

“Pompous Nothings” and Condescension in the Romanian Retranslation of *Pride and Prejudice*

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Abstract. *The present article aims at providing a textual analysis of formulaic language in eight Romanian versions of Jane Austen’s novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. The article investigates strategies in the translation of such constructions by looking at examples culled from the discourse of characters such as Mr. Collins, or Lady Catherine de Bourgh, whose speech patterns are known to be rife with formulaic language, meant to serve as reinforcement for (im)politeness. The corpus indicates that a strategy of equivalence for formulaic expressions in translation is the reason why overlapping occurs in multiple target texts. Thus, overlapping might be used as a tool for identification in the case of familiar language. I conclude that the overlapping noticed in the retranslation of formulaic expressions is not due to creative appropriation, rather it is a phenomenon dictated by the very presence of formulaic language in the source text.*

Keywords: *equivalence; formulaic expressions; familiar language; novel language; overlapping; retranslation;*

Introduction

The present article strives to combine two levels of analysis: pragmastylistics and retranslation studies. By analyzing speech patterns of fictional characters and their rendition in multiple versions, the article attempts to offer a broader view of strategic use of formulaicity, namely of “familiar” language as opposed to “novel” language, in translation.

The article thus aims at investigating the translation of what in the literature is known under the name of “formulaic” phrases. My approach is text-based, focusing on extant Romanian versions of Jane Austen’s well-known novel, *Pride and Prejudice*. I am interested in looking at the phenomenon of lexical overlapping (Van Poucke 15) in retranslation as a tool of identification for formulaicity. As pointed out in the literature (Wray 158), defining and identifying formulaic expressions has proved to be an onerous task to linguists. In support of her statement, Wray 180 discusses as many as eleven diagnostic criteria for identifying formulaic expressions and quotes a number of parallel definitions for formulaic structures. Consider the following definition: a formulaic expression is “a sequence, continuous or discontinuous, of words or other elements, which is, or appears to be, prefabricated: that is,

stored and retrieved whole from memory at the time of use, rather than being subject to generation or analysis by the language grammar” (Wray 2002: 9)

While formulaic expressions have been tackled from the perspective of first and second language teaching and of neurolinguistics (Wray 2008, Sidtis 2021) there are hardly any investigations conducted from the perspective of retranslation studies. My paper will thus look at how various types of such structures fare in translation: to what degree they are identifiable by translators and to what strategies translators resort so as to render them in their target texts. My intuition is that a considerable part of the lexical overlapping that occurs between retranslations has something to do with such “prefabricated”, recurrent structures in the fictional text. If things are so, it means that retranslations can be used, in their turn, as a diagnostic for establishing formulaicity and can be employed as an additional tool of identification by linguists.

From the perspective of retranslation studies, the current study makes use of the concept of translational intertextuality, a notion discussed in Zhang & Ma (2018). The idea that retranslations might “borrow from” or “build on” a first translation is not new in the literature. In this respect, Koskinen (2018: 320) provides an excellent summary, quoting proposals made by scholars such as Racz (2013) or Eoyang (1999). A retranslation might be in a relation of “recurrence” with its predecessor(s), by creatively incorporating previous versions. A second possibility is “allusion”, the situation in which a retranslation complements its predecessor(s) by “creative opposition”. A third possible situation is when the retranslator appropriates a previous version and pretends it is an original creation. Zhang & Ma build on this proposal, focusing on a textual analysis of the first two possibilities. Their study illustrates creative appropriation in retranslation by identifying textual clues at a morphosyntactic and lexical level. They refer to creative appropriation as intertextuality in retranslation, which can be achieved either by “filiation”, or by “dissidence”. Thus, filiation is represented by “textual similarities that reflect a filiation stance from one translation towards another” (Zhang & Ma 580), while “dissidence” is understood as “textual differences that indicate one translation is made to distinguish from or even to compete against another” (Zhang & Ma 581). No mention is made of “uncreative appropriation”, the third possibility discussed in Koskinen 320.

