *Fréquenter l'oubli*, the first two lines of the third verse read:

Le jour c'est pas si pire, j'ai toujours de quoi à faire

Je récupère et je m'inspire jusqu'à ce que tombe la lumière (Parent, 1998)

In the translation, the second line has had to be slightly manipulated to make it rhyme with the first. The translator sacrificed the letter of the text to achieve the illocutionary power of the song:

The days they aren't so bad, got tons of things to do

I work hard and I have pride, until I have just one more brew

In order to maintain the rhyme, the translator has added the idea of drinking in the translation. The start of the line changed somewhat as well, possibly due to the metre and stress restrictions of the song. The internal rhyme was also lost (pire/inspire).

In his study of nine 19th century French poets, H.E. Berthon states that "In French, rhyme is essential, so that blank verse is an impossibility." (Berthon, xliii) Although rhyme is common in contemporary Canadian songs, it is far from essential in either language.

Arthur Graham believes that song translators place too much emphasis on rhyme. He states that "the search for rhyme breeds awkward syntax and inappropriate vocabulary. [...] Translators need not reject rhyme, but it is suicidal to demand rhyme wherever it appears in the original."(Graham, 317) Thus, he believes that rhyme is not essential to the translated song, and should be abandoned whenever necessary to facilitate the construction of the rest of the line.

The arguments for and against rhyme are numerous, but in the end, the problems remain the same: how to make the rhyme fit the rest of the line, without excessively altering the meaning or throwing the rest of the song off-balance. Internal rhyme is also a challenge and adds additional constraints on the word choice.

2.3.3 Off-Rhyme

Off-rhyme occurs when the ending words of two consecutive lines have similar, but not identical sounds. Off-rhymes are very common in songs, as songwriters use them in striving to meet the constraints of both rhyme and metre. Often, in songs, rhyme is achieved by dropping or slurring certain sounds. This occurs often in Big Sugar songs, where rhyme is a common element. Sometimes, the singer must drop syllables in order to achieve a rhyme. The off-rhyme is also achieved through colloquial pronunciation. For example, in the song *Red Rover*

> 'Cause everywhere I look I see people who suffer
> For the things in life they can't get enough of

In this case, the end rhyme is "a". The end words are pronounced as "suffa" and "enough a" in order to make it work. The translator may have to decide whether the off-rhyme has a particular illocutionary function (comic, ironic) and whether that function can or should be reproduced.

2.3.4 Rhythm

In ordinary speech, there are various degrees of stress, varying jumps or drops in pitch, and varying durations of pitch movements in the tones. In connected speech, the alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables often conveys a rhythm, with stressed syllables providing the beat. English is said to be a stress-timed language, (Reeves, 124) in contrast to languages such as French, which are syllable-timed. In the song *Ordinary Day*, by Great Big Sea, the pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables would be thus (stressed beats will be underlined, unstressed will not):

I'll win now but sometimes I'll lose

I've been battered, but I'll never bruise (Doyle and McCann)

Stress is an important aspect of rhythm. The songwriter will manipulate the placement of words to fit with the music, so that the stressed part of a word lands on the strong beat, or the weak beat, if that is the intention. This allows the lyrics to flow with the music, or sound discordant, whichever is required. This also helps the singer, as the words are then given a rhythm that can be sung along with the music. In addition, the songwriter can manipulate the line to put emphasis on a particular word or idea, simply by its placement in the line, in conjunction with the stress of the word and the music. The translator may

have to consider all aspects of beat, word placement and stress when translating, to create a singable song.

2.3.5 Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of the same sound at the beginning of consecutive words. It gives emphasis to words and a certain rhythm to the sentence. Alliteration can be a useful tool in songs as it can assist in attracting listeners to, and helping them remember, a song. Songwriters are generally careful to make the alliteration short and simple so as to have an effect and not sound clumsy, to allow the lyrics to be sung easily. However, sometimes a more complex and difficult string of alliteration is very effective. For example, in the song *Mari-Mac* by Great Big Sea, alliteration is used very effectively in the chorus. In fact, the tempo of the song increases each time the chorus is sung, to make it more difficult for the singer, and to entertain the audience further:

> Mari-Mac's mother is making Mari-Mac marry me
>
> My mother's making me marry Mari-Mac (Traditional)

Keeping the alliteration in this tongue-twister is necessary, as it is part of the stylistic effect of the chorus. There is more than just the consonant "m" to contend with. "Mari" also rhymes with "marry" , as well as the hard "c" sound in "making" and "Mac".

Translators might ask whether it is necessary, desirable or vital to reproduce the alliteration. The translation problem is obvious – it may not be possible to reproduce or match the sound in other languages, while maintaining semantic information. The end result may often be one or the other, but seldom both.

2.3.6 Allusion

Authors may allude to a well-known text, cultural reference or event to give their own texts a sharper edge or provide the reader with a point of reference for the text. Lefevere mentions four types of allusions: biblical, which refers to religious books, people or events; classical, which refers to people or events from Ancient Greece or Rome; cultural, which refers to culturally-specific people or events and literary, which refers to well-known texts. Such allusions are often used in contemporary songs:

Biblical – *Someday We'll Know*, New Radicals, "Someday we'll know why Samson loved Delilah" (Alexander, 1998)

Classical – *She's So High,* Tal Bachman, "She's so high, like Cleopatra, Joan of Arc or Aphrodite" (Bachman, 1999)

Cultural – *Tear the House Down*, The Fables "Shoot from the blue line" (Simmons, 1998)

Literary – *B.J. Don't Cry*, Moxy Früvous, "Romeo"

- *My Baby Loves a Bunch of Authors*, Moxy Früvous, various Canadian authors named, including Mario Puzo, Margaret Atwood and Robertson Davies (Früvous, 1992)

Songs may present another type of allusion, or intertextuality. (Hatim and Mason, 125) It occurs when a song refers to another song, either by quoting lyrics or using a musical sequence from another song. This type of intertextuality occurs often in rap songs that create new lyrics for previously-recorded music, although it is used in all genres of music. Melanie Doane uses intertextuality in her song *Desire You.* The line "you don't

bring me flowers anymore" recalls the popular Neil Diamond song *You Don't Bring Me Flowers,* (Diamond, 1977) sung as a duet with Barbara Streisand.

The problem that allusion creates for the translator, is that he/she needs to be able to recognize allusions and their function in the text, to decide whether to reproduce them in the target text. The translator has a few options: maintain the original allusion and risk losing its effect, or change it to an equivalent allusion in the target culture and risk changing the meaning.

2.3.7 Register

Lefevere reminds his readers that language is never used in a vacuum; it is always used in specific situations (Lefevere, 58) Although most contemporary songs are aimed at the general public, some are more obviously aimed at particular age or social groups, such as teenagers or an older crowd. The songs will often be written in a sociolect, a register that identifies members of the same social group, or an idiolect, which is a personal register, the individualized use each speaker makes of common language.

This becomes an interesting challenge when the translator is dealing with Québécois, as anglicisms are common to everyday speech, the speech used in most songs. Indeed, Kevin Parent, a singer/songwriter from Gaspésie frequently uses English and anglicized words in his songs. Many translated Big Sugar songs include anglicisms to reproduce everyday speech. This phenomenon is not limited to Canada. Robbie Williams, a popular

British singer, often uses well-known French expressions, such as "mon cher", in his songs.

2.3.8 Metaphor

Metaphors – seeing one thing in terms of another – is at the root of language, and poetry makes extensive use of metaphors to push the limits of language and renew its force and vitality. (Reeves, 168) Concepts that do not normally belong together are linked in such a way as to increase the illocutionary power of the passage, preferably without overly straining the reader's credulity or sense of propriety. (Lefevere, 37)

The use of metaphor raises a choice for *(translators).* Do they maintain the metaphor, find a similar metaphor in the target language, or drop the metaphor entirely? Each choice has its own challenges. Maintaining the metaphor may result in a loss of meaning, *(while)* finding a similar metaphor in the target language risks adding a meaning to the target text that was not found in, nor intended to be in, the source, and dropping the metaphor results in a loss of illocutionary effect.[1]

Metaphor is used frequently in songs. It is an effective way for a songwriter to say a great deal in relatively few words. It is also useful to communicate a particular idea that the singer wants the listener to take away from the song. I have chosen to take my example from See Spot Run's song *Terrified* so that I can also demonstrate how it was translated:

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[1] For further information on how metaphor is addressed in translation, see Deslisle's *La traduction raisonnée.* Ottawa: Presses de l'Université d'Ottawa, 1993 or Lefevere's *Translating Literature: Practice and Theory in a Comparative Literature Context* Modern Language Assn of America; 1992

"I won't live my life like I've lived my life before / I need to spread my wings before I hit the floor"

"C'qui est fait est passé plus envie d'recommencer / Un urgent besoin d'air avant que j'tombe à terre" (Brodbeck, 1999)

The English imparts the idea of flight; the singer is trapped, falling, dying. The French is more subtle, merely stating that he urgently needs air, which also imparts the idea of being trapped, but without the metaphor of flight.

2.3.9 Names

As in literature, names in songs can be used not only to name a character, but also to describe them. The name may be indicative of certain personality traits that a person has, or possibly refer to physical traits. This is evident in the song Nicotina, in which the singer compares the girl of his dreams to "nicotine" and in the translation Tina Gasolina, in which the protagonist is called the "gasoline" of the singer's "V8 motor". The translation problems raised by names is whether the trait they imply is transferable in its form. The difficulty lies in moving that connotation into the target culture and language, without it sounding implausible, or losing the illocutionary effect.

