

Investigating multilingual audio-visual and written news: theoretical and methodological convergence

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Abstract

This paper addresses the theoretical and methodological issues that arise with research into multilingual audio-visual and written news. In particular, the idea of a *convergence* of methods will be expounded in order to describe a suitable theoretical framework for this kind of research.

The three fields of studies that particularly contribute to the analysis of the news in different languages and cultural contexts are those of Critical Discourse Analysis, Corpus Linguistics and Translation Studies. In this respect, the term *convergence* covers a twofold methodological function. Firstly, it establishes a clear intertextual connection with the well-known and namesake phenomenon of *media convergence* which we have been witnessing during the past decade.

Secondly, as a metaphor, it describes how the aforementioned theoretical-methodological inputs converge into an organic framework that allows the researcher to gain multiple perspectives on written and audio-visual news, on their contexts and languages, and on the discourses and narratives they envisage, promote and finally deliver to their audiences.

In this sense the term *convergence* includes the concept of methodological synergy and it expands on it, in that contributions by different research fields all point to and actively bestow on the understanding of multilingual news discourse and of the meaning making activity of translation in this context.

Keywords: Journalism, Discourse Analysis, Translation Studies, Corpus Linguistics, Convergence

1. Introduction

This paper deals with the theoretical and methodological issues arising with research into multilingual news in all of its forms; that is to say, written, as well as audio-visual and multimedia realisations. The main aim here is to demonstrate that, by using a variety of methods, and by taking inspiration from separate yet neighbouring disciplines, one can build a suitable theoretical-methodological framework for the analysis of multilingual journalism in general, and of its translation in particular.

The theoretical and methodological framework described here has been developed during the course of a Ph.D. project which focuses on the analysis of translation in international journalism. As will be made clear throughout the paper, Corpus Linguistics (CL from now on) plays a pivotal role in that two small groups of corpora have been built during this project in order to provide reliable evidence for the textual and contextual analysis of the news discourse. We believe, however, that this kind of multi-theoretical and methodological approach can be applied successfully to other areas of linguistic investigation, such as political, corporate and advertising discourses, for example.

To describe this kind of framework, we adopt the term *convergence* as an operational metaphor that

covers a twofold function. On the one hand, it establishes a clear link to the well-known and namesake phenomenon of *media convergence*, which is an observable phenomenon, which actively shapes mass media all over the world and basically creates a series of network-like relationships not only among mass media, but also among social media, institutions, and audiences (s. Quandt, Singer 2009, Berkovitz 2009).

On the other hand, the term *convergence* describes how all the theoretical and methodological inputs presented in this paper converge, *tout court*, in an organic framework that allows us to have a multiple perspective on multilingual journalistic texts, whether they present their content in a written, audio-visual or multimedia form, on their cultural and linguistic contexts, and on the discourses and narratives they envisage, endorse, and finally transmit to the audience.

In this sense the term *convergence* includes the concept of «methodological synergy» (Baker et al. 2008), but it expands on it, in that the contributions by the different research fields all point to and actively bestow upon the understanding of multilingual news discourse(s) and of the meaning-making activity of translation in this context.

2. (Critical) Discourse Analysis as common denominator

Discourse Analysis (DA from now on) is an extremely interdisciplinary field of study and, as such, it brings together a variety of disciplines from a range of academic fields. Thanks to this disciplinary flexibility, DA is considered to be the common denominator between the inputs of the two other methodological and theoretical approaches considered in this paper: CL and Translation Studies (TS from now on).

As Schrifin et al. (2001, p. 1) point out:

Discourse analysis is a rapidly growing and evolving field. Current research in this field now flows from numerous academic disciplines that are very different from one another. Included, of course, are the disciplines in which models for understanding, and methods for analyzing discourse first developed, such as linguistics, anthropology, and philosophy. But also included are disciplines that have applied – and thus often extended – such models and methods to problems within their own academic domains, such as communication, cognitive psychology, social psychology, and artificial intelligence.

DA offers researchers great flexibility and freedom in analysing discourses they are interested in: they can avail themselves of the tools they deem more appropriate to the task. Of course, the kind of analysis that is carried out mainly depends on the definition of discourse that one has in mind.