The present article makes use of Zhang and Ma’s framework while investigating nine Romanian versions of *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen (1813). I intend to look at lexical overlapping and variation in the versions under analysis with respect to formulaic structures. I am using the terms “overlapping” and “variation” as proposed by Van Poucke (2020: 15): “overlapping” in retranslation refers to those instances of text that are identical from one target text to another, whereas “variation” refers to those instances

of text that differ from one target text to another. My expectation is that retranslators will have had no trouble identifying formulaic expressions and that a high degree of overlapping should characterize their rendition into Romanian. However, overlapping in the case of formulaic structures is likely to be dictated by necessity rather than by an intention to “borrow from” a previous target text. Also, when lexical variation does in fact override overlapping, I believe this phenomenon is due to a strategy of archaizing in the sense of Pym 107, i.e. an attempt on the part of the (re)translator to “discoursively distance” the target text from the “here and now” of the translator.

A Taxonomy of Formulaicity

Formulaic expressions are constructions that are recurrent and recognizable, that have a unitary meaning and function. My analysis is couched in the framework of Sidtis 38 and her taxonomy of “familiar expressions” (henceforth FEs). In her framework, “familiar expressions” are the superordinate category that encompasses three subordinate classes: “formulaic expressions”, “lexical bundles” and “collocations”. All these classes are characterized by two common features: familiarity and cohesion. Consider the table below:

Table 1: A Taxonomy of Familiar Expressions (Sidtis 38)

FAMILIAR EXPRESSIONS (FEs)		
Formulaic Expressions (Fs) [-literal]	Lexical Bundles (LBs) [desemanticized]	Collocations (Cs) [+literal]
Conversational speech formulas: <i>see you later!, it's a wrap, pleased to meet you</i> Idioms and proverbs: <i>she has him eating out of her hand, look before you leap</i> Expletives: <i>darn it!</i> Blessings: <i>peace be with you;</i> toasts: <i>cheers!</i> Indirect requests: <i>it's awfully warm in here, are you going to eat that?</i>	Sentence stems (sentence initials): <i>I think, I've been wondering, I was like...</i> Hedges: <i>sort of, I would guess</i> Recurrent multiword sequences: <i>at this point in time, on the other hand, as I was saying, the extend to which, on the basis of, as a result of...</i> Pause fillers: <i>uh, um, like, ya know, I mean</i> Discourse elements: <i>so, well</i>	Irreversible bi- and trinomials: <i>salt and pepper; fast and furious, red, white and blue, cease and desist</i> A large range of known expressions: <i>It's never the animal's fault, land of fire and ice, rise and shine, faster than a speeding bullet, I've learned my lesson, what can possibly go wrong?, works like a charm</i> Professional jargon (academic, work,

Memorized: lyrics, prayers, nursery rhymes, titles, literary quotes, serial speech Schemata: <i>it's a _____ and a half; down with _____!</i> (nonliteral meanings) Slogans, jingles: <i>take tea and see</i> Proper nouns		sports, hobbies, etc.) <i>the undersigned, being the parents, guardians, or persons, having the care and custody of xx, do hereby consent</i> Schemata and snowclones (literal meanings) <i>once an X, always an X; that's why they call it the X, to X or not to X, etc.</i>
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The subclasses in Table 1 are organized according to frequency and semantic content: thus, formulaic expressions are those familiar expressions that have low frequency in speech and are used non-literally (figuratively); lexical bundles are highly frequent, but semantically bleached (devoid of meaning), being used as pragmatic or as discourse markers; collocations, on the other hand, are relatively frequent and are used literally.

As explained in the literature (Tannen 223), the use of FEs in speech has an important role in communication, as it establishes common ground. More than that, by altering FEs and fiddling with their form, speakers become creative and use prefabricated language to further their interests, establish interpersonal rapport, etc.

Given the fact that conversation (whether in real life or in fiction) is peppered with FEs and that they are crucial in creating speakers' patterns, a translator is honor-bound to identify these structures and recreate these patterns in their target texts.

The Corpus

My choice of the source text *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen is motivated by the fact that, as a canonical text, it should have acquired more than one corresponding target texts in a target language. It appears that there are as many as eight versions in Romanian, plus a version that seems to have been “uncreatively appropriated”.

