The appreciation of cultural and linguistic adjustments in multilingual museum audio tours by international tourists

Marisa Tempel and Jan D. ten Thije[*]
Department of Dutch, Universiteit Utrecht, the Netherlands

Abstract

This paper discusses the question of whether House's (2000) theory on a cultural filter can be applied to the study of the appreciation of multilingual audio tours. According to House (ibid) cultural adjustments of a target text to a specific target culture will have a positive effect on the appreciation and understanding of the information provided. This study analyses the appreciation of British and German users of the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum audio tour. After an institutional ethnographic investigation of the coming about of the German and English translation of the Dutch source text, three audio stops were selected of which two alternative versions were made: one linguistic manipulation of the text and one content manipulation of the text. In the linguistic manipulation one of the five dimensions of cross-cultural differences (House ibid) between English and German was manipulated, namely: orientation towards content versus orientation towards persons. All texts were presented to thirty British and thirty German visitors of the Rijksmuseum. Responses were measured using questionnaires composed by a multicultural team of Dutch, English and German native speakers and translators. The results of this experiment do not seem to confirm the hypothesis. However, the differences found signify a trend that the linguistic adjustments are more appreciated and the content adjustments are appreciated less than the original version of the text. The study encourages the discussion between multimedia producers and museum curators with respect to the standardisation or cultural adjustment of audio tour translations.

Key words: audio tours; cultural filter; translation quality assessment; functional equivalence; Dutch Golden Age; museum

1. Introduction

Whenever you enter a museum nowadays, next to the ticket office you will find a desk for audio tours. The availability of these personal digital guides has increased enormously over the last years. For museums audio tours are an important means to fulfil their educational purposes. Audio tours are offered in many formats and

applications. They give information about permanent collections, temporary exhibitions, or about historical sites during city walks. The tours address the general public but also focus on specific target groups like children and nowadays can be downloaded at home on your MP3 player before starting your visit. A common characteristic however, is that in general audio tours are multilingual. They are especially meant for an *international* public. Depending on their budget and prestige, museums will have audio tours available in at least two (native and English) or many other languages.

The *multilingual* audio tour may be self-evident for visitors; their composition and production challenges museum curators, copywriters, translators and multimedia specialists. These professionals have to cope with the following issues: How to achieve educational aims for a rather anonymous international public? Which information is indispensable for an adequate interpretation of the collection? Which cultural knowledge can be presupposed on the part of the public? How to intrigue the audience when no more then two hundred words are available per audio stop? Finally, how could one optimise the production process to keep an affordable product with competitive market prices?

As far as their production and translation for an international audience is concerned, multilingual audio tours have a lot in common with product catalogues of multinationals that have to address multiple target groups in a heterogeneous public. Shaping and translating these texts implies finding an optimal balance between a standardised and a localised approach of the customers. The development of multilingual audio tours might profit from studies in the field of intercultural communication and marketing research regarding cultural adaptations of persuasive or informative texts (Bolten 1999, Apfelthaler 2002, Gautheron-Boutchatsky et al 2003, De Mooij 2005). These studies point out that standardised translations are in danger of cultural blunders as they might neglect crucial cultural knowledge. Cultural adaptations are in favourite for specific audiences, but their production is time consuming and therefore expensive. Ten Thije & Pinto (to appear) show, for instance, how the international company IKEA pays very close attention to differentiation of the descriptions and explanations in their catalogues which are issued in twenty-seven languages.

This paper discusses a study concerning the multilingual audio tour of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam that goes with the exhibition of their Masterpieces from the Golden Age (Tempel 2008a,b,c). This audio tour is produced by Antenna Audio in cooperation with the Rijksmuseum. The study was carried out by Marisa Tempel in the

framework of the Master Communication Studies at Utrecht University and included a research internship at Antenna Audio in Amsterdam (Tempel 2008a). For this research project German and British visitors were interviewed about their need for more culture specific information in the audio tour (Tempel 2008b). Moreover, the text characteristics of the German and English translations of the audio tour were analysed. Finally, an experiment was conducted to test the hypothesis that specific adjustments of multilingual texts towards the target culture will have a positive effect on the appreciation and understanding of the text by their users (Tempel 2008c). For this purpose actual visitors of the exhibition were exposed to linguistic as well as cultural adaptations of three separate audio stops together with three masterpieces at the exhibition of the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum.

The structure of the paper is as follows. In the next section the discussion on linguistic and cultural adjustments in translation studies is addressed. In section 3 the production and the translation of the multilingual audio tour by Antenna Audio is discussed. Subsequently, in section 4 the experiment is presented. Section 5 and 6 contain conclusions and discussion.

2. Notions of 'equivalence' in Translation Studies

Should the translation of a text be as close to the original as possible, or should it be considered as an individual text? Although Baker (2002) claims that this question has been marginalised nowadays, it has been a central issue in translation studies during the last decades (Hulst 1995; Bührig, House & ten Thije 2009). Its main concern is the assessment of the quality of a translation. Within translation studies two different approaches can be distinguished. One approach takes the original text as starting point and translations are assessed according to their relation – their equivalence – to their source texts (cf. Jakobson 1959). The other approach considers target texts (TT) as individual functioning texts and the quality of translations depends on realizing the same - or equivalent - effect of the target texts in target cultures (TC) as the source texts (ST) would have realised in the source cultures (SC) (Nida 1964, Reiß 1971, House 1977).

The determination of the notion of equivalence is a key issue for translation studies. Baker (1992:6) states that "equivalence is influenced by a variety of linguistic and cultural factors and is therefore always relative". Consequently, the equivalence

between source and target text can be determined on various levels. These levels correspond to different definitions of equivalence, starting with *lexical* and *syntactic equivalence*. These levels concern formal correspondences of lexemes and syntactic structures in ST and TT. Of course, these formal linguistic distinctions are not sufficient for assessing text quality of translations in every day practice.

