

# Audiovisual and Literary Translators' Attitudes Toward Proofreading

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AUDIOVISUAL AND LITERARY TRANSLATORS' ATTITUDES TOWARD  
PROOFREADING

Master's Thesis

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Zagreb, 2022

## **Sažetak:**

Prijevodni proces uključuje svaki korak koji prevoditelj napravi za vrijeme izrade prijevoda, od početka rada na izvornom materijalu koji se prevodi do kraja rada na prijevodu na ciljni jezik (Hansen, 2003). Pri tome, suradnja prevoditelja i drugih aktera važan je dio prijevodnog procesa. Prije objave, prijevod se ispravlja i prolazi redakturu. Redakturu prijevoda može obavljati prevoditelj na vlastitom tekstu, a može je raditi i drugi prevoditelji, kao i stručnjak za određeno područje koji nije prevoditelj. U Hrvatskoj neke televizijske i izdavačke kuće zapošljavaju lektore, stručnjake za hrvatski jezik, kako bi dodatno pregledali prijevod prije objave.

Cilj istraživanja je ispitati kako prevoditelji gledaju na lekturu prijevoda te kako suradnja lektora i prevoditelja izgleda iz perspektive prevoditelja. U sklopu istraživanja proveden je polustrukturirani intervju s književnim i audiovizualnim prevoditeljima koji imaju iskustva suradnje s lektorima. Sudionici istraživanja iskazali su želju za komunikacijom s lektorima da bi stekli iskustvo za buduće prijevode i naučili nešto novo, kao i zbog želje za suradnjom oko rješavanja nedoumica i pronalaženja najboljih prijevodnih rješenja te da bi dobili povratnu informaciju na svoje prijevode. Jednako tako, prevoditelji su izrazili stav da se slažu s ispravicima koji poboljšavaju kvalitetu prijevoda, međutim, ne slažu se s preferencijalnim ispravicima zbog kojih moraju provesti više vremena na ispravljanju prijevoda. Naposljetku, istraživanjem je otkriveno i koja je uloga vanjskih čimbenika u suradnji prevoditelja i lektora, kao i neki od problema s kojima se prevoditelji i lektori susreću u Hrvatskoj.

Ključne riječi: lektori, prevoditelji, književni i audiovizualni prijevod, redaktura, intervju

**Abstract:**

The translation process includes every step a translator makes during the creation of a translation, from beginning to work on the source material that is being translated, to finishing the translation into the target language (Hansen, 2003). During the translation process, the cooperation between translators and other agents is important. Before it is published, a translation is corrected through the process of revision. There are two types of revision, self-revision and other-revision, and the latter can be carried out by a translator or by a domain expert who is not a translator. Some broadcasting and publishing houses in Croatia hire proofreaders (*lektori*), experts in the Croatian language, to check the target text of the translation before it is published.

The aim of this research was to explore how translators perceive proofreading, as well as how translators perceive cooperation between translators and proofreaders. A semi-structured interview with audiovisual and literary translators who had experience working with proofreaders was conducted for the purposes of this research. The participants expressed interest in communicating with proofreaders to gain experience for future translations, and learn something new, cooperate to solve doubts and find the best possible translation solutions, as well as get feedback on their translations. The translators said they agreed with the corrections which improve the quality of their translations. However, they did not agree with preferential changes, due to which they need to spend more time correcting the translations. Finally, this research has shown the role of external circumstances in cooperation between translators and proofreaders, as well as some of the issues they encounter in Croatia.

Keywords: proofreaders, translators, literary and audiovisual translators, revision, interview

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## 1. Introduction

In contemporary Croatian translation practice, most literary and audiovisual translations, as well as many other types of written translation, undergo revision by a native Croatian speaker, a proofreader, also known as a *lektor* in Croatian. A *lektor* is usually a person who holds a university degree in Croatian, and is responsible for proofreading of various texts, including translations. The aim of this study was to explore the attitudes contemporary Croatian translators have toward revision, how Croatian translators perceive their cooperation in the translation process, as well as their beliefs on the role of the proofreader in this process. This study will look into the current situation with respect for revision in Croatia, as well as what revision looks like in other parts of the world. It will explore the perspective translators have on the role of Croatian proofreaders in Croatia, and look into the possible historical, cultural and other reasons which motivate their correction practices.

The first section of this thesis will offer a brief theoretical overview of the translation process in general, and explore the agents that participate in said process. Following a brief overview of the translation process, the process of revision, as well as revision competences (Robert et al., 2017), will be presented. Although there is no previous research on the way Croatian translators perceive proofreaders, previous research on the attitudes and beliefs translators had about working with revisers conducted by Valdez and Vandepitte (2020) will also be presented in the following sections.

Opinions of Croatian linguists on the role proofreaders had in establishing Standard Croatian, as well as the rules they have to follow, set by various Croatian public and private institutions, will be covered in the second section of this paper.

The main section of this study will look at the attitudes Croatian audiovisual and literary translators expressed toward revision of their translations. The results of the interviews with Croatian translators will be given, and the answers about their experiences with proofreaders will be analyzed to explore their attitudes based on three categories established after the interviews. This section will be concluded with a discussion based on the results of the research.

## 2. The translation process and translation revision

The translation process (Hansen, 2003, p. 26) includes every step a translator takes during the creation of the translation, from starting to work on the source material to finishing the translation in the target language. This description of the translation process makes it seem like the translation itself is a very solitary process, where the translator works in isolation. With the rise of *language service providers* (LSPs), as well as industry standard regulation, which clarified the role other actors have in the translation process, the role of other agents, besides the translators, has become increasingly visible. This has led to increasing research interest in the translator as a social being, with the attention switching from the text to the translator, as well as other agents in the translation process, such as clients, target text authors, source text recipients, editors, reviewers or proofreaders (Wolf, 2011).

Abdallah (2012) and Solum (2018) stress the collaboration necessary to create a finished translation, noting that translators work in *production networks*. The concept of *production networks* illustrates a shift from a linear client-translator relationship, and instead suggests a vertical composition of the network, where there are multiple human and non-human actors involved in the creation of the project, such as language service providers who serve as intermediaries between the client and the translator. The role of other agents in the translation process, as well as the role of translators as participants in various social networks and cultures, has led to more research on translation revision, which is becoming prominent in contemporary translation practice, as understanding the role of agents in the translation process can help us understand how a translation is produced, and therefore, how this can affect the translation itself (Pym, 1998, p. ix).

### 2.1. Translation revision

Revision is broadly defined by Mossop (2011, p. 135) as “the process of looking over the translation to decide whether it is of satisfactory quality, and making any needed changes.” According to Mossop (2011), revision is motivated by the desire to attain quality, but the meaning of quality depends on various standards, for example, the desire to achieve customer satisfaction, to protect the local language from the influence of English, or to ensure the translation is suitable for its purpose.



Robert and Remael (2016, p. 580-581) describe revision as a process of checking the translation in order to make sure that the quality is satisfactory, and in order to implement possible changes, if needed. During revision, the text is adapted according to the client's needs and demands, before the finished translation is delivered to the client. Both of these definitions emphasize the importance of ensuring that the quality of the translation is improved to meet the necessary demands requested by the target text recipient and/or client. Therefore, it can be concluded that revision is perceived as a way to ensure a higher translation quality.

Mossop (2011) explains that translators can do the revision themselves in a process called *self-revision*, or it can be done by another translator, also known as *other-revision*. Revision can be bilingual or monolingual. In case of bilingual revision, the reviser checks the target text against the source text. Monolingual revision can be done by a domain expert, in which case it is sometimes referred to as *review* (International Organization for Standardization [ISO], 2015, n.p.), or by a target language expert, which is known as *editing* or proofreading.

Given that revision is still a relatively new subject in translation research, and since Translation Studies is still a relatively new discipline, there are still some inconsistencies in the terminology used when it comes to the concept of revision. As pointed out by Robert et al. (2017, p. 3), the term revision depends on the person doing the revision, the time when revision is done, the type of text being revised and the way it is revised. Mossop (2019, p. 116) lists terms such as *revision*, *re-reading*, *cross-reading*, *proof-reading*, *review* and *quality control* as the most frequent terms used to describe some kind of revision, all of them used in various meanings. It should be noted that another kind of revision is becoming more and more common today, known as *post-editing*, referring to the revision of machine translation.

