

# **Reading minds: A study of deictic shifts in translated written interaction between mental-health professionals and their readers**

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*The practice of knowledge mediation in written texts relating to the health sciences has hitherto received limited attention within Translation Studies. The overall aim of this study is to explore writer-reader interaction in a bilingual corpus of medical leaflets published on the website of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (UK). In order to do this, a comparative analysis of English source texts and Spanish target texts was conducted to identify shifts in personal reference, which served to contrast patterns in knowledge transfer processes between mental health experts and their target audiences. The study is underpinned by Thompson and Thetela's (1995) tenet that interactive and interactional features have to be considered in conjunction. It seeks to make a contribution to the relatively understudied field of how interaction patterns differ across cultural and linguistic settings. The corpus is of special interest due to the sensitivity of its subject matter, the varied constituency it addresses and the fact that the translated texts were produced and revised by mental health professionals.*

## **1. Introduction**

Most health authorities and trusts in the UK have published extensive documentation on translation and interpreting provision. Although both oral and written modes of language transfer are acknowledged, the former receives more attention by far. This can be explained by the fact that the guidelines and codes of practice often state that in medical settings translation is no substitute for interpreter-mediated exchanges. In turn, it explains why scholarship on medical translation is sparse in comparison with the volume of academic studies on interpreting in health settings. Nonetheless, because of developments in legislation or simply out of good practice, large numbers of medical leaflets and brochures are nowadays routinely translated so as to disseminate information to patients, their carers and the general public. Given the prevailing trend in contemporary communication, this type of material is often available online, which means that the knowledge representation and mediation processes are in effect targeting a broad constituency of text users: in addition to the intended addressees, any interested party with internet access can read the texts. Thus, expert-lay communication (see de Beaugrande, 1997; Gentner & Stevens, 1983) is not restricted to the interaction between health professionals and patients (as it would be in a face-to-face consultation), but is rather extended to the general public. This makes the conceptualization of the roles of text-producers and text-receivers a challenging task, and, as

Beger (2011) remarks, “researchers are forced to simplify the complexity of this problem for methodological reasons” (p. 321).

Research in the field of cross-lingual, cross-cultural communication (see. Pauwels, 1995) in health settings, and in public service settings in general, has focused overwhelmingly on oral events (recent contributions include Cambridge, 2010; Corsellis, 2008; de Pedro Ricoy, Perez & Wilson, 2009; Hale, 2007; Phelan, 2001;:). However, some initiatives that reverse this trend are emerging, notably those by the GENTT<sup>1</sup> research group. Studies such as those by Montalt and García Izquierdo (2002) and Montalt and García Davies (2007) have made inroads into genre-based analytical models in the context of the health sciences. García Izquierdo’s work (2009), which compares patterns of expert-lay communication in online fact sheets for patients in English and Spanish, is especially relevant, in that it identifies textual characteristics pertaining to the genre and pays special attention to grammatical and lexical cohesion.

This paper aims to compare the interaction between mental health experts and their readers before and after knowledge transfer is mediated through translation. The textual analysis will not focus on shifts as distortions or semiotic-pragmatic losses (i.e., it is not intended as an exercise in “error spotting”), but rather facilitate the comparative description of source texts (STs) and target texts (TTs) as the result of the strategic decisions on the part of their respective producers to position themselves in relation to their readers: firstly, because the needs and expectations of the readers of both STs and TTs will vary and secondly, because it is likely that the TTs’ addressees will share a geographical context (the UK) with the STs’ producers, even if their cultural background is different, and that any subsequent interaction (such as consultations, counselling and other medical interventions) will occur in that context. Halliday’s (2010) comment on the choices made by the interlocutors in face-to-face psychiatric therapy can be also applied to written interaction, in that mental health experts anticipate their readers’ choices as part of the dialogue that they initiate:

The therapist seeks to locate the disorder within the overall system of the language. In the discourses of psychiatric treatment ..., the therapist will often attend not only to the choices made by the patient but also to those he is making himself, and perhaps make some linguistic analysis of the discourse to track the course of the therapeutic encounter. (Halliday, 2010, p. 15)

## **2. Writer-reader interaction**

Any analysis of interaction in written texts has to be based on indicators of how meaning is constructed and negotiated. Studies, such as the present

one, which aim at comparing patterns of interaction in STs and their corresponding TTs will have to focus on the shifts that occur in the process of language transfer. As will be seen below, concepts and tenets derived from disciplines other than Translation Studies are useful tools for devising a framework in which this type of analysis can be developed.