In line with the multifaceted nature of DA, the very definition of discourse is varied and strongly influenced by the researcher's academic upbringing. For this reason, Baker (2006, p. 3) describes discourse as being a «problematic term, as it is used in social and linguistic research in a number of interrelated yet different ways». In this paper, following Foucault (1972, p. 49), we define discourse as the «practices that systematically form the object of which they speak».

From this approach on discourse derives the fundamental role of language in constructing discourse(s), as Baker (2006, p. 5) points out:

[O]ne way that discourses are constructed is via language. Language (both as an abstract system [...] and as a context-based system of communication) is not the same as discourse, but we can carry out analysis of language in texts in order to uncover traces of discourses.

Language and discourses are closely intertwined, and both of them are deeply rooted and criss-crossed in society as a whole. In this way, discourses create representations of realities, of self, categorising and interpreting social situations on a daily basis not exclusively through verbal language, but also, and at times more powerfully, through the interplay between the latter, images and other forms of non-verbal language.

Closely connected to DA and extremely relevant to this paper's argument is the methodological framework of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA from now on), which bears peculiar relevance to the analysis of news and political discourses.

[CDA] is a type of discourse analytical research that primarily studies the way social power abuse, dominance, and inequality are enacted, reproduced, and resisted by text and talk in the social and political context. With such dissident research, critical discourse analysts take explicit position, and thus want to understand, expose, and ultimately resist social inequality. (van Dijk 2001, p. 352)

Thus CDA embodies a critical theory of language, and sees the latter as being a form of «social practice» (Fairclough 1989, p. 17), through which social and power relationship are enacted. The main research questions driving from this line of research are usually linked to issues of access, control and maintenance of (social) power through discourse(s).

Being mindful of the power and social relationships that regulate and characterise mass media is then of crucial importance to CDA, to the extent that the role of the mass media as mediators between «public and private domains» (Fairclough 1995, p. 36) of society puts them in a powerful position under many points of view.

Moreover, the different dimensions of communication and social practices brought about by the mass

media inevitably influence the delivery of the messages, the medium and the receivers of the messages, shaping and constructing discourses that create multi-layered patterns of meanings and relationships, which the analyst should uncover and try to expose, thus fulfilling the social-active and dissident function claimed by van Dijk (cfr. 2001, p. 352).

3. Critical Discourse Analysis and Corpus Linguistics: a successful cooperation

In order to obtain a better understanding of the utility of corpora and CL in CDA, it is valuable to provide a definition of both.

According to Hunston (2006, p. 324) «a corpus is an electronically stored collection of samples of naturally occurring language». To complement this accurate, albeit brief, definition we might add, following Leech (1992, p. 116 – emphasis in the original), that «corpora are generally assembled with particular purposes in mind, and often assembled to be (informally speaking) *representative* of some language or text type». As corpora are accessed and analysed through computers, corpus linguists have the possibility of carrying out «complex calculations [...] on large amount of texts, revealing patterns and frequency information» (Baker 2006, p. 2).

Leech's definition of corpora highlights two important aspects about corpora: *representativeness* and the *purposes* behind the rationale for building a corpus. Although this paper is not specifically concerned with how corpora are built and structured, these two points should nevertheless be explained as they justify some claims that will be made clear later on. On the one hand, *representativeness* refers to the language or language variety a corpus intends to portray. It is therefore very important to aim at achieving it, in order for the findings based on the analysis of that corpus to be held true for the specific language or variety it represents (cfr. McEnery et al. 2006). On the other hand, the idea that corpora are built around «particular purposes» (Leech 1992, p. 116) reminds us that, although computers play a role of paramount importance in CL, the trigger for building a corpus always resides in human curiosity.

From this definition of corpus, one can safely infer that CL is «the study of language based on real life language use» (McEnery, Wilson 1996, p. 1) through the use of corpora, of course. CL, however, is also more than that, as it is «a powerful methodology – a way of using computers to assist the analysis of language so that regularities among many millions of words can be quickly and accurately identified» (Baker, McEnery 2015, p. 2).