### **2.1.1. Translation competence and translation revision competence**

In Translation Studies, the process of translation revision conducted by somebody other than the translators themselves is relatively rarely researched, and it is mostly researched from a didactic or a conceptual point of view (Robert et al., 2017, p. 2).

As Hansen (2009, p. 274) points out, *translation revision competence* is different from *translation competence*. Translation competence is the sum of knowledges that translators need to possess in order to successfully translate, described by Bell (1991) as source and target language

knowledge, text-type knowledge, subject area knowledge, contrastive knowledge and communicative competence. Further development of translation competence framework, notably the European Master's in Translation Competence Framework (2017) also increased the visibility of other competences needed for translation. The competences needed for translation are described as *language and culture* competence, *translation* competence, *technology* competence, as well as *personal and interpersonal* competence and *service provision*.

Similarly, the model of translation revision competence has also been developed by Robert et al. (2017, p.14). They described it as consisting of multiple revision subcompetences: *tools and research* (procedural knowledge related to the use of translation and revision conventional and electronic tools), *revision routine activation* (knowledge and ability to apply standard revision operations which lead to acceptable target language solutions), *knowledge about revision* (declarative knowledge what revision is and what it includes), *strategic* (procedural and conditional knowledge to guarantee an efficient revision and solve problems which might be encountered), *interpersonal* (the ability to cooperate with different actors involved in the translation project, such as the translator, translation company, source text author and commissioner, in particular dealing with potential conflicts, and the ability to communicate meaningful feedback), and *psycho-physiological components* (consisting of cognitive and attitudinal competences, such as memory, perception, attention, fairness and tolerance, and sociability, respect for others, patience, honesty etc.). Mossop (2019, p. 198) also stresses the importance of interpersonal relationships, as one of the major challenges in revision work is avoiding unwarranted changes, which are described as both a waste of time and damaging for interpersonal relationships.

Valdez and Vandepitte (2020) conducted an exploratory study on the attitudes and expectations translators and revisers specializing in biomedical translation have about one another. The translators who participated in their study stressed the importance of collaborative work, and expressed a strong negative attitude toward “preferential changes” from the revisers, citing that they feel that some revisers decide to implement certain corrections because they feel it is their obligation, and change things just for the sake of changing. Some participants of this study also pointed out that having this kind of revision work done to their translation affected their confidence. The conclusion of Valdez's and Vandepitte's (2020, p. 162) study stressed that the

lack of communication and trust between translators and revisers can diminish the quality of the translation, and in the end, it could damage the image of the translator. Valdez and Vandepitte (2020) suggest improvements in interpersonal communication between translators and revisers should be done to solve potential miscommunication issues and preconceived ideas they might have about one another. Their research further stresses the importance of interpersonal competence for both translators and revisers, as well as the increasing need to better understand what the other is doing with the text they are ultimately working on together.

However, in all previous research on translation revision, as well as the skills necessary for revision competence, the focus was on bilingual revision, as this type of revision is standard practice in LSPs. In Croatia, however, proofreaders, also known as *lektori*, traditionally revise audiovisual and literary translations in Croatian in a process known as *lektura*.

## **2.2. Revision vs. *lektura***

ISO 17100:2015 Translation Services - Requirements for Translation Services (2015) determines that a translation should be checked by a translator first, then by a reviser who is not the translator. Revision is described as “bilingual examination of target language content against source language content” (International Organization for Standardization [ISO], 2015, n.p.). The most important aspect of revision is to achieve the quality that the client demands, which is in line with what was previously mentioned in the definition provided by Robert and Remael (2016) and Mossop (2011). There are also additional steps described, such as review, understood as revision by a domain expert, monolingual examination of target language content, and proofreading, where the target language content is revised and corrected before printing. In Croatia, there is also the term *lektor*, used to describe Croatian language experts who are responsible for proofreading, or *lektura*, in Croatian.

The main difference between the Anglophone definition of revision and *lektura* is that revision is typically bilingual, where both the source and target texts are compared at the same time, whereas *lektura* is mostly monolingual. It should be noted that Croatian proofreaders sometimes watch the source material when checking subtitles. For example, this practice has been introduced in recent years by the Croatian public broadcaster, HRT, as it was indicated by the participants of the interviews conducted for the purposes of this study.

### 3. *Lektori*

The Croatian term *lektor* refers to “a person who reads and corrects the language and style, as well as polishes the manuscript while it is being prepared for publishing” Hrvatska enciklopedija (n.d.). However, this definition is very general, and it does not cover all social and cultural aspects of the job, as stressed by Lewis (2002). For the purposes of this research, the term proofreader will be used from now on to indicate *lektori*, as it is the most frequent English expression used in the translation community to refer to *lektori*.

Kovačec (2000, p. 125) claims the content of the Croatian word *lektor* is hard to translate into other languages, since many other cultures do not have, or even do not allow, this type of revision. Kovačec (2000, p. 126) also stresses that this process, if controlled, could direct the linguistic development of a language, as well as promote certain expressions, while completely suppressing others. According to Kovačec (2000, p. 131), the problem arises when there is no singular body deciding what is considered correct, and what is not, therefore proofreaders often have to make decisions based on their own criteria, or in some cases, the criteria provided by normative literature. This also raises the question of which texts should be revised by proofreaders, and when are texts considered works of art, which should not be touched.

Ever since the establishment of Croatia and its fight for independence from former Yugoslavia in the early 1990s, the issue of the purity of the Croatian language has been perceived by many as one of the symbols of Croatian culture and distinctiveness. Having a separate language seemed to go hand in hand with the legitimization of independence, and efforts to keep the Croatian language pure from outside influence, especially from the influence of neighboring Serbia, were strong (Kapović, 2011, p. 48). Therefore, proofreaders, especially those working for the public broadcaster, were often tasked with correcting undesirable expressions to make the language “better”, especially during the 1990’s (Starčević et. al., 2019, p. 12). This prompted discussion on the importance of their role in keeping the language “pure”, and these purist efforts also led to criticism of how much they were allowed to correct, as well as how their decisions were argued, usually using normative literature.

Samardžija (2000, p. 27) describes the way proofreaders often find themselves between political demands and flawed normative literature, which often leads to them using their own

linguistic feeling, which he considers subjective. Samardžija (2000, p. 27) also notes how the Croatian public is divided on what they think about proofreaders, as some speakers see them as meddling in the text without their permission, while others demand they revise their texts.

As far as criticism of their role is concerned, Matasović (2000, p. 141) raises the question of how far proofreaders are allowed to intervene, and he also notes that this could lead to a situation where how a person speaks becomes more important than what the person is saying. Babić (1994) calls them a paradox of linguistic culture, because there is a belief in Croatia that writing should be done by experts, while the revision should be left to proofreaders, whom he considers to be the result of the lack of linguistic culture. Lisac (2000, p. 111) describes this kind of relationship toward language as a reflection of the way Croatian society treats their own country, caused by the fact that the school system does not pay enough attention to teaching the Croatian language.

Some of the previously listed comments touched upon the lack of “necessary” education in Croatian society, whereas others described proofreaders as the result of flawed normative literature, which may provide conflicting advice. However, this reflects a deeper issue rooted in Croatian society, the issue of linguistic purism. The notion of purism (Thomas, 1991, p. 43) has to do with critiques of seemingly foreign elements and expressions in a language, which reflect nationalism and xenophobia, and while the latter is not tolerated overtly, linguistic purism is. According to Lewis (2002, p. 187), in Croatian society, some people view proofreaders as purists who want to keep the Croatian language safe from expressions from other languages. These efforts would therefore “protect” the Croatian language from said foreigners (Starčević et al., 2019).

