Sign Language Interpreting in Theatre: Using the Human Body to Create Pictures of the Human Soul

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Using the Human Body to Create Pictures of the Human Soul

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Introduction

In his critique of Descartes' philosophy of body-mind dualism, Wittgenstein asserts that the intellect is not a separate entity from the body; instead "the human body is the best picture of the human soul." This concept of body-mind connectivity is one that I have repeatedly encountered during my doctoral research on the participation of Deaf people in theatre: as the foundation of several theories of acting, as a way of describing the embodied nature of sign languages, and as an explanation of strong actor-spectator interaction (in the latter case supported by theory drawn from neurological science).

This article explores literature from Theatre Studies, Translation and Interpreting Studies and Performance Studies within which body-mind connectivity appears to be important, and aims to identify connections between them. It is triggered by my own research into sign language interpreted performances (SLIPs). I will commence with a brief introduction to Deaf culture and Deaf theatre, before describing SLIPs as they are delivered in the UK. Subsequently I will discuss the creation and performance of theatre translation in sign language as it occurs within the UK SLIP paradigm. Specific challenges discussed are the difficulty of creating a functionally equivalent target text, the placement of the interpreter in a performance space separate from the actors, and the impact of existing interpreting theory on the way that target text is performed. Given the absence of a suitable model for sign language translation/interpreting in theatre within the field of Interpreting Studies, I will subsequently explore heuristically whether this practice can more usefully be viewed within a theoretical framework drawn from Theatre Studies. By making comparisons between acting theory and sign language linguistics, and supporting my argument with theory developed in the field of neurology, I will aim to conceptualize a model for theatrical interpreting that might deliver the translation more effectively during an SLIP.

In conclusion I will generalize my arguments to spoken language theatre translation, and consider what can be learnt from an understanding of the challenges posed by SLIPs if the insights gained are subsequently applied to all theatre translation.

Deaf Culture

Before starting a discussion of SLIPs, it is necessary to make the distinction between the concepts of Deaf and deaf. The latter refers to all people who have some form of audiological hearing loss, be they pre-lingually deaf, deafened in later life (as a result of accident, illness or injury), or are losing their hearing (becoming hard of hearing) as part of the natural aging process. This paper does not however concern this entire population, but rather the much smaller subset of deaf people who are by convention referred to as Deaf (Ladd). These are

people who self-identify culturally as Deaf and are proud to belong to a community that perceives the world physically and visually: they talk not of 'hearing loss' but 'Deaf gain' (Bauman and Murray).

Deaf culture is described extensively in the literature (see for example Ladd; Lane; Lane, Hoffmeister and Bahan; Padden and Humphries*;* Sacks; Sparrow; Valentine and Skelton) and for the purposes of this paper I will not explore it further. Neither will I discuss other perspectives which deny the reality of Deaf culture, such as those that view Deafness though the lens of the medical model of disability (Miller, Vandome and McBrewster) as merely an audiological phenomenon. Rather I will accept the model presented by Deaf writers and academics as paradigmatic for Deaf people, and recognize both that Deaf culture is a genuine social phenomenon created by the actions of Deaf people, and that self-definition as a distinct culture is a fundamental right of the Deaf community (Corker).

Whilst in practice the capitalized term Deaf refers to a socially and culturally diverse group of people (a phenomenon also discussed extensively in the literature already cited), it is broadly accepted by Deaf communities that within their diversity they all constitute linguistic minorities (Ladd): central to the expression of Deaf culture is the use of a sign language as a first language. Sign languages were only recognized in the literature in the second half of the twentieth century (Stokoe in the US and Brennan in the UK), and by governments even later: the British Sign Language (Scotland) Act, which expects publicly funded organizations to be working towards providing information in British Sign Language, was only passed into law in 2015 and there is at the time of writing no similar requirement in the rest of the UK. Despite this late recognition, sign languages are now understood to be real languages, with their own linguistic and syntactical structures expressed on the hands, face and body (Kyle and Woll; Sutton-Spence and Woll). Of particular relevance to this essay, sign language communication is produced physically and perceived visually.