With respect to the translation quality Umberto Eco (2000) argues that: "a good translation is not concerned with the denotation but with the connotation of words" (Eco 2000: 8). The actual meaning of words goes beyond their dictionary meaning. Meaning is found in the context of a situation. Therefore, translations are "not only connected with linguistic competence, but with intertextual, psychological and narrative competence" (Eco 2000: 13). Eco distinguishes between *linguistic* and *cultural equivalence*. He considers translating not as a linguistic process but as a process in which the translator has to translate one culture into the other.

According to Eco's (2000) notion of *cultural equivalence* the translator has the freedom to radically change literal and referential meaning in order to preserve the sense of a text and, at the same time, adjust a text to the referential frames of the target culture in order to assure understanding. Translating is an interpretation process resulting in two different texts in two different languages. The question that Eco (2000) poses with respect to the relationship between source and target text is: "should a translation lead the reader to understand the linguistic and cultural universe of the source text, or transform the original by adapting it to the reader's cultural and linguistic universe?" This choice depends on the function of the text. Nevertheless Eco states: "a good translation must generate the same effect aimed by the original" (2000: 44). This conclusion brings us to the model of translation assessment of Juliane House (1997, 2000) in which she introduces the notion of *functional equivalence*.

Juliane House (1977, 1981, 1997, 2000) bases the notion of *functional equivalence* in her translation assessment model from a pragmatic perspective, e.g. within the linguistic systemic theory of Halliday ([2]1994). Language should be analysed as a means of communication that enables acting in reality. With respect to translation quality she takes the function of the text as a starting point and by this she means: "the application or use which the text has in the particular context of a situation" (1977: 37). This approach implies the following definition of *functional equivalence:* "The suggested basic requirement for equivalence of a given textual pair (ST and TT) is that TT should

have a function which is equivalent to ST's function, and that TT should employ equivalent pragmatic means for achieving that function" (House 1977: 37).

House distinguishes between two types of translations: *overt* and *covert translations* (House 1997). The purpose of an *overt translation* is to give the reader insight into the function of the source text (ST) in the original language and culture (SC). In overt translations the translator does not adapt the text to the cultural differences between SC and TC. In fact, cultural specific elements are often kept intact. The prototypical example of an overt translation are literary texts. In case of *covert translations*, the function of the source and target text for both the target groups should remain the same. In order to realise a functional equivalent text the source text should not only be translated, but also be adapted to the cultural knowledge and competences of the new target group. A covert translation functions as an independent text in the target culture. The readers are not aware that they are reading a translation. Examples of covert translation are advertisements, for instance, in IKEA catalogues (Ten Thije & Pinto to appear).

According to House (1997) translators of covert translations make use of a so called *cultural filter.* A cultural filter consists of those characteristics of the target culture that have to be applied to a source text in order to reach the required level of functional equivalence in the target culture. This cultural filter consists of five cross-cultural dimensions that characterize German – English *lingua-cultural differences* (House 1997: 79). The dimensions are represented in table 1:

Table 1

Dimensions of Cross-Cultural Difference		
Directness	↔	Indirectness
Orientation towards self	↔	Orientation towards other
Orientation towards content	↔	Orientation towards persons
Explicitness	↔	Implicitness
Ad-hoc Formulation	↔	Use of verbal routines

Dimensions of cross-cultural differences between German and English (House 1997: 84)

On the basis of various functional pragmatic text analyses, House has investigated the cultural filter that adapts German and English texts reciprocally. She concludes: "a consistent pattern emerges: in a variety of everyday situations, German subjects tended to interact in ways that were more direct, more explicit, more self-referenced and more content-oriented. German speakers were also found to be less prone to resort to using verbal routines than English speakers" (House 1997: 84). All five dimensions of cross-cultural difference have been taken as a starting point for the contrastive analysis of the audio tour, but only the content-person dimension was used for the linguistic adaptation of the text.

In order to determine the relationship between the concept of *cultural filter* and that of *functional equivalence* within a functional pragmatic approach to text and discourse, it is interesting to introduce the notion of the *dilated speech situation* (Ehlich 1983, 1984). The dilated speech situation occurs whenever the production situation and the reception situation diverge in terms of time and place, as in case of listening to audio tours. The text's functioning as a sort of 'messenger' enables the hearer to receive (e.g. understand) the speaker's linguistic action and therefore the original speech situation becomes 'dilated'. Because of this, the formulations used in the text will be adapted accordingly. According to Bührig, House & ten Thije (2009, 2) this relates to translation studies as follows: "Both interpretation and translation are characterized by a specific rupture of the original speech situation, which results from the linguistic barrier between speaker and hearer or between an author and his or her readers. And it is only with the help of an interpreting or translating person that this linguistic barrier between speaker (member of culture 1) and hearer (member of culture 2) or author and reader can be bridged." This means that by translating the linguistic action in language 1 (Situation 1) is being passed to the language 2 addressees (Situation 2). This has consequences for the transmitted linguistic action: "While already monolingual texts show signs of being prepared for transmission, this is particularly true of translated texts, because they are exposed to a double transmission process" (ibid.)That means that understanding multilingual audio tours is based on a double adaptation process.

Based on the literature, the following research questions were formulated for the study on the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum audio tour:

1. To what extent do British or German museum visitors appreciate the culturally adjusted versions of the audio tour compared to the original and standardised version?

With cultural adjustment we mean changes in the text that correspond to cultural and communicative knowledge and needs of the different cultural groups. These adjustments meet the functional equivalence of the translations so that the function of the audio tours will be the same for members from both cultures. The research question has been split up into subordinate questions that have been investigated:

2. What is the function of the audio tour?

In an institutional ethnographic study (DeVault & McCoy 2001) and functional analysis (Lentz & Pander Maat 2000) the main functions of the audio tour have been analysed. This analysis has been used to compare the purposes and text characteristics of the source and target texts.