Even though varied perceptions of proofreaders in Croatian society have been presented by Croatian linguists, it is important to understand that proofreaders are still participants in the process of creating texts, and play an important role in the translation process as well. Therefore, this study aims to explore the attitudes Croatian audiovisual and literary translators have toward working with proofreaders, as well as what they see as important in collaboration with proofreaders.

#### **4. Aim, research problem and research questions**

The aim of this research was to explore the cooperation of audiovisual and literary translators and proofreaders in Croatia, what elements affect their cooperation, and the attitudes of translators toward translation revision.

The research problem for this study was to gain insight into the way audiovisual and literary translators cooperate with proofreaders, as well as to see if their cooperation can be improved.

The research questions for this research were as follows:

1. How do translators perceive their cooperation with proofreaders?
2. Which aspects of their cooperation are perceived as positive, and which as challenging?
3. What is the translators' perception of the corrections they get from proofreaders?
4. What are the suggestions translators have for improving their cooperation with proofreaders?

#### **5. Method**

In order to explore the attitudes Croatian literary and audiovisual translators have toward cooperation with Croatian proofreaders, semi-structured interviews with seven literary and/or audiovisual translators were conducted from February to June 2021. The interviews were originally conducted in Croatian, and were later transcribed and translated into English.

##### **5.1. Data collection**

The method of semi-structured interview was chosen due to the possibility to reflect and comment on the answers that the participants provide (i.e. to ask further questions to clarify or expand upon their answer). This method also provides more freedom to ask further questions, or skip certain questions if they are not necessary, such as in cases when a participant has already touched upon the subject of the question in a previous question (Rubin & Rubin, 2004).

Individual interviews were chosen, as opposed to focus groups, to avoid the possibility of one or a few members of the group taking over, which could result in the participants conforming

on a topic that some participants may have different opinions on (Morgan & Krueger, 1993). Individual interviews also give participants the opportunity to freely express their opinions and talk about their experiences, with the information remaining confidential.

On the other hand, to fully gain insight into the individual experiences and opinions that translators have toward native Croatian proofreaders and their work, the interview was chosen instead of a questionnaire, which, albeit offering the participants the possibility of remaining anonymous, does not offer the opportunity for additional clarification or for requesting more examples if needed.

However, in order to shorten the duration of the interviews to one hour per interview, and to fully utilize that hour to explore the participants' experiences and attitudes, the participants were asked to fill out a short questionnaire via Google Forms before the interview. The aim of this questionnaire was to collect sociodemographic data on the participants, and it contained questions regarding their gender, age, education, the type of employment they are in (freelance translators, in-house translators, or other), the kinds of translations they do and the language combinations they work with. They were also asked the question "How often do you collaborate with proofreaders?", where they were asked to choose on a scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Always).

The interview guide consisted of 28 questions. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the interviews were conducted via Zoom, which can record both the audio and video of the interviews. Before the interviews, participants were also asked to sign consent forms using their digital signatures, in order to minimize physical contact between the interviewer and the participants.

## **5.2. Participants**

In total, seven participants participated in the interviews conducted from February to June 2021. Audiovisual and literary translators were chosen as proofreaders mostly revise audiovisual and literary translations, whereas other kinds of translations, such as, for example, translation for technical documents, software translation etc., usually undergo bilingual revision.

The participants' answers will be presented under a coded name in the form of the letter T in the first place standing for "translator", followed by their gender marker and the numerical order

in which their interviews took place. So, for example, the first female participant will be coded as TW1, the first male participant as TM1, and so on.

Two of the participants were male, and five were female. Their age range is between 30 and 70. All of them work as freelance translators, and three of them have or had other jobs, with translation on the side. Their language combinations are mostly English and Croatian, but others also translate from German, Romance languages like Spanish, Portuguese, French and Catalan, as well as Scandinavian languages such as Swedish, Norwegian and Danish. All of them have at least ten years of translation experience. Five of them have experience with audiovisual translation, and four of them have worked as literary translators. Two of them have experience with both audiovisual and literary translation. When asked how often they work with monolingual proofreaders, four of them rated it as a 3, meaning “Sometimes”, and three of them rated it as a 5, meaning “Always”.

### **5.3. Data analysis**

The seven interview transcripts, video footage, the examples of corrections translators shared during and after the interviews, as well as field notes collected during this research, were analyzed and sorted into categories using grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 2006).

Grounded theory analysis is based on purposive sampling, whose aim is to select the participants who can provide the answers to research questions. For the purposes of this research, only audiovisual and literary translators were contacted to participate. Following purposive sampling, as many inductive codes, denoting social and psychological processes, are created from the early data collected. During this process, important terms and patterns are identified and marked. After this step, additional theoretical sampling is carried out to explore the leads in the data by sampling more participants. Therefore, after three initial interviews, the participants’ answers were analyzed to find possible connections between their answers, which were then explored further in the following interviews. At the end of the interviews, the collected data was then analyzed in the process of intermediate coding, which built up on the initial codes set during the first coding phase, and core categories and data saturation was identified. The final step was advanced coding, which produces abstract categories, in which the gathered data for this research was divided into three categories:

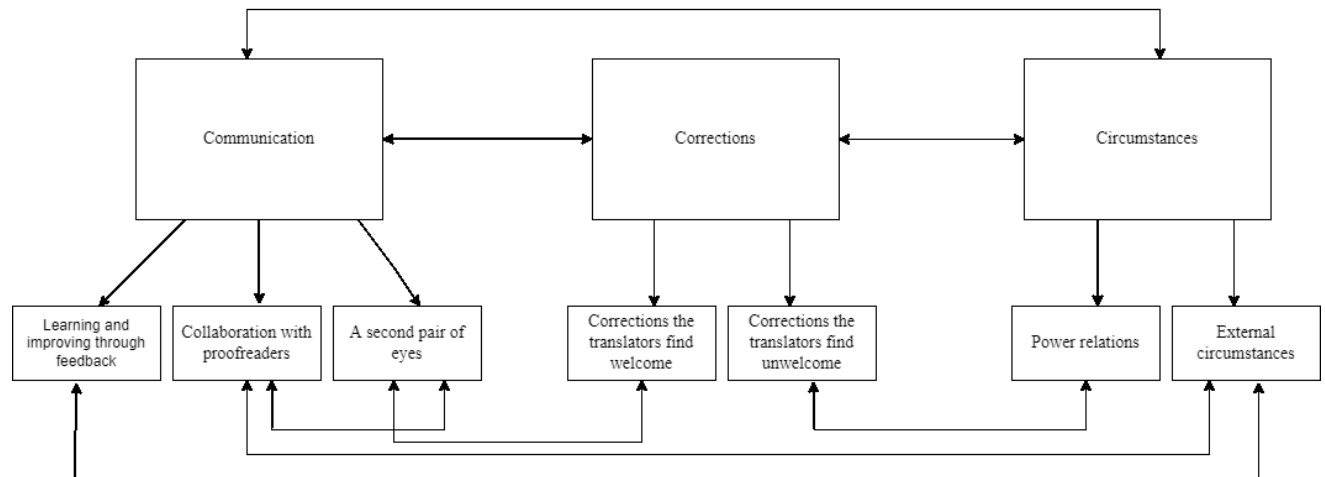


1. Communication
2. Corrections
3. Circumstances

During the analysis, it was shown that these categories, as well as their subcategories, are related. Figure 1. shows the relationships between the categories and the way they are interconnected.

**Figure 1.**

*The main categories and their subcategories.*



## 6. Results

The data analysis produced three main abstract categories, and the categories are also divided into their respective subcategories, as seen in Figure 1. It is important to note that data analysis has shown that the categories are interconnected, and that an imbalance in one category, such as, for example, external circumstances, can have an effect on another subcategory, like collaboration with proofreaders.

The results of the data analysis will be further elaborated in the following sections, which also contain the participants' replies in Croatian, and their English translation.