Typically a sign language has some relationship with a particular spoken language, not least because there is no easily accessible written form of any sign language (Conley), so written communication defaults to the language of the surrounding hearing community. It should be noted however that such relationships are not always unique or distinct: British Sign Language and, for example, American Sign Language both have a relationship to English but are themselves linguistically very different. Conversely, American Sign Language shares linguistic features with *La Langue de Signes Française*, but the latter's spoken language relationship is with French. Importantly, then, sign languages are not merely signed versions of a spoken language; and, as I shall explore later, translation between a signed and a spoken language is not simply a case of exchanging words for signs or vice versa.

The absence of written texts in sign language has led to the Deaf community being described (using a term borrowed from anthropology and ethnology) as an 'oral' culture (Peters), or, as Leith would have it, as a 'corp-oral' culture in which cultural knowledge is passed on

through embodied language, be that spoken or signed, rather than through written language. Furthermore, in the Deaf community, cultural values are typically transmitted horizontally, through peer-to-peer storytelling (Avon), as ninety percent of Deaf people are born to hearing parents and cannot acquire Deaf norms and values vertically from older generations (Padden and Humphries). Accordingly the main locus for the acquisition of culture has not been the home, as in other 'corp-oral' cultures, but rather the residential Deaf school, where skill in storytelling has been a significant marker of leadership within Deaf society (Atherton).

Deaf Theatre

Such storytellers maintain their leadership roles into adult life (Haggerty), and in Deaf clubs storytelling becomes more sophisticated, developing along the performance continuum (Wilson) from conversational to platform storytelling, and eventually transforming into Deaf theatre, a central feature of Deaf culture. Miles and Fant define Deaf theatre as that which is performed by Deaf actors, using a signed language, and which draws on issues of Deaf cultural experience for its subject matter. Stylistically the variety of forms (poetry, monologues, comic skits) which combine to create a piece of Deaf theatre has been described as a "raucous vaudeville" (Padden and Humphries); Bienvenu and Bouchauveau outline in more detail the particular forms of Deaf humour which are commonplace in American Deaf theatre; and Peters outlines the creative use of sign language in what she calls "indigenous Deaf theatre," and the strong actor-spectator interaction that this creates, a subject to which I will return.

Despite its importance to the Deaf community, Deaf theatre is in decline. Amateur participation was commonplace in the traditional Deaf spaces provided by schools and clubs in the twentieth century (Atherton), but these are gradually closing down, being inexorably replaced by a virtual Deaf space within social media (Valentine and Skelton). Professional Deaf theatre had its heyday in the late 1900s: in the USA, the National Theatre of the Deaf was founded in 1967 by David Hays and Bernard Bragg and toured widely throughout the USA and abroad, influencing the establishment of many national companies around the world (Baldwin; Bragg and Bergman; Hays), but now its main activity is as a small children's theatre company (National Theatre of the Deaf). In the UK, the Royal National Institute for the Deaf Mime Group, which had been established in 1961, professionalized in 1974 to become the British Theatre of the Deaf (BToD). But despite its early success it survived only until 1977 when political tension between the Deaf and hearing communities (BToD was led by Pat Keysell, a hearing director), and finally funding cuts, led to its demise (Lee; Stewart). Articles in the grey literature show that attempts were made in the early 2000s by Shape Arts in London to reinvent a Deaf National Theatre in the UK (Fellowes; Fenlon), but apparently inadequate funding over the longer term made this unachievable.[1]

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[1] This information was shared in a private conversation on 13 January 2017 by Allison Pottinger, stage manager and sign language interpreter, who was working with Shape Arts during the period that a National Deaf Theatre was proposed and developed. Certainly the articles cited suggest that there was sufficient support and enthusiasm for the project within the Deaf community, and that external features were the cause of its demise.

Currently there are only a small number of companies in the UK creating work with Deaf actors, including Deafinitely Theatre and The Deaf and Hearing Ensemble. Their work tends to be bilingual (British Sign Language and English) and is often pigeon-holed as 'alternative' theatre: certainly it doesn't have the status or funding of 'mainstream' companies. To my knowledge, in the UK only Jenny Sealey at Graeae Theatre Company is managing to bring Deaf performance into the mainstream, with recent co-productions with Dundee Rep and the Royal Exchange in Manchester that have prioritized accessibility for D/deaf, disabled and visually impaired audiences (Graeae Theatre Company).[2]

Sign Language Interpreted Performances
Within an environment in which Deaf theatre has a diminished status, the current paradigm for engaging Deaf people in mainstream theatre in the UK is the sign language interpreted performance (SLIP). This is described by Rocks as the simultaneous interpreting of spoken language theatre into sign language for Deaf spectators, although for the purposes of this essay it can usefully be described as the simultaneous performance by an interpreter of a sign language translation. Because of the lack of clarity in the definition I will refer to it throughout as theatrical translation/interpreting to distinguish it from spoken language translation.