Thus, this particular source text is a very good candidate for testing my hypothesis regarding the overlapping of FEs in translation. Moreover, the fact that Jane Austen has created characters that excel at spouting pedantic drivel and hackneyed phrases is an added bonus. I have, to this end, chosen fragments from the speech of characters such as Mr. Collins and Lady Catherine, in the hope of seeing FEs at work either as face-saving strategies (Mr. Collins) or as face-threatening strategies (Lady Catherine). The important communicative

and pragmatic role of FEs in the speech patterns of these characters should also be captured in (re)translation.

Let us consider the information in Table 2.

Table 2: The Romanian Versions of *Pride and Prejudice*

THE PRE-COMMUNIST PERIOD	TT1 - <i>Surorile Bennet</i> 1943, translated by Gh. Nenișor, ‘Socec & Co. S.A.R.’ publishing house (republished in 1993 under the name <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> , ‘Mengel Impex – S.R.L’ publishing house, București)
THE COMMUNIST PERIOD (1947-1989)	TT2 - <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> 1968, translated by Ana Almăgeanu, ‘Editura pentru literatură universală’ in the collection <i>Clasicii literaturii universale</i> (republished in 1970 by ‘Eminescu’ in the collection: <i>Romanul de dragoste</i> (“The Love Novel”)). Republished after 1989: 1992, ‘Garamond’. 1998, ‘Rao’.
THE POST-COMMUNIST PERIOD	TT3 - <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> 1992, translated by Al. Petrea, ‘Valahia’
	TT4 - <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> 2004, translated by Anca Florea, republished in 2006, 2008 by ‘Leda Clasic’; 2013, republished in 2014, 2022, ‘Corint Books’.
	TT5 - <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> 2006, translated by Anamaria Alb, ‘Maxim Bit’ (Cluj)
	TT6 - <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> 2008, translated by Corina Ungureanu, published by ‘Aldo Press’ and republished in 2009 and 2011 by ‘Adevărul Holding’ . The same text, with the same translator, was also reproduced in 2016 by ‘Dexon’.
	TT7 - <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> 2012, translated by Mariana Bronț, published by ‘Casa Cărții’ (Oradea) – source text: an annotated American edition.
	TT8 - <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> 2016, translated by Florența Simion, published by ‘Litera’, republished in 2018, 2020
	TT9 - <i>Mândrie și prejudecată</i> 2017, translated by Graal Soft SRL, published by ‘Rao’

Interestingly enough, but not unexpectedly, the first translation of the source text was made as late as 1943, as confirmed in Burlacu et al. (359). The second version was published in 1968, 25 years later, during the communist

period, and, like many other translated books during communism, it functioned as the only available translation to many generations of readers. The research I have been conducting in retranslated Romanian literature indicates that most “communist” retranslations – which very frequently count as the second target text in the translational series – are also the most influential of the series, functioning as genuine “pseudo-originals”, to use the term proposed by Pym 107: they set the tone for the next retranslations and sometimes even block the development of the translational series for a while. An indication that a retranslation is influential can be correlated with the fact that the respective retranslation has been republished more than once: this is the case of Target Text 2 (TT2 henceforth), and of some of the many versions produced after 1989, during the post-communist period: TT4, first published in 2004, and TT8, first published in 2016. Of all eight versions, TT2 stands out as the most frequently republished target text. More than that, TT2 seems to be mirrored by TT6, published in an almost identical form under another translator’s name in 2008 and republished many times since. I have preserved TT6 as part of the translational series as a way of illustrating what to my mind looks like uncreative appropriation in retranslation. The table should also include a TT10, which is the most recent retranslation of the source text, made by Miruna Andriescu and published by ‘Librex’, a target text that has been unavailable to the author of this paper. However, the fact that TT4 was republished in 2022, followed close by a tenth version in 2023 indicates that the translational series continues to develop and that there is a wealth of parallel versions competing for the attention of the readership. It seems to be a situation of reinforced “contradictory equivalence”, to use Pym’s term (Pym 107).

The fact that the translational series is well represented has enabled me to compile an adequate corpus for the purposes of this paper. Let us now consider the corpus and analyse how FEs fare in translation.