## 6.1. Communication

Throughout the interviews, the first category that stood out was the desire for communication between translators and proofreaders. Some translators, predominantly audiovisual translators working for the public broadcaster, had experience working with proofreaders who would call them on the phone or send them e-mails to discuss their translations while correcting them, give them feedback on the translation, or ask them to clarify some parts of the translation:

TW1: Tu suradnju mogu opisati sa čistom peticom, zato što je bila izravna komunikacija između lektora i prevoditelja. Znači lektor je rekao svoje i postavio pitanje prevoditelju. Najčešće smo našli neko kompromisno rješenje ili je netko nekog uvjerio u svoju argumentaciju i to je po mom iskustvu najplodniji vid suradnje lektora i prevoditelja, dakle izravna verbalna komunikacija.

Translation: Our cooperation deserves a straight A, because translators and proofreaders communicated directly. Proofreaders would give their arguments, and ask the translator questions. We often reached a compromise or somebody would convince someone with their arguments, and in my experience, that is the most fruitful way of cooperation, direct verbal communication.

Other participants who worked as audiovisual translators for private companies had mixed experiences. One translator described working as an audiovisual translator for a Croatian private company specializing in audiovisual translation, and noted he would always get feedback from proofreaders, as well as ask them for advice when necessary:

TM1: Tamo smo mi radili sa lektorima, znači naš prijevod smo poslali lektoru, on bi nazvao ako ima pitanje i prepravio i tako to.

Translation: We worked with proofreaders, we sent our translation to a proofreader, they would call if they had any questions, fixed it and so on.

Other translators who had experience working for both domestic and foreign translation companies, as well as for the Croatian public broadcaster, noted the difference between the level of communication between proofreaders in those two cases. Whereas proofreaders at private companies would not always contact them and give feedback, proofreaders who worked for the Croatian public broadcaster, HRT, would (almost) always call or e-mail:

TW3: Ove kableske, komercijalne, lektori nikad ne nazovu, tam to prepravi po svom, HRT-ovi surađuju, osjeti potrebu da me nazove na račun HRT-a, i može razgovarati, suradnik je, dok za komercijalne ja više predam prijevod i više ne znam što će biti od njega, tko će ga kako iskasati.

Translation: Proofreaders working for cable TVs and private broadcasters never call, they just change it on their own, HRT proofreaders cooperate, they feel the need to call me, paid for by HRT, and they can talk, they are collaborators, while for commercial ones I just turn in the translation and I don't know what will become of it, who will chop it up and in what way.

Literary translators described working with proofreaders, who left comments in the translated documents for translators to see, and to which the translators replied:

TW1: Medij je taj štur za takvu vrstu komunikacije, jer lektor kaže svoje ili naprosto prekriži i onda ja otkrižavam i dodajem svoje komentare i naprosto se cijeli proces jako otegne.

Translation: That is a very rough mode of communication, because the proofreader says what they have to say or just crosses it out, and then I uncross it and add my comments, and the process just draws on.

They also noted they occasionally met and discussed the translations, or they would talk about the corrections via e-mail:

TM2: Lektor obavi cijelu lekturu, sve radi s Track Changes i komentarima sa strane i nakon što završi, pošalje meni da dam odobrenje, jer prijevod je uvijek autorsko djelo i prevoditelj odgovara zapravo za sadržaj.

Translation: The proofreader does the whole proofreading, everything is done with Track Changes and comments on the side, and after they are done, they send them to me to give my approval, because the translation is always a work of authorship, and the translator is in fact responsible for the content.

Literary translators also said that, due to financial cuts, proofreaders would sometimes be omitted from the workflow altogether, or the editors would do the proofreader's job in such cases:

TW4: Pa zapravo bih voljela da sam imala češće lektora, međutim mnogi izdavači zapravo štede na tome, pa, odnosno nude tolike niske tarife za lekturu, što ni po meni nije dobro, a onda naravno ozbiljni lektori to ne žele radi, a onda zapravo koji put, onda rade urednici.

Translation: I would have liked to have worked with proofreaders more, but many are publishers saving money on that, so, that is, they offer such low fees for proofreading, which I agree is not good, and then of course, serious proofreaders don't want to do that, and editors do it.

All the translators who participated in the interviews, both those who always have revision as the next step after their translations, and those who only occasionally worked with proofreaders, expressed the desire for communication with proofreaders. The motivation for communication was trifold. The first reason was that this kind of collaboration helped translators learn, and improve their translations, through the feedback they received from proofreaders. They appreciated being able to collaborate with proofreaders to find translation solutions. They also explained that proofreaders were also useful as another pair of eyes on the text, to catch any possible mistakes, and to give their opinion as first readers of the translation. The participants' reasons will be further elaborated below.

### **6.1.1. Learning and improving through feedback**

The first reason was that communication enabled translators to get linguistic feedback on their translations, which helped them learn and improve future translations. Having this kind of feedback was perceived as positive, and as a possible future improvement. Audiovisual and literary translator TW1 noted:

TW1: Tu sam radila sebi svoje bilješke prema tim lektorskim intervencijama i tako gradila svoj... svoju nekakvu pismenost na materinjem jeziku.

Translation: I made notes of the proofreaders' corrections and built up my... my literacy in my native language.

Audiovisual translator TW3 also pointed out the didactic role of the feedback she gets from proofreaders, describing them as partners, who improve something that she wrote:

TW3: Ko mala lekcija bude. Tako da učim uz njih učim. Osim što mi malo nekada i preslože rečenicu i to bude bolje, tako da mislim korisni su, ne bih se ja usudila bez njih, ne dolazi u obzir.

Translation: It's like a small lesson. So I learn, I learn with them. They also change my word order a little bit, and it's better, so I think they are useful. I wouldn't dare do this without them, no way.

This importance of having a good proofreader, who offers feedback and helps the translator learn, was stressed throughout the interviews. A good proofreader, as described by the participants, gave the translator feedback on how to improve their translation and their language, whereas a bad

proofreader would often force their own solutions, and would change the translation, sometimes making it even worse:

TW1: Moj stav prema lektoru je da dobar lektor može puno pomoći da prijevod bude još bolji i da vi kao prevoditelj, da vam otvori neku perspektivu. To sam doživljavala i to mi se jako sviđa. Drugi dio spektra, gdje lektor tjera svoje i nema sluha za ono što vi kažete, drži se ko pijan plota nekakvih pravila bez osjećaja za kontekst situacije koju vi pokušavate dočarati i nema osjećaj za jezik. Svoj posao rade mehanički, a ne sa osjećajem za tekst i onda je to problematična suradnja.

Translation: In my opinion, a good proofreader can help make the translation even better and open up a new perspective to you, as a translator. I have experienced that, and I like it very much. On the other side of the spectrum, when a proofreader forces their opinion and has no understanding of what you are saying, sticks to the rules blindly, with no feelings for the context and language. They do their work mechanically, with no feeling for the text, and then the cooperation is problematic.

### **6.1.2. Collaboration with proofreaders**

All participants mentioned that working with a proofreader should be collaborative and should result in a final translation that has good quality. The participants also stressed the opportunity to ask proofreaders questions during and after the translation, if they needed advice on how to improve something, or if they wanted to hear their opinion. This is the second reason why they wanted to communicate with proofreaders.

This collaborative effort of both the translator and the proofreader was described by TW5, when talking about working with a particular proofreader:

TW5: I ta suradnja bila izvrsna, stvarno izvrsna. Ja ako bih negdje nešto zapela, recimo oni pridjevi koji i kakav, tu dosta ja malo brkam, to mi je uvijek nešto. Ali to je ona meni uvijek znala lijepo objasniti.

Translation: The cooperation was great, really great. Whenever I would get stuck, like with determiners, which I often confuse, it is always something. But she would always know how to explain it to me nicely.

Audiovisual translator TM1 touched upon the importance of getting suggestions from proofreaders, noting:

TM1: Čak volim kad mi napišu ovo je sugestija, znači ne moraš ti to uvažiti, nego ovo ti je sugestija i ti onda odlučuješ stvarno želiš li ili ne želiš to prihvatiti.

Translation: I like it when they write it as a suggestion, which means I don't have to take it, but rather here you have a suggestion, and then you can decide if you really want to accept it or not.