SLIPs in the UK are typically provided in proscenium arch theatres with the aim of providing accessibility to Deaf patrons (Simpson). The standard model used is 'platform interpreting,' outlined in detail by Gebron, in which the interpreter is positioned in a downstage corner or on the auditorium floor, deliberately spatially separated from the stage action. The absence of interaction with the actors means that little rehearsal is required, hence the technique is cheap; and the use of a separate space is thought to minimize distraction for hearing audience members and actors (although this is often not the case [Conley]).

Given that SLIPs represent the current paradigm for encouraging Deaf people to participate in theatre, in my research I have attempted to identify the challenges presented by SLIPs; and in problematizing the processes involved in creating and delivering SLIPs, to discover any potential solutions, with a view to providing effective and meaningful accessibility. This is particularly important as Deaf theatre had set a high standard in the achievement of what Fischer-Lichte might describe as a Deaf aesthetic in theatrical performance; SLIPs have effectively replaced Deaf theatre but current attendance by Deaf spectators is lower than might be expected (Lee), and this raises the question of whether that Deaf aesthetic has been lost.

The specific challenges presented by SLIPs that I will explore here will concern the creation of a dynamically equivalent translation, the space within which that translation is performed, and the inadequacies of interpreting theory to provide an effective model for theatrical translation/interpreting.

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[2] The situation is somewhat better in other countries. In the US, for example, the theatre company Deaf West has recently had a successful run of *Spring Awakening* on Broadway; and in Paris, the International Visual Theatre programmes an annual season of Deaf and bilingual theatre.

Translation Challenges

There is no clear theoretical basis on which to ground translation practice within theatrical interpreting. Translation and Interpreting Studies considers as 'translation' the act of producing a target written text from a written source text. Such translation events typically meet other conditions: they happen in a different time and space from the creation of the source text, and the target text has an on-going existence beyond the timeframe of the translation event. By contrast, 'interpreting' is described as translation from speech to speech, producing an ephemeral target text within the same spatial and temporal boundaries as the production of the source text. (For an introduction to theory and practice in Translation Studies, see Munday and Venuti; corresponding volumes, one written by Pöchhacker and a second edited by Pöchhacker and Shlesinger, provide a similar grounding in Interpreting Studies). Sign language interpreting in theatre falls between these two theoretical frameworks. The source text is available in written form before it is performed as speech and, as we shall see, an accurate rendition of the sign language target text requires advance preparation in a separate time and space from the performance; but that rendition occurs simultaneously with the delivery of the spoken source and the output has disappeared even before the curtains fall at the end of the performance. Given these conditions, we can confidently claim that theatre interpreting is neither uniquely interpreting nor translating. (Wurm, focussing on the creation of a sign language video 'translated' from a written English source text, gives a fuller description of the blurring of theoretical boundaries in this area of practice).

Turner and Pollitt recognize this inadequacy of theoretical specificity in their review of theatrical translation/interpreting in practice, and suggest that theatre interpreters need the skills of literary translators as well as of interpreters. They and others (see for example Ganz Horwitz) identify a number of challenges in producing the target; I will use (and to a degree extend) definitions proposed by Jakobson to categorize these challenges, and to compare them to spoken language theatre translation.