FEs in Translation

As stated in the introduction, I expect FEs to shine through the target texts in the corpus, producing instances of overlapping. The first examples provided here belong to Mr. Collins and perfectly illustrate his character. Austen portrays Mr. Collins as the embodiment of the typical “pompous fool” (A1-haj 47), using fixed expressions to support his fixed ideas or to embellish his “pompous nothings”. Consider the example in Table 3 which is an excerpt from Collins’ botched marriage proposal to Elizabeth. The example in Table 3 contains two collocations, which I have marked in italics: C1, “nothing remains for me”, and C2, “the violence of my affection”. Of these two, the latter is an obsolete phrase, apparently a standard phrase in the declarations of love made during that period. Shapard, the annotator of the edition I consulted, goes on to explain that Mr. Collins, aware of the necessity of using animated language

when proposing, can do nothing but “toss in the most obvious cliché available” (Shapard 105).

Table 3: Mr. Collins’ Speech in Retranslation I – Collocations (C), Novel language (N)

ST: And now <i>nothing remains for me (C1)</i> but to assure you <u>in the most animated language (N)</u> of <i>the violence of my affection (C2)</i> . (Austen 98)	BACK TRANSLATION:
TT1: Și acum <i>nu-mi mai rămâne nimic altceva</i> , decât să te încredințez în <u>cele mai aprinse cuvinte</u> despre <i>înfocata mea iubire</i> . 103	And now nothing else remains for me but to pledge to you in the most fiery words my love everburning.
TT2: Și acum, <i>nu-mi mai rămâne nimic altceva de făcut</i> decât să vă încredințez, <u>cu vorbe dintre cele mai arzătoare</u> , de <i>violența sentimentelor mele</i> . 110	And now, nothing else remains for me to do but to pledge to you, in some of the most ardent words, the violence of my feelings.
TT3: Aș vrea să vă asigur în continuare, <u>pe cât de meșteșugit mă pricep</u> , că <i>nutresc pentru dumneavoastră cele mai aprinse sentimente</i> . 73	I would like to assure you next, as masterfully as I am able to, that I harbour for you the most fiery feelings.
TT4: Acum, <i>nu-mi mai rămâne nimic altceva</i> , decât să vă asigur, <u>cu vorbe din cele mai aprinse</u> , de <i>furtunoasa mea afecțiune</i> . 115	Now, nothing else remains for me but to assure you, with the most fiery words, of my tumultuous affection.
TT5: Iar acum <i>nu îmi mai rămâne altceva de făcut</i> decât să vă conving, <u>prin cel mai animat limbaj posibil</u> , de <i>intensitatea afecțiunii mele</i> . 73	And now nothing else remains for me to do but to persuade you with the most animated language possible, of the intensity of my affection.
TT6: Și acum, <i>nu-mi mai rămâne nimic altceva de făcut</i> decât să vă încredințez, <u>cu vorbe dintre cele mai arzătoare</u> , de <i>intensitatea sentimentelor mele</i> . 122	And now, nothing else remains for me to do but to pledge to you, in some of the most ardent words, the intensity of my feelings.
TT7: Iar acum <i>nu-mi rămâne de făcut nimic altceva</i> decât să vă asigur, <u>în cuvinte pline de entuziasm</u> , de <i>intensitatea sentimentelor mele</i> . 133	And now nothing else remains for me to do but to assure you, in words full of enthusiasm, of the intensity of my feelings.

<p>TT8: Acum, <i>singurul lucru care-mi mai rămâne de făcut</i> este să vă asigur, <u>cu vorbele cele mai pătimase, de puterea afecțiunii mele.</u> 111</p>	<p>Now, the only thing that is left for me to do is to assure you, with my most passionate words, of the force of my affection.</p>
<p>TT9: Iar acum <i>nu-mi mai rămâne decât</i> să vă asigur <u>printr-un limbaj cât se poate de însuflețit</u> de <i>intensitatea afecțiunii mele.</i> 155</p>	<p>And now nothing is left for me but to assure you, with as fervent a language as can be, of the intensity of my affection.</p>

