

Intralingual Translation in *Tu rostro mañana*, by Javier Marías

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This article explores how *Tu rostro mañana* by Javier Marías portrays the intricacy of communication. Although an interesting area, it will not focus on the many examples of interlingual translation that take place throughout the text, but instead the less obvious and subtler cases in which the protagonist of the novel, Jacques Deza, provides readers with cases of intralingual translation. In Marías's novel the source text from which the intralingual translation stems is often presented as an unstable domain in the narrative. As Jakobson observed, the process of intralingual translation, much as its interlingual counterpart, should also be taken as a 'creative transposition' as it is directly linked to subjectivity. This suggests that, if both the source text and its translation appear obscure and subjective, the certainty of the message that results from this process is rendered questionable. As the following article seeks to show, this ambiguity is present in the communication process, whether the linguistic exchange takes place between two languages or within the confines of one. Thus, the relentless personal interpretation of messages in the novel brings into question the veracity of the story told by the narrator, turning the narrative plot into a domain where ambiguity and haziness emerge as all-pervasive.

Interpretations of lives and linguistic messages fill the many pages of *Turostromañana* and even though they may be nothing more than Deza's point of view, this personal and inquisitive narrator encourages readers to mirror his own attitude and, using Tupra's words, ask themselves 'qué más, qué más'.

Intralingual translation and its subjectivity

The term intralingual translation was coined by Roman Jakobson in 1959, distinguishing between interlingual (between languages), intralingual (within a language) and intersemiotic translation (in which written text is translated into different artistic forms, such as music or cinema). The notion of intralingual translation refers to the process of interpreting information within the confines of a single language, exploring the nature and value of paraphrasing and rewording (Venuti 2004, 138-43).¹

George Steiner argues that translation is a process that takes place every time a person receives a message from another human being, even when only one

language is involved in the process (1998, 48). In this sense, translation is understood as an interpretation of information. The action corresponds to the fourth definition of “interpretar” of the *Diccionario de la Real Academia*: “Concebir, ordenar o expresar de un modo personal la realidad”, and English dictionaries include equivalent definitions. Comparing intralingual and interlingual translation, Steiner states that the former also requires an “interpretative decipherment, an encoding-decoding function or synapse”, suggesting that it is not an inferior form of translation relative to its bilingual equivalent and that in both processes there is much subjectivity (1998, 49).²

This article will explore the nature and effects of intralingual translation in Javier Marías’s *Turostromañana* (2002-2007). At times, the protagonist’s translation of reality into words, a kind of intersemiotic translation, will also be acknowledged in the analysis of the novel because, as Ilse Logie asserts, in Marías’s characters: “vivirequivala a interpretar” (2001, 74). The main focus of the article is to assess the ways in which messages are interpreted or by the narrator, as well as how this interpretation constitutes an important tool in the creation of an all-pervasive uncertainty within the plot.

As duly noted by Eduardo Mendoza, uncertainty is one of the most relevant traits of Marías’s novels:

Las novelas de Javier Marías, como sus personajes, tienen varios rostros y admiten varias lecturas, en todos los sentidos del término. ¿Qué ha sucedido exactamente? ¿Qué hay de verdad en lo que los personajes han acabado revelando? ¿Qué saben cuando dicen saber y qué ignoran cuando pretenden no saber? (2011, 4)

Rostro is a fine example of how Marías succeeds in creating a halo of ambiguity in his storylines. This uncertainty in the plot stems from the author’s stated belief in a permanently partial experience of reality in life:

Lo que uno ve y vive es por definición fragmentario y sesgado [...] Asistimos a los sucesos desde nuestra subjetividad irremediable y desde un solo punto de vista, y hasta cierto punto lo vemos todo como si, ante una escultura, solo fuéramos capaces de contemplar su parte frontal, o bien la parte posterior, o uno de sus perfiles, pero estuviéramos incapacitados para dar la vuelta en torno a ella y admirarla desde todos los ángulos, como fue concebida y ejecutada (2009, 22).

The same subjectivity with which the author believes reality is experienced by human beings is transferred to the main character of *Rostro*, Jacques Deza, who also experiences both his own reality and conversations subjectively, making use of intersemiotic and intralingual translations respectively.