## 2.1. Overview

Interaction in written texts has been studied, although not as intensively as interaction in oral texts, from different linguistic approaches (e.g., Crismore, 1989; Hoey, 1983, 2001; Hyland, 2005; Myers, 1999; Nystrand, 1986; Thompson, 2001; Thompson & Thetela, 1995), although, with few exceptions (e.g., Liao, 2007, 2011; Mason, 2000), from a monolingual angle (see Marttila, 2011, for an examination of textual strategies in English 17th-century remedy books that address a lay audience).

As the study of interaction in written texts came later than that of spoken interaction, it builds on the models used for the latter. It should not be ignored that spoken interaction is also constructed on the basis of texts, although the oral nature thereof brings to the fore considerations (paralinguistic features and non-verbal expressions, such as gestures) that do not apply to written texts to the same extent.<sup>2</sup> For this reason, it has been traditionally assumed that spoken interaction is a more complex phenomenon, as it tends to entail the presence of text producers and text receivers in the same place and enables immediate exchanges between them. However, gestures and body language can be irrelevant in spoken monolingual communication (e.g., a radio listener will not see the text producer) and also in interpreter-mediated events (e.g., a conference delegate will not necessarily see the interpreter, although generally s/he will see the ST producer, and the same situation obtains in telephone liaison interpreting, which is becoming increasingly common: see Kelly, 2008).

The concept of interaction remains fuzzy and, as Liao (2007, pp. 1–2) observes, it has been approached in a fragmented fashion. Nevertheless, there is a common core, the foundations of which are based on long-established concepts in linguistics: the “dialogic” (see Hoey, 2001) nature of written communication, which was introduced by Bakhtin in the 1930s in relation to the genre of the novel (see Bakhtin, 1982) and the interpersonal metafunction of lexicogrammar, first articulated by Halliday in the 1960s, which is concerned with “the speaker’s ‘angle’: his attitudes and judgements, his encoding of the role relationships in the situation, and his motive in saying anything at all” (Halliday & Hasan, 1976, pp. 26–27). Halliday identifies two other broad metafunctions: ideational, which concerns the construction of human experience, and textual, which relates to the internal organization and communicative features of texts. These two metafunctions are also connected to the rapport that is established between

text producers and receivers in that they determine the patterns of interaction.

Thompson and Thetela (1995) distinguish between two kinds of “interaction”: interactive and interactional, which Thompson (2001) describes as “the two sides of the same coin” (p. 61). The former is concerned with textual organization and is writer-centred, in that the writer guides readers on the basis of assumptions as to their knowledge, expectations and needs. The latter is reader-centred, as it requires active collaboration between the reader and the writer in the construction of meaning: “writers may choose at any point to bring their management of the unfolding of the text to the surface and to engage themselves and the readers explicitly in the process” (Thompson, 2001, p. 61). Therefore, interactive features signal the writer’s interventions covertly, whereas interactional features are yardsticks of the writer’s stance.

However, as Hyland (2005, p. 44) explains, interactional aspects can operate interactively and *vice versa*. This is a crucial thesis in the work of Thompson and Thetela (1995), who call for an integrated approach to interactional and interactive features, focusing on “the way in which interactive, reader-friendly choices work together with interactional, reader-managing choices” (p. 125). These choices may be instantiated differently by the ST’s writer and the translator, as they will both engage in audience design (see Bell, 1984) and their respective readerships may have different needs and expectations. Mason (2000) applies Skopos theory to a study of STs and TTs and suggests that significant shifts may occur due to systematic variation in the choices made by the ST producer and the translator as to audience and text design. As Halliday (2010) remarks, “all use of language is the exercise of choice; most of the time the choosing remains ‘unconscious’—that is, below the level of our conscious attention and awareness. It is nonetheless a process of choice” (p. 15). Additionally, it has to be borne in mind that some shifts will be attributable to rules (grammar), and therefore obligatory, whereas others will be determined by culturally-determined norms and conventions.

## 2.2. Indicators of interaction in written texts

Any aspect of text organization, including texture and structure (see Hatim & Mason, 1997, p. 16) can be interpreted as an indicator of interaction, both on the macro and the micro levels. In the study of written texts, paralinguistic features that lie exclusively in the domain of oral communication (e.g., intonation, pitch, volume, pauses) have to be excluded. However, as mentioned above, the analysis of interaction in written texts is indebted to previous models of analysis, and the concepts outlined in the framework of systemic functional grammar (SFG), such as transitivity, cohesion, reference, mood, modality and theme-rheme, have

often been taken as a starting point. Other concepts pertaining to different fields, such as pragmatics, critical discourse analysis or relevance theory can also be useful tools: patterns of politeness, presupposition and implicature help understand text-management choices.