2.3.10 Neologisms

A neologism is a new word that a writer has invented to strengthen the illocutionary power of his/her text. It may consist of a variation of existing words, or combinations of parts of existing words. Translators may need to decide how important the neologism is,

and whether they can recreate an analogous neologism in the target language with similar illocutionary effects.

An example of a neologism can be found in the name of the band, Moxy Früvous. "Früvous" is an invention all their own. Big Sugar also uses neologisms, as shown in their song *Opem Up, Baby.* "Opem" could be a contraction of "open" and "them", though this remains ambiguous in the song.

Translators often have a choice when dealing with neologisms. They may create a neologism in the target language, maintain the same neologism in the foreign language, with an explanatory note or drop the device entirely. In the Big Sugar example used above, the decision was made to drop it.

The aforementioned devices may be found in poems and songs alike, and may pose problems for the translator. In the analysis of the songs in my corpus, I will examine how these devices are used and how they were translated. In doing so, I will attempt to discover any common solutions or notable trends.

2.4 THEORIES

In the previous section, I discussed various aspects of song translation. In this section, I will discuss the possible theories behind the act of song translation to assist in my exploration of how the songs in my corpus were translated.

Robert de Beaugrande states "Texts should be dealt with according to the way language is used in them." (de Beaugrande, 15) In other words, not all texts are equal; thus, there is no one translation theory that can apply to all texts equally and adequately. Accordingly, there are no set rules for translating songs. The translator who accepts the challenge of translating a song has many options available in terms of the approach to the translation.

For instance, he or she may subscribe to one of the two paths outlined by Friedrich Schleiermacher's theory of translation: "Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer, or leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader." (Schleiermacher, 42) In the first case, which Schleiermacher clearly prefers, the translator tries to preserve the original grammatical structure, style, idioms, and so on. The result should sound awkward to the target language reader. The translator transposes the original work into the target language without compensating excessively for the differences between the source language and the target language or for the reader's ignorance of the original language, style and text. The translator wants to communicate to the readers the same image and impression that he or she has of the original text.

The translator who chooses the second path aims to let the author of the original text speak as though he/she were a native of the target culture and language. The resulting text feels completely natural to a target language reader. In this case, the translator usually adapts all cultural references, grammar and stylistic devices of the original that would sound foreign to the target culture into something recognizable to that audience.

This idea is also discussed by Nida. He states that there are two basic orientations in translation, which he labels "formal equivalence" and "dynamic equivalence". In his words, "formal equivalence focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content." (Nida, 159) He declares that the message in the target language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language. When focussing on the dynamic equivalence in a translation, Nida states that "one is not so concerned with matching the receptor-language message with the source-language message, but with the dynamic relationship." (Nida 159) He believes that, with this orientation, the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the original message.

2.4.1 Skopos

The decision to use either approach is based on another translation theory – the *Skopos* theory. Vermeer, who first formulated this theory, describes it thus:

> any form of translational action, including therefore the translation itself, may be conceived as an action, as the name implies. Any action has an aim, a purpose [...] The word *skopos,* then, is a technical term for the aim or purpose of a translation. [...] Further: an action leads to a result, a new situation or event, and possibly, to a 'new' object. (Nord, citing Vermeer, 12)

Simply put, this theory assumes that "the prime principle determining any translation process is the purpose, or Skopos of the overall translational action." (Nord, 27) Skopos theory maintains "translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function." (Nord, citing Vermeer, 29) What Skopos does not mean is that a good translation should conform or adapt to

target-culture behaviour or expectations, although the concept is often misunderstood in this way. Translations are not simply dominated or dictated by the source text either, but by the client and the overall purpose that the translation has to achieve in the target culture.

Skopos states that one must translate, consciously and consistently, in accordance with some principle respecting the target text, although that principle is not spelled out as it must be established separately for each text. It does not tell the translator how to go about his translating job, what translation strategy to use, or what translation type to choose. As there is more than one theory that applies to song translation, Skopos will dictate which approach is best suited to the purpose of the translation in the case of song translation, either to access other markets to gain more exposure or target a specific audience.

2.4.2 Polysystem

This theory focuses on the target text, on the translated texts themselves, their position and role within the target culture and their relations with original texts of that culture. Therefore, this theory is appropriate for the study of song translation in the context of my thesis because I am not concerned with whether or not songs "should" or "might" be translated. I am concerned with the results of translation between the English and French systems in Canada.

The polysystem theory originated with Even-Zohar and was championed and developed by the Tel Aviv School, Gideon Toury in particular. Essentially, the polysystem theory

implies a study of a system of systems, which can be described by a series of oppositions: between the *centre* (which dictates norms and models to the entire polysystem), and the *periphery*, between the *canonized* system (which usually occupies the centre of the polysystem) and the *non-canonized.* (Weissbrod, 2)

The polysystem theory discusses literature in terms of central and peripheral literature, where a type or genre of literature plays a central or primary role in the literature system, and other genres are peripheral or secondary; there can be more than one genre in the central role. In contemporary Canadian music, the boundaries between musical genres are unclear, in part because of a lack of consensus in the media when labelling bands, and because Canadian bands can play a variety of music that can fall under different labels.

In his *Introduction to the Polysystem Theory,* Milan Dimic quotes Evan-Zohar in defining the primary and secondary roles: "primary activity is presumed to be the activity which takes the initiative in creating new items and models for the repertoire, while secondary is conceived of as a derivatory, conservatory and simplifactory activity." (Dimic citing Even-Zohar, 4) Based on that definition, in terms of the translation of Canadian contemporary songs, the primary would be Big Sugar because they were the first band (of my corpus) to translate on a larger scale, and because some of the other bands, the secondaries, model their translations on Big Sugar's second translation style, i.e. maintaining the chorus in English. See Spot Run is also a secondary, in this case, because they modelled their translations on Big Sugar's first translation style, i.e. translating the chorus as well.

A central concept of the polysystem theory is that of norms. Norms dictate the selection of texts to be translated and the source languages and models that are preferred by a given target literature. They also play a central role in dictating the mode of translation and consequently, they determine the relations between source and target texts. Toury suggests that through their work, translators get to know the translation norms and learn to obey them in a socio-cultural context and with feedback from publishers, critics and readers, or in the case of song translation, from record producers, broadcasters and listeners.

According to Toury, translators not only have to deal with the language and information constraints presented by a given text, but also the constraints of a given text type in the source and target culture, referred to by Toury as "socio-cultural constraints". (Toury, 54) These constraints have been described as lying along a scale between two extremes: general, relatively absolute rules and pure idiosyncrasies. Between these two ends lies a vast middle ground occupied by norms. Some norms are stronger and more rule-like, and some are weaker and almost idiosyncratic. Some norms may, over time, evolve into binding rules or fade into rare idiosyncrasies. Rules and idiosyncrasies can also cross the boundaries and become norms.

This theory is useful because I want to look at translated song texts as a whole to determine any common occurrences such as whether a particular song type or genre was preferred for translation or whether there are commonly used solutions to problems raised by song translation. While I plan to examine the translated songs as a system, there are

limitations to the use of this theory. As songs are on the extreme periphery of study, and translated songs are not numerous or lengthy, it would be difficult in this work to compare them to other Quebec systems, such as music or literature. By using this theory here, I hope to lay the foundation for further study.

In my analysis, I plan to examine each song and its translation in isolation, looking at various problems the translators encountered and the solutions they found. I am looking for any changes made to the texts and what may determine these changes, such as target audience or metre and rhythm. I will then look at all songs and translations as a whole in an attempt to find any trends or similar approaches taken to the translation problems.

In the next chapter, I will introduce the bands in my corpus, their background, music and their translation practices.

CHAPTER THREE – THE BANDS AND THEIR SONGS

The bands that I have chosen to study are all different in terms of background, construction and direction, but they are all similar in terms of audience and nationality. The bands I have chosen to study all fall under the broad genre of Rock/Pop. I am excluding genres such as country, rap or blues, although that does not mean that they do not include translation. Similar to the selection criteria used by Geoff Pevere and Greig Dymond, authors of *Mondo Canuck: A Canadian Pop Culture Odyssey*, I have chosen bands based on their accessibility to the majority of Canada, and on their radio-play. I will examine a number of songs and their released translations.

I will study the following songs by Big Sugar:

- *Turn the Lights On and (Pas) Envie d'allumer*
- *Better Get Used To It and Better Get Used To It (version française)*
- *Nicotina (She's All That) and Tina Gasolina*
- *We Could Live and Harmonie*
- *Pretty Bird and L'Oiseau Reggae*

I will also study *Weightless* and *Décoller* by See Spot Run, *Sometimes Wanna Die* and *Sometimes Wanna Die (version française)* by Joydrop and *Dedication* and *Dedication (version française)* by Sky.

3.1 Big Sugar

Big Sugar has more translated songs than other bands I am studying. Work from two different periods and albums has been translated, which allows me the opportunity to study how song translation may change within a band, as well as between bands.

Big Sugar formed in Toronto in 1991, led by Gordon (Gordie) Johnson; the members hail from all across Canada and Jamaica. Although band members have come and gone, Johnson has remained the constant. He formed his band from people he had played with in different capacities over the years. Big Sugar has seven albums to their credit, and their music has changed and evolved over the years. The band began as an instrumental jazz band, playing restaurants for rent money. As they began to write and record their own music, they began branching out into blues, rock and reggae. Johnson now describes his band as a Roots Rock Reggae band. He said that Big Sugar's music "reflects our record collections at any given moment".(Johnson) After twelve years together, Big Sugar disbanded on January 1, 2004.

In the summer of 2001, Big Sugar made Canadian music history by simultaneously releasing the first translated album ever produced in Canada – *Brothers and Sisters, Are You Ready?* and *Brothers and Sisters, Etes-vous Ready?* Although many bands have recorded French versions of their more popular songs, no one had ever released a bilingual album.