3. To what extent is the German – English cultural filter applied in the process of translating the Dutch source text into the German and English target text?

In a text analysis of the German and English translations the occurrence of the five dimensions of House (2000) in the audio tour were analysed. Also other changes concerning the content have been analysed. This analysis is used as a basis for the linguistic and content manipulations for the experiment. The experiment focuses on the dimension of "Orientation towards content vs. Orientation towards persons".

The study starts from the assumption that translators make use of a cultural filter, but is designed to test the hypothesis that the application of an extra cultural and linguistic adjustment will increase understanding and appreciation and will therefore improve the communicative function of multilingual audio tours for the different target groups.

3. **Audio tours**

3.1. New multi media applications for museum's educational purposes

In an early study of what in 1993 was called the *walkman guide* Van Huffelen & Orbons (1992a,b) discuss characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of the practical use of this new communicative medium. According to Tempel (2008a) the most relevant conclusions of this study are that:

- Visitors get access to far more information than the traditional lettering next to exhibited objects can supply.
- These guides animate an exhibition.
- Museums are capable of informing the public more elaborately and on a massive scale, and in different languages.
- The public seems to be more receptive to an oral rather than a written presentation of information.
- The walkman guides are meant as an extra service.
- They are considered to be an alternative for the traditional personal guided tours that can not cope with huge groups.

Since digital developments, audio tours have become more and more important as means for museums to achieve their educational aims. Van Stein (2000) states that in the nineteenth century museums core activities were research and conservation of cultural heritages. In the last decennia of the twentieth century these aims have shifted towards cultural education and informing new target groups. Museums have had to change into public oriented organizations that know how to adequately mediate cultural knowledge to a heterogeneous audience. When used properly, audio tours can have an important added value in the strategy to increase the accessibility of cultural heritage. This explains why the production of audio tours has grown into a mature and serious business.

3.2. The production process of multilingual audio tours

Antenna Audio delivers audio tours and other multimedia services for museums and cultural attractions on a global scale. The company is leading provider in this branch by developing and producing technical equipments as well as the audio tour content. Over three hundred employees are spread over sixteen different locations around Europe, North America and Asia as well as Israel and South Africa. Since September 2010 Antenna Audio is part of the Wicks Group of Companies, L.L.C. in New York. According to their own information the company distributed in 2008 more than twenty

million audio tours to seventy million visitors at eight hundred locations, such as The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Alhambra, London's National Gallery, the Louvre, the Vatican Museums, the Alcatraz Cell house, and Elvis Presley's Graceland[*].

The production of multilingual audio tours is a multi-party process of which the design is documented and organised in the so called *creative treatment*. The production starts, of course, with a museum commissioning the audio tour. In this process the *museum curators* often act as principals. The curator chooses which objects are going to become part of the tour. Moreover, they supply the information needed for the content of the audio tour. All decisions regarding target group, text design, structure, number of stops, objects and more are agreed upon in the *creative treatment*. Based on this and the information provided by the curators, *text writers* make a first script. This script is then edited by the creative manager of Antenna Audio before it is sent for a first reading to the museum's principal. Only after all parties agree on the original script will the text be ready for translation. The script is therefore sent to an Antenna Audio office in the right language culture: the London office for English translations, the Paris office for French, Berlin for German and so on. This way the scripts are always translated by *native speakers* living in the target culture.

For the professionals mentioned above - writers, editors, and translators - engaged in the different stages of text production Antenna Audio developed a *Writer's Guide to audio interpretation.* The Writer's Guide contains stylistic, formal and content outlines for designing an audio tour and the handling of specific target groups. These guidelines should improve understanding and keep visitors from losing their concentration. It contains a total of thirty points regarding text design of an audio tour script, e.g. the maximum number of words per segment, the maximum length of an entire tour, how to work on a linear or non linear setup of a tour, and techniques on how to instruct a listener without distracting from the visual experience of the observed object. Furthermore, the guidelines stress out the difference between spoken and written text since the reception of oral represented communication differs from written information. This means that simple vocabulary and short sentences should be used. Moreover, the tone of voice should be informal and intimate.

The Antenna Audio Writer's Guide exemplifies that the text design of audio tours has been professionalised enormously since the first walkman guide was introduced in

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[*] http://www.antennaaudio.com/content/section/5/32/lang,en_GB/ (consulted September 21st 2010)

the early nineties of the last century. Moreover, Antenna Audio developed their guidelines on the basis of assessing and evaluating practical usage of their audio tours on various locations. Above all these guidelines make clear that whenever cultural adjustments are made they have to fit in many genre and text specific restraints.

In 2006 the company Antenna Audio conducted an Audio Global Visitor Survey (Antenna 2006). The purpose of this survey was to collect data on visitor's characteristics, their intentions, their habits, and interests regarding audio tours in order to improve and increase the distribution of their audio tours. The questionnaire was available in six languages (English, French, German, Spanish, Italian and Dutch) and filled in by more than twelve thousand visitors spread over thirty locations in Europe and the United States of America. The results show a significant correlation between age, level of education, frequency of the visits and usage of audio tours. The frequent user of audio tours is advanced in age and highly educated. Especially the young and male visitors belong to new target groups for future developments. The study recommends future research on audio tours to offer more insight into the evaluation of multilingual audiotours. Tempel (2008a,b,c) aims at meeting this research interest.