### **2.3. Translation shifts**

The term “shift” was introduced to Translation Studies by Catford (1965), although it is generally acknowledged that Vinay and Darbelnet’s (1958) taxonomy of translation strategies is underpinned by the same notion. Put in simple terms, a translation shift is any deviation that occurs through a language transfer process. Shifts can be categorized according to lexical and grammatical features, but the resulting shifts in ideology, style or pragmatics should not be disregarded. For this reason, hybrid (i.e., not limited to lexicogrammar) approaches are often adopted within Translation Studies, even though they may be unwieldy or unnecessarily complex.

Matthiessen’s (2001) systemic functional approach to the environments of translation includes an attempt at categorizing shifts according to the principles of SFG. Matthiessen (2001) states that “in translation metafunction tends to be preserved. But within a metafunction, there may be considerable variation” (p. 99). He then proceeds to list and illustrate different types of shift that may occur when language transfer is effected: metafunctional, within metafunction, in rank, in system and in structure (Matthiessen, 2001, pp. 101–110). One of his observations is that “within the ideational metafunction, it seems clear that languages vary considerably in how they divide up the labour of ‘construing experience’ between the logical mode and the experiential mode<sup>3</sup>” (Matthiessen, 2001, p. 101). It can be argued that this considerable variation is bound to have an impact in how the interaction between producers and receivers is instantiated in texts, especially when the shifts are not obligatory, or, in other words, linguistically motivated (see Toury, 1995).

### **3. Data and methodology**

Any textual sample can be analysed according to a suitable methodology for the purposes of studying writer-reader interaction; however, a coherent corpus is required in order to identify patterns and trends that will yield significant findings.

### **3.1. The corpus**

The material for this study has been extracted from a bilingual corpus of medical leaflets published on the website of the Royal College of Psychiatrists (UK), RCPUK henceforth, which includes information in 21 languages (including BSL), under the generic heading “Mental Health Information for All”. All the leaflets were produced by the RCPUK’s Public Education Editorial Board. The RCPUK states that their material is intended to provide “Readable, user friendly and accurate information about mental health problems” (see [www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall.aspx](http://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/mentalhealthinfoforall.aspx)). Thus, the text providers overtly position themselves in a relationship of solidarity with their readers and define the function of the material as informative. Expert-lay communication is conducted between health professionals and the public, not necessarily patients or people who are experiencing mental health problems, but also, and sometimes primarily, carers, relatives and other interested parties. The intended addressees are sometimes explicitly referred to as such in the leaflets, and sometimes alluded to in generic terms (e.g., “people”, “parents”, “anyone”) or by means of personal deixis (e.g., “you”, “we”).

The Spanish microsite contains 47 translated leaflets. Seven of them were chosen for close examination (see Table 1) due to their being flagged as “Key Facts” (“Puntos clave” in Spanish). García Izquierdo (2009, p. 22) notes that in the case of specialized genres translators are “outsiders”, as they are not part of the relevant professional community, yet this is not the case in the corpus under study, since the translations have been produced and edited by health professionals.<sup>4</sup> It can be argued that the strategic decisions made in the translation process will reveal how they position themselves in relation to their readers according to the offer of information in the ST, on the one hand, and their own medical background and experience as advisors in their respective cultural settings, on the other.

Table 1: Selected texts

	ST	Word Count	TT	Word Count
1	Antidepressants	2796	Antidepresivos	2871
2	Anxiety	848	Ansiedad	924
3	Cannabis and mental health	775	Cannabis y salud mental	823
4	Depression	1006	La depresión	1182
5	Bipolar disorder	938	Trastorno bipolar	1001
6	Personality disorder	779	Trastorno de la personalidad	811
7	Post-traumatic stress disorder	881	Trastorno por stress postraumático	968
		Total: 8023		Total: 8580

### 3.2. Methodology

Exophoric personal reference was chosen as the topic of investigation. Halliday and Hasan (1976) observe that personal deixis serves the purpose of defining the roles of participants in a communicative event and, given that the object of the present study is the dialogue that is established between the mental health experts and their readers, the analysis was restricted to first and second-person reference. Because of the relatively small size of the corpus, which is intended to enable detailed qualitative analysis, the possibility of using an alignment software program for the quantitative analysis was disregarded. Following a close reading of all the STs, each of them was scrutinized and all first and second-person references were marked up, counted and arranged in a table. They were then matched against the relevant TT segments, which were also marked up and recorded in another table according to the manner in which they had been rendered.

Second-person plural reference was excluded, since no occurrences were identified in the TTs. Both singular and plural forms were included for first-person reference, as some of the headings in the STs are phrased as

questions posed by the addressee, which enhances the dialogical nature of the communication. Possessive pronouns were altogether excluded, as no occurrences were identified in the material under examination. Possessive adjectives in the first-person singular form were also excluded, as they were absent from the STs. Table 2 shows the personal references identified in the STs and their counterparts in Spanish.