However, not all songs on the album were translated. There are three English songs on both albums: *Lost and Found, Bump on the Head* and *Nashville Grass*. There are two songs on the French album in French, *Busté* and *À Nu (Pom Pom),* that do not have English equivalents and two songs on the English album in English, *Bad Old Days* and *All Hell for a Basement*, that do not have French equivalents. There are seven songs on both albums in translation, in English and French respectively. There is an additional

song on the English album that does not appear on the French album – a Jimi Hendrix-style version of *O Canada*. Johnson is famous for his double-necked electric guitar and the heavy guitar riffs that accompany almost every Big Sugar song. He applied those riffs to the national anthem, to create a rock version of it. Why that version was not included on the Québec-destined album one can only guess, as Johnson has never commented on it.

This bilingual record is Big Sugar's seventh album, but not their first attempt at translation or singing in French. In 1999, they released their first French-language album, *Chauffé à Bloc*. This 5-track album is composed of French translations of four of their more popular songs, *(Pas) Envie d'allumer (Turn the Lights On)*, *C'est moi qui rêgne (The Scene)*, *Better Get Used To It (version française)* and *Ouvre-toi bébé (Opem Up, Baby)*, with one original French song, *Je suis cool*.

When asked in an interview about his decision to record bilingually, Johnson said "As a Canadian, if I want to tour in Canada and play everywhere, why should I exclude the people in Québec just because they don't speak the same language that I sing in? It occurred to me that maybe it should be up to me to try and learn the language and sing to people in Québec. I'm the one who stands to gain from it, just from the experiences of going there and meeting people and experiencing the culture." (Johnson) In an interview in Québec, Johnson added "Les systèmes politiques nous catégorisent selon nos différences; la musique nous montre ce que nous avons en commun!" (Johnson) This shows that although Johnson wanted to translate for increased revenue, he realizes the

cultural implications of his decision. Translation allows him the opportunity to experience another Canadian culture and viewpoint.

In addition, upon perusing their revenues, Johnson realized that the group did not sell many albums in Québec, so he decided to make his future album, *Brothers and Sisters, Are You Ready?* accessible to both French- and English-speaking Canadians. Johnson, a self-professed murderer of the French language, enlisted the help of the Québec City-based band, Les Respectables, to translate the songs for the new album (Sperounes). Even advertising agencies are benefiting from Johnson's attitude. Nissan's recent car advertisements have used the song *Better Get Used To It* in their commercials – the English version for English TV and radio, and the French version for French TV and radio.

The band had a specific target audience in mind - Québec - when they decided to translate their songs. It was a challenge for them, not only linguistically, but also commercially; because it was seldom done, they faced a great deal of scepticism and criticism. "My reason for doing it is just to be able to communicate with an audience," says Johnson. "A third of the people in Canada, for god's sake! It just seems like simple science to me. But I'm not bilingual and I'm not from Québec, and there were a lot of [record label] people nervous about it. They would say, 'Well, it's gonna be hard to do, people might not appreciate it, somebody might get offended.' And I was like, 'That's your risk to take, not mine.' I was fearless about it." (Yurkiw, citing Johnson)

Johnson is also not afraid to admit that his efforts in French are purely to help Big Sugar break through in the Québec market. "Yeah, of course," he says, citing the fact that non-Anglophone artists from around the world do this all the time. "And if someone doesn't appreciate it or if they see me as a fraud, well, I'm not trying to fool anybody. I'm not gonna lip-synch my interviews! It's strictly because I want to entertain people. It's my job!" (Yurkiw, citing Johnson)

Big Sugar is the first band to produce a bilingual album, released in 2001. Since, they were an established Canadian band with a large fan-base, as opposed to a band just starting out, trying to establish a fan-base. I thought their motives for translation might have been different from the motives of bands just starting out.

3.2 See Spot Run

See Spot Run formed in Montreal in 1997, and the members originate from St. John's, Montreal, Winnipeg and Calgary. This is an Anglophone band that is now based in Toronto. As a new band hitting the Canadian music scene, See Spot Run realized that they had a lot of work to do in order to get recognized, and to expand into Europe and the US. They made pop, rock and dance versions of the title track of their second album, *Weightless,* and even translated a few songs into French in order to maximize their radio play. They had a specific goal in mind - to reach as many audiences as possible. (Schaan and Merkley)

Being from Montreal, lead singer Chris Brodbeck translated the songs himself. However, he translated only two of their songs, *Weightless (Décoller)* and *Terrified (Terrifié)*, which are their two most popular songs. These were released on their second album, and the French version was more successful than the English! *Weightless* reached #9 on the American Rock chart, #6 on the American Top 40 chart and #5 on the Canadian music chart. *Décoller* reached #1 in Québec and stayed there for an impressive 6 weeks. (Who and What) Only *Weightless/Décoller* is commercially available, and that is the song heard most on the radio.

This album is a mild departure for the formerly light-pop group. Although more punk than hard rock, *Weightless* demonstrates new influences and a slightly meatier edge. "I'm influenced by new music," says Brodbeck, who feels "the more music you listen to, the better your own music."(Schaan and Merkley) Unlike other Canadian bands, like The Tragically Hip, Blue Rodeo and Great Big Sea, who are content with Canadian success, it seems See Spot Run will not rest until they can reach American market domination, although it is unclear as to how translation will help them reach the market in the United States.

3.3 Joydrop

Joydrop formed in 1996 in Toronto, with members from Toronto, Halifax and Montreal. Joydrop did not make the decision to translate until their second album, *Viberate,* and for a different reason from the previous two bands – they were asked to. According to Thomas Payne, lead guitarist and writer of the song *Sometimes Wanna Die*, French radio

stations had requested a French version of this popular song, so that they could meet both the CanCon requirements of MAPL and the French language requirements without playing the same songs repeatedly, and meet listener's requests at the same time.

Joydrop's lyrics are quite often very vague. Sometimes misinterpreted, lead singer Tara Slone chuckles when she thinks about how *Viberate's* first single, *Sometimes Wanna Die*, might be taken. Written by Payne about an exhilarating yet infuriating relationship, she says, "For the record, I don't ever ever ever wanna die." The song is meant to be sung with one hand on the brow and an exasperated shake of the head. (Slone)

To accomplish the translation, their record label, Warner, enlisted the help of Gerry Stober, a Montreal-based songwriter/producer. After discussions with Stober and listening to the song, Payne felt confident that Stober had a feel for the song, and trusted his ability as a songwriter. This translation led to another translation for the band, this time of their song *Spin Go Spin* for Six Flags theme parks in Belgium and France.

My reasons for selecting Joydrop are simple. They were the only band to answer my email. When I had decided upon my thesis topic, I sent emails to every band I knew that had a translated song, asking for more information about the song, reasons why they had translated it, how they had translated it, and so on. Thomas Payne, lead guitarist of Joydrop and author of the song responded that same day.

Sometimes Wanna Die is the band's only translated song released in Canada. In fact, it was only provided to the radio stations. There is no copy of the song commercially available. Thomas Payne sent me an electronic copy of the song for the purposes of my thesis, and Gerry Stober sent me a copy of the French lyrics electronically.

3.4 Sky

Like Big Sugar, the band Sky has gone through many changes in style and composition. In 1992, Antoine Sicotte and James Renauld met and began a collaboration that would rack up achievements such as the double-platinum status of their album, *Piece of Paradise,* and Best New Group Award at the Junos. Antoine and James invested not only time, but also a rare combination of talent and passion for music into their work.

However, James was uncomfortable in the spotlight. He preferred to work behind the scenes and did not enjoy the public scene of performances, interviews and recognition. Enter Anastasia. Antoine had known Anastasia for several years, as they had grown up in the same neighbourhood and he had worked with her several years previous. With a new singer came a new sound. However, the band did not limit itself to a particular sound. Antoine also felt Anastasia's vocals added a different dimension to the music and created a different chemistry. (Dascalescu)

In 2002, Anastasia and Antoine split, and Antoine was still looking for the perfect replacement for James. When he heard Karl Wolf's voice for the first time on the guide harmonies and vocal tracks of Gabrielle Destroismaisons album, he knew right away that

Karl was the one. Both Karl and Antoine became fans of each others' work right away, so they immediately decided to form the new duo. For both Karl and Antoine, pop and urban music is a life long addiction as they add their own unique flavours to their new infectious multi-layered / urbanized R&B / pop, smash record *Picture Perfect.* (Latest)

Picture Perfect, the band's third album, includes a translation of the first track, *Dedication.* Again like Big Sugar, Sky chose to keep the chorus in English. This song is about dedication, or commitment, to your dreams. This could refer to Antoine's dreams for his band, as Sky has had several different singers and sounds, but emerges new every time to try again to become famous. Although it seems odd that a band that won a Juno with its first album would be singing about "making it one day", in both English and French, about working hard for your dreams and making them come true.

Dedication is not Sky's first attempt at translation. Antoine and Anastasia translated two of their songs on Sky's second album, *Travelling Infinity.* The band decided not to release these songs commercially. They were available for a short time on the Internet only, although they are both still played often on French radio.

Sky was also an inspiration for my thesis. When I heard the song *You* and its translation, *You,* on the radio, I noted that the French version maintained the English chorus. I thought that sounded rather odd. In the context of the French lyrics, the English chorus had a whole new connotation, which intrigued me. Unfortunately, I was unable to obtain a copy of the French version of the song, and therefore, could not study it. But with the

release of *Sky*'s third album in 2003, including a translation of the first release from that album, *Dedication,* which is also played regularly on the radio, I decided to include them in my study.