3.3. Masterpieces of the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam

The multilingual audio tour of the Rijksmuseum belongs to an exhibition of Master Pieces from the Golden Age in the Netherlands. This was a famous historical period with great prosperity in economic, financial, scientific and cultural domains of the Dutch society with Amsterdam as its centre. This period lasted from around 1585 to 1675 (Hellinga 2007). Next to historical objects the exhibition contains paintings from Johannes Vermeer, Rembrandt van Rijn, Frans Hals, Pieter de Hoogh, Jan Steen and other famous painters from that period. The tour addresses thirty three of the four hundred objects. The audio tour is available in nine languages: Dutch, French, German, English, Italian, Spanish, Japanese, Chinese (Mandarin) and Russian. This study concentrates on the Dutch, English and German versions. The original script was written in Dutch. The Dutch text is translated into English and German; these target texts are translated as close as possible to the source text.

Tempel (2008b) reports on assessments and communicative expectations of international visitors with respect to cultural adjustments of this audio tour based on semi-structured interviews with Dutch, German and British visitors. A total of twelve respondents participated in the interview which addressed issues such as informational

value, understanding, appreciation, and language use of the audio tour as well as the visitor's characteristics. The respondents were – as could have been expected based on the global survey - regular museum visitors, highly educated and relatively advanced in age. The British respondents appear to have listened to strikingly more stops than the German and Dutch participants. The average grading of the tour was a 7.75 on a scale from one to ten. All respondents say that they would have liked to have more stops in the tour. German and British respondents demonstrated a more serious need for information than the Dutch respondents. The former report to be more interested in biographical backgrounds of the artists, especially of Rembrandt van Rijn. Tempel (2008b) thus concludes from her study that British and German visitors are more interested in historical background information than the Dutch visitors.

Within the frame work of this study Tempel (2008c) also compared the German and English target texts with the Dutch source text. This contrastive analysis primarily focuses on the five cross-cultural dimensions of House (1997) that determine the cultural filter, but also analyses other differences between source and targets text, such as deletions and reformulations. This analysis was carried out on eight of the stops. Table 2 represents examples of the four dimensions of House.

Table 2

Dimension	Dutch	German	English
Directness/ Indirectness	***Laat u zich rustig*** verrassen door de honderden details, zoals indertijd de verbaasde gasten van Petronella Oortman	***Lassen Sie sich*** von unzähligen Details überraschen, wie seinerzeit die Gäste von Petronella Oortman	***Do take this opportunity*** to marvel at abundant details, as Petronella Oortman's amazed guests certainly would have done
Self/Other Reference & Explicitness/ Implicitness	In deze Philipsvleugel ***tonen we u*** hoogtepunten uit onze collectie.	Im Philips-Flügel, ***in dem Sie sich jetzt befinden***, ***zeigen wir Ihnen*** Höhepunkte unserer Sammlung.	In the Philips wing ***you will discover*** highlights from our collection.
Content/ Persons focus	***Het schilderij stond*** tot in de 19de eeuw ***bij velen hoger aangeschreven*** dan Rembrandts *Nachtwacht*,	***Das Gemälde wurde*** bis ins 19. Jahrhundert ***mehr geschätzt*** als die *Nachtwache*	Until the 19th century ***many people thought more highly of this work*** than of Rembrandt's *Night Watch*
Explicitness/ Implicitness	Staalmeesters keurden de kwaliteit van geverfd laken aan de hand van stalen.	Die „Staalmeesters" waren ***Stoffprüfer***, die die Qualität des gefärbten Tuchs anhand von Musterlappen, ***den so genannten „stalen"***, kontrollierten.	The syndics' task was to check the quality of dyed cloth from samples.

Cross cultural differences between Dutch, German and English audiotour of the Rijksmuseum

The examples in table 2 document that the cross-cultural dimensions can be recognised in the translations of the audio tours. It should be noted that the dimension 'Self / Other

reference' was only documented once in the data. The dimensions 'Orientation Towards Persons and Towards Content' as well 'Explicitness versus Implicitness' were found more frequently. The fifth dimension 'Ad-hoc Formulation versus Verbal Routines' fails completely, which can be explained from the written mode of the audio tours. Besides the dimensions that could be recognized in the text, the audio tour was also characterized by reversals and the lack of use of cultural specifics. There is no strict application of the cultural filter as House (2000) would have expected. The translations seem to stick to the source text which appears to be in accordance with Antenna Audio's guidelines.

The content of all texts are closely related to each other. There are differences, however, to be found in respect of *realia,* which according to Grit (2004) are concepts or notions in the following domains: historical or geographical, institutional, private, or social cultural. For instance, the 'Vrede of Münster' is translated into 'Westfälische Frieden' in the German tour. This notion is translated so that it corresponds to German historical knowledge. Grit (ibid) states that in case of *realia*, translators should choose the most communicative adequate translation. However, they also have the opportunity to choose between a more *naturalistic* or *exotic* translation. This distinction corresponds to the difference between *overt* and *covert* translation (House 2000). For example the Dutch notion of *burgemeester* can be translated in English with the naturalistic notion of *mayor* or the exotic notion of *burgomaster*. Although, the audio tour contains many realia, no consistency in the distinction between naturalistic or exotic has been found in the German and English translation. Finally, one striking difference between source and target texts should be mentioned: whereas in the (Dutch) source text present tense is used, both German and English target texts use past tense. This cannot be explained with the help of House's (2000) cultural filter.

4. Experiment

Based on the contrastive and functional analysis of the Rijksmuseum audio tour an experimental study has been designed (Tempel 2008c). From the functional analysis (cf. Lentz & Pander Maat 2004) it was concluded that the main purpose of the audio tour is information transfer and, therefore, the main communication function is related to the tour as an educational device. Four stops of the German and English audio tour have been manipulated regarding the content as well as regarding one of House's (2000)

cross-cultural dimension of the so called cultural filter, namely 'Orientation Towards Content versus Orientation Towards Persons'. This dimension was selected because this dimension has linguistically the most solid basis (Hees 2007). In conclusion, the main research questions of the experiment concerns: To what extent do British or German museum visitors appreciate the adjusted versions differently than the original and standardised version of the audio tour? This question is now specified as follows:

1. Which of the three text versions (original, linguistic manipulation, content manipulation) is appreciated more, or appreciated less by the German and British subjects?