Table 2: Forms of personal reference included in the study

		English	Spanish
1 <sup>st</sup> person (singular)	Subject	I	Yo
	Object	Me	Me Preposition + <i>mí</i>
	Reflexive pronoun	Myself	<i>Yo</i> / preposition + <i>mí</i>
1 <sup>st</sup> person (plural)	Subject	We	Nosotros
	Object	Us	Nos Preposition + <i>Nosotros/as</i>
	Reflexive pronoun	Ourselves	Nos
	Possessive adjective	Our	Nuestro/a (sg) / nuestros/as (pl)
2 <sup>nd</sup> person (singular)	Subject pronoun	You	Formal: <i>Usted</i> Informal: <i>Tú</i>
	Object pronoun	You	Formal: <i>Lo / le</i> Informal: <i>Te</i> Formal: Preposition + <i>Usted /</i> <i>Consigno</i> Informal: Preposition+ [ <i>Ti / Tú</i> ] / <i>Contigo</i>
	Reflexive pronoun	Yourself	Formal: <i>Se</i> Informal: <i>Te</i>
	Possessive adjective	Your	Formal: <i>Su</i> Informal: <i>Tu</i>

#### 4. Data Analysis

First, an overview of the overall quantitative results of the analysis will be presented. An account of the quantitative results for each identified type of first and second-person reference across the whole corpus<sup>5</sup> will be then detailed, along with illustrative qualitative analysis (presented as matching



ST and TT segments and a back translation, BT, of the latter). This will be followed by a discussion of the findings in the next section.

Table 3: Occurrences of 1st and 2nd personal reference in the STs

		ST1	ST2	ST3	ST4	ST5	ST6	ST7	Total
1 <sup>st</sup> person reference (pl)	We	4	2	0	0	0	1	0	7 (0.9 ptw)
	Us	4	5	2	0	0	3	1	15 (1.9 ptw)
	Ourselves	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1 (0.1 ptw)
	Our	4	3	1	0	0	1	1	10 (4.9 ptw)
1 <sup>st</sup> person reference (sg)	I	3	0	2	5	0	0	3	13 (1.6 ptw)
	Me	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2 (0.2 ptw)
	Myself	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (0.1 ptw)
2 <sup>nd</sup> person reference	<i>You</i> (subj.)	57	22	9	19	25	37	16	185 (23 ptw)
	<i>You</i> (obj.)	14	6	6	4	4	6	9	49 (6.1 ptw)
	Yourself (obj.)	5	1	0	0	1	3	3	13 (1.5 ptw)
	Your	33	6	3	7	2	7	7	65 (8.1 ptw)
	Total	124 (44.3 ptw)	45 (53 ptw)	23 (29.6 ptw)	37 (36.8 ptw)	32 (34.1 ptw)	59 (75.8 ptw)	41 (46.5 ptw)	

The figures in the rightmost column of Table 3 indicate the total number of occurrences of each reference in the corpus and their distribution per thousand words (“ptw”) rounded to the first decimal point. The figures on the bottom row indicate the total number of occurrences of references in each ST and their distribution per thousand words. Second-person reference, *you* (subject) in particular, is the most prominent deictic feature in the STs, which indicates that the writers tried to address their readers directly. It is also interesting to note that, while all but three of the first person subject, object and reflexive references are inclusive (i.e. they do not refer to the RCPUK, but rather make the producer or the addressee part of a community), less than 50% (4 out of 10, one in each of ST1, ST2, ST6 and ST7) of the occurrences of “our” are inclusive, the remaining six referring to the material that the RCPUK distributes (“our leaflet”). Personal reference is preferred for the description of conditions and feelings, whereas distal indicators are reserved for the description of treatments and medication. All this emphasizes the dialogic nature of the communication that the ST producers have designed.

Table 4: Occurrences of 1st and 2nd personal reference in the TTs

		TT1	TT2	TT3	TT4	TT5	TT6	TT7	Total
1 <sup>st</sup> person reference (pl)	Subj.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0 ptw)
	Obj.	0	4	1	0	0	2	1	8 (0.9 ptw)
	Reflexive	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0 ptw)
	Possessive	3	2	1	0	0	1	1	8 (0.9 ptw)
1 <sup>st</sup> person reference (sg)	Subj.	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0 ptw)
	Obj.	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2 (0.2 ptw)
	Reflexive	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1 (0.1 ptw)
2 <sup>nd</sup> person reference	Subj. formal	6	2	1	0	0	0	1	10 (1.2 ptw)
	Subj. informal	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0 (0 ptw)
	Obj. formal	4	1	1	0	0	0	3	9 (1 ptw)
	Obj. formal reflexive	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2 (0.2 ptw)
	Obj. informal	0	0	0	4	2	0	0	6 (0.7 ptw)
	Obj. informal reflexive	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1 (0.1 ptw)
	Possessive	9	2	2	6	1	0	6	26 (3 ptw)
	Total	22 (7.7 ptw)	11 (12 ptw)	6 (7.3 ptw)	12 (10.1 ptw)	4 (4 ptw)	4 (5 ptw)	14 (14.5 ptw)	