Firstly, the intersemiotic translation that Deza embodies entails a subjectivity that could be placed alongside the visual and plastic arts, which have long acknowledged that the representation of reality is utterly dependent on the eye of the artist: reality acts as a message that is filtered by the artist subjectively in a not too dissimilar way to that whereby reality is interpreted by a speaker. The movement of impressionism constitutes one of the many examples of subjective representation. As its name suggests, impressionism is defined by the *OED* as the “artistic style that seeks to capture a feeling or experience, rather than to achieve accurate depiction”. Elisabeth Prettejohn, for example describes Caspar Von Friedrich’s impressionist style and his use of a *Rückenfigur*, a person seen from behind contemplating the view, as a scene understood, perceived and idealised by a human (2005, 54-56).

The idea of a scene that appears as perceived by a human suggests a profound degree of subjectivity in the discernment of the view, whose “reality” appears secondary to the way it is perceived by the *Rückenfigur*, suggesting at the same time the primacy of the individual perception of the spectator. It is almost as if there were a narrator whose impression of reality is being presented as the only one. The example of the *Rückenfigur* is especially suggestive because it evokes two different subjectivities: that of the painter, who interprets reality subjectively as any artist does; and that of the figure depicted, whose point of view of the image we are given, with the implications that this has for the perception of the human viewer looking at the picture. This idea visually prefigures Marías’s presentation of the partial experiencing of reality, which is always transmitted to the reader through the subjectivity of one narrator, Deza in the case of *Rostro*.

The belief that the transformation of reality into language, inaccurate, partial and based on the viewer’s impressions, could be considered a first stage of translation is clearly stated by Marías:

Para lo que nos sirve en el fondo cada vocablo es para referirnos a las cosas sin necesidad de tener las cosas delante, lo cual equivale a admitir que el lenguaje es ya en sí mismo una traducción [...] La lengua traduce la realidad o lo existente – lo está traduciendo al denominarlo– (2009, 29).

It is the individual perception of reality by human beings, but also and more specifically that of artists. Much as the *Rückenfigur* was introduced as a narrator with whose point of view the audience is invited to identify, in Marías’s fiction, the readership is presented with a first-person protagonist/narrator who interprets the events around him subjectively. This fiction, like the *Rückenfigur*, has two levels of subjective perception of reality, that of the author, which is partial by definition,

and that of the narrator, whose biased version, as we shall see, emerges as one of the main traits of Marías's fiction.

Secondly, regarding his view of intralingual translation, Marías clearly shares Steiner's view on the matter as he asserts that "todas las conversaciones en sí una traducción" (Braudeau 2009, 27). Some of his novelistic work proves this, as he constantly inserts intertexts from different authors to then filter and interpret them subjectively; a good example is the phrase "Negra espalda del tiempo," which not only has been translated into Spanish subjectively but has also been interpreted and given a particular significance by the author, which does not correspond to its "original" meaning.³ The personal interpretation of quotations, which has been referred to by Antonio Iriarte as "variaciones personales sobre el sentido de la cita original" (2009, 307), is an example of intralingual translation; Marías interprets the quotations and uses them for his own purposes, highlighting the instability of a source text.

Furthermore, Marías's narrators' obsession with thinking, language and intralingual translation is rendered plausible by his frequent choice of jobs for them that are closely related to language: professors, translators, ghost-writers and interpreters, for example. Irene Zoe Alameda relates this to their storytelling abilities: "No en vano, los narradores de las obras de Marías tienen por profesión contar (o recontar)" (2005, 74). Even though the number and intensity of their reflections may appear implausible, as a professional arguably would not normally question language related issues as obsessively as his characters do, Marías also bestows upon his characters an extremely meditative and reflective disposition, something he terms their "pensamiento literario", a concept he uses to refer to the very personal interpretation of messages glossed by him as the "series of considerations and meditations" (Ingendaay 2000, 84) that take place on the part of the narrator when the action stops to give way to reflection. This explains why, in the words of David K. Herzberger "in nearly all of his writing, Marías seeks to incorporate tellers and listeners into the fabric of his narrative" (2005, 206). The incorporation of these tellers and listeners provides Marías with a source from which to reflect and explore instances of intralingual translation and its subjectivity.