All four bands had various reasons and methods for translating their songs into French. In the following pages, I plan to speculate on the methods used to translate through comparative analysis of the songs and their translations and suggest possible reasons why the translations turned out the way they did.

CHAPTER FOUR – SONG ANALYSIS AND THEORY APPLICATION

I have selected seven songs, and their translations into French, and this chapter will present the results of my analysis.

I will examine each song and its translation in depth, comparing both texts in relation to the images produced and the rhythm, beat and stress of each. I will then speculate on the method and implicit theory used to translate the song and examine how the song changes in form and content as a result of translation.

4.1 ANALYSIS

4.1.1 Big Sugar

As Big Sugar has more translated songs than other bands I am studying, and has two albums of translated songs, completed approximately two years apart, I will be focussing more on this band. I am also curious to see whether the method of translation changed within the same band, as well as between different bands.

In total, Big Sugar has eleven translated songs over two albums. I have chosen two songs from each album for my corpus. I felt that these four songs were adequately representative of all the songs, and had the most material for analysis. The lyrics from these songs are not multi-layered or ambiguous; they are typically simple, straightforward and repetitive. Therefore, analysis of all the translated Big Sugar songs would have been rather dull.

As mentioned, Big Sugar's first French language album was released in 1999. It comprised five songs: one was an original French song, three were translations of songs from their album *Heated*, released in 1998 and one was the translation of a song from their album *Hemi-Vision*, released in 1997. These four songs were, and still are, well-known and popular Big Sugar songs, and have received a great deal of radio play. This may have been an influence in their selection for translation.

Big Sugar's second translated album was a more comprehensive attempt. In 2001, the band released two albums simultaneously, one in French, *Brothers and Sisters Êtes-vous Ready?*, the other in English, *Brothers and Sisters Are you Ready?*. Seven songs on each album were the same, the French versions being translations of the original English songs.

The band has never stated the purpose of their first translation. The intention for their second attempt, as stated by Johnson in various interviews, was to write songs for Francophone Canada, specifically Québec. They were not interested in targeting Europe or other Francophone countries, only Francophone Canadians. This was a rather ambitious attempt, as two albums, one the French translation of the English original, had never before been released simultaneously by a Canadian Anglophone band.

For the translations, the band decided to maintain the rhyme pattern of the original songs although not the same rhyme sounds. As rhyme is an aspect of all Big Sugar songs, the band may have felt it was important to keep it. The rhyme makes the translations similar

in style to other Big Sugar songs, more credible to Francophone and Anglophone Big Sugar fans, and possibly more readily accepted.

All Big Sugar songs are written in 4/4 time, which means that there are four beats per measure (also known as a bar), and four measures per line. This is the most common time signature for rock music, although some may use 3/4, or waltz time. In 4/4 time, the measure is divided into four beats – the first and third beats are strong, with the first being the strongest, and the second and fourth are weak. (Dean, 14) A word that the singer wants to emphasize is placed in the line so that it falls on the strong beat. This word is usually a noun or verb, or in the case of a multi-syllable word, the natural stress of the word falls on the strong beat.

My hypothesis was that if the English song was written in iambic pentameter, which is the norm for English songs, than the translation would be written in alexandrine, the norm for French songs. But that is not the case for these songs. Many of the English Big Sugar songs are indeed written in iambic pentameter, but the translations are seldom in alexandrine. The majority of the lines in the translation still have five feet. Some have five and a half or six feet, but in those cases, the singer must sing very quickly in order to make the text fit the music, which can make the text unclear.

4.1.1.1 Turn the Lights On/(Pas) Envie d'allumer

These songs are about a man waiting for his love to come home and "turn the lights on" and be with him. In the English version, the singer says that he does not want to be alone,

which does not indicate that he particularly cares for his lover, but that any one would do. He also refers to a 'higher high', which could mean either drugs or heavens. He states "You're the finest thing I've known", which indicates that the singer sees the object of his affection as an object, not a person in her own right.

I have had my share of lies And some lonely, lonely nights Lord, they didn't feel to right Wanna reach a higher high	J'en ai assez de me battre Je me sens seul et c'est ben plate On t'a dit que ça fait mal Vise le ciel, vise les étoiles
The sun is sinkin' like a stone And it hurts to be alone An you're the finest thing I've known So won't you wake me up when you get home	Le soleil plonge à toute vitesse Je ne voudrais pas que tu me laisses J'aimerais forger ces liens Et si je dors, c'est comme rien
Turn the lights on baby 'fore you lie down baby turn the lights on	Ouvre la lumière bébé J'veux te voir clair Bébé ouvre la lumière
And if I'm sleeping like a log Just wake me up and I'll be a dog	Je serai l'ombre de ta main Je serai l'ombre de ton chien
Turn the lights on, babe Before you lie down, baby Turn the lights on	Ouvre la lumière bébé J'veux te voir clair Bébé ouvre la lumière
Turn the lights on, baby Let it shine on, baby Turn the lights on	Ouvre la lumière bébé J'veux te voir clair Bébé ouvre la lumière
Wake me up when you get home	Vise le ciel, vise les étoiles

The French singer says that he does not want his lover to leave him, so does not want to be without her specifically. This version of the song is more active. There are also references to 'ciel, étoiles', but with no implication of drugs. In this case, the ambiguity is removed and one option remains. The French states "J'aimerais forger ces liens", which indicates a previous attachment. There is no suggestion of ties or attachment in the English, just admiration; this is an addition on the translator's part.

4.1.1.1.1 Rhythm

The majority of phrases, which is half of an eight measure period, start on the third beat in the English version. This allows one and a half bars of music between phrases, to showcase the music or allow the singer to hold a final syllable. For example, the word "lies" at the end of line one in the English version can be held for more than one beat. Some phrases in the French version start on beat three, but some start on beat two, depending on the placement of the word the singer wanted to emphasize. The lines that begin with a pronoun start on the second beat, and lines that start with a verb start on the third beat. In some lines in the French version, a syllable had to be added to a word to fit the music. For example, in lines five and six, the final "e", usually silent, was enunciated to add another syllable to the line, so that the singer would not have to end the line holding the "s" for an additional beat. The choruses in both songs start on the first beat of the phrase, which makes them distinct musically from the rest of the song.

4.1.1.1.2 Content

The images in the two songs are slightly different, mostly due to the spoken part mid-song. The English song states that the singer does not want to be lonely, so he is giving a standing invitation to his lover to wake him whenever the lover gets home and he will be ready.

Turn the lights on, turn it on now baby
I wanna see ya right now
I wanna se ya real good
Real, real
Why you just blow my mind

Chéri, j'ai pas envie d'allumer ce soir
Non, pas ce soir
J'ai pas envie
Chéri, j'ai pas envie
Arrête tes conneries, je te dis

In the spoken part of the English song, a man is talking to his lover, asking his lover to turn the lights on. The last line "Why, you blow my mind, you know" implies that she does turn the lights on, which also implies that she accepts his invitation. The French version of this song also includes a spoken part, but in this case, it is the woman who speaks. Unlike the English version, women get a voice in the French version of this song. This part is different also because she clearly says 'no', which is indicated in the title of the song, with 'Pas' in brackets. The singer's advances are refused, as the woman says that she does not want to turn the lights on tonight. This change gives a different impression of women. The English woman, having no voice and silently accepting his proposal, is more passive, more of an object, whereas the French woman is more assertive.

4.1.1.1.3 Metaphor

There are a few poetic devices used in this song. As with most Big Sugar songs, the lyrics rhyme. This song includes an alliterative metaphor: "the sun is sinking like a stone", as well as the metaphor "I will be your dog". The alliterative metaphor was not brought over into the French, merely stating that the sun is sinking quickly. The image remains, but the comparative simile is lost. In addition, the translator had to change the semantic sense of the next line slightly in order to maintain the rhyme – "I don't want to be alone" vs. "Je ne voudrais pas que tu me laisses".

The second metaphor, however, was rendered using an intertexutal reference. The bridge "And if I'm sleeping like a log, wake me up and I'll be your dog" was translated as "Je serai l'ombre de ta main, Je serai l'ombre de ton chien." It is taken from a 1972 song "Ne

me quittes pas" by Jacques Brel, a Belgian singer, born in 1939. This is interesting because it is not contemporary and not Canadian. It is also interesting to note that both songs, the Big Sugar song and the Jacques Brel song, have similar themes. Jacques Brel's song is about a man pleading with his love not to leave him and that he would do anything to have her at his side. Both songs indicate service – he will be whatever she wants him to be.

Reference to Brel's song is a good example of a translator fitting in French cultural knowledge. This could signal that the song was also intended for the European market. As this was part of their first translation attempt, and there is no information about the translator or the target audience, I can only speculate why such choices were made.

4.1.1.2 Better Get Used To It/Better Get Used To It (version française)

This song is about a man who is completely in love with his woman; he would do anything for her. The title of both the French and English versions are somewhat ambiguous though. Whether she had "better get used" to him or whether he had better get used to love is unclear. The listener is unsure whether the person being addressed has to get used to having him around or whether he has to get used to being good and being her slave.

4.1.1.2.1 Content

The ideas brought forth in the English song are that the object of the singer's love turned him into a good man, he is her slave and he is not going anywhere.