At a first glimpse, CL might seem incompatible with CDA methodologies, in that it seems to point to a more quantitative rather than qualitative analysis of language. However, it is important to stress the fact that, despite employing computerised quantitative methods to explore data sets, CL strongly encourages analysts to access contextual information about the texts included in the corpus. As Baker and McEnery (2015, p. 2) make clear:

While the earliest stages of a corpus analysis tend to be quantitative, relying on techniques like keywords and collocates in order to give the research a focus, as a research project progresses, the analysis gradually becomes more qualitative and context-led, relying less on computer software. Once quantitative patterns have been identified, they need to be interpreted and this usually involves a second stage of analysis where the software acts as an aid to the researcher by allowing the linguistic data to be quickly surveyed.

The focus on language and patterns of discourse(s) in language is surely a point of contact between CL and CDA, but we have not yet explained how and why corpora should inform CDA.

As already observed, CDA scholars often rely on qualitative techniques focusing on a very small number of significant texts in order to test their hypotheses. In addition, they also analyse and examine comprehensively the socio-political, economic and historical context surrounding the texts under investigation. Since it focuses on a restricted number of texts, this research method inevitably shrinks the validity range of the claims made through such an analysis, and *cherry-picking* the most suitable texts that somehow corroborate the researcher's initial hypothesis is indeed a persistent risk.

Alternatively, an analysis of language employing mainly or exclusively quantitative techniques and ignoring thus con- and intertextual information, cannot, by all means, be considered complete, nor unbiased, since quantity cannot be the only measure of relevance when analysing patterns of discourse.

This is essentially why «[q]ualitative and quantitative techniques need to be combined, not played off against each other» (Hardt-Mautner 1995, p. 2). Along the same line, Baker et al. (cfr. 2008) refer to the combination of CDA and CL methodologies as a «useful methodological synergy» for investigating discourses, one that presents mutual advantages for both disciplines.

Using a corpus to inform CDA (and DA as well) in fact helps analysts to reduce their own biases, «starting (hopefully) from a position whereby the data itself has not biases» (Baker 2006, p. 12). Moreover, corpora and the use of statistics in data analysis allow researchers «to unravel how particular discourses, rooted

in particular socio-cultural contexts, construct reality, social identities and social relationships» (Hardt-Mautner 1995, p. 1).

In order to be built and disseminated successfully in society, in short to be dominant, discourses need to be repeated and to negotiate their hegemonic position in the socio-political system in which they are embedded. Even when dominant discourses obtain a wide-core acceptance, they must still find ways to remain influential. The way in which they are maintained is indeed by creating repeated patterns in language, showing that «evaluative meanings are not merely personal or idiosyncratic, but widely shared in a discourse community» (Stubbs 2001, p. 215). These patterns, alongside the so-called «incremental effect of discourse» (Baker 2006, p. 6), would be very difficult to demonstrate using qualitative methods of analysis alone.

Finally, corpora allow the researcher to access frequency information, and they can also provide information about items that are not frequent, guiding the analyst's attention towards potential resistant discourses, which, conversely, in small-scale case studies involving few texts may be mistaken for hegemonic discourses (cfr. Baker 2006, p. 23-25).

CDA, instead, can add to CL the kind of thorough contextual analysis that decontextualized collocations or frequency lists tend to overlook. Moreover, even though modern software used for CL purposes easily allows the analyst to step out of the concordance lines and consider thus wider stretches of text or even the entire text under investigation, it is only with a greater sensitivity to extra-textual information and through a qualitative and all-comprehensive analysis, that claims about language and discourse(s) can be made.

In conclusion, this *convergence* of methods contributes greatly to anchor «findings in more robust interpretations and explanations, and it allows researchers to respond flexibly to unforeseen problems and aspects of their research» (Baker 2006, p. 16).

4. Translation Studies: an enigmatic «Phoenician Trader»

TS is perhaps the most theoretical of the disciplines considered here, and, although translation as a practice has ancient roots, its academic study is relatively recent, since the first attempts to develop a systematic study of translation as a practice and to build a coherent theoretical apparatus date back to the second half of the 20th century. Traditionally, the discipline of TS is described as concerned with «the complex problems clustered around the phenomenon of translating and translation» (Holmes 1988, p. 181).

Although this is not the place for a digression on the history of TS as a discipline, it is quite important to remark that TS has gradually come to acquire a certain independence and is now a well-anchored and established academic field.