Amongst other types of first-person narrators, Franz K. Stanzel distinguishes between a "peripheral" and a "quasi-autobiographical narrator". He states that the peripheral narrator: "is located at the periphery of the narrated events and his role is that of an observer, witness, biographer, chronicler, but not that of the hero who stands in the centre of the events". Subsequently, he moves on to describe the quasi-autobiographical first-person narrative as one "in which the narrator and the

hero of the story are identical” (1986, 201). In Marías’s fiction, the narrator is undoubtedly the centre of the narrative, however, his observant, witness-like attitude are traits typical of a peripheral narrator. Therefore, although he is the main character and the person who experiences most actions, he also appears as though he were stepping back from the action to watch over it. The outcome is a first-person narrator who, although a witness of events, is nevertheless the main centre of the action and therefore is often found witnessing his own life. Together with the unstable source material, the subjective digressions and interpreting of Marías’s first-person narrations, who acts as witnesses of their own lives, lead to a narrative pregnant with judgements, opinions and beliefs, giving the impression that, far from an “objective” portrait of affairs, the narration consists of a series of events filtered by each narrator’s intralingual translation.

Andrés-Suárez confirms this idea when she asserts that in Marías “la realidad es fruto de la experiencia subjetiva del que la vive. Todo es provisional y hay tantas versiones como seres humanos” (2005, 204). While this is true of all first-person narrators to some extent, Marías’s extremely reflective ones provide readers with an especially self-conscious type of subjectivity. Juan Antonio Masoliver Ródenas notes that Marías’s characters have in common “la obsesiva actividad del pensamiento” (1994, 62) while Andrés-Suárez goes on to state that the fact that there is a first-person narrator who thinks and reflects so deeply on reality leads to subjective narrations. The reader, she observes, feels wary of the truth behind the story since it appears to be clearly packed with one individual’s own feelings, thoughts and fears, instead of being any attempt—however flawed—at an objective version of the truth (Andrés-Suárez 2005, 209).

Navajas develops the implications of this:

Los diversos narradores de Marías ven y oyen más allá de lo habitual y convierten esta capacidad de observación en un instrumento no solo de conocimiento sino también de poder sobre las figuras y acontecimientos (2001, 41).

The specification of “ven y oyen” in this statement draws attention to the fact that in Marías’s novels both types of translation take place, an intersemiotic translation of reality into language as well as an intralingual one. Whether it is the reality around the narrators or the conversations they hear, both source texts are inherently unstable. Instead, the individual’s interpretation emerges as the only solid ground. Alameda sums this up: “el narrador—la voz del relato—es tanto o más importante que aquello que se cuenta” (2005, 73). This lack of objectivity leads

to the aura of uncertainty that surrounds Marías's plots, which will now be analysed in the context of *Rostro*.

Intralingual and intersemiotic translation: interpreting information in *Tu rostro mañana*

The well-known warning which opens *Rostro*, “No debería uno contar nunca nada” (*FL*, 13, 15, 25)⁴ shows that “como prácticamente todos los inicios de sus novelas, el apercebimiento nos remite sin rodeos a uno de los temas principales de la obra, si no su tema fundamental: los efectos del contar” (Grohmann 2009, 161). The reflections and opinions about the nature and effects of storytelling in the text will be analysed in the light of intralingual translation. The concept is explored mainly through Deza's job, which entails the interpretation of suspects' speeches and their behaviour.

The interpretations about suspects advanced by Deza as well as his reflections upon them are amongst the most remarkable traits of the novel. These are based on his partial experiencing of reality and on the subjective nature of language respectively. He transforms reality or verbal discourses into his subjective version of them; whether he translates someone's behaviour (intersemiotic interpretation) or their words (intralingual), his messages appear to be surrounded by uncertainty. As with Marías, Deza's key approach to language stems from the idea of its inadequacy to translate reality, which poses obvious problems considering his job: “casi todas nuestras frases son metáforas en sí mismas, el lenguaje es aproximación, tentativa, rodeo” (*BS*, 294). This suggests there is inaccuracy and ambiguity in the intersemiotic translation of reality into language. And how does intralingual translation function and affect the plot?

Given Marías's view about language, it is not surprising that the text, and Deza in particular, approach it from two different perspectives; on the one hand, as an inadequate means of translation (*BS*, 294), but on the other hand as a central element of one's life. Indeed, Deza states that what he hears affects him as much as what he lives (*BS*, 303).⁵ Through intralingual translation, the presence of language, however inaccurate in its representation of the textual reality, has a central role in the plot and the creation of uncertainty.