However, the participants noted that these suggestions are good if they are a way to actually improve upon the text, not just preferential suggestions. TM2 described working with a proofreader who wanted to needlessly change many aspects of the translation:

TM2: Imao sam nedavno jednu lektoricu koja strašno voli uljepšat rečenice. Zapravo sjeli smo par sati i gledali tekst jer je ona svaku rečenicu htjela baš uljepšati da to bude poetski, čak i tamo gdje te poetike možda nije bilo.

Translation: I recently worked with a proofreader who really likes to make sentences prettier. We sat for a few hours and looked at the text, because she wanted to make every sentence nicer and more poetic, even when there was nothing poetic about it.

Even though the translators prefer to get suggestions on how to improve upon translations, those suggestions were considered welcome only when they actually made the translation better. When suggestions were deemed unnecessary, it often meant they had to spend more time correcting the translation or discussing with the proofreader why certain suggestions are not good. As TM1 summed it up:

TM1: Nego opet kad moram cijeli dan neki prijevod ispravljat, a ja bi ga preveo u pola dana, e to recimo me zna isto naživcirat.

Translation: When I have to spend all day correcting a translation, which I translated in half a day, that for example can also be annoying.

### **6.1.3. A second pair of eyes**

Finally, the translators wanted to communicate with the proofreaders, because the proofreaders also served as the first readers of the text. Therefore, they could express their opinion on the clarity of the translation, and what could be made to make the translation more understandable to the reader or viewer. TW1 described the proofreader as “the first to read the text as a reader”.

Having this sort of feedback, which is not just formal, but also related to comprehension, helps translators improve their translations. Literary translator TW4 noted:

TW4: Zato sam stvarno zahvalna na dobrim lektorima i urednicima. Prevoditelj je sam previše u tekstu da bi vidio neke greške ili nelogičnosti.

Translation: That's why I am really grateful for good proofreaders and editors. Translators themselves are often too involved in the text to see some errors or contradictions.

Audiovisual translator TW3, who often translates television series, also expressed the importance of proofreaders, as someone who also follows the way the story progresses:

TW3: Bitno mi je imat svog lektora koji ide za mnom i u radnji je, da me ispravi ako mi padne koncentracija.

Translation: It's important to me to have my own proofreader, who follows me and the story, who corrects me when my concentration drops.

Overall, the participants who worked with colleagues they deemed good proofreaders, described those experiences as enjoyable, as well as good learning opportunities. However, they also noted they disliked getting too many unnecessary, preferential changes, which just made them lose more time working on translations. A collaborative effort between the translator and the proofreader to make the translation better and more understandable to a target audience was considered welcome as long as both parties showed consideration for one another, as well as being able to compromise.

## **6.2. Corrections**

While reflecting on the corrections they received from proofreaders, the translators talked about the kinds of corrections they agreed with, usually having to do with formal errors, such as typos, punctuation, spelling, syntax, or standard grammatical forms of certain words. All participants agreed with these kinds of corrections, and they considered them important for improving the quality of their translations. The participants shared examples of the corrections they received from proofreaders, along with their comments on why they agreed or disagreed with certain corrections.

On the other hand, there were corrections translators did not agree with. Many participants considered these kinds of corrections preferential and they agreed that these corrections did not improve the quality of the translation, but that they reflected proofreaders' attitudes toward their

dialect, or they were caused by hypercorrection, which will be described in further detail in the following sections.

### **6.2.1. Corrections the translators find welcome**

The corrections the participants found welcome were usually related to improving the syntax or rhythm of the sentence, in order to make it blend with the next sentence better. Punctuation, sentence and word order, as well as lexical mismatches with the rest of the text, were the most common kinds of corrections the translators agreed with.

When asked about the kinds of corrections she agrees with, TW1 described:

TW1: Sintaksa, kad vam je rečenica rogovatna, kad vam se vremena, kondicionali se ne slažu. Lektor, to je prvo što će uočiti i to je negdje gdje je poboljšanje stopostotno.

Translation: Syntax, when the sentence is clumsy, when tenses, conditionals are not right. That is the first thing a proofreader will spot, and this is where there is 100% improvement.

TW2 also noted that working with proofreaders had helped her learn the importance that sentence order has in a translation:

TW2: Sklapnost, kako se jedna rečenica nadovezuje na drugog, to zna dić kvalitetu teksta.

Translation: Cohesion and coherence, the way sentences are connected, it can improve the quality of the text.

As literary translator TW5 pointed out, she agrees with corrections of this kind, especially when she herself is not sure which form is better:

TW5: Znači ti zarezi i ono što mi je stalno problem. E tu, tu, to mi je, nek mi ispravljaju to i neka isprave kako treba, meni to uopće ne smeta.

Translation: Things like commas and what not are always a problem to me. They can correct anything there, they should correct it and correct it right, I don't mind at all.

### **6.2.2. Corrections the translators find unwelcome**

Even though the participants agreed that many corrections were welcome, especially from the proofreaders they deemed good, there were also some corrections they did not find welcome.



The kinds of corrections that not all participants agreed on usually have to do with certain lexical forms the proofreaders deemed not good enough for according to the client's rules, or with what was prescribed as correct by other Croatian language experts and authority on language. Also, sometimes proofreaders claimed they had not heard of a certain expression before:

TW1: To je stvar autora, to je stvar koju ne dirate. Ako je sve točno, a tebi se samo ne sviđa ili što sam često znala čuti „Ja za to nisam čuo“, to nije argument, ili „Ja to nikad tako ne bih rekao“.

Translation: It's a matter of the author, it's a thing you don't touch. If everything is correct, and you just don't like it, or what I've often heard, "I have never heard about it", that is not an argument, or "I would never say it like that".

When asked about the kinds of corrections they disagreed with, audiovisual translator TM1 pointed out an important issue he had encountered. As a person who is not originally from the Croatian capital of Zagreb, he noted that while working in Zagreb, proofreaders who were native Zagreb citizens would sometimes correct his attempts to use his own variety in Croatian. One such example was the word *lega*, an informal expression frequently heard on the streets of Osijek, meaning "mate" or "pal". Osijek, the fourth largest city in Croatia, with just under 100,000 inhabitants, is the political, economic and cultural center of the eastern Croatian region of Slavonija. He described this experience:

TM1: A neki su bili bezobrazni, tipa, ne znam, baš je bio takav razgovor gdje sam stavio *lega*, tražio se sinonim puno riječi za prijatelj, ja sam stavio *kompa* i tako dalje. Od svih riječi smetalo je *lega*.

Translation: Some of them were rude, like, I don't know, there was a conversation where I used *lega*, because I had to use many synonyms for the word friend, so I used *kompa* and so on. Of all the words, *lega* bothered her.

He noted that only *lega* was corrected, while other, equally informal expressions more frequent in Zagreb were considered acceptable. TM1 also reflected on the experience of using his native variety of Croatian, and the way some proofreaders reacted to it:

TM1: Bilo je naravno i lošijih. Bilo je onih koji su bili jako bezobrazni, pogotovo prema nama Slavoncima. Radit u Zagrebu titlanje gdje se gura zagrebački i onda svaki slavonski bi potpuno anulirali.

Translation: There were some bad ones, of course. Some of them were really rude, especially to us Slavonians. Working in Zagreb, where the Zagreb dialect was pushed forward, and all Slavonian elements were completely erased.

Participants noted that proofreaders sometimes worked in a hurry, while also trying to follow the client's rules.

TW3: Kad su lektori da ubrzaju posao nisu gledali titlove, sad postoji recimo, nije traka, nego je vrpca, ne daju tamo, imaju ondje i ovdje, to je nekakvo pravilo, postoji ovdje i ondje, a tamo ne postoji, i onda je lektorica, ima ona pjesma „Hello darkness, my old friend“, ona je napisala „Zdravo, tamo dragi prijatelju“, i lektorica, ne gledajući film, taj tama, darkness, je prebacila u ondje. Ne daju traka nego mora vrpca, onda je ta ista lektorica, vidjela traka, preticajna traka, i na autopilotu mijenjala vrpca.