One of the most important aspects of TS can be identified its inter- and multidisciplinary (Baker, Malmkiaer 1998). Baker and Saldahna (2009, p. xxii) notes how «new concerns in the discipline [of TS], its growing multidisciplinary, and its commitment to break away from its exclusively Eurocentric origins» are common features of recent developments in TS.

It is quite evident how translation as a practice involves many, if not all, aspects of human experience. By the same token, TS is a transversal discipline, which allows for the inclusion of different research methodologies, but also theories and applied approaches. The concept of interdiscipline is often tricky and slippery. To this end, we would like to consider this definition given by McCarty (1999):

A true interdiscipline is [. . .] an entity that exists in the interstices of the existing fields, dealing with some, many or all of them. It is the Phoenician trader among the settled nations. Its existence is enigmatic in such a world; the enigma challenges us to rethink how we organise and institutionalise knowledge.

We find this definition to be a perfect fit to the essence of TS, a field of study that entertains relationships with many different disciplines, takes on perspectives, methodologies and insights from a range of academic fields and pulls the threads of these varied contributions into an organic system; that is to say, bringing them to a point of *convergence*.

Besides being interdisciplinary, TS can also be multidisciplinary, in the sense that many researchers and analysts, who find themselves interested in TS, do not have to be involved in translation as a practice to delve into this field of study. TS accommodates therefore contributions from disciplines such as sociology, media studies, psychology, neurolinguistics, and so on and so forth.

Once established the inter- and multidisciplinary nature of TS, we are left to explain in which ways we could tie up TS, CDA and CL. Conventionally, the investigation around issues of culture, politics, and ideology in translation has been limited to literary texts, even though these issues are more likely to have a deeper influence in people's everyday life rather than be restricted purely to literature, the access of which being somewhat limited.

As Cronin puts it:

The full significance of non-literary translation in cultures is drastically underestimated. [...] Translation

Studies in the non-literary area can appear to be condemned to a purely reactive mode. In other words, instead of realising that its disciplinary time has come, so to speak, and that it has important things to say about change in the contemporary world, pragmatic translation studies is content, more often than not, simply to register change and tailor translation courses accordingly. (Cronin 2003, p. 2)

However, in the last few years TS concerning non-literary texts has been drifting away from pure prescriptivism to favour a more flexible observation of both texts and contexts in order to «draw tentative conclusions about the political, economic and, most of all, social impact that these [translational] practices can have» (Caimotto 2007, p. 16) on their target audiences.

It is then in this shifting away from prescriptivism and from the logic of binary oppositions, which have long dominated TS, that it has adopted, combined and mixed methodological approaches in a successful way. Mixed approaches in TS adequately cater for the social, economic, cultural and political complexities in which translation, both as a product and as a practice, is embedded.

Among others, (C)DA and CL have proven to be very beneficial to TS, in that they combine respectively the effectiveness of considering language a social practice embedded in a social context characterised by power struggles and relationships, and the capability of anchoring claims and hypotheses to real-life language instances.

The use of CL methodologies in TS has developed recently into a clear sub-discipline, i.e. CTS (Corpus-based Translation Studies), which «can be defined as the use of corpus linguistic technologies to inform and elucidate the translation process» (Kruger et al. 2001, preface). M. Baker suggests that there are three types of corpora that can be compiled for the purposes of TS, «comparable», «parallel», and «multilingual» corpora (cfr. Baker 1995, pp. 230-235).

For instance, in the Ph.D. project to which this paper refers, the researcher built two different kinds, or sets, of corpora: a parallel one made of news articles in English and their Italian translations taken from Global Voices' website; one comparable bilingual corpus of web-newscasts in English and Italian from the website of Euronews channel; and two comparable monolingual corpora of newscasts aired by the British channel BBC One and the Italian channels Rai Uno and Rainews24. These corpora are the main tools through which the journalistic discourse is analysed and the translational features of the language of the news uncovered.

Returning the discussion to a more theoretical level, CTS are broadly divided into two fields: practical

and theoretical. Conceivably, practical CTS is closely related to and fostered by the development of technologies in the field of TS (e.g. translation memory, machine translation, ecc.), whereas theoretical CTS is more concerned with studying both processes and products of translational activities.