Deza's job

One of the main channels through which the concept of intralingual translation, as well as its subjectivity and potential dangers is explored, is via Deza's job. In his

second stay in England, he starts to work for a mysterious organization, which he believes to be linked to the British Secret Services. Initially, his work consists of translating Spanish discourses of suspects into English. However, it is not long before these discourses stop coming from Spanish speakers and start taking place in English, shifting the focus from an interlingual to an intralingual interpretation. In fact, Deza is not merely interpreting verbal messages from suspects but also translating verbally what he perceives from their linguistic and non-linguistic behaviour: their tone of voice, inflections or nuances as well as other signals such as gesture and clothing. Therefore, he is interpreting intralingually, but he is also translating reality into language. In both cases, uncertainty and subjectivity prevail, but intralingual translation poses a second layer of complexity since the verbal messages interpreted are a translation of some previous aspect of reality, a process which could stretch ad infinitum. In his own words about his job:

consistía en escuchar y fijarme e interpretar y contar, en descifrar conductas, aptitudes, caracteres y escrúpulos, desapegos y convicciones, el egoísmo, ambiciones, incondicionalidades, flaquezas, fuerzas, veracidades y repugnancias; indecisiones. Interpretaba—en tres palabras—historias, personas, vidas. Historias por suceder, frecuentemente (*FL*, 262-63).

There are a number of uncertainties surrounding the process of interpreting people. Firstly, the source material from which these interpretations stem (suspects' behaviour and/or their verbal discourse) appears as an unstable domain. In the words of Deza: "se trabaja sobre eventualidades y figuraciones e hipótesis, sobre la nada y lo inexistente y sobre lo que no sucede ni tampoco ha sucedido antes" (*FL*, 233). His judgements and interpretations are based on what often is an absence of information (*FL*, 318-19). He has to read "lo incógnito e insondable" (*FL*, 320). Domingo Ródenas de Moya states that through Deza's perceptiveness, "lo incierto [de aquellos a quienes interpreta] deja de serlo en algún grado, aunque esa disminución de la inseguridad encierre el grave riesgo de infundir una seguridad engañosa respecto a la verdad" (2009, 69-70) highlighting with this "seguridad engañosa" the unsteadiness of the sourcetext.

Secondly, his own interpretations, often based upon uncertainties, are subjective by nature because they belong to his perception. This perception acquires a new degree of uncertainty as he states that "poco importa la capacidad de acierto, sobretodo porque en mi actividad éste era rara vez comprobable" (*FL*, 320), hinting at the idea that uncertainty is both unavoidable and without consequences. Tupra's words of encouragement "Qué más, qué más, qué más has visto", while Deza states "aunque no haya ningún más a veces y uno deba forzar sus visiones o quizá fraguárselas con su invención y recuerdo" (*BS*, 125), underline the extent to

which his interpretations are shaped by his own creative powers. Tupra's encouragement to always give his opinion outside his comfort zone (BS, 31) leads him to interpret "allí donde uno diría que ya no puede haber nada" (FL, 344; BS, 253): a sentence that becomes crucial to the plot of *Rostro*, since Deza is constantly pushed to use ambiguous messages to produce stories where he often does not see them. The realisation that he is "pushed" to see increasingly more and that he is using his personal judgement for this is obvious as Deza admits: "iba perdiendo más escrúpulos cada día" (FL, 316); he becomes increasingly bold as time progresses (FL, 338), and defines his attitude as "atrevimiento interpretativo" (FL, 463) and his job as "la gran irresponsabilidad" (FL, 271). Deza provides readers with countless examples where he states the daring nature of his interpreting, describing it as: "mi punto de vista al término, casi mi pronóstico en ocasiones, cómo decir, una apuesta" (FL, 263), at times compared to writing fiction "o por lo menos semblanzas" (VSA, 236) or even complete invention, if Tupra so required (VSA, 256).