Interestingly enough, while almost all (re)translators have no trouble identifying the first collocation, which is reflected in the high degree of overlapping present for C1 (with a few exceptions, such as TT3, that omits it), only some of the (re)translators identify the obsolete collocation (C2) and translate it by an equivalent (*intensitatea sentimentelor / afecțiunii* “the intensity of my feelings/affection”). The older versions resort to marked variants, providing archaizing equivalents: TT1 opts for an older stock phrase, *înfocata mea iubire* “my love everburning”, and poetically makes use of a non-canonical syntactic pattern where the adjective pre-poses the noun (Adj_Noun instead of Noun_Adj), TT3 rationalizes the text (in the sense of Berman 288) by omitting the first collocation but reordering the syntax and making use of a formulaic expression, *a nutri sentimente* “to harbour feelings”. TT2, the “communist translation” and the version I expected to behave as a point of reference for the subsequent target texts, is, surprisingly, the only one that resorts to literal translation and does not select a FE from the lexicon. TT6 appears identical with TT2 with one, notable, exception: the retranslator of TT2 replaces the phrase *the violence of my affection* with the same phrase employed by most of the other target texts (*intensitatea sentimentelor*), rightfully sensing that a collocation is needed here. Thus, TT5, TT6, TT7 and TT9 select a similar collocation: *intensitatea sentimentelor*, which can be identified as an instance of overlapping in retranslation.

The example in Table 3 also contains an instance of freshly generated language, i.e. “novel” language (henceforth N), as opposed to “familiar language”. The N “in the most animated language” has been underlined in the text. If one compares the translation of N to the translation of C1 and C2, it is noticeable that there is much less overlapping and a lot more lexical variation in this case. While the lexical variation for the translation of “words” is understandable, since Romanian possesses two near-synonyms for this word (“vorbe” and “cuvinte”) – although I would argue that “cuvânt” is more technical than “vorbă” – there are many other instances of variation, from lexical (the adjective “animated” is translated by at least seven synonyms) to morphosyntactic (the superlative “most” is translated by an equivalent term (“cel mai”) but also by other distinct patterns such as “pe cât de... posibil”,

“cât se poate de...”, “plin de...”, etc. These patterns have been glossed in the back translation accordingly. It thus becomes obvious that the instances of familiar language trigger a considerable amount of overlapping in (re)translation, and that most (re)translators opt for equivalence and, more infrequently, for rationalization and/or archaization. When alternative strategies are applied (such as rationalization and archaization), lexical variation overrides overlapping.

Let us now consider another sample of text containing FEs, this time culled from the letter that Mr. Collins sends Mr. Bennet after Lydia has eloped with Wickham. In this case, Mr. Collins’ usual obsequiousness is interspersed with bouts of self-righteousness, rightfully marked by the use of all types of FEs, as illustrated in Table 4. The excerpt selected in Table 4 contains as many as three collocations (C1, C2, C3), one lexical bundle (LB) and one formulaic expression (F):

Table 4: Mr. Collins’ Speech in Retranslation II: Lexical bundles (LB), Collocations (C), Formulaic expressions (F)

<p>ST: The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison of this. [...] <i>Let me advise you then (LB), my dear Sir (C1), to console yourself as much as possible (C2), to throw off your unworthy child from your affection for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits (F) of her own heinous offence (C3).</i> (Austen 265)</p>	<p>BACK TRANSLATION:</p>
<p>TT1: Moartea fiicei dumneavoastră ar fi fost o binecuvântare în comparație cu ce s-a întâmplat. [...] <i>Dați-mi voie, prin urmare, scumpe domn, să vă sfătuiesc a vă consola pe cât se poate și a alunga pentru totdeauna din inima domniei voastre această nemernică copilă, lasând-o să culeagă singură ce a semănat.</i> 272</p>	<p>The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison with what happened. [...] Let me, therefore, dear sir, advise you to console yourself as much as one can and to cast off for ever from your heart this unworthy child, letting her reap by herself what she sowed.</p>
<p>TT2: Moartea fiicei dumneavoastră ar fi fost o binecuvântare în comparație cu aceasta. [...] <i>Dați-mi voie, deci, să vă sfătuiesc, scumpul meu domn, să vă consolați atât cât</i></p>	<p>The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison with this. [...] Let me, therefore, advise you, my dear sir, to console yourself as much as it is possible, to</p>