Once I was a villain	Il était une fois
I behaved just like a cad	J'agissais comme un goujat
But like a shot of penicillin	Telle une dose de pénicilline
She cured me of all that	Elle m'a guéri de tout ça
She's a healthy dose of heaven	Elle est un ange du paradis
For a man that's hooked on sin	Pour un homme qui est en vice
Let the joy begin	Que la joie subsiste
Better get used to it, baby	Better get used to it, baby
If I was a beggar	Si j'étais mendiant
I would beg ten million dimes	J'amasserais un million
I would have a million dollars	Pour un instant avec toi
For a minute of your time	Telle est mon ambition
I would walk across the desert	Je traverserais le désert
Eating dust and sand	Mangeant sable et poussière
If that was your command	Tu serais ma rivière
Better get used to it, baby	Better get used to it, baby
And if you never tell me	Et dis-moi comment
You care just how I feel	Tu te sens vraiment
It's a dying man's last meal	Me veux-tu maintenant
Better get used to it, baby	Better get used to it, baby

In the French version, she also turned him good, saved him and he is not going anywhere; however, he wants to know how she feels about the situation, about him and he is asking her to accept him (last verse). This version has more praise for the woman, with the use of 'ange' and 'rivière'.

The English version uses the rare word "cad", listed on some fan and lyric websites as "cat", which does not make sense in the context of the song. By using an out-dated term, the meaning is clearly lost on some listeners, possibly those less well read. The French translation is "goujat" which on Termium is labelled as a regional dialect, used in the Le Droit, but is also used in a Guy de Maupassant novel, *Coco*. Both terms indicate an ill-

bred, ungentlemanly man. Using the rarely used French term in the translation maintains both the device and the sense.

4.1.1.2.2 Chorus

Unlike the other songs of the first translation attempt, the chorus of this song remained in English, but there is no information from the band as to why. It could be due to the constraints of the music or a band/translator decision.

4.1.1.2.3 Rhythm

The stress of the words "penicillin" and "pénicilline" fall in different places: on the penultimate syllable in English and on the final syllable in the French. As the singer wants the stress of the word to fall on a strong beat, that is, the first or third beat of a measure, it had to be placed in the line to accommodate the natural stress of the word. In the English, the phrase starts on the fourth beat of the previous measure to ensure that the stress and beats line up. Otherwise, the singer would have had to drop the first word 'But', and the first two lines would not have flowed together as one unit. They would have been separated by the extra beat and lack of conjunction to tie the ideas together. The singer may also have felt that three beats between the two phrases was too long. In the French version, this phrase starts on beat three, allowing only one beat between the phrases. In this case, the stress of the word falls on the first beat and that syllable is held for an extra beat to place further emphasis on it, and to ensure that the next word "elle" landed on a strong beat, as it is "she", the subject of the song, who the singer wanted to emphasize.

The majority of the phrases in the English version start on beat one and vary between beat one and beat three in the French. The singer may have felt the need to use beats from the previous measure in the French version to make all the syllables of the line fit the music.

4.1.1.2.4 Metaphor

There is an interesting metaphor found in both songs, where the singer's lover is referred to as medicine, penicillin, a cure. However, with one word, the image this 'cure' portrays is different between the songs. The English calls her a 'shot' of penicillin, which implies pain. While he needs the medicine, its delivery is difficult. The French singer calls her a 'dose' of penicillin, which does not imply pain.

There is another metaphor that is brought out differently in either song. The English singer talks about walking across the desert, eating dust and sand if that were the lover's command, which implies that the singer is her slave and would do anything for her. The French singer also mentions crossing the desert, eating dust and sand, but then says that his lover would be his 'river', or his rescuer; she is seen as a saviour, an angel of paradise, a cure. Although he is still saying that he would do anything for her, there is less submission in this version.

4.1.1.3 Nicotina/Tina Gasolina

Although the theme of the two songs is the same – a guy who has completely fallen for a bad girl, who is attracted to distraction – it is brought out differently in the two songs, as each is aimed at a different culture-specific audience.

4.1.1.3.1 Rhythm

The majority of the verses in the English version start on beat three and the chorus starts on beat one. The phrases in the French version start on either beat three or four, depending on the first word in the phrase. As with the previous song, phrases starting with pronouns or conjunctions start on beat four.

We've been a little more than just friends
And in most cases, that's just where it ends
But I took the time to stoke up your flame
Can I get a witness to back up my claim?
Now I'm standing so close to your fire
If I say that I quit ya, you can call me a liar.

Now we've been a little more than just friends
And where we go now, I guess that depends
If I get myself caught up in your scene
Black hair, black coffee and hard nicotine

I can't sleep, I can't eat
Need you to hold my hand so I can cross the street

Oh yeah, she's all that
Oh yeah, she's all that
Sugar in my coffee oh yeah makes me mean
Oh yeah she's all that
Oh yeah, she's all that
I'm her silver dollar, she's my slot machine
Oh yeah, she's all that
Oh yeah, she's all that
Oh yeah, why I call her Tina, my nicotine.

Oui je m'souviens de t'avoir croisée,
avec des amis dans les bars du quartier
C'était crowdé, y avait plein de fumée
et tu m'as regardé
T'as dit il faut s'en aller
Et puis t'es montée sur ma mobylette,
t'avais l'allure d'une vraie starlette

T'as checké l'huile et testé mes freins
mon moto de course se semble plus masculin
Tu ne respectes jamais les limites
Le pied au plancher c'est bien ça qui m'excite

Mais moi, avec toi
Je sais jusqu'où ira et si on reviendra

Oh yeah, she's all that
Oh yeah, elle est tout ça
Mon moteur à reaction en perd toute sa raison
Oh yeah, she's all that
Oh yeah, elle est tout ça
Avec elle je vis à fond je l'aime avec passion
Oh yeah, she's all that
Oh yeah, she's all that
Avec elle je m'éclate, Tina ma gasolina

4.1.1.3.2 Allusion

There are a few poetic devices in this song. The first verse includes an intertextual reference in the fourth line of the first verse. The phrase "Can I get a witness" was first uttered in a song by Marvin Gaye in 1964. There are also a few metaphors, such as "she's

my silver dollar, I'm her slot machine", and "She's my V8 motor, I'm her gasoline". None of these devices were rendered in the translation.

4.1.1.3.3 Register

In addition, *Tina Gasolina* uses Québécois French – crowdé, checké, testé, as opposed to standard French serré, vérifié, essayé. There are two possible reasons for the decision to use Québécois. The first may be that since the song targets a Québécois audience, it naturally follows that the band would use the terminology and vocabulary used by their audience. Further, the Québécois words seem to fit better into the line. In the first instance, there is no difference – crowdé and serré both have two syllables, but in the other two instances, the Québécois words have fewer syllables, and thus fit rhythmically and metrically.

4.1.1.3.4 Content

The song, *Nicotina* talks about addictions. There are many references to nicotine and caffeine: "Black hair, black coffee and hard nicotine" and gambling: "I'm her silver dollar, she's my slot machine". The songwriter compares the woman's black hair with black coffee, and equates the woman herself with nicotine, with the neologism "Nicotina". This song is about two friends who are a little bit more than friends, and their attraction that has built up over time, like an addiction.

Tina Gasolina refers more to excitement. There are 10 references to excitement: "Le pied au plancher c'est bien ça qui m'excite", and danger: "Tu ne respectes jamais les limites",

and four references to passion: "Avec elle je vis à fond je l'aime avec passion". This song refers to a chance meeting between two strangers and the excitement and passion of their immediate attraction.

The differences between these two songs can be viewed as a social comment on both cultures. The French song talks about smoky, crowded bars, and motorbikes, passion and speed. The English song talks about friendship, the slow stoking of a flame and soft drugs, like caffeine and nicotine. It could imply that English Canadian relationships are built up over time, with nothing dangerous or forbidden, whereas French Canadian relationships are more spontaneous, passionate, and mysterious. In addition, English Canadian women are portrayed as difficult and challenging, but addictive, whereas French Canadian women are easier and quicker, yet more attractive.

This translation seems to bring the writer to the reader, or in this case the listener (Schleiermacher), by re-telling the song from another viewpoint – crowded bars, fast cars and passion vs. friendship, patience and addiction. In an interview in Edmonton, Johnson noted that "You can smoke in the grocery store in Trois Rivières, so Nicotina just doesn't have that same ooh-she's-bad vibe. It just didn't sound cool to my Québécois chums." (Sperounes, citing Johnson, 2001) What did sound cool was a tough girl into fast cars. Therefore, while the theme of the songs is the same – an irresistible attraction to a "badass" woman – and the music is the same, the songs are told from two different cultural viewpoints.

4.1.1.4 We Could Live/Harmonie

This song is about the singer's desire for peace, happiness and harmony, either marital or global. Images in the English version of this song are peace for the world or a spouse, although it is more explicitly for spouse (family, honey), but could refer to the family of humankind. The images in the French are the same, but are more explicit for world peace (chacun défend sa religion). This changes the song's potential for the listener.

Two wrongs don't make a right Me and you don't have a fight Keepin' love in this family Me and you got to agree	Les hommes ont perdu la raison Chacun défend sa religion Mais c'est l'amour qui nous unit Toi et moi, you've got to agree
These wars we have at night Don't pretend everything is all right These wars we have at night Don't pretend - don't pretend...	Toutes ces guerres, toutes ces tueries Ne sont jamais, jamais loin d'ici Toutes ces guerres, between you and me C'est pas fini, c'est pas fini
We could live happily	Il faut vivre en harmonie
Two wrongs don't make a right Me and you got to unite 'Cause now the sky is ever so dark When it rains, where does it fall?	Toujours la haine dans notre tête Et dans le ciel, encore la tempête On ne pourra pas toujours s'enfuir Un jour ou l'autre il faudra s'unir
On your house, the same as mine Don't pretend everything is fine On your house, the same as mine Don't pretend - honey, don't pretend... We could live happily	Notre maison, c'est la terre Et notre toit est l'univers Notre maison, c'est la terre Tous des frères, tous des frères Il faut vivre en harmonie

4.1.1.4.1 Content

De Beaugrande states:

> It is frequently left to the readers to make associations between the object and other things indicated by it. A translator might well supply these associations not only in responding to the text, but also while producing the translation. The result is a text deprived of its dynamic aspect, since the reader's role has been filled by the translator. [...] The situation becomes still worse when the translator's reactions are either purely subjective, that is, not based on textual signals, but on individual priorities, or else

> erroneous, that is, ignoring, misrepresenting or distorting the signals in the text. (de Beaugrande, 25)

Many of the more ambiguous statements in the English have been restricted and constrained in the French, whereas some of the more specific statements in English have been made ambiguous in French. This is a major challenge in song translation – how to maintain the "possibilities" of the translation in so few words and with such restrictions. Many Big Sugar songs deal with romantic break-ups, and the English version of this song is no exception. However, the translator took one possible interpretation – world peace - and translated that into French, thereby making the song more explicit and less ambiguous.