CTS is yet another example of synergy, which has been considered by some scholars to be a «mini-paradigm» for empirical research in TS. For instance, Laviosa acknowledges that CL's research model combined with «their varied sources of hypotheses» (Laviosa 2002, p. 118) allows the research to evolve «from mere description to explanation and from linguistically oriented studies to socio-cultural investigations» (Ibid. 2002, p. 118).

It is evident how socio-cultural analysis has to go hand in hand with its purely linguistic investigation, and whereas corpora can really improve linguistic and comparative analysis of translations, they are not designed to provide extensive contextual information, which instead (C)DA can supply.

As a matter of fact, DA approaches to translation have been adopted for instance by Hatim and Mason (1992), demonstrating how ideology, defined as «the set of beliefs and values which inform an individual's or institution's view of the world and assist their interpretation of events, facts, etc.» (Mason 1992, p. 25), influences the translation process and product.

In her more recent work, Baker (M. Baker 2007, 2010, 2013) draws specifically upon CDA, narrative theory and the notion of framing to «explore various ways in which translators and interpreters accentuate undermine or modify aspects of the narrative(s) encoded in the source text or utterance» (Ibid. 2007, p. 151).

M. Baker's narrative theory has proven to be indeed very useful and effective especially in combination with Fairclough's notion of «internal and external relations» (Ibid. 2003, p. 36) in the analysis of international journalism and its multi-layered connections with translation, as Federici points out:

In translation, the representation of the world, according to what Fairclough calls **social structure**, becomes a mediation between two social structures, that of the SL and that of the TL, each one carrying an ideological thrust. In the case of newspapers, a translation is then mediated once more. (Federici 2011, p. 1040 – emphasis in the original)

In a different, yet closely related context, Schäffner analysed political discourse, starting from the assumption that translation is regularly employed in every type of political discourse and explaining how:

[...] translation is in fact part of the development of

discourse, and a bridge between various discourses. [...] [P]olitical discourse analysis relates linguistic behaviour to political behaviour. The linguistic behaviour may well reflect evidence of mediated behaviour, i.e. mediated by translation. (Schäffner 2004a, p. 120)

The awareness that discourses and ideologies are created, established and consolidated via language has brought about a renewed interest in translation and translators as gatekeepers, acknowledging them to be in a position of power (e.g. interpreters in war zones).

From the point of view of (C)DA, disciplines investigating the broad area of language(s) are then of paramount importance, since language is and will always be one of the (main) means through which discourses are realised. As a matter of fact, «the CDA representatives agree to a large extent that complex interrelation, between discourse and society cannot be analysed adequately unless linguistic and sociological approaches are combined» (Weiss, Wodak 2003, p. 7).

This interdisciplinarity and interplay between different fields of studies is seen here as a methodological starting point, which argues that results from the investigation of the international journalistic discourse and its translation should be considered under the joint light of the theoretical inputs and methodological tools presented so far.

5. How to achieve convergence

We should now focus on how this *convergence* of theories and methods can help researchers investigate and tackle issues of translation and multilingualism in international journalism.

To this end let us consider this statement by Chouliaraki and Fairclough:

The theoretical constructions of discourse which CDA tries to operationalise can come from various disciplines, and the concept of «operationalisation» entails working in a transdisciplinary way where the logic of one discipline [...] can be «put to work» in the development of another [...]. (Chouliaraki and Fairclough 1999, p. 17)

This is indeed what mixed theoretic-methodological approaches are all about, i.e. «putting to work» the underlying rationale of a discipline. In the case of this paper, the rationale would be that of CDA, putting it to work in order to inform, integrate, complete and substantiate claims and results in other disciplines, such as TS and CL. Keeping this kind of flexibility is the main concern here, precisely because of the textual genre for which this model has been envisaged.

In written and audio-visual news translation, carrying out a comparative analysis of a source text (ST) and target text (TT) is almost never feasible. In order to analyse how translation is carried out and which

translational processes underlie the production of a news text, the analyst has to step out of the texts (i.e. from the corpus) and consider other non-linguistic or non-verbal features, which are especially important in research about audio-visual media.