Furthermore, Deza is interpreting the suspects' future. Of course, this future does not exist at the time of its being predicted, and his job is therefore to interpret what *could* happen; he is "traductor o intérprete de las personas [...] y también de sus deducibles historias, no pasadas sino venideras, las que aún no había no currido" (FL, 32). Aware of the uncertainties that he is working with when attempting to interpret the future, Deza observes that in his job he gets paid to: "contar lo que aún no era ni había sido, lo futuro y probable o tan solo posible—la hipótesis—es decir, por intuir e imaginar e inventar; y por convencer de ello" (FL, 22). Interpreting the future adds a new dimension of ambiguity to his job; as Luis Martín-Estudillo observes, Deza's judgements could be defined as "unos intercambios en los que hay mucho de mayéutica." When this critic refers to Tupra, he states that he is pushing the protagonist to "dilatar al máximo el discurso, [...] prolongar la visión del aprendiz u oráculo" (2009, 119-20). The crucial use of the word "oráculo" hints at Deza's future predictions. The future, however, emerges as unpredictable, as Deza observes: "La verdad es lo que sucede, la verdad es cuando pasa, cómo quieren que se la diga ahora. Antes de suceder no se conoce" (FL, 243), and yet this is precisely the nature of his job. Deza is aware of the story of his father (FL, 163), who, after suffering the betrayal of one of his closest friends, asserts that people's future actions are always unpredictable (FL, 182, 191, 199). The nature of his job constitutes, thus, an impossible task. He has to interpret the future based on a number of uncertainties, and although he seems to agree with the premise of its impossibility, he nevertheless takes the risk and experiences the

bitter consequences of his interpretations, ignoring his own warning about how no one should ever tell anything to anyone, and realising that, although unknown to him in most cases, his verbal interpretations do have consequences.

Thirdly, Deza's task of interpreting truthfully is also proven unrealistic if one takes into account Wheeler's opinion on the lack of objective meaning that facts have unless interpreted:

nada es nunca objetivo y todo puede ser tergiversado y distorsionado [...] los hechos y las actitudes dependen siempre de la intención que se les atribuya y la interpretación que quiera dárseles, y sin esa interpretación no son nada (*FL*, 119).

If the true meaning of facts only depends on their interpretation, such meaning will always be inevitably subjective.

The above sets out some of the most important traits of Deza's interpretations in his job: firstly, their "origin" or source text is ambiguous and unstable; secondly, Deza's interpretations are often untrustworthy, partly due to the fact that they are his own impressions and partly because they refer to the future. Thirdly, and not without controversy, these interpretations are essential in assigning meaning to facts that would otherwise not have any. Hence, his interpretation of the suspects mirrors the interpretation of reality as a simulacrum through language; much as the suspects, reality is only ever experienced partially and is expressed subjectively through the inadequate means of a linguistic system.

Finally, there is great ambiguity surrounding the purpose or destination of these messages. The narrator admits he does not have any information about the purpose his interpretations serve, even questioning whether they have any at all (*FL*, 232, 337-38; *BS*, 293). Through Deza's job, *Rostro* addresses the uncertain afterlife of any message. After explaining how translations are independent from their originals, Walter Benjamin explores the concept of the text's "afterlife" or "survival" as follows:

Just as expressions of life are connected in the most intimate manner with the living being without having any significance for the latter, a translation proceeds from the original. Not indeed so much from its life, as from its 'afterlife' or 'survival' (2004, 76).

This point elucidates the nature of Deza's interpretations, which, although closely linked to him, become an entity outside his control and have an afterlife of their own precisely because, although intralingual, they are nothing but translations. Herzberger's reading of this particular characteristic of Deza's profession is the following:

what we say may be appropriated and folded into another story [...] until our narrative stretches beyond its original context, intentions and meaning to form part of someone else's story [...] This process [...] implies misappropriation and misreading of original desire (2011, 186).

This article proposes that while it is true that messages may indeed be folded into further stories, this does not necessarily imply a case of “misappropriation or misreading” of a message because that would imply a stability of the source text that seems to often be lacking. Instead, it highlights the extent to which a person's reading of any given message is invariably individual, turning the act of communicating into one which carries an extremely high level of subjectivity and which stretches ad infinitum because stories will constantly fold into others. This process will inevitably lead to a number of undetermined consequences regarding Deza's interpretations. Herzberger posits the importance of this issue, alluding to the lack of control that he has over his words:

¿con qué fin se usan los relatos, quiénes los usan y qué restricciones éticas exigen las historias cuando éstas pueden ser empleadas para formar otras historias, y todavía otras, de modo que la intención y el significado se escapan del control de los narradores originales? (2009, 192)

Deza, aware that he remains ignorant of the consequences of his words, muses: “cuántas más de mis interpretaciones o traducciones habrían tenido consecuencias sin yo enterarme” (VSA, 550). Isabel Cuñado notes that: “lo que realmente preocupa al protagonista [de *Rostro*] son las circunstancias y los efectos de su relato” (2009, 235). Not knowing the purpose of his interpretations indeed constitute one of Deza's main concerns.