<p><i>este cu puțință, să izgoniți pe veci din inima dumneavoastră această fiică nedemnă și s-o lăsați să culeagă fructele oribilului său păcat. 265-266</i></p>	<p>banish forever from your heart this undeserving daughter and to let her reap the fruit of her horrible sin.</p>
<p>TT3: Mai bine s-o fi văzut moartă decât să fi îndurat o asemenea rușine. [...] <i>Permiteți-mi</i> deci să vă rog să găsiți alinare <i>cum credeți mai bine</i> și s-o alungați din sufletul dumneavoastră pe această odraslă infamă și s-o lăsați să <i>suporte consecințele păcatului ei</i>. 193-194</p>	<p>Better to have seen her dead than endured such shame. [...] Allow me, therefore, to bid you to find comfort as you see fit and cast from your soul this infamous offspring, and to let her bear the consequences of her sin.</p>
<p>TT4: Moartea fiicei dumneavoastră ar fi fost o binecuvântare în comparație cu aceasta. [...] Prin urmare, <i>dați-mi voie</i> să vă sfătuiesc, <i>dragul meu domn</i>, să vă consolați <i>pe cât posibil</i>, s-o îndepărtați din sufletul dumneavoastră pe fiica cea nedemnă și s-o lăsați <i>să-și culeagă roadele odiosului ei păcat</i>. 282</p>	<p>The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison with this. [...] Therefore, let me advise you, my dear sir, to console yourself as much as possible, to push away from your soul the undeserving daughter and to let her reap the fruit of her odious sin.</p>
<p>TT5: Moartea fiicei dumneavoastră ar fi fost o binecuvântare în comparație cu asta. [...] Astfel, <i>îngăduiți-mi</i> să vă sfătuiesc, <i>dragule domn</i>, să vă consolați, <i>pe cât posibil</i>, cu respingerea copilului dumneavoastră nedemn pentru totdeauna și <i>lăsați-o să culeagă fructele propriei ofense</i>. 190</p>	<p>The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison with this. [...] Thus, permit me to advise you, dear sir, to console yourself as much as possible with rejecting your undeserving child forever and let her reap the fruit of her own offence.</p>
<p>TT6 (identical with TT2): Moartea fiicei dumneavoastră ar fi fost o binecuvântare în comparație cu aceasta. [...] <i>Dați-mi voie</i>, deci, să vă sfătuiesc, <i>scumpul meu domn</i>, să vă consolați <i>atât cât este cu puțință</i>, să izgoniți pe veci din inima dumneavoastră această fiică nedemnă și s-o lăsați să <i>culeagă fructele oribilului său păcat</i>. 325-326</p>	<p>The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison with this. [...] Let me, therefore, advise you, my dear sir, to console yourself as much as it is possible, to banish forever from your heart this undeserving daughter and to let her reap the fruit of her horrible sin.</p>

<p>TT7: Moartea fiicei dumneavoastră ar putea fi considerată o binecuvântare în comparație cu ce s-a întâmplat de fapt. [...] În concluzie, <i>stimate domn, dați-mi voie</i> să vă consolez <i>atât cât îmi stă în putință</i> și să vă sfătuiesc să încetați a vă mai manifesta dragostea față de această fiică pentru totdeauna și să o lăsați <i>să culeagă roadele propriei fapte defăimătoare</i>. 351</p>	<p>The death of your daughter could be considered a blessing in comparison with what actually happened. [...] In conclusion, esteemed sir, let me console you as much as it is in my power and to advise you to cease showing love to this daughter forever and to let her reap the fruit of her own defamatory deed.</p>
<p>TT8 (identical with TT2): Moartea fiicei dumneavoastră ar fi fost o binecuvântare în comparație cu aceasta. [...] <i>Dați-mi voie</i>, deci, să vă sfătuiesc, <i>scumpul meu domn</i>, să vă consolați <i>atât cât este cu putință</i>, să izgoniți pe veci din inima dumneavoastră această fiică nedemnă și s-o lăsați <i>să culeagă fructele oribilului său păcat</i>. 302</p>	<p>The death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison with this. [...] Let me, therefore, advise you, my dear sir, to console yourself as much as it is possible, to banish forever from your heart this undeserving child and to let her reap the fruit of her horrible sin.</p>
<p>TT9: Până și moartea fiicei dumneavoastră ar fi fost o binecuvântare în comparație cu ceea ce trebuie să simțiți acum. [...] Prin urmare, <i>permiteți-mi</i> să vă sfătuiesc, <i>dragă domnule</i>, să vă consolați <i>pe cât de mult puteți</i> și să o îndepărtați pentru totdeauna pe fiica netrebnică din inima dumneavoastră, să o lăsați <i>să-și culeagă singură roadele odiosului ei păcat</i>. 414-415</p>	<p>Even the death of your daughter would have been a blessing in comparison with what you must be feeling right now. [...] Therefore, allow me to advise you, dear sir, to console yourself as much as you can and to push away forever the worthless daughter from your heart, to let her reap by herself the fruit of her odious sin.</p>