This is where a CDA-oriented approach is most useful, allowing the analyst to evaluate and ascertain the multiplicity of complexities that characterise translation in contexts where the boundaries between ST and TT are essentially blurred (Federici 2010, 2011; Van Doorsaeler 2010).

In our globalised and information-saturated society, mass media clearly facilitate and basically enable the circulation of information across languages, cultures, and countries, but it would naïve to think that they do so following fair-play rules, so to speak.

Indeed, mass media «can privilege specific information, and they can also hinder and prohibit information from being circulated» (Bassnett, Schäffner 2010, p. 8), and it is important to keep in mind that this is the very context in which translators and interpreters work. By the same token, it is central to remember that these contexts are «shaped by social aims and ideologies» (Schäffner 2004a, p. 122). Moreover, these considerations cater for a valid justification for the employment of a mixed theoretical-methodological approach and for a good reason to go beyond the text, carefully considering contexts and intertextual relationships among the media.

Corpora and CL are, in this respect, ideal tools to provide reliable evidence and to guide the researcher's attention to peculiarities or repeated patterns of discourse(s). Following McEnery and Wilson's claim (McEnery, Wilson 2001) that corpus-driven and corpus-based approaches do not exclude each other, but they are instead complementary (McEnery et al. 2006), the role of CL in this approach to multilingual journalism is both of providing the starting point for the analysis (i.e. corpus-driven) and of substantiating and/or reject hypotheses made *a priori* by the analyst (i.e. corpus-based).

In the case of the Ph.D. project this paper refers to, corpus evidence is compared across the audio-visual corpora described earlier on and also against other larger general and specialised corpora, contextualising the results of such comparisons into a wider frame, which allows for a more qualitative con- and textual analysis.

For example, the audio-visual corpora built for the purposes of this Ph.D. project have been used for researching issues concerning migrations and migrants. Each sub-corpus was compared against each other through a computer software according to the language they contained, selecting a number of keywords in

Italian and English that were most prominent in the debate around migration. From there, we saw how frequency and collocations (i.e. the closest words to the left and right side of the word which is being investigated in the corpus) pointed to patterns of discourse and therefore defined the attitude towards migrants in this or that channel.

Comparing frequencies across different corpora is useful, since it gives the researcher an idea of the importance of that topic in the corpus. In the case at hand, migrants' related words in the Italian monolingual component (Rai Corpus) and in both Italian and English bilingual components (Euronews Corpora) were substantially more frequent than in the English monolingual component (BBC Corpus).

This lured the analyst's attention towards the collocates of these migrants related words in the four components, in order to decipher the semantic prosody or the overall tone in which migrants were talked about.

Looking then at the concordance lines and at collocates across the four components, it was possible to identify three different attitudes towards migrants in the three different networks. Rai Corpus focused mainly on the on-going socio-political debate around the issues that migrants pose to Italian communities (involving a lot of aggressive talk), and on the kind of journey that migrants underwent to get to European shores. Euronews Corpora seemed to be the more balanced ones among the four sub-corpora, focusing more or less equally on the migrants' journey and on the difficulties European harbours had to face to provide for all these people suddenly coming to their shores. Finally, the BBC Corpus did not show significantly high overall frequencies when it came to migrants' related words in general. In this case, the focus was mainly on the difficulties and disruptions caused by migrants to local Italian and Greece communities, and also on the internal political debate about migrants coming both from the European Union and from African and Middle-East countries.

From this kind of analysis, the researcher could infer the political and social contexts to which the corpora refer and draw conclusions about different attitudes towards migration fluxes to the European countries under investigation.

In turn, this analysis, in a virtuous circle, could bring about other aspects, concerning for example the language or the audio-visual features of the texts. These aspects would then point the analyst's attention back to the corpus, in order to test hypotheses and intuitions deriving from this qualitative approach.

As concerns the translational features of the texts included in the corpora, they too are investigated through a combination of qualitative and quantitative

analysis. As a matter of fact, corpora can be tagged and annotated with reference to a variety of different information, ranging from grammatical and functional tagging (the so called *part of speech* or *POS* tagging) to more customised thematic labelling, which basically allows the compiler to add whatever information about the text s/he deems to be necessary and useful to her/his analysis.