2. What differences in appreciation between the German and British respondents can be observed?

3. What differences in appreciation can be found between the three separate stops?


4.1. Respondents

For the experiment, only visitors from Germany and the United Kingdom have been asked to cooperate; a total of thirty German and thirty British visitors participated. The ratio of female to male in both groups was 56.7 percent to 43.3 percent. With regard to education level, 66.7 percent of the respondents were highly educated. It is important to mention the fact that this sample is comparable to the sample of Antenna Audio Global Visitor Survey (2006). The sample also corresponds to the results of the national Museum Monitor 2007 (Ranshuysen 2008) that was initiated by the Dutch Museum Association and executed by the research bureau TNS NIPO. This makes it a representative sample of museum visitors and increases the representativeness of this study. With respect to their museum experience, it appeared that more than half of the respondents have visited a museum more than three times and almost seventy five percent has visited a museum more than once in the past year. In conclusion, the sample exists of relatively highly educated, culturally experienced museum visitors. These characteristics correspond to previous studies and confirm the 'iron law' that museums mainly attract highly educated and culturally active persons. In the analysis the homogeneity of both German and British group of respondents was controlled by chi-quadrate and Mann-Whitney U-test and confirmed (p>0,045).

4.2. Material

The experiment concerns three audio stops from the Rijksmuseum audio tour. These stops each give information about one painting of Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn: "The greatest painter of Holland and one of the greatest painters who ever lived" (Gombrich 1989). Rembrandt was very successful in his youth as a portrait painter of rich Amsterdam citizens in the period that this city developed from a small harbor city into a very important world economic centre (Schama 1987). At the same time Rembrandt was also very successful as a historical and religious painter. His expertise in many different disciplines makes him one of the most admired painters ever (Fry 1932; Gombrich 1989; Schama 1987; Hellinga 2007). The paintings of Rembrandt and the 'Night Watch' especially, are the blockbusters of the Rijksmuseum. From the interviews with German and British visitors of the Rijksmuseum Tempel (2008a) found special interest for Rembrandt. Therefore, his paintings were chosen. In actual fact, the famous Night Watch' was not selected, because the audience might already have too much foreknowledge. The three selected paintings are 'Jeremiah' (audio stop 30), 'Johannes Wtenbogaert' (audio stop 31) en 'The Jewish Bride' (audio stop 33). A fourth audio stop on 'The syndics of the Amsterdam draper's guild' (audio stop 34) was included in the development of the experiment as reserve, however was not included in the experiment itself.

The selected painings of Rembrandt: 'Johannes Wtenbogaert', 'Jewish Bride' and 'Jeremiah'
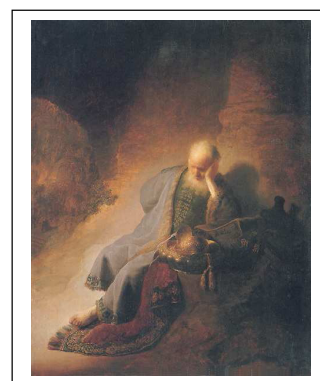
The linguistic manipulation of the audio stops focuses on the content-person dimension of cross-cultural differences. With the linguistic adjustments the target text aims at meeting the different cultural communicative expectations of German and British visitors. The German manipulated translation thus focuses on the content of the text by avoiding addressing the listener directly and by avoiding persons in the painting, or Rembrandt himself in subject position. By doing so the interpersonal function of the text

is less expressed in the translation and the content function is enhanced. Table 3 and 4 contain examples of these manipulations.

Table 3

	Original	**Manipulation**
Avoiding interpersonal Focus	*In weiteren, hier gezeigten Gemälden des jungen Rembrandt **sehen Sie**, wie er mit Licht und Schatten ebenso wie mit verschiedenen Maltechniken experimentiert.*	*In weiteren, hier gezeigten Gemälden des jungen Rembrandt **ist zu sehen**, wie er mit Licht und Schatten ebenso wie mit verschiedenen Maltechniken experimentiert.*
	*Und wie in fast allen Gemälden Rembrandts **begegnet uns** auch hier das Spiel von Licht und Schatten. **Es lenkt unsere** ganze Aufmerksamkeit auf das Gesicht, die strahlend weiße Halskrause aus Leinen und die geäderten Hände des Dargestellten.*	*Und wie in fast allen Gemälden Rembrandts **gibt es** auch hier das Spiel von Licht und Schatten. **Dadurch wird die** ganze Aufmerksamkeit auf das Gesicht, die strahlend weiße Halskrause aus Leinen und die geäderten Hände des Dargestellten **gelenkt**.*
Avoiding persons in subject position	***Er hatte** die Zerstörung Jerusalems **prophezeit**, doch **der König Zedekia hatte** seine Warnung **in den Wind geschlagen**.*	***Die Zerstörung Jerusalems war** von ihm **prophezeit worden**, doch **wurde seine Warnung** von König Zedekia **in den Wind geschlagen**.*
	*Dadurch, **dass Rembrandt** den zweiten Mann von links in der Bewegung des Aufstehens oder sich Setzens **darstellt**, **vermeidet er** ein steifes Porträt von fünf nebeneinander aufgereihten Herren mit Hüten.*	*Dadurch, **dass** der zweite Mann von links in der Bewegung des Aufstehens oder des sich Setzens **dargestellt ist**, **wird** ein steifes Porträt von fünf nebeneinander aufgereihten Herren mit Hüten **vermieden**.*

Examples of linguistic manipulations German

In the English translation, the listener is addressed directly, and the person of the painter Rembrandt or one of the painted characters are put in subject position. Consequently, the focus is oriented towards the interpersonal function and towards persons.