Translation: Once, when the proofreader was in a rush, she did not look at the subtitles, and so there is a rule that we cannot use *traka*, but *vrpca*, they don't like *tamo*, they have *ondje* and *ovdje*, it's a rule that *ovdje* and *ondje* exist, and *tamo* does not, and the proofreader corrected the song "Hello darkness, my old friend", it said "Zdravo, tamo, dragi prijatelju", and the proofreader, not watching the movie, corrected *tama*, darkness, into *ondje*. They also don't allow *traka*, it has to be *vrpca*, and the same proofreader saw *traka*, *preticajna traka*, and she changed it to *vrpca* on autopilot.

TW2 also reflected on the issue of proofreaders working in a hurry, pointing out the importance of communication in such cases:

TW2: To se zna dogoditi ako je lektor u žurbi, ako ne stigne, možda ne stigne nazvati. Oni su svjesni da se to može dogoditi i sad zovu, to se moglo dogoditi prije deset godina kad nisu bili svjesni koji se propusti mogu dogoditi ako nema te komunikaciji.

Translation: This can happen when the proofreader is in a hurry, if they don't have enough time, maybe not enough time to call. They are aware that this can happen, and they call us now, this could have happened ten years ago, when they were unaware that these kinds of mistakes could happen without communication.

The issue of the rules set by the client, as well as other external circumstances, were also a topic of discussion during the interview, and they will be further analyzed in the following section.

### 6.3. Circumstances

The final area translators touched upon was circumstance, both because of the differences in power between the proofreaders, the translators and the clients, as well as because of external

circumstances, such as short deadlines and low pay. The first issue the translators touched upon was that of power relations, as the translators need to navigate between the client's rules, their employment status, as well as normative standards for the Croatian language they need to follow.

The participants also brought up the issue of translation fees, and a decline in quality of service related to a reduction in translation fees. They described that due to the translation and proofreading fees lowering, the quality of their translation, as well as the quality of proofreading, might be affected.

### **6.3.1. Power relations**

The first issue they brought up was the issue of power relations between translators and proofreaders, as well as the client. As TW2 described the difference in power at the Croatian public broadcaster between proofreaders and translators:

TW2: Lektori su uglavnom zaposleni, mi smo vanjski. Bilo bi super da se status prevoditelja poboljša da smo zaposleni, da nismo vanjski suradnici. Možda to pridonosi tome da prevoditelj u startu zazire od lektora, jer su oni su unutra zaposleni i imaš osjećaj većeg autoriteta, a ti si mali honorarac izvana.

Translators: Proofreaders are usually in-house, we are freelancers. It would be great if the status of the translators was improved, so that we were in-house, not freelancers. Maybe this contributes to the fact that translators shrink back from proofreaders from the start, because they are employed there and you feel [they have] more authority, and you are just a small freelancer on the outside.

TW3 also touched upon the broader issue of power relations:

TW3: A oni isto imaju iznad sebe, neki akademici koji su to stvarali i utvrđivali njima koja će biti pravila, i onda oni jadni, nisu jadni, ali eto netko je rekao da to tak mora bit.

Translation: They also have somebody above them, some academics who created and determined the rules for them, and then poor proofreaders, they are not poor, but because somebody said so, it has to be like this.

The issue with certain prescriptivist rules were also described by the translators who had experience working for HRT, as it is stipulated by the Law on Croatian Radio-Television that they must use the Croatian language and Latin script unless otherwise determined (Law on Croatian Radio-Television, 2001). However, the translators had mixed reactions to those rules. TM2 noted that occasionally, these rules meant that their translations were made more rigid by proofreaders,

like changing the Croatian equivalent of “hi” to *bog* or *zdravo*, which are more formal and/or outdated, as opposed to a more informal *bok*. TM2 described it as:

TM2: A opet ima lektora, recimo koji se strahovito drže nekakvih, a možda preskriptivističkih propisa i imaju neke ideje da su npr neke riječi nepoželjne u hrvatskom samo zbog porijekla, bilo da vuku na srbizme, turcizme ili nešto.

Translation: And yet, there are some proofreaders who, let's say, really stick to some kind of, possibly prescriptivist rules and have some ideas about which words are undesirable in Croatian just because of their origin, be it Serbian origin, Turkish or something else.

TW2, who also touched upon the rules set by the client, the public broadcaster, described it as such:

TW2: A čini mi se da naručitelj ima nekakva svoja pravila, meni je to s godinama postalo normalno. Onaj za koga radiš, držiš se nekakvih pravila , a naravno u toj suradnji neko se pravilo zaobiđe, nisu ni ta pravila uvijek toliko kruta koliko se čini.

Translation: It seems to me the client has certain rules, which have become normal to me over the years. If you work for somebody, you stick to certain rules, and of course, during the cooperation, those rules can sometimes be circumvented, they are not always as rigid as it seems.

Of course, this does not mean that all translators disagreed with all of the corrections that were meant to improve upon the correct usage of the language, as TW3 pointed out:

TW3: Nas su obučili i znam što ne ide. I strašno paze na taj jezik, nastoje što više tuđica da se makne.

Translation: They trained us, and I know what should not be used. They really take care of the language, and try to avoid as many foreign expressions as possible.

However, TW3 also noted that both the translators and proofreaders, in the end, need to adhere to the rules set by the client when working for the public broadcaster. When comparing it to working for private clients, she noted that there was less feedback in general, and that she did not need to stick to the rules as much when it came to working with private companies.

Another example where the client's rules were prioritized in corrections was described by a literary translator TW4:

TW4: Mislim da izdavačka kuća zapravo ima pravo imat neka svoja pravila koja onda prevoditelj bi trebao poštovati, al eto mene je to baš jako smetalo, mislim što se moglo, naprosto nije mi bilo vrijedno sad nekog zagovaranja jer u principu nije da imam argumente kad može i jedno i drugo.

Translation: I think that the publishing house has the right to have their own rules, which the translator should respect, but I did not agree with some of them, but I mean, it just wasn't worth it to me to advocate for some solutions because it's not like I had arguments, both are fine.

When talking about rules and authority, another issue was brought up by TW5, who described a situation where a proofreader insisted on following the rules prescribed by one grammar book, whereas she followed another. TW5 noted that it would be best if it was first agreed upon universal rules which should be followed. The kind of situation TW5 described is related to the fact that, in Croatia, there are multiple orthography guides the proofreaders can choose from, and some of them differ in certain aspects (Volenec, 2015, p. 70). This can lead to corrections where the proofreader opted to follow one orthography guide, whereas the translator followed the advice from another.

TW5: Imamo nekoliko pravopisa i nisu ista pravila u svim tim pravopisima. I to je veliki problem, i u odnosu prema lektorima i uopće u radu.

Translation: We have multiple orthography books, and the rules are not the same in all of them. And it's a big issue, both with dealing with proofreaders, and working in general.

### **6.3.2. External circumstances**

Another issue that was brought up was related to external circumstances, notably time and pay, which greatly influences the ability to maintain a full translation workflow. TW1 noted:

TW1: Vrijeme i rokovi. Jer to je na kraju vam to presudi kao prevoditelji, pogotovo AV prevodilačkom dijelu.

Translation: Time and deadlines, because in the end, it is crucial for translators, especially AV translators.

The issue of money was also brought up. TM1 described it as:

TM1: Firmama je najčešće najbitnije štedit novac, i onda oni odlučuju da li će nešto bit lektorirano ili neće. Ako nemaju novca za projekt, onda lektora izbacuju i onda naravno to ne ovisi o nama.

Translation: For companies, saving money is often the most important part, and so they decide if something will be proofread or not. If they don't have enough money for a project, then a proofreader is skipped, and of course, this does not depend on us.