A comparison reveals that the indicators of interaction in the categories, as set out in Table 4 above, are much less frequent than they are in the STs. This could be partially explained by the fact that the use of a subject pronoun is not compulsory in Spanish (it is normally included only when disambiguation or emphasis is required). For the purposes of this study, omission is understood as the removal of the pronoun when the verb ending signals the personal reference that is present in the ST. Similarly, the convention in Spanish is to use articles, instead of possessive adjectives, for parts of the body and, in most cases, personal belongings. However, the range of translation strategies that is detailed below, often in avoidance of personal reference, suggests that the TT producers opted for distancing, non-inclusive solutions when personal references were relayed. The overall difference in interaction patterns is confirmed by these findings, which are detailed below. The figure between brackets after “ST” indicates the number of occurrences.

Table 5: Translation strategies for You (subject)

You (subject)						
	Formal pronoun	Informal pronoun	Uno/a	3rd person reference	Impersonal	Omission
ST1 (57) – TT1	6	0	15 (m)	0	27	9
ST2 (22) – TT2	2	0	3 (m/f)	0	8	9
ST3 (9) – TT3	1	0	2 (m)	1	1	4
ST4 (19) – TT4	0	0	0	0	0	19
ST5 (25) – TT5	0	0	0	0	5	20
ST6 (37) – TT6	0	0	4 (m)	0	3	30
ST7 (16) – TT7	1	0	2 (m)	3	5	5

The figures contained in Table 5 indicate a clear trend towards omission, in accordance with the target language (TL) conventions. In TT6, over 80% of the references are omitted, but, in a reversal of the preference for formal reference (which may be considered as distancing in itself), all the verb endings agree with an omitted informal pronoun. Yet there is also an overall significant distancing move towards impersonal forms and third-

person reference which is the result of optional shifts. The equivalent of the impersonal third-person pronoun “one”, which is absent from the STs, is often used in the masculine form, with the exception of ST2, in which the gender inclusive “uno/a” is used three times. The gender bias, which could be attributed to a grammatical convention (masculine forms include the feminine in Spanish) and would appear to be indicative of a desire to be systematically “neutral”, is especially remarkable when addressing pregnant or lactating woman:

(ST1) you would have to consider  
 (TT1) uno tendría que considerar  
 (BT) one [m] would have to consider

(ST1) you will need to think about  
 (TT1) uno debería tener en cuenta  
 (BT) one [m] should bear in mind

However, in most cases, the use of *uno*, allowing for its grammatical gender inclusiveness, signifies a departure from the STs in that the addressee becomes impersonal:

(ST6) You don't learn from experience  
 (TT6) Uno no aprende de las experiencias  
 (BT) One does not learn from experiences

(ST7) you can feel grief-stricken, depressed, anxious, guilty and angry  
 (TT7) uno puede sentirse desolado, deprimido, ansioso, culpable y enfadado  
 (BT) one can feel grief-stricken, depressed, anxious, guilty and cross

This trend towards depersonalizing the addressee is pervasive and it is manifested by the use of verbs, nouns, pronouns and adjectives that place the emphasis on external circumstances or processes, with the resulting shifts in transitivity and agency:

(ST5) If you have had more than one episode of severe depression  
 (TT5) Si se tienen [sic] más de una fase depresiva severa  
 (BT) If more than one severe depressive phase has been had

(ST2) If you are anxious already  
 (TT2) Si una persona ya tiene ansiedad  
 (BT) If a person already has anxiety

(ST1) the effect that being ill can have on your [sic] or your baby

(TT1) las consecuencias de una recaída sobre la madre y el bebé  
 (BT) the consequences of a relapse on the mother and the baby

(ST1) you can usually stop this  
 (TT1) esto se puede atenuar  
 (BT) this can be alleviated

(ST7) the energy you need  
 (TT7) la energía necesaria  
 (BT) the necessary energy

Table 6: Translation strategies for *You* (object)