For Jakobson, inter-lingual translation is the production of a target text in a different language from the source text. Problems posed by inter-lingual translation are not unique to translation into sign language, as examining the opening lines from *Richard III* (Shakespeare) will demonstrate: "Now is the winter of our discontent/Made glorious by this son of York" (1304). The couplet's impact is achieved by the wordplay offered by the fifth word of the second line: when spoken it suggests not only the hereditary bloodline of the 'son' but also the radiance and brilliance of the 'sun.' The double meaning is effective alone but is also reminiscent of the Yorkist mythology surrounding the Battle of Mortimer's Cross in 1461, when the illusion of three suns in the sky was perceived as an omen for the three sons of York. Furthermore, the meanings of son/sun also contribute to the couplet's over-arching visual imagery of the changing of the seasons from darkness to light. So a single signifier designates two distinct concepts which

lead us to different layers of meaning: it is unlikely that in translation a single word (or sign) could signify the same two concepts. Derrida underscores common sense: the literal translation of a homophone is impossible without losing the additional impact of the implied second sign.

Further translation challenges arise from the form of the source text: the question of how to translate rhythm, metre or rhyme needs consideration. The multiple problems faced in the translation of poetry or the dense prose found in dramatic texts are well represented in the literature and I will not explore them further here; see Lefevere, Nabokov or Pound for further discussion.

A second translation process proposed by Jakobson is inter-semiotic translation, that is translation between different modes of perception, for example a written text used as the source from which a piece of music is produced as the target text. This is relevant to theatrical performance, which is more than merely the rendition of a written text as speech. The staging of a text usually incorporates additional auditory information through music, sound effects and accents, which require inter-semiotic translation into sign language as well as potentially a degree of cultural exchange (sound and phenomena which rely on it or are represented by it, for example a door-bell, do not form part of the experience of many Deaf people). To provide a concrete example, in the performance under scrutiny in my own research on SLIPs, a character reveals that he is a spy by dropping his fake English accent and reverting to his more natural German accent: how is the interpreter to provide this information for Deaf spectators when the dialogue doesn't explicitly state what is implied by the accent change?

Finally, the specific nature of translating from a spoken language to a sign language, and performing the source and target texts simultaneously, creates one more challenge which can be seen as being both inter-lingual (between the two languages) and inter-semiotic (between the different modalities primarily used by those languages). The visual and embodied nature of sign languages gives them a very different syntactical structure from that of spoken languages spoken languages: ideas that take time to express when spoken might be communicated quickly when signed, and vice versa. During a live performance this can lead to time lag or even significant omissions in the translation.

These problems with sign language translation in theatre make it clear that in common with spoken languages the complexity and density of a theatrical text require a literary translation strategy that aims for what Nida calls dynamic equivalence, where the aim is for the spectators of the sign language translation to respond to it in the same way (and in theatre at the same time) as the hearing audience. The additional inter-semiotic challenges created by a translation into sign language suggest that any attempt to create a literal word-for-word or even sentence-for-sentence target text is unachievable: Rocks suggests instead that an entire scene should be considered the smallest unit of meaning. While this approach can be theoretically justified within Translation Studies, as 'imitation' (Schleiermacher) or even 'tradaptation' (an approach mixing translation and adaptation) (Lieblein), for the practicing interpreter it poses several challenges: there is often

insufficient preparation time; she is rendering the target text simultaneously with the production of the source by the actors; and she is unlikely to have the necessary training or experience to create such a literary translation (at the time of writing, theatrical translation/interpreting is not recognized in the UK as a separate specialty within the sign language interpreting profession and there is no requirement for specific training). In this high-pressure situation it is not surprising that word-for-word translations are not uncommon, even sometimes word-for-word translations of idiomatic phrases that are meaningless in the target culture (Rocks).

Problems with Interpreter Placement

Notwithstanding translation challenges, the study of SLIPs further reveals that the platform approach already described isn't particularly effective in making the translation accessible for Deaf spectators. As the interpreter is located in a different space from the actors, some theatre interpreters think that they are intrinsically ineffective because of what Bennet calls the ping-pong effect: constantly looking backwards and forwards from stage to interpreter. Depledge goes further in his organizational report for *Signed Performances in Theatre*, claiming that only 35% of Deaf spectators were able to say that they understood everything that happened in a performance (although it's not clear from the report how he generated his data or how it compares with hearing spectators?).