Table 4

	Original	**Manipulation**
Adding interpersonal focus	*In Rembrandt's time pictures with a Greek or Roman theme, or depictions of biblical stories, were known as history paintings, and enjoyed the highest regard.*	***Did you know that** in Rembrandt's time pictures with a Greek or Roman theme, or depictions of biblical stories, were known as history paintings, and enjoyed the highest regard?*
	*And once again **there is** that play of light and shade, a regular feature of Rembrandt's work.*	*And once again **we can see** that play of light and shade, a regular feature of Rembrandt's work*
Putting persons in subject position	*The title The Jewish bride dates from the 19th century.*	***Rembrandt didn't actually name this** The Jewish bride **himself**. The title dates from the 19th century.*

	*A gesture **that seems to say**: "We are open and fair in assessing the cloths."*	*With this gesture **he seems to say to us**: "We are open and fair in assessing the cloths."*

Examples of linguistic manipulations English

By adjusting the existing translations by applying the content-person dimension more consistently (as illustrated in tables 3 and 4) the listener will be addressed in his own cultural communicative preference. The hypothesis of the experiment states that German and British respondents recognise and appreciate these linguistic changes corresponding to their communicative expectations.

The changes concerning the content of audio stops are aimed at meeting the different cultural competences and foreknowledge of German and British visitors. For this purpose, literature on (art) history was studied (Gombrich 1989; Hellinga 2007; Alpers 1983; Wilschut 2007; White, Alexabder & d'Oench 1983; Schama 1987; Fry 1932; Benesch 1970; Beckett 1949 and Prak 2006). With the cultural adjustments concerning content, the information provided was linked to the target culture. Information was added on contemporary painters and/or historical developments in either Germany or England. The addition of information also meant that certain parts of the original text had to be deleted since the overall length of the audio stops is restricted. Examples of manipulations of the content can be found in table 5.

Table 5

	Original	Manipulation
German	*Als „erzählender" Maler ging Rembrandt einen Schritt weiter als viele seiner Kollegen:*	*Im Malen von religiösen und mythologischen Themen dürfte Rembrandt zum Beispiel von den Werken Adam Elsheimers beeinflusst worden sein, aber als „erzählender" Maler ging Rembrandt einen Schritt weiter:*
	Vincent van Gogh schrieb über dieses Bild, die Judenbraut von Rembrandt: „Glaube mir, dass ich zehn Jahre meines Lebens dafür geben würde, wenn ich vierzehn Tage hier vor diesem Bild sitzen könnte, mit nur einer trockenen Brotrinde als Zehrung."	*Rembrandt war bereits zu Lebzeiten ein gefeierter Maler, auch in Deutschland. Ein Süddeutscher Kunstliebhaber nannte ihn 1664 schon das 'Wunder unserer Zeit'.*
	Es lenkt unsere ganze Aufmerksamkeit auf das Gesicht, die strahlend weiße Halskrause aus Leinen und die geäderten Hände des Dargestellten.	*In Amsterdam hatte Rembrandt zahlreiche Schüler, darunter auch die jungen Deutschen Jürgen Ovens und Christoph Paudiss. Sie nahmen Rembrandt's Stil und Hell-Dunkel-Techniken mit zurück nach Deutschland*
British	*Elsewhere in this gallery you can also see the young Rembrandt experimenting extensively with light and shade, and also with painting*	*Rembrandt was a well known and influential artist in Continental Europe, but it took almost half a century after his death before English painters and connoisseurs*

	techniques.	acknowledged or appreciated his influence.
	when Rembrandt had just moved from Leiden to the new metropolis of Amsterdam	As a portrait painter Rembrandt influenced a number of artists worldwide, including the English painter William Hogarth. In his portraits Hogarth imitated Rembrandt's style and technique so well, that one was actually mistaken for a work by the Dutch master himself.
	Vincent van Gogh wrote of this Jewish bride by Rembrandt: "Would you believe, I would have given 10 years of my life if I could have sat in front of this portrait for a fortnight with just a dry crust of bread to eat?"	English painter Roger Fry wrote in an attempt to describe the nature of Rembrandt's genius: "He united in his spirit a dramatic and psychological imagination of Shakespearian intensity and an equally great plastic imagination".

Examples of content manipulations German and British

The hypothesis behind the content manipulations is that the better the information connects with the listeners' foreknowledge the higher the text will be appreciated. It is expected that the direct relation to the cultural heritage of the target culture will increase the recognition and appreciation of the German and British respondents. Since both respondents are confronted with a version that is adapted to their own cultural foreknowledge no differences are expected between the appreciations of both groups.

All six scripts of new audio stops have been recorded by Antenna Audio in the London studio according to the companies' standard procedures.

4.3. Procedure

The experiment was conducted on location at the Masterpieces exhibition in the Rijksmuseum. This way subjects could enjoy the full experience of listening to the tour and looking at the 'live' paintings. Both visitors with and visitors without audio tours were asked to participate and it was explained to them that the experiment was concerned with pretesting a new version of the audio tour. Of the visitors approached, non-response was very low; no more than five visitors did not wish to participate. After listening to each audio stop, respondents were asked to fill in a questionnaire to indicate their appreciation. The whole procedure took about 10 minutes.