There is very little English in the French, only two half-lines (between you and me/you've got to agree). The first of the two English phrases in the French version maintains the sense and rhyme and fits the rhythm and metre of the song. The second, however, is an addition by the translator, although it is unclear why. The translator could easily have used the phrase "en notre famille", which would maintain the rhyme, rhythm and metre, and would preserves the sense of the song. The stress would fall on the appropriate beats, with the first syllable of 'notre' and 'famille' on the strong beats of the measure.

The chorus is also slightly different: "Il FAUT vivre en harmonie" vs. "we COULD live happily", which imparts a stronger sense of urgency and possibility in the French. However, the English says "Me and you got to unite" vs. "Un jour ou l'autre il faudra s'unir". The French states 'one day', whereas the English says 'right now'. In addition, the

metaphors change slightly: the English states that the sky is dark, then mentions rain. The French version uses 'tempête', to contain both ideas.

4.1.1.4.2 Rhythm

The phrases of both songs start on the first beat, including those phrases in the French version that begin with pronouns and conjunctions, unlike the other Big Sugar songs.

4.1.1.5 Pretty Bird/L'oiseau Reggae

There was one other noteworthy change in another Big Sugar song from the second translation attempt, *Pretty Bird/L'oiseau Reggae*. In this song, the chorus changes – the addition of European countries indicates that this song may be directed at more than just Canadian Francophones.

There is a pretty bird who sings a pretty song	Il y a un bel oiseau qui chante une chanson
She sits outside my window and she sings the whole day long	Toute la journée il la fredonne sur mon paillasson
I know the song she sings 'cause it reminds me of my girl	Je connais la chanson car elle me rappelle une fille
And how I wish I knew just how to find her in this world	Que j'aimerais retrouver avant que l'amour ne file
It doesn't matter just how far away she'll be	Quelle importance même si elle est loin d'ici
If you could find her could you send her home to daddy?	Au Portugal, en France ou même en Italie

This changes the song's potential as well. Rather than searching the world over for his girl, as in the English, it seems as though the French singer will be limiting his search to Europe.

These are only a few examples of the 15 songs translated by Big Sugar. I chose these four songs, two from the first album, two from the second album, as they were excellent representatives of the others.

4.1.1.6 Summary

The main difference between the two Big Sugar translation attempts is that although the Skopos seems to be the same for both the first album released in 1999 and the second released in 2001, namely, to gain access to a Francophone market, the approach changed. The first album, which included *Turn The Lights On* and *Better Get Used To It*, stayed close to the original and did not make any cultural adjustments for the target audience, whereas the second, which included *Nicotina* and *We Could Live*, made several changes for the target audience. Rather than maintain the same approach used for the first translations, the band chose to adjust their approach in the second attempt. This difference proves my previous statement that there is no single theory for song translation and that the decision depends on many factors. It does, however, disprove my previous statement that the choice of theory depends on the band's Skopos for the song. The choice of approach depends not only on the purpose of the song in the target culture, but also the content of the song.

In most cases, the band seems to have opted for a sense equivalent rather than an illocutionary equivalent when translating the poetic devices, unless both were possible. For example, in the song *Better Get Used To It*, the translator used an archaic word in the

translation with a similar semantic sense. In the song *Turn The Lights On*, the alliteration 'sun is sinking like a stone' was not maintained, and was replaced with a cliché.

What is interesting to me, as a woman listener and music fan, is that the image of women changes from the English Big Sugar songs to the French. In the English songs, women are portrayed as weak, submissive objects and treated with great indifference. The French women, however, are portrayed as passionate, strong, and they are the ones to treat men with indifference. Whether this is the influence of Les Respectables, and their opinions of the female sex, or whether Johnson's idea of English women and French women is so different, is not clear.

4.1.2 See Spot Run

The following English song appeared on See Spot Run's second album: *Weightless*. The French version of *Weightless* is available commercially as a single. They also have a translated version of their song *Terrified*, translated as *Terrifié*, but this song is not available commercially, although both translations are frequently heard on the radio. The reason for this is unclear. It seems that the band's purpose for the translation was not only to reach other markets, but to increase the band's marketability. With more than one song in translation, the band can exploit as much airplay as possible.

4.1.2.1 Weightless/Décoller

Weightless and *Décoller* are both about a man in love. The title refers to how the object of his affection makes him feel. He does have some reservations about the relationship,

admitting that he is not perfect and that the "girl will leave him in the end", but he's "gonna chance it" because of the way he feels. The French version expresses the same emotions.

I know it's not always a party
Living with a guy like me who's always in outer space
Maybe I don't know what's good for me
I never thought a girl like you could ever change my ways

Lately I've been feeling uneasy
Thought it might have been something I said I didn't mean
If you get to know me much better
You will see it's never my intention to be mean

You make me weightless
When I get home I float around my whole living room
You make it painless
Like I am on acetaminophen all the time

Je sais que c'est pas toujours facile
Vivre avec un gars comme moi, la tête dans les nuages
Peut-être que je sais pas ce qui est bon pour moi
J'aurais jamais cru qu'une fille comme toi puisse me changer

Hier je me suis senti mal pris
C'est peut-être quelque chose que j'aurais pas dû dire
Si tu prends le temps de m'apprivoiser
Tu verras qu'j'ai jamais voulu être méchant

Tu me fais planer
Un sentiment d'apesanteur dans mon deux et demi
Tu me fais décoller
Comme si je prenais l'acétaminophène jour et nuit

4.1.2.1.1 Content

The images in both songs are very similar. The idea of space is brought out in the images of "outer space", "my whole living room", "tête dans les nuages", "planer" and "mon deux et demi". There is also the image of floating, illustrated by the title "Weightless", "float around", "planer" and "sentiment d'apesanteur". Another theme in this song is drugs. This theme is brought out more in the French version that in the English. The English version refers only to over-the-counter drugs (acetaminophen), but the French version refers to other drugs as well, as implied with the term "planer".

There are not many differences between the content of these two songs, but there are a few slight changes. There is one slight skew in the 2nd line of the 3rd verse – "Tomber pour une fille qui va bientôt me quitter" vs. "Going for a girl who's gonna leave me in the end". "Bientôt" gives the impression that the break-up will happen soon, which makes the subject look more stupid for falling for the girl. "In the end" gives the impression of being more in the future, less certain that it will happen.

4.1.2.1.2 Rhythm

The time signature for this song is also 4/4. In both the English and French versions, the phrases alternate between starting on beat one and beat three. The word 'acetaminophen' falls in the same place in both songs, although the singer has to slur many of the words in French in order for it to fall on the appropriate beat to match the stress of the word. This may be seen as the singer using colloquial speech or trying to fit the line with the music by dropping some syllables.

There is no set metre to this song. It is written in free verse, with two lines equalling 23 syllables, divided as 9 and 14. Therefore, the translator of this song had fewer constraints than did the translator of Big Sugar's songs. There is no rhyme requirement, the metre is flexible and there is no specific audience to keep in mind other than Francophones.

4.1.2.1.3 Metaphor

The author used a few poetic devices in the English and French versions of these songs. The English contains a metaphor "a guy like me who's always in outer space." This was

translated to "un gars comme moi, la tête dans les nuages". The French is slightly more clichéd, and the English imparts the sense of being farther removed from society or social norms with the term "outer space". Another metaphor used in the chorus "float around my whole living room" changes slightly in the French, as the singer merely states "un sentiment d'apesanteur". The third verse contains an alliteration "going for a girl who's gonna leave me", which was not reproduced in the French. The translator may have decided to forego the device to maintain the sense.

4.1.2.1.4 Chorus

The most significant change occurs in the chorus. The term "planer", as in "Tu me fais planer", adds a meaning that is not there in the English. "Weightless", as in "You make me weightless", according to the *Gage Canadian Dictionary*, means "appearing to have no weight; being free from the pull of gravity" (Gage, 1276). However, according to *Le Petit Robert*, "planer" means "se soutenir en l'air sans remuer (ou sans paraître remuer) les ailes; flotter dans l'air; être dans un état de bien-être et d'indifférence au réel, après absorption de drogue"(Robert, 1451). The French version portrays the woman's "intoxicating" love more explicitly than the English, although both include the reference to acetaminophen.

In addition, the term "décoller" has a slight difference in meaning than does "painless". According to *Le Petit Robert*, "décoller" means "Détacher ce qui est collé; ne plus adhérer; s'en aller, partir; maigrir."(Robert, 461) According to the *Gage Canadian Dictionary*, "painless" means "causing or producing no pain."(Gage, 815) There is no

image of "pain" in the term "décoller", and there is no image of "ne plus adhérer" in the term "painless". The French includes the idea of falling apart: the girl's love makes the singer come unglued. The idea of pain is brought forth implicitly in the third verse, when the singer tells the listener that he has fallen for a girl who will soon leave him. This image is explicit in the English: although she "makes it painless" now, the singer knows that she will cause pain later when she leaves him.