In my own recent research into SLIPs, one unanimous theme that emerged from my Deaf spectator focus group was the extent of the information that was missed as a result of the placement of the interpreter in a separate performance space from the actors (irrespective of the quality of the interpreter's translation). A typical participant response was: "I feel I picked up half the performance and half the interpreter, but I had to take that and create something myself. It's not good. It wasn't clear." The problem is best clarified by an example. In the performance under scrutiny, a character appears to be shot through the heart at the end of act one, and falls down as if dead. He had, however, previously placed a book in his inside jacket pocket some time earlier, and so is not killed: the book is thick and blocks the path of the bullet, so he is merely stunned. All my Deaf respondents missed this crucial piece of information, which was conveyed only visually from the stage; they were watching the interpreter at the crucial moment and the incident was not mentioned in the dialogue (and hence not rendered in the interpreter's translation). When the character was still alive, or rather (from their perspective) resurrected at the start of act two, the Deaf spectators were unable to comprehend the plot.

This raises a further question relating to inter-semiotic translation at an SLIP. The staging of a written text also conveys information to spectators visually, but as we have seen, for Deaf spectators this is provided in a different space from the translation. How does the interpreter build cues into her translation that signal to Deaf spectators that they should shift their focus to the stage to watch the action? Or should she attempt in some manner to convey the visual information created on stage within her own translation?

The confusion caused by placing the interpreter in her own isolated performance space can be avoided by integrating the interpreter more into the action, so that the translation can be watched at the same time as the actors (Gebron). Such approaches are more common in the US (although not on Broadway) and in Australia (SPiT; MacDougall), but they require an element of preparation in rehearsal with the actors, and are thus much more expensive. Integrated interpreting is uncommon in the UK, especially in mainstream theatre, and as a result a typical SLIP is effectively two performances of the same play: one onstage, performed by the actors; and a second, the translation, performed in a different performance space by a single interpreter. The comparison with spoken language translation of theatre, where the translation is usually provided in advance and rehearsed by the actors, is invidious. Even in the case of simultaneous translation, the spoken translation is delivered through headsets or similar technology in much the same way as audio description for the visually impaired. In either scenario, there is no requirement for the audience to divide their attention between the different spaces in which the performance and its translation are placed.

Challenges Provoked by a Lack of Theoretical Definition

The lack of professional recognition of theatrical interpreting as a distinct specialty is symptomatic of the inadequacy of theoretical models in Interpreting Studies to describe theatrical interpreting accurately. Superficially it most closely seems to resemble conference interpreting (Pöchhacker): the placement of the interpreter in the stage corner at both types of event suggests a similarity, as does the requirement for simultaneous interpreting. Also of relevance here is the so-called conduit model of interpreting, wherein the interpreter aims to be 'invisible' (Angelelli) within the interaction, passively providing as accurate an interpretation as possible. Hsieh, Ju and Kong claim that if this model were accurate, interpreters would be expected to operate as mere translation machines without bringing to bear any of their own personality, which is unlikely; and many writers (for example (Angelelli; Llewellyn-Jones and Lee; Mason) recognise the active advocacy role played by interpreters in different settings. In theatre, however, any attempt to support or broker communication cannot occur and interpreters find it easy to default to the passivity of the conduit model.

The reliance on these models, conference and conduit, is exemplified by a private conversation I had with a theatrical interpreter colleague who believes that she should go even further, being not only theoretically 'invisible' but also in practice a little less visible in her rendition than the performance of the actors, so that she doesn't present a distraction. This contradicts the views of some writers, who have commented on the importance of theatrical interpreters developing performance skills (Ruane; Gebron; MacDougall); and furthermore is in opposition to the views of the Deaf spectators in my study, who feel that the interpreter should match the actors onstage: "The interpreter should match the theatre… that will help explain the story."

Furthermore she should maximize her use of the embodied features of sign language: "It needs more facial expression, movement, mime." Specifically, they do not accept the conduit

model as appropriate to theatrical interpreting: "It's not a conference style, for plays you need more body language."

In Search of Other Theoretical Models

If the conduit model and a conference style of interpreting are not appropriate for theatrical translation/interpreting, then perhaps the other commonly described theoretical model in Interpreting Studies will be more appropriate. I refer to community or public service interpreting, the model used, for example, in health care settings. This model typically involves face to face contact in a two-way conversation which may need an element of communicative support (for example repetition or clarification) to make the interaction effective (Pöchhacker). Turner and Pollitt discuss in some detail how theatrical interpreting differs substantially from the community model: the text is relayed uni-directionally to spectators, no response is required or expected, and there are no opportunities for the interpreter to check understanding by the spectators or to use strategies such as repetition to support communication. In providing a theoretical basis for theatrical interpreting, this is no more suitable than the conference model.