To exemplify this process, it may be useful to revert again to the corpora described above and in particular to the issue of migrants. During the investigation of the audio-visual corpora, the researcher came across the expression *asylum applicants* in the English component of Euronews Corpus. In the BBC Corpus the most frequent collocate of the word *asylum* was instead *seekers*, the expression *asylum seekers* was thus more frequent in the monolingual component than in the bilingual one.

Starting from the assumption that the bilingual component contained some translated texts, the analysts carried out a comparison between the frequencies of these two expressions on a general monolingual corpus of English, and found that the wording *asylum seekers* was the most frequent, whereas *applicant* was to be found mostly in work/professional-related contexts. What the analyst cautiously inferred here was that the Euronews Corpus' phrase *asylum applicant* might have been translated from another language, such as Italian (i.e. *richiedente asilo*).

Thanks to tagging and annotation, to the possibility of alignment for parallel texts and of comparison with larger general language corpora, translational features can be observed and markers or expressions that signal translational interventions to the audience can be identified. From there, the analyst is then able to infer which ST(s) are involved in the translational activity and how translation is framed in the target communicative context.

Finally, other contextual information can and should be obtained by reading and analysing related texts, and ideally by contacting professional journalists and/or translators working in the news-making industry.

6. Conclusions

The investigations undertaken by this paper allowed us to build up to a mixed theoretic-methodological approach that comprehends three different disciplines, CDA, CL and TS, and tries to make them *converge* in order to analyse and better understand issues of translation and multilingualism in journalism as a discourse.

We are well aware that inter- and multidisciplinary approaches come with many challenges, one of them

surely deriving from the insecurity of venturing into unknown academic fields. However, analyses carried out with similar synergetic approaches have proven to have great potential, and to be able to deconstruct the multiple layers of complexities, which are indeed common features of all discourses permeating our societies, and are particularly powerful and relevant in journalistic genres (P. Baker et al. 2008, Caimotto 2007, McEnery et al. 2015, Schäffner 2004a).

In particular, the framework described in this paper could provide an original and effective method to investigate also other under-represented areas of TS research, especially concerning those texts that are considered to lie somehow on the borderline between translation and originally produced texts, such as advertising texts or corporate multilingual communications, among others.

It is also true that designing and building a corpus, especially if audio-visual texts are to be included, means undergoing an insidious and time-consuming journey. On the bright side, there are many corpora freely available and constantly updated (e.g. M. Davis' *Now Corpus*) through web-based platforms that can be exploited and interrogated according to one's research questions and hypotheses (e.g. CQPWeb, NoSketchEngine, SketchEngine).

Newness is indeed another thorny issue that can be contested while compiling a news corpus. However, even though the news market gets saturated pretty quickly (Tsai, 2012) and therefore always needs to be fed with new stories for its audience, the ways those stories are retrieved, selected, framed and reported are likely to remain stable for longer periods of time.

As far as TS are concerned, the main difficulty surely lies in recognising translational features in the news, as translation itself is in this context a slippery, fuzzy concept that Schäffner describes as:

A fluid, negotiable object that arouses multiple images and expectations, which vary according to the subject's role: consumer, requester, practitioner, researcher, student. Such an object is at the same time a service, a product, an occupation and a skill. (Schäffner 2004b, p.64)

Despite this, the greatest advantage of employing a mixed theoretical and methodological approach rests on the confidence that shortcomings in this or that discipline can be made up for by the interplay of different methods.

The theoretical and methodological *convergence* presented here displays one way in which research into multilingual journalism can be conducted. Multidisciplinarity does not always entail multi-methodologies, but undoubtedly encourages it, as it is unlikely that different, albeit closely related, fields of studies

would all employ the same single methodology to answer their research questions.

Finally, we described how criss-crossed theoretical and methodological inputs can create virtuous circles of knowledge and research, thus setting the foundation of the operative framework built through the course of this paper, as Laviosa (2002, p. 118) puts it:

Theory, description, methodology and applications interact with one another on an equal basis, [...] giving rise to a sort of serendipity process of discovery which continually throws up new data which, in turn, lead to new hypotheses.

This serendipitous method of researching is then only achievable by means of converging theories and methodologies, shaping knowledge through different case studies and framing results in a flexible yet valid manner.

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