The band's Skopos for this song was to be able to reach as many audiences and branch out as much as possible with their music. They decided to translate two of their songs, *Weightless* and *Terrified,* into French in order to access both markets at once. In that way, they wanted to focus on as many audiences as possible, rather than targeting one audience in particular.

4.1.2.2 Summary

Although See Spot Run wanted to reach other audiences with their translations, they did not make them easily accessible. While the French versions are often heard on the radio, they are difficult to find in record stores. I searched 5 different Montreal record stores before finding the album in a used shop in Toronto. This could indicate that the band was merely experimenting with translation, and the experiment failed.

As the author of the original English song was also the translator of the French version, there are few semantic shifts in the French version. This may also be due to the fact that there were fewer constraints, such as rhyme and specific target audience, in this song than

in the Big Sugar songs. The author/translator made only slight changes to enhance a nuance or idea that could not be brought out in the English due to vocabulary or line limitations.

4.1.3 Joydrop

A special situation exists when the translator is a poet in his or her own right. It often happens that this kind of translator transports the text into the mode of interaction which is not typical of the original author, but rather of the translator/poet. De Beaugrande states

> There will be a constant danger that the translator will render into the goal language not just the meaning potential of the text, but the translator's own additions and responses. (...) The situation becomes still worse when the translator's reactions are either purely subjective, that is, not based on textual signs, but on individual priorities, or else erroneous, that is, ignoring, misrepresenting or distorting the signals in the text. (de Beaugrande, 30)

This seems to be the case in the song *Sometimes Wanna Die*.

4.1.3.1 Sometimes Wanna Die

The combining of French verses with an English chorus, as in the case of this song, is not always the best option, even if big name bands such as Big Sugar do it. It can create problems, rather than solve them, such as creating discrepancies between the chorus and the lyrics and rendering the song nonsense. The chorus is the focal point of the song, and it sets the mood and tone for the whole song. It is an important bit of translation, and a challenge for the translator. This could be a reason why many translators choose not to translate the chorus at all. This may be the case in *Sometimes Wanna Die.*

Don't worry 'bout one thing
Don't worry 'bout nothing
She said I'm not gonna let this one go
Nobody's on my side
Nobody seems to see
How much, how deep, how far these things can be

My eyes are dry and.

I, I still don't even know you
I, I still wish I could hold you
I, I sometimes wanna die

And you were at the start
And now you are the end
And you left me with nothing to defend
I need the voice of a good friend

Can't stop myself from laughing
No matter how sad these things can be
These things can be

My eyes are bright and.

J'ai pas envie de rire
J'ai pas envie de rien
plus rien, et même les étoiles s'en fouent
de tout ce qui m'arrive
de tout ce qui m'déchire
de bas, en haut
ma vie est en morceaux

My eyes are dry and.

I, I still don't even know you
I, I still wish I could hold you
I, I sometimes wanna die

Tu étais au début
et tu es à la fin
moi je reste sans arme, sans ta main
C'est d'un ami que j'ai besoin

Et j'ai envie de rire
Mêm' si la vie me tape dessus
me tape dessus

My eyes are bright and.

4.1.3.1.1 Content

As with the case of *Nicotina*, the chorus of *Sometimes Wanna Die* is in English, but it is unclear why. According to songwriter Thomas Payne, it was the translator, Gerry Stober's idea: "Gerry suggested keeping the chorus in English because he thought the meaning and emotion of the chorus might not translate properly into French. We agreed." According to Stober, it was the band's idea, "They wanted the chorus to remain in English. It's a popular thing...French lyrics with English chorus." Was this the translator's way of not dealing with the challenge of translating the chorus? Or was the band trying to copy other translated artists, such as Big Sugar? Although the band gave Stober free rein to translate as he saw fit, they did give final approval. Two members of the band speak

French, Tom McKay and Tara Slone. From our correspondence, I learned that although the translation was contracted out, ownership is solely Joydrop's.

It seems that the translator's Skopos was to create a song that 'works', although at times the translation only vaguely resembles the original. Although both songs have the same theme, that of the break up of a romance and the uncertainty and confusion of love, and although they share a chorus, that is almost where the similarities end. The first two lines of the song, to begin with, convey very different images. "Don't worry 'bout one thing Don't worry 'bout nothing" vs. "J'ai pas envie de rire J'ai pas envie de rien". The English gives the idea of "carefree", nothing to worry about. The French, however, gives the idea of melancholy, passivity; the person uttering these statements has given up and does not care about anything anymore. The third line of the first verse in the French states the opposite of the same line in the English. The French states "même les étoiles s'en fouent", which means that even the stars have given up. The English, however, states "She said I'm not gonna let this one go", which means that "she" alone is not going to give up. However, the translator did maintain the repetition in lines one and two and lines four and five.

The second line of the second verse sends the listener off in different directions. The English states, "And everyone I see/ Somehow almost sets me free", whereas the French states "ne me mène nulle-part/ Pourtant, je me retrouve je crois". The original gives the idea of being free; the translation talks about finding oneself - not at all similar.

In addition, the second line in the third verse has a subtle shift that is almost imperceptible at first glance. The English reads "And now you are the end". The French reads "et tu es à la fin". The addition of "à" changes the line completely. Instead of the object being the end or the cause of the end, the object is merely at the end. The third line strays from the original. The English states that he has nothing left to defend, whereas the French implies that he is defenceless. This may have been due to the need for an additional syllable in the line to maintain the rhythm and metre.

The last line of the chorus "sometimes wanna die" conveys the heartache of both songs, but reveals different aspects about the subject of the song. In the English, this is an avowal of his pain. His eyes are dry; "no one seems to see how much, how deep, how far these things can be", and he's laughing, "no matter how sad these things can be". However, in the French, this avowal is merely the subject reiterating what he states in the verses, that "tout ce qui m'déchire, ma vie est en morceaux". He is not giving the listener a glimpse at what is really going on emotionally. Overall, the listener gets a very different image about the subject of the song and his message. One is more emotional and one is more detached, but both are still in pain.

4.1.3.1.2 Rhythm

The majority of the phrases in both versions of the song start on the second beat. As most of the phrases begin with a pronoun or conjunction, this enables the singer to accentuate

The band's Skopos in this case seems to have been different from that of the other three bands. Joydrop did not intentionally decide to branch out into Québec or Europe, but took the advice of their label and met the demands of their audience. French radio stations are starting to realize the value of translation to help them meet their CanCon requirements and their audiences' requests. They are taking the initiative – rather than waiting for the band to make the decision. Joydrop chose to translate this song not from an initial desire to reach other audiences or create a new niche for the band. They translated it because Francophone radio stations requested a translation. (Stober, 2002) French radio stations have an additional CanCon requirement. Not only does 35% of the music they play have to be Canadian, that is, songs that meet MAPL requirements, but 65% of the music they play must be in the French language. Therefore, if English bands translate their most popular songs, for which the radio stations receive many requests, this enables the radio stations to meet both requirements with one song, while satisfying listener requests.

4.1.3.2 Summary

In this case, translation was not the band's idea, although they seem to have benefited from it. As such, they had little control over the choice of the translator, and likely put few constraints or obligations on the translator.

4.1.4 Sky

The band Sky has been through several changes in composition and format. Although this is not their first attempt at translation, this is the first of their translated songs that has been made commercially available.

4.1.4.1 Dedication

This song is about the singer's dedication to making his dreams come true. He knows it will take time and hard work, but that one day he will succeed. It reinforces the idea that he/the band will keep working and producing, despite changing times, trends and band members.

Some day soon
I'm gonna become someone
Gonna eat the fruits of labour
Cause I work so hard
Day and night I see the stars
Wanna make it one day

Pre-chorus
I know I'll get by
I'll make it through
Cause time time time allows me to
You know that I try so hard, it's true
In Time, I'll make it

Chorus
Dedication, my friends they tell me
I'm blowing up and one day you'll see
Dedication the whole world tells me
Maybe they are right

When I see kids that don't believe in
The power of emotion
I just close my eyes
I'll be standing right there by
A dream that just won't fade out

Bridge
One day I will make through
I'll be right here
I feel it's true
It's alright
Maybe they are right (x2)

Un jour prochain
J'arriverai au sommet
Personne ne pourra m'empêcher
Après tant d'efforts
Je reste déterminé
Le ciel m'aura guidé

Pre-chrorus
J'y arriverai, je poursuivrai,
Ma route au sommet je l'atteindrai
Qu'on me donne une chance d'y parvenir
Croyez-moi, je suis prêt

Chorus
Dedication, my friends they tell me
I'm blowing up and one day you'll see
Dedication the whole world tells me
Maybe they are right

On me dit: rien n'est sûr dans cette vie
Surtout ne prends rien pour acquis
Alors je ferme les yeux
Et je pris les cieux
Qu'on ne m'enlève ce rêve précieux

Bridge
Un jour prochain
J'arriverai au sommet
Personne ne pourra m'empêcher
Après tant d'efforts, je reste déterminé
Le ciel m'aura guidé

4.1.4.1.1 Content

The main image in this song is that of hard work, dedication, success, and making your dreams come true. This is emphasized by the use of the cliché 'fruits of labour'. One of

the images brought out in the English version of this song is reminiscent of the band's name, Sky. The sky is referred to a few times, through the use of 'stars' and 'up'. Repetition is also used in this song, 'time, time, time', presumably for emphasis, but it may have been padding to help fill out the line.

Time is greatly emphasized in the English song version. In addition to the repetition in the third phrase of the pre-chorus, the fifth line also contains the word time, and in this case, it is held for a full measure, or four beats. This is not brought over into the French. There are no explicit references to time, and no other words are emphasized by being held for many beats.