If the main theoretical models of Interpreting Studies are inadequate when describing theatrical translation/interpreting, then perhaps we can explore other fields to find useful models that might support the practicing interpreter. To undertake such an exploration I will use as my starting point one of the topics raised by my research participants: the inadequate use of the embodied features of sign language in the translation.

The philosophical approach of Merleau-Ponty, experiential phenomenology, is helpful in this exploration. Like Wittgenstein's, it is built on a rejection of Descartes' body-mind dualism and the alternative understanding that intention, action and perception all happen in both the mind and the body at the same time. In Merleau-Ponty's view we do not understand the world only objectively as an abstract intellectual construct (as Descartes proposed); rather we are bodies embedded in the world who also perceive the world subjectively through our senses. Furthermore, much of our intellectual understanding occurs through the creation of memory from repeated embodied experience.

For Merleau-Ponty our understanding of others also comes from perception, in this case of their bodily actions. From these we build an intellectual construct in our minds, but only in retrospect, as that construct is predicated on repeated bodily experience. The same is true of emotions: anger, for example, is not an abstract intellectual concept, rather it is first perceived through a number of physiological changes on and in the body. Merleau-Ponty goes further to state that such an emotion can more accurately be thought of as existing in the space between the self and the other: it acquires full meaning only when expressed on one body and perceived (through the reactions it causes) by the body of another. Subsequently, it is possible to understand the anger intellectually, but only in retrospect following cognitive processing of what happened on the body.

Phenomenology would seem to be particularly relevant to theatre, where emotions and the body are directly perceived by audiences during performance. Theoreticians of acting through the twentieth century (for example Stanislavski; Meyerhold; Grotowski) have increased our understanding of the link between the body and the mind in creating performance; and Artaud called for actors to cultivate the emotions in their bodies. The apotheosis of these developments in Western theatre is psychophysical acting (Zarrilli) which draws on acting styles – such as Kathkali in India and Noh theatre in Japan – that have not been influenced by Cartesian body-mind dualism. The psychophysical approach is a process designed from the actor's perspective, giving them the tools to express intention and emotion on the body in a manner that creates a theatrical world available in the moment of its experience/perception for both actors and audience. Bodily experience is shared (as described in the example of anger given above) and from this, meaning can be constructed from retrospective cognition.

The relevance to sign language translation/interpreting in theatre can be seen when comparisons are made between the aims of psychophysical theory for actors and the bodily experience of sign language users. The body is a key part of the space occupied by a sign language text rather than merely a vehicle for producing speech (Bauman), and the text only acquires full meaning in the space between the body on which it is produced and another body which perceives it. Furthermore, emotion expressed on (rather than described by) the body is a recognized linguistic feature of sign languages (Sutton-Spence and Woll). Sign language can thus be considered a tool for expressing intention and emotion on the body, which suggests that sign language storytelling and by inference theatrical interpreting can be aligned with psychophysical acting techniques. This acting theory might then be used as a conceptual model for theatrical translator/interpreters that supersedes the conference and conduit models of interpreting and provides a useful theoretical basis for them to create a translation that maximises the physical features of sign language and to deliver it in a manner which emphasises the body in performance.

Neuroscience and the Mirror Neuron System
The hypothesis that actors and theatrical translator/interpreters should foreground their corporeality (Fischer-Lichte) in performance is supported by recent theories developed in the field of neuroscience. McConachie explores the concept of an actor-spectator interaction created phenomenologically and pre-cognitively, as discussed above, but takes the additional step of providing supporting arguments based on the function of a part of the brain called the Mirror Neuron System (MNS). The MNS is activated as a response to seeing actions performed by others (Rizzolatti et al.); it seems to mimic the neurological action of the other without causing the action in the body of the self. Importantly, the response of the MNS occurs without, and faster than cognition (Gallese, Keysers and Rizzolatti): as it is not of the mind, we can consider its function as embodied perception.