Even though proofreaders are sometimes excluded from workflows, all of the participants agreed that they are an important part of the translation process, as they all agreed that feedback, and having a second pair of eyes on a translation, is crucial. The issue of low translation rates was mentioned by TM2, who also noted that it can lead to more errors:

TM2: Evo primijetio sam otkako je taj trend silaznih cijena, sve lošije prijevode i lektorske pogreške, da nekakve pravopisne pogreške i stvari ne isprave jer se žure radit, što prije odrade da nešto zarade. To ne ovisi o nama nego to stanje na tržištu nas zapravo tjera da radimo što lošije jer ne možemo se posvetiti svom poslu. Rijedak je slučaj kad nam netko da i adekvatan honorar i adekvatno vremena da vi to odradite kako treba.

Translation: I noticed that, ever since the prices dropped, the translations have been getting worse, and proofreaders make mistakes, they don't correct some grammatical errors and stuff because they are in a hurry, to do it quickly and make some money. This does not depend on us, since the market is forcing us to do a worse job because we cannot dedicate ourselves to our job. We are rarely adequately paid, and given adequate deadlines to do it right.

## **7. Discussion**

Overall, the translators who took part in these interviews expressed a positive attitude toward working with proofreaders. Translators stressed the importance of three aspects of collaborating with proofreaders. Firstly, communication was described as a significant aspect of the translation process. The value of feedback, as well as being able to communicate about issues they encountered during the translation process was brought up, and all of the participants commented on the importance of having an open channel of communication with the proofreaders. Translators noted that the proofreaders who were willing to explain their corrections to them, and who were open to questions or discussions, were considered to be more cooperative, which led to a better perception of them.

Audiovisual translators who worked for the Croatian public broadcaster, HRT, especially stressed how much they enjoyed being able to communicate with proofreaders and knowing what happened with their translation afterwards, as well as being able to learn from the corrections they received. When comparing it to working for private companies, some said that there was a

difference in the level of communication they had with proofreaders, noting they preferred being able to get more feedback. Literary translators also expressed a preference for being able to communicate with proofreaders, although they sometimes were not able to do so.

Being able to communicate with proofreaders when necessary is also stressed by both Robert et al. (2017) and Mossop (2011), who touched upon the importance of interpersonal competence when working with revisers, but the importance of this competence can also be applied to proofreaders in this case. The desire for collaboration was also expressed by Valdez's and Vandepitte's (2020) participants. This goes to show that the importance of communication, as well as collaboration, during the translation process, seems to be universally necessary.

It can be concluded that the motivation behind the desire for communication is linked to the fact that the translators wanted to be able to learn from their feedback, especially in the beginning of their careers. Having the ability to collaborate with proofreaders also meant that they were able to improve their translations and ask questions when in doubt. The participants noted, however, that even though proofreaders' suggestions for improvements were welcome, they did not want unnecessary preferential changes, which just took more time out of their day to correct those errors, mirroring what Valdez's and Vandepitte's (2020) participants expressed about preferential changes. As opposed to the predominantly negative attitude the participants in Valdez's and Vandepitte's (2020) research had toward changes made during the revision stage, the participants of this study mostly felt the changes suggested by the proofreaders were welcome, unless they were preferential, or if the proofreaders tried to do their job for them.

The participants also noted that having a proofreader meant that they had a second pair of eyes on the translation, who could spot certain errors, such as "translationese" (Mossop, 2019, p. 115), meaning too literal translations, where the text sounds like a translation. This role of the proofreaders was also described both by Robert and Remael (2016), as *revision routine activation*.

When the translators were asked about the corrections they received in the past, they were asked to give examples of corrections they agreed with, as well as corrections they disagreed with. Corrections related to grammatical errors, typos, punctuation, spelling, word order as well as the already mentioned "translationese" were considered welcome, and described as examples of corrections which improve the overall quality of the translation. The participants expressed they

are very grateful when proofreaders spot these kinds of errors, as they are usually caused by working in a hurry, or a drop in concentration. Being able to correct this kind of errors is in line with *revision routine activation* as well (Robert & Remael, 2016).

On the other hand, translators noted that there were some kinds of corrections they disagreed with. Along with the previously mentioned preferential changes, the translators pointed out that they sometimes noticed proofreaders over-corrected certain parts of the translation, also described as “hyper-revision” or “over-revision” by Mossop (1992, p. 85). Another issue that was brought up was correcting one’s native dialect, deeming it incorrect, for which the proofreader gave the argument they had never heard that expression before, therefore it must mean that expression is wrong, in a way. Participants also pointed out the issue of prescriptivism, where certain unnecessary, or even wrong corrections were made, be it because the proofreader automatically corrected the expression before looking at the context, or because the proofreader did not have enough time to fully go through the translation. Usually these kinds of wrong corrections were motivated by rules set either by Croatian language experts or by the client, who opted for a certain expression as the correct one, and advised the translator and proofreader to avoid using other, equally legitimate expressions.

The third category from the interviews was the issue of circumstance. Continuing with the theme of the rules set by the client or commissioner of the translation, the translators noted that, because proofreaders are usually in-house, and translators are usually freelancers, translators sometimes, especially at the beginning of their careers, felt like proofreaders were closer to the client. Therefore, the proofreaders’ word held more weight when it came to making the decision which correction should be implemented. The translators noted, however, this had changed over the years, as they grew more familiar and comfortable with the proofreaders they worked with, and that having an interpersonal connection made them feel more comfortable expressing an opinion on the translation.

The issue of prescriptivism was brought up by translators who had experience working for Croatian Radio-Television, HRT, the public broadcaster, which is legally obliged to use the Croatian language in their programs, unless prescribed otherwise, and that this meant sometimes adhering to more prescriptivist rules than they themselves used in their personal life. In this case, the translators mostly opted for loyalty to the commissioner (Nord, 1997), as they had the final say



in the translation. This sort of power relations was also brought up by literary translators, who also noted some publishing houses had rules they needed to adhere to, and which usually followed normative literature, just like HRT did. It is important to note that, in the end, neither translators, nor proofreaders or even clients, have the final say in what the correct form of the Croatian language is, as Croatian language experts create normative literature on the correct forms of Croatian. Even Croatian language experts themselves are, in a way, influenced by the previous generation of Croatian language experts, active during the 90's, who were part of the political ideology of nationalism, and linguistic purity, which aimed to purge foreign influence from the Croatian language, and therefore, Croatian society.

Opting for loyalty to the commissioner, of course, does not mean that the translators had no final say on what their translations will be like, or no authority to decide if certain expressions should be used. Many translators pointed out that, by having a conversation with proofreaders, they were sometimes able to circumvent certain rules or find a better solution that fits both the context and the rules they need to follow. Proofreaders, in a way, served as mediators between translators and the client, making sure that the quality of the translation is sufficient for the client's demands, as well as understandable to the target audience, which echoes Mossop's (2011) definition of revision, with an emphasis on quality.

Lastly, when the translators were asked about external issues which affect the relations between translators and proofreaders, the participants noted that a drop in translation fees, as well as short deadlines, can significantly affect the quality of the final translation, as both translators and proofreaders do not have sufficient time to fully dedicate themselves to their job. This sentiment is also mirrored by Valdez's and Vandepitte's (2020) participants, who stress the importance of realistic deadlines to avoid mistakes that arise from rushed translations.

### **7.1. Limitations and future research**

This research covered the attitudes Croatian audiovisual and literary translators have toward Croatian proofreaders, and the sample only consisted of translators specialized in those two areas. These are far from being the only translation specializations in Croatia, the experiences of translators specializing in other areas of translation should be examined. Since not all translators work with proofreaders (e.g. especially translators who work with ISO-certified LSPs, where

revision is typically conducted by a bilingual reviser, who checks both the target text against the source text) this would call for a separate analysis.

The participants also brought up other kinds of experiences with revision worthy of future research scrutiny. However, due to the limitations of the scope, the participants' answers regarding other forms of revision, such as revision done by editors, as well as other forms of quality control, were excluded from the analysis, as the aim was to fully focus on their attitudes toward Croatian proofreaders who only check the target text before it is published.