The uncertain future of the suspects once they have been interpreted is indeed an important contributing factor to the uncertainty surrounding the purpose of Deza's interpretations. Deza, afraid that he is disturbing the universe with his assertions about suspects, discusses with Pérez Nuix what happens with their interpretations as Deza insinuates the danger of ignoring how these are used. Who listens to them? And how do they interpret them? His colleague's clear conscience prompts him to compare their exercise to attributing the consequences of a novel to the author. The novelist, she states, is not responsible for the ideas or temptations that his fictions provoke (BS, 54), just as they are not responsible for the actions that their interpretations trigger. However, Deza fears the consequences of losing control over his interpretations, as Wheeler observes: “nadie puede controlar la utilización que se hace de sus ideas y sus palabras, ni prever enteramente sus consecuencias últimas. En general en la vida” (VSA, 608).

Ultimately, this is one of the main topics of Marías's novels. In the words of Herzberger:

whether rooted in observation or fantasy, whether true or false, stories are enmeshed in the fabric of society along with other stories, which in turn are woven into other stories and still others until they spin beyond our intention and thus beyond our control. In Marías's view this process is at once inevitable and necessary (2005, 213).

Therefore, it would not be too far-fetched to argue that the source texts (the suspects being interrogated), as well as Deza's reading of them and the consequences of these messages, are fundamental in creating the ambiguity surrounding Deza's job, which embodies the idea of language as unavoidably intertwined with reality as well as being forever reinterpreted and outside the realm of the speaker's control.

One of the most interesting paradoxes of the novel is that, however unreliable and dangerous language interpretations are, they happen constantly and have the ability to shape the course of events. This sheds light on the questioning of reality, a fragile domain susceptible to the subjectivity and uncertainty of language interpretation. Herzberger describes Marías's use of language in *Rostró* as a way "to show how storytelling can also be used to organize our actions and perception of the world in the future" (2011, 180). Deza's interpretations of stories ultimately have the power to transform reality drastically. He is aware of this and observes that Dearlove feels, what he calls "la repugnancia narrativa" (*FL*, 352); that is, Dearlove's actions are driven by how these will be related in the future. The danger of this practice is patent in the plot; Dearlove is not the only one who controls his story. In this case, Deza has reasons to suspect that his interpretations of Dearlove provoked the crime of the young boy (*VSA*, 678-80), hence shaping a critical part of Dearlove's life. This case shows how Deza's meddling has drastic consequences. In the words of Herzberger:

cuando una de sus historias produce el acto de Dearlove, de repente Deza comprende que lo real (la vida de Dearlove) y lo narrado (el relato de Deza acerca de Dearlove) comparten el mismo plano en el mundo (2009, 194).

His job illustrates the following paradox: Deza transforms people's lives into stories (however subjectively, perhaps inaccurately and inventively). Interestingly, that same narration affects, modifies or even terminates people's lives. During the course of this process, Deza is also affected by his own interpretations since the decision to leave his job and return to Madrid is based on the consequences of his own words about Dearlove. By then, Deza has understood "the transformative

power of stories” and the way in which they transform the person who tells the story (2011, 193).

Arguably, this transformative power rests upon the idea of intralingual translation. In other words, the power of stories rests on the premise that each receiver will interpret and use the story depending on their own circumstances, desires or whims. This process, due to its never-ending nature, takes place whenever there is a verbal discourse and constitutes a fundamental trait of language.

Although Deza’s job is the most powerful and illustrative example of the nature and dangers of intralingual translation, the text presents other cases which contribute to highlight the risks of telling and the subsequent appropriation of messages on the part of the receivers, such as the Miranda warning, the campaign against careless talk and the cases of eavesdropping.

Miranda Warning

The fascination with the consequences of speaking and interpreting is patent in the Miranda warning, upon which the protagonist reflects in the novel as another example of the dangerous effects of this never-ending process.