The French version has the same images, but the image of 'sky' is more evident, through the repeated use of 'ciel'. The images of dedication and hard work are also brought out in this version. The chorus was kept in English, but the pre-chorus, which is a lead-in to the chorus and not a verse in itself, was translated. This makes one wonder why only the chorus remains in English. If they were attempting to highlight the fact that this song is a translation, this was accomplished by maintaining the title in English, and by following it with "(version française)" on the album's track listing. One possibility is that they were merely following the trend created by Big Sugar of maintaining the English chorus in a French song. This song, *Dedication*, and its translation were released in 2003, two years after Big Sugar's bilingual album. Perhaps they saw the success of Big Sugar's translations, and emulated their style.

4.1.4.1.2 Rhythm

Most of the phrases in the English version of this song start on the third beat of the measure. The chorus starts on beat two because the natural stress of the word 'dedication' falls on the third syllable. By starting the phrase on the second beat allows the third syllable to fall on the third beat, a strong beat.

4.1.4.1.3 Metaphor

The English version of this song includes one metaphor and a cliché – "gonna eat the fruits of labour". Only the cliché was translated into French – "arriver au sommet", the metaphor was not brought over.

4.1.4.1.4 Rhyme

Although there seems to be some rhyme (chorus, pre-chorus) in this song, it does not seem to be more accidental than deliberate. Since rhyme is not used systematically throughout the song , it does not seem as though the author set "rhyme" as an intentional device to be used in the song. Therefore, it is unlikely that it was a stipulation for translation, so I will not be including it as part of my analysis.

4.1.4.2 Summary

The purpose of this translation was to target Francophone Canadians. The translator in this case was the author, and his decision to maintain the chorus in English was interesting; perhaps he was taking his due from the popularity of the Big Sugar songs.

4.1.5 Conclusion

The Skopos of these four bands seems to be quite different, going some way to explain why their songs were translated so differently. Big Sugar is concerned with accessing a specific audience in Québec, so their songs were adjusted to the culture of the province. They want to write songs that Francophone Canadians would buy, so they took their music to the listener. See Spot Run is concerned with accessing as many audiences as possible, including all of Canada, US and Europe, so they focus more on the original meaning of their song, rather than targeting it to a specific cultural group. Joydrop wants to create a workable French song and so focuses more on the original meaning of the song, albeit only one aspect of it. Sky wants to produce French versions of their songs for greater radio play in order to attract a larger audience.

4.2 DISCUSSION

While there is typically one primary reason for a translation, there could be several secondary reasons. The primary skopos in all cases of translation of these songs was to produce a workable song in French. In many cases, this goal was reached, since the songs are heard on the radio, and therefore considered viable songs by program managers, DJs and listeners. However, this goal was reached in many different ways, based on the secondary skopos of the band. Some translators maintained a rhyme pattern when the original text rhymed, some did not. Some transferred English to the translation, some did not. Some took one aspect, or one possibility of the English song, and created the French version from there, or expressing that possibility, removing most, if not all, ambiguity. Due to the numerous constraints on a song translator, one aspect of a song often had to be

dropped in order to maintain another: for example, the rhyme had to be dropped for the sake of meaning, or vice versa.

Each band took a different approach when translating their songs, and there are pros and cons to each approach. In Joydrop's case, their label chose the translator and supervised the translation process. The option of translation was presented to the band, and they were able to decide whether or not they wanted to record it. The band did not have to worry about dealing with the business end of the process, only the creative end. Conversely, although they did get a final say on the translation, they had little other control. In addition, they had little experience, and had to put their faith in the translator the label had chosen to make decisions and choices appropriate to their purpose for the original song.

The approach taken by Sky and See Spot Run was similar – the author of the original song also did the translation. In this case, the translator is working with his/her own material, and can manipulate it as needed, bringing out underlying themes if required, as he/she has intimate an knowledge of the original text and the motive and reasoning behind its creation. The author/translator has almost total control over the outcome of the song. The drawback is that the onus is on the band to create the translation, possibly with no outside support. It may happen that the band has to convince their label to accept the translation and release it, as Big Sugar had to at the start. In this case, the argument for translation is weaker. Obviously, the band can create an original French song, so why would they translate? It may be that they wanted to provide a particular song to both

possible audiences, or felt that there was something in that particular song that could or should be shared with all fans, regardless of language.

Big Sugar's approach was to seek help from a band from the Québec culture they were targeting. This approach gives the band a knowledgeable and reliable reference tool to help and support them in their goal to create viable songs for French Canadians. They have more control than Joydrop, and only slightly less than Sky or See Spot Run. The downside is that the reference band may inadvertently influence the translating band to reflect their style and not the style of the translating band. It would be important to choose the reference band based on song style, and not popularity or friendship.
The effect that song translation has had on Canadian contemporary music is that it has provided Canadian bands with a larger Canadian audience. Anglophone Canadian bands now have the option of translation, and can offer their English songs to a new audience in another language. This helps turn the band's attention away from the more lucrative American market and makes the Canadian market more viable with more options.

In terms of polysystem theory, both Big Sugar albums could be seen to form the centre of the system. The first album, *Chauffé à bloc* forms the centre because it is the first attempt at translated songs of the bands in my corpus. The second attempt, *Brothers and Sisters Are you Ready?/Êtes-vous Ready?* reinforces this position, though it uses a different method, maintaining some English in the translations. See Spot Run's translations seem to be influenced by Big Sugar's first translation attempts, and Sky and Joydrop's

translations may have been inspired by Big Sugar's second attempts. These could be viewed as peripheral to the Big Sugar centre.

It is interesting to speculate on what inspired Big Sugar's first translation. As there is little information on this, I will only make suggestions here. It is possible that Johnson felt that there was only one way to translate something, and that was to translate it entirely. He wrote an entirely English song for English listeners, so it is logical that he would have wanted an entirely French song for French listeners. This mindset may have driven his decision to translate the entire song, and not leave the chorus in English, as he did in the second attempt.

In the second translation attempt, Johnson enlisted the help of Pascal Dufour and Sébastien Plante, friends from the band Les Respectables, whose songs include a significant mix of English and French lyrics. This style may have influenced the translations of the Big Sugar songs. Johnson may have decided to model his songs after a popular Québécois band, to ensure that they would be acceptable to Francophone Canadian ears and to French Canadian radio stations. This in turn, influenced the translations of other bands, as they looked to Big Sugar as an example of how successful translations of songs were done.

Is there a benefit for bands to translate rather than just write an original French song, as in the case of Anglophone bands Moxy Früvous and Great Big Sea? The answer is both yes and no. For bands like Big Sugar, those with the desire and drive to create songs for all

Canadians and to reach another audience, the answer is yes. They can't simply write an original French song without a translator to turn their thoughts and ideas into French; therefore, it may be easier for them to create an original English song, and then have it translated. However, for bands like Joydrop, who are merely taking the advice of their label, the answer would be no. They did not commission the translation, and although they had final say, it was the translator who made all the decisions, such as taking the song from one viewpoint and, possibly, maintaining the chorus in English.

CHAPTER FIVE – CONCLUSION

5.1 THE ROAD BLOCKS

I encountered a number of difficulties in researching and analysing the corpus for my thesis. The first was compiling my corpus. I knew of several songs and their translations before I began, but finding the song lyrics and music was challenging. There were several bands with translated songs that I could not include in my corpus, such as Sugar Jones and McMaster and James, simply due to a lack of information. Information from the bands themselves was also difficult to obtain. I emailed every band that I knew had a translated song, but, unfortunately, only one band, Joydrop, answered my questions. Most of my information on the bands, their albums and songs came from online interviews and fan sites.

In researching song translation, the lack of prior studies and significant works was also an obstacle. Information had to be gleaned from the brief introductions and prefaces to song collections. The few studies that had been completed on song translation dealt with operas or chorale music from the 17th century. There were various studies of poems set to music, and the translation of those poems, but they were typically addressed to music students and not translation students. The studies focused more on the music and the interaction of text and music, rather than on the translation process.

Another difficulty that I did not foresee was the analysis of the songs. Many contemporary Canadian songs, including those of my corpus, contain little in terms of

content, ambiguity and depth, which created problems and limited my material for analysis.

5.2 ROADSIDE ATTRACTIONS

I made one or two unexpected discoveries during the research and analysis of my thesis, particularly that my hypotheses were all wrong! I had assumed that the same approach would be taken to translations with the same Skopos. Big Sugar's two translation attempts proved me wrong. Both attempts have the same purpose, which was to increase record sales and Big Sugar exposure in Québec, but they were not translated in the same way. The translator of the first attempt translated everything, using no Québécois slang or anglicisms, whereas both are frequently used in the second attempt. I also realized that while the purpose of the translation was a significant factor in the way a song was translated, it was not the only one; devices such as rhythm and rhyme, and target audience were also key aspects. Based on radio play, the second attempt was more successful than the first, as the first translation attempt received no radio play until the popularity of the second attempt was established through listener requests.

There are several answers to the previously raised questions of why and how artists translate songs. They translate to access a larger audience, be it domestic or foreign, increase their revenues, because they are asked to, either by their label, their audience or by radio stations, to tell a story from a new viewpoint and, possibly, to get involved in the global movement of song translation. After all, artists such as Robbie Williams in England, Shakira in South America, Jean-Jacques Goldman in France and *NSYNC in

the United States are translating. Bands are beginning to realize how to tap into a previously inaccessible market.

5.3 FURTHER JOURNEYS

I believe that further research in this area is possible and could be an interesting project. The sociological aspect of song translation would be very informative, exploring how the songs are received and their impact on the target culture. A look into the European market and the role song translation plays in the European Union would also be fascinating.

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