The excerpt selected in Table 4 makes use of all the range of FEs (marked with italics) and of some language built around and echoing FEs, such as “*a fate worse than death*” or “*banishing a person from one’s heart*”. It is no wonder that the target texts exhibit a considerable amount of overlapping. Variation takes place in the first part of the excerpt, when the (re)translator feels bound to explicitate the pronoun “this”, but otherwise, the strategy is that of equivalence. A very interesting thing happens with the lexical bundle “let me”, which is correctly translated by TT1, TT2 (TT6), TT4, TT7, TT8, with a Romanian lexical bundle (*dați-mi voie*). The other target texts opt for more

formal verbs such as *a permite* “to allow” or *a îngădui* “to permit”, where the latter is the most formal of them all. However, opting for formality makes the translators translate literally, since neither of these two verbs is as pragmaticalized as *a da voie* “let one do something”. The difference in translation is subtle, but, because of this variation, in TT3, TT5 and TT9, Mr. Collins is more obsequious than he is self-righteous. Strangely enough, in this particular case, TT8 is identical with TT2 (and with TT6), which is surprising, since I have not identified so far other places where these versions overlap to such an extent. It is possible that so much overlapping should be due to both necessity, as the excerpt abounds in FEs and clichés, and to “filiation”, that is deliberate consulting of the older version.

Negligible variation takes place with the translation of C1 and C2. In the case of C1, Romanian has two options that are both appropriate: either the adjective *scump* “dear”, or the adjective *drag* “dear”. Both lexical choices work well in this context. As for C2, Romanian has synonymous phrases that are all good equivalents in translation. C3, on the other hand, is more interesting to look at in translation, since Romanian does not have a correspondent collocation (no equivalent for “heinous” unless it is “serious” as in “serious offence”), which is probably why some translators omit it (TT3 and TT5) or conflate the formal expression (F) with the collocation (C3), as is the case of TT1. Even in this case, the adjectives *oribil* “horrible” and *odios* “odious” are recurrent, as is the noun *păcat* “sin” for the translation of *offence*.

This example, just like the previous one, illustrates much overlapping in the areas of “familiar” language and less overlapping where “novel” language is employed, although in this case even “novel” language is a smokescreen for clichés.

The last example I would like to discuss is an excerpt from the discourse of Lady Catherine and is not an instance of “pompous nothings” and verbal padding, but of condescension. In this case, the noun “condescension” is used with its contemporary, negative meaning, not with the positive meaning with which Mr. Collins uses it when speaking about Lady Catherine (“such affability and condescension” Austen 93) and which became obsolete by the beginning of the 19th century. The example is interesting because it is an illustration of “altered FEs”, tailored so as to be part of Lady Catherine’s strategy of impoliteness. Consider the excerpt in Table 5:

Table 5: Lady Catherine’s Speech in Retranslation – Altered Collocations (AC)