The Miranda warning is a legal warning given by the police in the United States aimed at criminal suspects in police custody to prevent them from incriminating themselves. They are given the right to remain silent because anything that they say may be used against them. Deza reflects upon this concept at large and defines it as “derecho [...] a no perjudicarse verbalmente con su relato o sus respuestas o con tradiciones o balbuceos. A no dañarse narrativamente” (*FL*, 18). Echoing the ability of language to have an impact on reality, Herzberger observes that language “often determines the outcome of our lives as if it were reality itself rather than a pale representation of it” (2011, 189). This use of language prompts the idea of J. L. Austin’s performatives, whose main trait is their immediate effect on reality.⁶ In this case, the interpretation of the message is inevitable in the sense that the prisoner’s words instantly belong to the person imprisoning him, to the potential detriment of the former.

“Se informa al reo de que las reglas van a ser sucias a partir de ahora” (*FL*, 17), observes Deza. His fascination is precisely that the warning, being a verbal formula, uses the same means whereby the suspect may incriminate him/herself, that is, language. Deza remembers a time when he was told the Miranda warning inaccurately, and therefore invalidly (*FL*, 18). Given that it takes place at the beginning of the first volume of the novel, through this example, the reader is

warned at an early stage about the risks that verbal messages may entail, which is further explored through the protagonist's job and the ambiguity surrounding his interpretations.

Careless talk campaign and eavesdropping

The dangers of speaking and the advisability of remaining silent are further illustrated in the campaign against careless talk. Deza finds out the extent of its historical relevance through Sir Peter Wheeler. The campaign was launched in Britain during the Second World War to urge people not to talk to anyone about anything that could compromise national security. With messages like "careless talk costs lives", "Telling a friend may be telling the enemy" (*FL*, 398-99) or "Be like dad, keep mum" (*FL*, 405), a fear of being heard was imposed. This fear of spies resulted in the inevitable perception of language as a dangerous tool that could be used against speakers at any point. Sir Peter Wheeler describes the nature of this process:

se nos enemistó con lo que más nos define y más nos une: hablar, contar, decirse, comentar, murmurar, y pasarse información, criticar, darse noticias, cotillear, difamar, calumniar y rumorear, referirse sucesos y relatarse ocurrencias, tenerse al tanto y hacerse saber, y por supuesto también bromear y mentir (*FL*, 409).

The idea of careless talk, which represents the dangers of speaking and being heard, is inextricably linked to our third example, the act of eavesdropping, for the latter represents one of the dangers about which the campaign was trying to warn its target audience. Deza eavesdrops on De La Garza and Professor Rico (*VSA*, 283) and on Luisa in the lounge (*VSA*, 540-42). On both occasions, the characters he spies on would have either used a different tone (as is the case with De La Garza) or omitted information (in the case of Luisa) had they known that Deza was listening.

Therefore, the danger of language is intimately linked to the idea of intralingual translation precisely because this danger stems from the interpretation of the message by its receiver. It is the appropriation of messages which, as previous examples show, leads to fatal consequences. This appropriation is not so much a "misreading" but, arguably, the main trait of language: stories are reinterpreted and folded into other stories. In other words, one message has multiple intralingual translations, turning the act of communication into a subjective and uncertain process. These interpretations are both the only way for the message to exist and the reason why they can never be trustworthy.

Conclusion of intralingual and intersemiotic translation on *Turostromañana*

In conclusion, how does intralingual translation contribute towards the creation of uncertainty in the novel? Deza, in his role as interpreter of lives, illustrates, firstly, the instability of the source text through the suspects' messages. Secondly, the subjective nature of interpretations becomes obvious through his own impressions of their stories, and finally, ignoring the text's afterlife highlights the extent to which a text no longer belongs to the speaker once it is uttered. Stories fold into stories and are forever interpreted subjectively by individuals. In this inevitable process, the objective truth of those messages recedes ever further and readers are left only with their interpretation. Furthermore, the Miranda warning provides Deza with further examples of the dangers of language upon which to reflect, whereas the cases of eavesdropping illustrate how the danger is patent in everyday life situations.

Interestingly, Karen-Margrethe Simonsen observes that in a previous novel by Marías, *Corazón tan blanco*, "events, dialogues and even 'things' do not present themselves as independently meaningful entities, but are continuously interwoven in Juan's general interpretation and direction of discourse" (1999, 199). This statement could be applied to Deza and is key to understanding the importance of intersemiotic translation and its subjectivity because in *Rostro*, as well as learning events through language, there are also important events and "things" being intertwined with Deza's interpretations, thus hinting at his subjective verbal interpretation of reality and the lack of clarity that it leads to. Therefore, it would not be too far-fetched to argue that one of the main traits of *Rostro* is the obsessive presentation of events through an extremely personal intersemiotic translation.