You (object)					
	Formal pronoun	Informal pronoun	Uno/a	Impersonal	Omission
ST1 (14) – TT1	4	0	0	2	8
ST2 (6) – TT2	1	0	1 (m)	1	3
ST3 (6) – TT3	1	0	2 (m)	1	2
ST4 (4) – TT4	0	4	0	0	0
ST5 (4) – TT5	0	2	0	1	1
ST6 (6) – TT6	2 (3rd person pl)		0	2	2
ST7 (10) – TT7	3	0	0	6	0
	1 (3rd person sg)				

As can be seen in Table 6, pronouns are more frequent than in the case of *you* as a subject, because they are not optional unless a paraphrase is used. Again, the preference seems to be for omission (an optional shift) and the use of impersonal or third-person references. However, the informal object pronoun is explicitly used in ST4 and ST5, which increases proximity (in that it is familiar), but may alienate Spanish speakers who are not European, as it is not common in their linguistic repertoire. The implication of these strategies is that the TT producers distance themselves more from their addressees than the ST producers do.

(ST1) helps you look at the way  
 (TT1) ayuda al individuo a observar la manera  
 (BT) helps the individual observe the manner

(ST2) Sometimes it is obvious what is making you anxious  
 (TT2) A veces es obvio lo que produce la ansiedad  
 (BT) Sometimes it is obvious what produces anxiety

(ST6) Other people see you as eccentric  
 (TT6) Son percibidos como excéntricos  
 (BT) They are perceived as eccentric

(ST7) Give them time to tell you about what happened  
 (TT7) Deles [sic] tiempo para hablar de lo que pasó  
 (BT) Give them time to talk about what happened

Table 7: Translation strategies for *Yourself* (object)

NB: Only one occurrence of *yourself* as an intensifying subject was identified in the whole corpus (ST5) and has been excluded for the purposes of presenting the results.

Yourself (object)				
	Formal pronoun	Informal pronoun	Impersonal	Omission
ST1 (5) – TT1	1		0	2
	2 (3rd person sg)			
ST2 (1) – TT2	0	0	1	0
ST3 (0) – TT3	0	0	0	0
ST4 (0) – TT4	0	0	0	0
ST5 (1) – TT5	0	1	0	0
ST6 (3) – TT6	2 (3rd person pl)		1	0
ST7 (3) – TT7	2	0	0	1

As Table 7 demonstrates, with the exception of three pronoun occurrences (TT5 and TT7), all the strategies involve distancing. It is noteworthy that when a pronoun was chosen 50% of the occurrences entail a shift to third-person reference:

(ST1) you think about yourself  
 (TT1) se ve a sí mismo  
 (BT) one sees oneself

(ST6) make it hard for you to live with yourself and/or other people  
 (TT6) dificultan el convivir con los demás y con ellos mismos  
 (BT) make it hard to live with others and with themselves

(ST6) You feel bad about yourself  
 (TT6) Se sienten mal sobre sí mismos  
 (BT) They feel bad about themselves

Omission in all the cases above removes the agency that is present in the STs and, therefore, also constitutes a distancing shift:

(ST1) look into these issues for yourself  
 (TT1) explorar estos temas  
 (BT) explore these issues

(ST1) to think of [...] killing yourself  
 (TT1) tener ideas de suicidio  
 (BT) to have thoughts of suicide

(ST7) Remind yourself that  
 (TT7) Recuerde que  
 (BT) Remember that

Table 8: Translation strategies for *Your*

Your					
	Possessive	Definite article	Indefinite article	Impersonal	Omission
ST1 (33) – TT1	9	21	2	0	1
ST2 (6) – TT2	2	2	0	0	2
ST3 (3) – TT3	2	1	0	0	0
ST4 (7) – TT4	6	0		0	1
ST5 (2) – TT5	1	0	0	0	1
ST6 (7) – TT6	4 (3rd person pl)	0	0	3	0
ST7 (7) – TT7	6	1	0	0	0

Table 8 demonstrates that the preference for omission or the use of an article can be attributed to Spanish-language conventions (see comments after Table 4). However, there is no consistency: co-occurrences of “el médico” (“the doctor”) and “su médico” (“your doctor”) are frequent in the TTs. TT1 shows a clear preference for the use of articles even when the possessive would have been an idiomatic choice or could have been compensated by the inclusion of a personal pronoun:

(ST1) depression itself will interfere with your concentration  
 (TT1) la depression interfiere en la concentración  
 (BT) depression interferences with the concentration

(ST1) whether your baby is premature  
 (TT1) el hecho de tener un niño prematuro



(BT) having a premature baby

(ST1) Alcohol on its own can make your depression worse

(TT1) El alcohol de por sí puede empeorar la depresión

(BT) Alcohol on its own can worsen the depression

(ST1) give your tablets to someone else

(TT1) dar los medicamentos a otra persona

(BT) to give the drugs to someone else

It is also significant that in TT6 all second-person possessive forms were replaced by third-person or distal references, for example:

(ST6) find it hard to control your emotions

(TT6) tienen problemas controlando sus emociones

(BT) have problems controlling their emotions

(ST6) parts of your personality

(TT6) partes de esa personalidad

(BT) parts of that personality

(ST6) [you] prefer your own company

(TT6) prefieren estar solos

(BT) [they] prefer to be alone

Table 9: Translation strategies for *We*

We			
	Pronoun	Impersonal	Omission
ST1 (4) – TT1	0	2	2
ST2 (2) – TT2	0	0	2
ST3 (0) – TT3	0	0	0
ST4 (0) – TT4	0	0	0
ST5 (0) – TT5	0	0	0
ST6 (1) – TT6	0	1	0
ST7 (0) – TT7	0	0	0

As mentioned above, all instances of *we* are inclusive (they refer to both producer and addressee or to the medical community as a whole), thus creating a rapport between the mental health experts and their addressees, as the former appear to share or understand the latter's experiences. As shown in Table 9, whereas the omission of the subject pronoun is aligned with the norm in Spanish, it is significant that impersonal constructions are

used in two of the target texts, as these remove the implicit reference to medical experience (as in the first example below) or the sense of solidarity between the text producer and the readers (second example):

(ST1) We don't know for certain, but we think  
 (TT1) Aunque no se sabe con certeza, se cree que  
 (BT) Although it is not known for certain, it is believed

(ST6) the collection of ways that we think  
 (TT6) el patrón de maneras de pensar  
 (BT) the pattern of ways of thinking

Table 10: Translation strategies for Us

Us			
	Pronoun	Impersonal	Omission
ST1 (0) – TT1	0	0	0
ST2 (5) – TT2	4	1	0
ST3 (2) – TT3	1	0	1
ST4 (0) – TT4	0	0	0
ST5 (0) – TT5	0	0	0
ST6 (3) – TT6	2	1	0
ST7 (1) – TT7	1	0	0

The trend revealed by Table 10 is reversed and most of the pronominal references are kept in the TT, although there are cases when the involvement of the text producer is removed:

(ST2) Some of us seem to be born more anxious than others  
 (TT2) Algunas personas nacen más ansiosas que otras  
 (BT) Some people are born more anxious than others

(ST3) For many of us, cannabis is a way to relax  
 (TT3) Para muchos, el cannabis es una manera de relajarse  
 (BT) For many, cannabis is a way to relax

(ST6) for some of us, this isn't true  
 (TT6) en algunos casos, esto no es verdad  
 (BT) in some cases, this is not true

## 5. Findings and discussion

It is clear that knowledge transfer between medical experts and their respective readers has been maintained through the process of translation. It is also obvious that different patterns of interaction and audience design emerge from STs and TTs respectively, although both sets of texts fall within the area of expert-lay communication. To use Halliday's terminology, the field and mode of communication remain unaltered, but there is a shift in tenor: the subject matter and the channel of communication are the same, but the relationship between the participants, if not their purposes, has changed. Whereas an explicit difference between addressees and other participants (see Bell, 1984) is established in the STs, the difference tends to be blurred in the TTs. The ST producers provide information and advice by establishing a dialogue with their readers: second-person references are used to address people who are experiencing certain symptoms and conditions and those who want to help them, while impersonal and third-person references are used for the description of treatments. The TT producers also offer information and advice, but they generally avoid the same degree of dialogism: shifts towards impersonal and third-person reference are common and, as a result, the identity of their addressees becomes less well-defined. The involvement of the text producers in the dialogue is also reduced through the language transfer.

The shifts in interaction that were identified in the corpus are non-obligatory, i.e. they are not motivated by grammatical rules. In some cases, such as the instances of omission of the subject pronoun, they can be attributed to linguistic conventions. However, the vast majority can be classed as optional and, therefore, determined by personal preference, which was, no doubt, informed by the professional background and experience of the translators. Thus, it can be argued that the significant degree of variation in the instantiation of interaction patterns is not due to grammatical or stylistic differences between the two languages represented in the corpus (for instance, there were no noteworthy deviations between the use of the logical and experiential modes).

No significant differences in translational patterns between the TTs were identified. They all stay very close to the respective ST in terms of syntax, although the lexis is occasionally more specialized (e.g., "psicoterapia" for "talking therapy"). The use of contractions (e.g., "doesn't") in the STs is not reflected in any informal features in the TTs (e.g., formal pronouns are preferred).