The questionnaire consisted of nine Likert-items (Maes, Ummelen & Hoeken 1996) constructed to measure together the overall appreciation of the text. This concept was operationalised in three different multiple constructs namely *comprehensibility*, *attractiveness*, *recognisability* and one singular item: *behavioural intention* (e.g. Do you plan to use an audio tour more often?). Items were formulated alternately positive and

negative according to the balanced-scale technique (ibid). To measure the overall assessment of the audio stop respondents had to grade each stop on a scale from one (very poor) to ten (excellent). This served as an indication of the appreciation of the text.

For the translation of the questionnaire into German and English the method of decentering was applied: "a translation process in which the source and the target language versions are equally important and open to modification during the translation process" (Brislin 1973: 37-38). This method is needed in order to develop equivalent questionnaires to test the appreciation of German and British visitors accurately (Behling & Law 2000; ten Thije & Pinto to appear).

To measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire Cronbach's alpha was used. The construct *appreciation*, which was made up by all items except the grading from one to ten, tested to be reliable ($\alpha = 0.780$). This applies to the German questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.768$) as well as the British questionnaire ($\alpha = 0.793$). With respect to the three different item sets (*comprehensibility*, *attractiveness*, *recognisability)*, however, only the construct of *recognisability* proved to be internally consistent ($\alpha = 0.659$) (see for details Tempel 2008b). Because of this, conclusions will only be based on the overall appreciation. A high correlation (correlation coefficient .672) was found between the average appreciation and the standardised grades given by the respondents, which indicates that the questionnaire is valid.

The procedure of a 'between participants design' (Maes, Ummelen en Hoeken 1996) was applied. This way each individual respondent was presented with only one version from all three text variants (either the original version, the linguistic or content manipulated version respectively). The design of the items in the experiment was varied according to the principle of counter balancing (ibid.) in order to avoid sequential influence.

4.4. Analysis

The appreciation is measured by the average of the three concepts, as well as by the behavioural intention and the grade given. A t-test was used to measure the difference between the original and the manipulated versions. A single variation analysis (ANOVA) was used to test the significance with respect to the three text versions within the German and British group. The differences in appreciation are also tested for each audio stop separately. With respect to audio stop 30 (Jeremiah) the difference between

average grading of the original appreciation (7.2) and the content manipulated version (8.5) are significant (p=0.014). The difference in appreciation of the original and the content manipulated version of audio stop 31 (Johannes Wtenbogaert) is also significant (0.04). Other found differences are not significant.

5. Results

The averages scores of all items for both German and British scores together and separated are summarized in table 6 - 8. For the concepts comprehensibility, attractiveness, recognisability, behavioural intention and appreciation the scale counts from 1 (low) to 7 (high). The grading has a scale form (1) low to (10) high. In brackets the standard deviation is noted.

Table 6

Total (N=180)	Original version (N=60)	Linguistic manipulation (N=60)	Content manipulation (N=60)
Attractiveness	6.2 *(0.74)*	6.0 *(0.97)*	5.9 *(0.83)*
Recognisability	5.7 *(1.04)*	5.7 *(1.14)*	5.5 *(0.99)*
Comprehensibility	6.2 *(1.01)*	6.2 *(0.96)*	5.9 *(1.27)*
Behavioural intention	5.4 *(1.12)*	5.4 *(1.18)*	5.4 *(1.24)*
Appreciation	5.9 *(0.71)*	5.9 *(0.84)*	5.7 *(0.74)*
Grade	7.9 *(1.57)*	8.2 *(1.50)*	7.9 *(1.48)*

Average scores German and British (5.5 = average score; (1.21) = standard deviation)

The results in table 6 indicate that differences between appreciations within the three versions are very small. The appreciation of the original and the linguistic version is both 5.9; the content manipulated version is appreciated with 5.7. The linguistic manipulated version is graded with 8.2 and the original and the content manipulated are graded both with a 7.9.

Table 7

German (N=90)	Original version (N=30)	Linguistic manipulation (N=30)	Content manipulation (N=30)
Attractiveness	6.2 *(0.56)*	5.9 *(1.14)*	5.9 *(0.85)*
Recognisability	5.6 *(1.13)*	5.4 *(1.35)*	5.3 *(1.06)*
Comprehensibility	6.1 *(1.16)*	6.0 *(1.03)*	6.1 *(1.15)*
Behavioural intention	5.4 *(1.10)*	5.3 *(1.23)*	5.4 *(1.09)*
Appreciation	5.9 *(0.63)*	5.7 *(0.98)*	5.7 *(0.71)*
Grade	7.9 *(1.52)*	8.0 *(1.75)*	8.0 *(1.39)*

Average scores German (5.5 = average score; (1.21) = standard deviation)

The appreciation of the German respondents separately (table 7) indicate that both linguistic and content manipulations are graded higher than the original (8.0) to (7.9). The British respondents (table 8) grade the content manipulated version the lowest (7.6) and the linguistic manipulated version the highest (8.3) compared to the original (7.8).

Table 8

Brits (N=90)	Original version (N=30)	Linguistic manipulation (N=30)	Content manipulation (N=30)
Attractiveness	6.2 *(0.90)*	6.2 *(0.76)*	5.9 *(0.83)*
Recognisability	5.8 *(0.95)*	5.9 *(0.81)*	5.6 *(0.92)*
Comprehensibility	6.3 *(0.86)*	6.4 *(0.83)*	5.7 *(1.38)*
Behavioural intention	5.4 *(1.15)*	5.5 *(1.14)*	5.5 *(1.38)*
Appreciation	6.0 *(0.79)*	6.1 *(0.63)*	5.7 *(0.79)*
Grade	7.8 *(1.65)*	8.3 *(1.21)*	7.6 *(1.56)*

Average scores British (5.5 = average score (1.21) = standard deviation)

The appreciations of the separated audio stops show more remarkable differences that counter balance the overall appreciations. Summarising these results from Tempel (2008b) it can be stated that with regard to audio stop 30 ('Jeremiah') the content manipulated version is appreciated the highest, regarding audio stop 31 ('Johannes Wtenbogaert') the original ranks as the highest appreciated version and finally, audio stop 33 ('Het Joodse Bruidje') the linguistic manipulated version is the most appreciated. These results count for both German and British respondents.