Another topic worthy of future research are the attitudes proofreaders have toward working with translators, as this would show the other side of the coin, as well as to compare their attitudes and beliefs toward one another. Throughout the interviews, external influences which affect the translation process, such as deadlines, payment, as well as client expectations were touched upon, and they also open avenues for future research.

## **8. Conclusion**

The aim of this research was to explore the attitudes Croatian audiovisual and literary translators had toward working with proofreaders through seven semi-structured interviews with translators. Croatian translators, especially audiovisual and literary translators work with *lektori* or proofreaders, who check the target text before it is published.

Even though the perception of proofreaders is mixed in the Croatian community, as some perceive them as language purists, whereas others see them as the guardians of the Croatian language, the participants of this research expressed their gratitude for being able to work with proofreaders, and they expressed mostly positive attitudes toward working with proofreaders, noting three main aspects, communication, cooperation and corrections, which affect their attitudes toward revision.

All of the participants noted they preferred having an open channel of communication with proofreaders, as their corrections helped them improve their knowledge of their native language, and the ability to communicate about certain solutions and suggestions was important to them. All of the participants, however, disagreed with getting preferential changes from the proofreaders, as they deemed them unnecessary and time consuming.

The translators who took part in the interviews noted they agreed with corrections that improve the quality of the translation, notably grammatical errors, typos, punctuation errors, and “translationese”, but that they disagreed with the over-revision of their translations. The participants also noted that they understand that their translations also need to adhere to the rules set by the client, and that they are aware that the proofreaders are also obliged to follow the rules. Finally, it was noted that the issue of shorter deadlines and lower pay, both for the translators and the proofreaders, leads to poorer translations, which also affects their ability to cooperate.

In conclusion, Croatian audiovisual and literary translators expressed the desire for collaborative work with proofreaders, in order to create a better version of the final translation. The participants had mostly positive attitudes toward proofreaders, and they appreciated having another person going over their translation.

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## **10. Appendices**

### **10.1. Interview questions in Croatian**

#### **Iskustva prevoditelja**

1. Kako biste opisali svoj pristup prevođenju?
2. Kako doživljavate sebe kao prevoditelja?
3. Što biste istaknuli kao pozitivno, a što je izazovno vezano za posao prevoditelja?

#### **Asocijacija na lektore**

4. Za početak, molim vas da mi kažete što vam prvo pada na pamet kad pomislite na lektora?  
Slobodno navedite sve što vam padne na pamet.

#### **Suradnja s lektorima**

5. Opišite mi svoje iskustvo s lektorima. Možete se usmjeriti na opći doživljaj ili na neka pojedinačna iskustva.
6. Kako doživljavate ulogu lektora u suradnji s vama kao prevoditeljem? Koja su vaša očekivanja od lektora?
7. Koliko su ta očekivanja do sad ispunjena?
8. Što bi se moglo promijeniti da se lektori s kojima surađujete približe vašoj slici idealnog lektora?
9. Kako doživljavate ulogu prevoditelja u suradnji s lektorom?
10. Kako gledate na situacije kad lektori ispravljaju prijevode?
11. Jeste li, i koliko često, dobili lektorove ispravke prijevoda? Kakvo je vaše mišljenje o tim ispravcima?

#### **Iskustva suradnje s lektorima**

12. Prepričajte mi jedno dobro iskustvo s lektorom, ako ga imate?
13. Ako ste doživjeli loše iskustvo s lektorom, možete li mi prepričati jedno?
14. Opišite mi kako izgleda vaša prosječna reakcija na primljeni ispravak prijevoda.

### **Ispravci lektora**

15. Pokušajte se prisjetiti nekih ispravaka koje ste dobili. Možete li ih opisati?
16. Jeste li ikad dobili ispravak s kojim se ne slažete? Možete li mi opisati obilježja tog ispravka? Ili, ako niste imali iskustvo neslaganja, opišite kako bi izgledao ispravak s kojim se ne biste složili.
17. Ukoliko se dogodi da se ne slažete s ispravkom, što činite?
18. Ako ste se obratili lektoru oko ispravka, kako je lektor reagirao na vaše komentare i kako opravdava svoje ispravke?
19. Koja su obilježja ispravaka s kojima se slažete? Možete li mi dati nekoliko primjera?

### **Reakcije na ispravke**

20. Kako se osjećate nakon što primite ispravak lektora koji nema puno ispravaka? *(Ako opišuite samo pozitivne reakcije, pitati jesu li imali i negativne reakcije na ispravak lektora bez puno ispravaka)*
21. Kako se osjećate kad dobijete povratnu informaciju lektora s puno ispravaka, što vam prolazi kroz glavu i što činite?
22. Po čemu se razlikuje vaša reakcija (emocije, misli, ponašanja) kad primite ispravak s kojim se slažete i onaj s kojim se ne slažete?
23. Dogodi li se nekad da u kasnijim čitanjima ispravaka reagirate drugačije nego odmah po primitku ispravaka? Po čemu se te dvije reakcije razlikuju?
24. Što mislite, zašto lektori odlučuju unijeti više, a zašto unose manje ispravaka u prijevode?



## **Utjecaj na prijevod**

25. Postoje li ispravci za koje smatrate da pogoršavaju kvalitetu prijevoda? Možete li mi dati primjer?
26. Ako postoje ispravci s kojima se slažete, možete li mi reći zašto se slažete s njima i dati nekoliko primjera?

## **Prijedlozi za poboljšanje suradnje s lektorima**

27. Kako se suradnja s prevoditeljima i lektorima može dodatno pospješiti? Tko treba preuzeti inicijativu?
28. Koje vanjske okolnosti djeluju na suradnju prevoditelja i lektora? Može li se po tom pitanju napraviti neka poboljšanja?

## **10.2. Interview questions in English**

### **Translator's experiences**

1. How would you describe your approach to translation?
2. How do you perceive yourself as a translator?
3. What aspects of the job would you describe as positive, and which as challenging?

### **First associations for proofreaders**

4. For starters, please tell me what first comes to mind when you think about proofreaders? Feel free to name all of the things that come to mind.

### **Cooperation with proofreaders**

5. Describe your experience with proofreaders. You can focus on a more general impression, or on some specific experiences.
6. How do you perceive the role of the proofreader? What are your expectations?

7. To what degree have those expectations been met until now?
8. What could change to make the proofreaders you work with now closer to your ideal image of a proofreader?
9. How do you perceive the role of translators in cooperation with proofreaders?
10. How do you perceive situations where proofreaders correct translations?
11. Have you, and how often, received a corrected translation from a proofreader? What do you think about those corrections?

### **Experiences of working with proofreaders**

12. Tell me about one good experience with a proofreader, if you have experienced it.
13. If you had a bad experience with a proofreader, could you please tell me about one such experience?
14. Describe your average reaction to a corrected translation.

### **Proofreaders' corrections**

15. Try to remember some corrections you received. Could you please describe them?
16. Have you ever received a correction you disagree with? Could you please describe the correction? Or if you have not, please describe a correction you would disagree with.
17. If you disagree with a correction, what do you do?
18. If you talked to a proofreader about a correction, how did they react to your comments, and how did they justify them?
19. Could you describe a correction you agree with? Could you give me some examples?

### **Reactions to corrections**

20. How do you feel after you receive a translation with minor corrections? (*If only positive reactions are described, ask if they have had negative reactions to a translation with minor corrections*)
21. How do you feel when you get a lot of corrections for your translation, what goes through your mind, and what do you do?
22. How is your reaction (emotions, thoughts, behaviours) different when you get a correction you agree with, as opposed to one you disagree with?
23. Do you sometimes react differently when going through the translation later on, than when you just received it? How are those two reactions different?
24. Why do you think proofreaders make more, and why less changes to a translation?

### **Influence on translation**

25. Are there any corrections you believe worsen the quality of the translation? Could you give me an example?
26. If there are corrections you agree with, could you please tell me why, and give me a couple of examples?

### **Suggestions for improving cooperation with proofreaders**

27. How can the cooperation between translators and proofreaders improve? Who needs to take the initiative?
28. What external circumstances affect the cooperation between translators and proofreaders? Can there be any improvements in this area?