It has been argued here that the distance between text producers and receivers is greater in the TTs, yet the shifts that cause this should not be perceived as translation errors. Rather, they are manifestations of strategic behaviour on the part of the translators, who are not just guided by TL grammatical rules and conventions, but also by their own professional experience and the specific communicational norms that they apply in their

cultural context. Additionally, as mentioned in 2.2., pragmatic considerations cannot be disregarded: the introduction of face-saving devices so as not to confront readers directly with severe consequences and negative personality traits arising from their mental health condition (e.g., in TT1 and TT6) or so as to exclude medical experts from socially discouraged behaviour (e.g., in TT3) can be considered strategic behaviour too.

## **6. Conclusions**

This paper has provided an overview of shifts in interaction in the context of knowledge transfer processes initiated by mental health professionals. Given that the corpus examined here is available online, it is potentially accessible by anybody with an internet connection. That said, it appears that the STs were designed to address patients and their carers directly, whereas TTs are often presented as an offer of information which would be relevant to any interested party. It is acknowledged that the limited size of the corpus does not allow for generalizations and a larger-scale study, for which the application of relevant software would be required, is desirable. However, salient trends in interaction patterns have been identified and can be used as hypotheses to be tested by means of further investigation.

It seems that Thompson and Thetela's (1995, p. 125) call for an approach that integrates interactive and interactional features is pertinent: ST and TT producers alike engage overtly with their readers and, at the same time, "manage" them covertly by choosing textual features according to their perceived needs. This contributes to explaining the shifts in interaction, as the text producers design their respective audiences on the basis of both linguistic and cultural expectations, which are necessarily different.

The comparison of occurrences of first and second-person references proved a good indicator of shifts in interaction, but they cannot be taken in isolation, as they trigger other features (e.g., transitivity, lexicalization, agreement) that contribute to creating overall textual patterns. Halliday and Hasan's (1976) taxonomy of cohesion provides a sound toolkit for in-depth analysis of whole texts, which is beyond the scope of this study but worthy of future exploration. Nonetheless, theoretical concepts beyond SFG, such as politeness strategies (a marker of distance between text producer and receiver in themselves) and implicature (assumed knowledge is a key factor in audience design), should be factored into a holistic approach to translational shifts in interaction, as should paratextual elements (e.g., layout, illustrations).

A contrastive approach to TTs produced by professional translators, or "outsiders" (García Izquierdo, 2009, p. 22), and by health-science experts would also yield interesting results as to how interaction is

constructed and managed by each group. It can be argued that the mental health experts who produced the STs studied here took the role of primary communicators by dint of their background and specialized knowledge, whereas it is likely that professional translators would assume an intermediary role in the knowledge mediation.

An analysis of corpora that address different groups of readers would also be needed in order for any far-reaching trends in terms of interaction to be made (for instance, the RCPUK has published extensive multilingual documentation on mental health problems in young people, which primarily addresses parents and teachers). Even when trends can be identified, these may differ substantially from corpus to corpus and therefore render diverging results as to how interaction is textually instantiated.

Reception and perception studies could be undertaken to test the findings that emerge from textual analyses. For instance, focus groups (see García Izquierdo, 2009) could be set up or questionnaires distributed among interested parties, ethical issues having been taken into consideration. This can, however, prove more problematic in the mental health context than in other fields, given the sensitivity of the subject matter of the leaflets and the characteristics of the constituencies they address.

To conclude, it is crucial to emphasize that the present study was not intended as a “spot-the-error” exercise; rather, it pursued the description and analysis of shifts that occurred in the translation process due to strategic behaviour. It has been argued here that separating the linguistic make-up of texts from cultural considerations is injudicious and that the design of an analytical tool for systematically exploring shifts in writer-reader interaction in translated medical texts is desirable. This study seeks to make a contribution to this relatively understudied yet socially important field.

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<sup>1</sup> *Géneros Textuales para la Traducción* (Textual Genres for Translation). See <http://www.gentt.uji.es/>.

<sup>2</sup> Some paralinguistic features, such as voice inflection or volume, can be replicated in writing by using different font sizes, capital letters, italics, bold characters, etc. The potential use of emoticons will be disregarded here, as it is not a characteristic of expert-lay communication.

<sup>3</sup> In the logical mode, world experience is construed as a concatenation of phenomena which is ruled by logico-semantic relationships. In the experiential mode, it is construed as clusters of phenomena, whose components are interrelated and have different roles.

<sup>4</sup> ST1 and ST2 (neither of which were revised, according to the information on the website) were translated by the same mental health expert, who also acted as the reviser of TT7. ST3, ST5 and ST6 were translated by another health professional. ST4 and ST7 were translated by two other doctors and the producer of the latter acted as the reviser of TT5.

<sup>5</sup> The number of occurrences of *our*, *me* and *myself* is very low and no significant shifts in interaction were observed, as a result of which they will not be included in the detailed analysis.