6. Conclusion

This study provides detailed insights in the development and translation of multilingual audio tours. Audio tours have the potential to diversify museum visitors, and increase the number of museum visits exponentially. In the frame work of this study an experiment was conducted in which German and British respondents were asked to assess cultural and linguistic adjustments of three audio stops of the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum audio tour on the Dutch Golden Age. Based on the results of this experiment the following conclusions can be formulated:

The expectation that both linguistic and content manipulations would be appreciated more than the original version can neither be confirmed nor rejected. The results of the difference in appreciation between the three audio tour versions are not significant. However, a trend can be observed that the linguistic manipulated versions are slightly

preferred and the content manipulated versions are appreciated slightly less than the original.

Since both German and British respondents had to assess audio stops that were adapted to their culture, no specific differences between the two groups were expected. The study shows a small, though not significant, difference between the two groups. This difference ought to be ascribed to the appreciation of the texts by the British respondents. Their appreciation was deviant from the overall scores. The hypothesis is to be rejected.

Since the three different audio stops belonging to three different paintings were manipulated using the same method, no differences were expected. When the results are considered for each audio stop separately, however, it appears that in each case another version is appreciated more. Since the sample group for each individual version of the audio stop is small (n=10) only two results were significant. The hypothesis is to be rejected, but the differentiated variances in appreciation of the separate audio stops do explain the fact that overall appreciation shows only small differences.

The expectation that cultural and linguistic adjustments would be appreciated by the German and British respondents can not be confirmed on the basis of the small samples that have been studied in this investigation. The differences are marginal, but increase when the individual audio stops are analysed separately. This indicates that the adjustments could have an effect on the appreciation of the text in a further study.

7. Discussion

A possible explanation for non significant results of the experiment could be found in what is called the 'ceiling-effect' (Mook 2001). According to this effect, the appreciation of the respondents for the original versions of the audio tour is already so high that the appreciation of adjusted versions is hardly measurable. First of all, this indicates that the German and British respondents highly esteem the audio tour that Antenna Audio has developed together with the Rijksmuseum. However, does that mean that cultural and linguistic adaptations are pointless? Some methodological considerations of the experiment should be discussed.

The experiment points out that the three audio stops were appreciated differently. The differences found signify, however, a trend that the linguistic adjustments are appreciated more and the content adjustments are appreciated less than the original version of the text. Moreover, if looking solely at the individual stops the differences in appreciation are bigger and the results show that each stop has a different version ranking with the highest score. This implies that cultural adapted translations do have an effect on the appreciation by different lingua-cultures but that the size of the sample group was not big enough to receive significant results. Another possible explanation could be that the paintings themselves were appreciated differently and, consequently, these assessments have effected the appreciation of the audio tour. Another explanation is that the manipulations concerning the linguistic structure and concerning the content were not consistent. With respect to the linguistic manipulation, other text characteristics could have influenced the appreciation. In respect of content manipulation, more art historical expertise would have increased the eloquence of these manipulations. Although the questionnaire was developed with all kinds of care, the internal consistency was not optimal for testing the *comprehensibility*, *attractiveness*, and *recognisability* in equivalent manner for both cultural groups. Pretesting the questionnaire could have avoided these problems. These considerations could be elaborated in future research in which on larger scale cultural adjustments could be tested.

The results of the investigation have been discucced with the creative manager of Antenna Audio. It was agreed that the conclusions reveal the problems of functional equivalence of overt and covert translations in general and systematize recurrent problems in the translation process of audio tours. For instance, text writers regularly use idiomatic phrases or presuppose implicit cultural knowledge. As a possible guideline for future projects less differentiated translations are seen as a possible prevention of these comprehension problems. In actual fact, the company seems to be more inclined to choose for more standardization of *realia* and less localization regarding translations of audio tours.

From a theoretical perspective this study reveals insights in theory on *cultural filter* and *functional equivalence* in translation studies (House 2000). Since the multilingual audio tour addresses highly educated international tourists, the academic education standards of the target group could be of more importance than the differences that the cultural filter predicts respecting communicative expectations and competences of

different lingua-cultures. Furthermore, this study on audio tours enriches the insight in the difference between covert and overt translations. Although the audio tour seems to be an overt translation since the user has to choose a certain language when buying a tour, this communicative awareness on the overt character of the translation disappears during listening of the audio tour. As shown in Antenna Audio's guidelines the direct address of the user is aimed at avoiding listeners to reflect upon anything else than the information provided, e.g. the (quality of) translation.

Since the *dilation of the speech situation* (Bührig, House & ten Thije 2009) is a prime feature of translation, it is important for future studies to address the target-oriented reflective feature of all translatory constellations and their relation to the processes of reflection upon functional equivalence. In actual fact, the dimension of content-orientation versus addressee-orientation can be interpreted as facilitating understanding via either explicating knowledge for the reader or leaving the reader to infer knowledge on his own. Further research could address the process of understanding by the L2 recipient using the theory on dilated speech situation.

Notes

Notes on contributors

Marisa Tempel has a BA in Media Studies and an MA in Communication Studies from Utrecht University and is currently working as a freelance writing and editing professional focusing on language, (intercultural) communication and translatory processes. E-mail: marisa.tempel@gmail.com

Jan D. ten Thije is researcher at the Utrecht Institute of Linguistics and lecturer at the Department of Dutch at Utrecht University. E-mail: j.d.tenthije@uu.nl, www.jantenthije.eu

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