The MNS has been linked to language development (Rizzolatti and Arbib; Rizzolatti and Craighero), which I will not explore in any detail here; and to our instinctive understanding of

others, or empathy (Gallese and Goldman). It seems that fifty years ahead of the neurological evidence, Wittgenstein was right: the actions you carry out in your body do provide an insight into your soul. As conceptual reasoning is not required for an MNS response, we can assume that empathy is triggered by bodily perception before we can cognitively create in the mind an intellectual construct of what we are seeing. McConachie applies these ideas to theatre audiences, suggesting that through the MNS, spectators rapidly experience (phenomenologically) an empathic response to the embodied aspects of a performance and only later construct meaning from spoken language, which relies on slower cognitive processes for its comprehension.

To return to acting theory, this further supports the hypothesis that techniques which maximize physicality in their communication of emotion, such as psychophysical acting, will produce a stronger actor-spectator interaction. Similarly, the interpreter who uses a language style that maximizes the embodied features of sign language when performing her translation will more effectively engage her Deaf spectators than one who falls back on the traditional conduit model.

Implications for Spoken Language Translation in Theatre
The importance of physical and visual communication has more general implications for the translation of theatre between spoken languages. A good literary translation of a play is not enough even if the form, content and meaning are effectively translated from the source to the target language and receiving culture; it is also necessary to produce a text that suggests physicality and theatricality. My arguments support the view of Deprats that a translated play should be written in such a way that it demands the performativity of the actor's body; because all theatre translation is inter-semiotic (Delabastita), the multi-modal nature of performance should be evident even in the single mode of the written translation if it is to be effective in producing a strong actor-spectator interaction during performance.

To illustrate my point I will turn to the example of Shakespeare. His plays contain many instructions for action over and above stage directions; the dialogue is replete with words and phrases that trigger physicality through rhetorical gesture, such as greetings, dances, fights and intimate acts (Snyder). Furthermore his choice of words demands a particularly physical approach to speaking, a choice which was linked to his intimate knowledge of the buildings he was working in: recent experiments at the Globe Theatre in London (Rylance) have shown that the only way to make yourself heard in such a venue is to adopt a very physical approach to delivering the text, which as we have seen also contributes to a strong empathic response from the audience and thereby a stronger actor-spectator relationship.

For a translator, considering these aspects of theatre practice alongside language choices and cultural issues suggests an approach to translation more in the style of imitation than paraphrase; it seems to me unavoidable that a good theatre translator will adopt a significant element of authorship of the finished text, producing a 'tradaptation' (Lieblein). Such an approach is already widely accepted in Shakespearean translation, where the production of the

target text is widely considered not only as an inter-lingual but also as an inter-temporal and inter-cultural process (Bassnett); see for example Lieblein, McClure, Modenessi, or Orkin for specific examples of such inter-cultural 'tradaptations.'

Conclusion

Neither conference nor community models are appropriate for the conceptualization of theatrical interpreting: the latter is too interactive to be relevant; and the former relies on the conduit model which leads to a muted rendition of the translation. This doesn't meet Deaf spectators' expectations of a performed translation that fully exploits the embodied features of sign languages.

Psychophysical acting theories build on the phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty to produce a technique of acting that relies on emotional communication through physical action which is perceived bodily by spectators. The similarities between psychophysical acting and sign language storytelling are inescapable, and suggest that a model for theatrical translation/interpreting might usefully be drawn from Theatre Studies. Furthermore, theories developed in neurological science following the discovery of the Mirror Neuron System support a claim that a highly physical sign language translation of a play effects a stronger actor-spectator interaction than one rendered more passively. Further work is now required to establish whether such ideas can indeed be used in the development of a new theoretical model for the theatrical translator/interpreter.

Spoken language translations should also benefit from promoting such physicality. Even if a translation goes beyond mere word-for-word literality, if it remains focussed on the written text its performance will be predominantly speech based, giving audiences an experience of the mind from which they can cognitively analyze the characters and their actions. But what of bodily perception and the pre-conscious empathic response that comes from experiencing onstage physicality? Our studies suggest that spoken language translators of dramatic texts have something to learn from theatre without spoken word—physical theatre, sign language interpreted theatre and Deaf theatre—because it's only by providing the triggers on the actor's body for an empathic response in the body of the spectator that theatre can achieve Wittgenstein's true picture of the human soul.

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