Moreover, there is the question of memory, about which Simonsen adds: "Does Juan remember things exactly as they happened? Memory is never innocent; it also distorts and lies," observing that uncertainty is the result of first-person narration when memory is involved (1999, 199), which is a premise that could be applied to *Rostro* too. Remembering one of the suspects' manner of speech, Deza recognizes the instability of the source text: "Quizá no hablaba así, pero asíes como lo recuerdo" (*FL*, 240-41). However, first-person narrators who tell a story about the past are extremely common in contemporary fiction. So what makes Marías's narrator different? Why is he less trustworthy in his telling of stories? As I have tried to demonstrate, Deza's untrustworthiness stems from the fact that, being particularly aware of the effects of telling, he makes conscious use of intralingual translation; not only interpreting events and language subjectively (as other first-

person narrators often do) but also drawing the reader's attention to just how untrustworthy source texts and interpretations may be.

Herzberger discusses the importance of individual readers' interpretations of Marías's narrative work as he states:

la lectura tiene menos que ver con lo que es verdad en relación con el mundo, o con lo que es importante respecto al texto en sí, que con lo que es pertinente para el lector individual y para su mundo de experiencias (2001, 36).

Based on this statement, the idea of a "correct" narrative truth recedes ever further. The emphasis on the reader's interpretation of the story is based on the narrator's presentation of his own account of events. In other words, his individual version of the story encourages readers to, not only question the truth of the story but, in fact, advance their own subjective readings of the text. In the light of this study, it would not be too far-fetched to argue that the subjectivity of Deza and his use of language turn the narration into an invitation to the reader to own the story and extract his/her own reading as it is presented like a message, which s/he needs to interpret, much as the characters do within the plot. Agustín Casalía notes this characteristic:

el lector de *TRM* pertenece a la obra, al verse impelido expresamente a interpretar. Es que quien escucha se apodera de aquello que se le cuenta. *TRM* le hace así un guiño explícito al lector para que se apropie del relato mediante el diálogo que supone la relación hermenéutica [...] El narrador lee 'lo real', lo interpreta, dando indicios claros al lector para que este se adentre en concreto en la obra, en su capacidad y su posibilidad de adueñarse plenamente de ella, es decir, de fundirla y disolverla en la interpretación (2012, 30).

Whether the narrator is interpreting intralingually or intersemiotically, the scene or image that readers are presented with emerges as uncertain, prioritising the narrator's version over an objective truth, inviting the reader to also interpret the text and extract their own version.

Deza deals with stories constantly cast by others, which amount to permanently ambiguous messages that he is constantly interpreting. Regarding the truth at a textual level, the lack of objectivity which this process leads to mirrors the partial view with which reality is typically experienced. *Rostro* illustrates that there is an inherent subjectivity in the perception of any source text, be it reality, textual reality or a conversation. The ambiguity that pervades *Rostro* ultimately stems from the author applying the same principles to his characters as to those that he observes in real life. The result is an all-pervasive uncertainty in the narrative plot in which the very viewpoint of the narrator emerges as dubious, perhaps inviting readers to question their own perspective on life.

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¹ Unfortunately, due to space limitations, this article will only look at the nature and effects of intralingual translation in the analysed text, however, interlingual translation also plays an extremely important part in the novel.

² Since, according to Jakobson's and Steiner's definitions, the idea of interpreting emerges as the base of intralingual translation, I shall henceforth use the terms "interpreting" and "intralingual translation" interchangeably.

³ The line is a common intertext in his novels and comes from Shakespeare's *The Tempest*. Originally the line was "dark backward and abysm of time".

⁴ The following abbreviations will be employed to quote the primary source in the text: *Fiebre y lanza (FL)*, *Baile y sueño (BS)* and *Veneno y sombra y adiós (VSA)*.

⁵ This same assertion seems to be shared by Deza's father (*BS*, 331).

⁶ In the words of Austin, to utter a performative sentence under the appropriate circumstances "is not to describe my doing of what I should be said in so uttering to be doing or to state that I am doing it: it is to do it." In other words, performative sentences transform reality in a more immediate and objective manner than others; "When I say, before the registrar or altar, [...] "I do", I am not reporting on a marriage: I am indulging in it" (1962, 6).