ST: “I take no leave of you (AC1), Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother (AC2). You deserve	BACK TRANSLATION:
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no such attention. I am most seriously displeased.” (Austen 297)	
TT1: Nu-mi iau rămas bun de la d-ta, d-ră Bennett. Nu trimit complimente mamei d-tale. Nu meritați asemenea atenții. Sunt foarte supărată. 327	I take no leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother. You do not deserve such attention. I am very upset.
TT2: Nu-mi iau rămas bun de la dumneata, domnișoară Bennet. Nu îi trimit complimente mamei dumitale. nu meritați astfel de atenție. Sunt cât se poate de nemulțumită. 321	I take no leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother. You do not deserve such attention. I am as displeased as can be.
TT3: -Nu-ți spun la revedere, domnișoară Bennet, și nici nu-ți adresez complimente pentru mama dumitale. N-am de ce să te onorez cu asemenea atenții. M-ai dezamăgit foarte mult. 235	I say no goodbye to you, Miss Bennet, nor do I send compliments to your mother. I have no reason to honor you with such attention. You have disappointed me very deeply.
TT4: -Nu-mi iau rămas-bun de la dumneata, domnișoară. Nu îi trimit complimente mamei dumitale. Nu meriți asemenea atenție. Sunt nemulțumită, cât se poate de serios. 338	I take no leave of you, young lady. I send no compliments to your mother. You do not deserve such attention. I am displeased, very much so.
TT5: -Nu îmi iau rămas bun de la dumneavoastră, domnișoară Bennet. Nu îmi trimit complimentele pentru mama dumneavoastră. Nu meritați o astfel de atenție. Sunt profund nemulțumită. 231	I take no leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother. You do not deserve such attention. I am profoundly displeased.
TT6 (identical with TT2): Nu-mi iau rămas bun de la dumneata, domnișoară Bennet. Nu îi trimit complimente mamei dumitale. Nu meriți astfel de atenție. Sunt cât se poate de nemulțumită. 395	I take no leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother. You do not deserve such attention. I am as displeased as can be.
TT7: -Nu doresc nici măcar să-mi iau la revedere de la dumneata, domnișoară Bennet. Nu transmit nici o urare mamei dumitale. Nu ești vrednică de o asemenea atenție. Mă declar a fi cu adevărat dezamăgită de dumneata. 423	I do not wish even to take my leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no good wish to your mother. You are not worthy of such attention. I declare myself to be truly disappointed with you.

TT8: Nu-mi iau rămas bun de la dumneata, domnișoară Bennet. Nu îi trimit complimente mamei dumitale. Nu meriți astfel de atenție. Sunt cum nu se poate mai nemulțumită. 366	I take no leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother. You do not deserve such attention. I am as displeased as one can possibly be.
TT9: Nu-mi iau nici măcar la revedere de la dumneata, domnișoară Bennet. Nu îți transmit complimente pentru mama dumitale. Nu meriți asemenea atenții. Sunt cât se poate de nemulțumită. 500	I do not even take my leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother. You do not deserve such attention. I am as displeased as can be.

The discourse of Lady Catherine is characterized by brevity and directness. She minces no words and wastes no time in making her opinion known to her interlocutor. Making use of negation to alter FEs normally employed to express politeness is a very effective technique which seems to be reflected in all the target texts under analysis. Variation is minimal and takes place in the second part of the excerpt, the part where “novel” language is produced, especially for the translation of the superlative “most displeased”. There is a considerable amount of overlapping, most of which seems to be dictated more by necessity than by “filiation.”

Conclusions

The present article has discussed the translation of FEs from English to Romanian in multiple target texts. The purpose of the article was to check whether FEs are correctly identified by retranslators and if the strategy employed is that of equivalence, which would produce instances of overlapping. The analysis suggests that a link can be traced between overlapping in retranslation and the frequency of FEs in the translated excerpts under analysis. These findings indicate that retranslated texts can be used as basis for identifying FEs.

My analysis has been qualitative rather than quantitative and has focused on checking the behavior of FEs in translation as well as the strategies employed by (re)translators when dealing with “familiar” language. My expectations were met in that the examples I selected indicate that in retranslation FEs are strategically matched with equivalents, producing overlapping rather than variation. The systematic treatment of FEs in retranslation suggests that the instances of overlapping are dictated by the presence of FEs in the source text, rather than by creative appropriation. Lexical variation occurs when translators opted for an archaizing approach. A different strategy is employed in the case of novel language, where overlapping is reduced and variation is high.

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