Specialised translation today: a view from the *JoSTrans* bridge

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ABSTRACT

As *JoSTrans* enters its fifteenth year of publication, this article sets out to chart how 'specialised translation' has been conceptualised since the journal's launch based on a survey of articles published over that time. The results show a shift away from what has traditionally been considered as the core of specialised translation, namely, the interlingual translation of texts in non-fictional subject fields, with professional and training issues, as well as audiovisual translation now achieving higher numbers of articles. The inclusion of some literary topics, whilst not frequent, also suggests a broadly conceived publishing policy. The article concludes with an acknowledgment that a broader view of specialised translation can be productive in fostering new perspectives as part of the fast-changing interdiscipline of Translation Studies and in supporting flexible curriculum design.

KEYWORDS

Specialised translation, non-literary translation, domain classification, *JoSTrans*, Translation Studies landscape.

1. What are we looking at?

It is rather curious to think of 'specialised translation' as an activity that needs special comment: it has a long and distinguished history dating back over two millennia. And recent quantitative estimates of the relative importance of specialised translation for the translation market around the millennium range between 80%-90% (Wilss 1999: 9; Kingscott 2002; Franco Aixelá 2004). Yet *JoSTrans* is still, to my knowledge, the only international refereed journal dedicated to specialised translation[1]. This is all the more remarkable in view of the large number of international Translation Studies journals in circulation. Overall, the picture painted in recent literature indicates that specialised translation enjoys a disproportionately low profile in the academic discipline of Translation Studies relative to its practice compared to literary translation (e.g. Franco Aixelá 2004; Salama Carr 2009; Olohan 2013). However, a small survey of articles in two leading translation journals — *The Translator* and *Target* (volumes published in 2004; 2009; 2014) — yielded a surprising result: 29% of the articles published in these 12 issues could be classed as dealing with an aspect of specialised translation, compared to 30% for literary translation (Rogers 2015: 12-15). While this distribution still fails to match the extensive market coverage of specialised translation[2], the relative degree of academic attention it receives in this small sample gives cause for reflection. Nevertheless, we should also bear in mind that a much larger survey of a leading online bibliographic database (the *Translation Studies Bibliography* [*TBS*]) reports that between 1996 and 2011 the three

categories most frequently assigned to abstracts were "literary translation," "translation theory" and "intercultural studies," with "translator and interpreter training" in 4th place, "audiovisual and multimedia translation" in 7th place, and "specialized and technical translation" and "terminology and lexicography" in 10th and 11th places in the 27 categories (Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding 2015: 171-2).

The categorisation on which the 2014 selective survey of *The Translator* and *Target* was based was derived from the published guidelines relating to the scope of each journal. Both reached way beyond 'literary translation' in line with their full titles — *Studies in Intercultural Communication* and *International Journal of Translation Studies* respectively —covering some but not all of the 27 *TBS* categories. Some notable differences were observed between the two journals: *Target* adopted a more interdisciplinary line, explicitly mentioning possible research approaches; interpreting was not mentioned but "pedagogy" was. *The Translator* was more specific about the areas of translation for which contributions were invited, including "commercial and technical translation[3]":

> *The Translator*:
> translation and interpreting as acts of intercultural communication […] cover[ing] a broad range of practices, written or oral, including interpreting in all its modes, literary translation and adaptation, commercial and technical translation, translation for the stage and in digital media, and multimodal forms such as dubbing and subtitling.
> *Target*:
> welcomes submissions of an interdisciplinary nature. The journal's focus is on research on the theory, history, culture and sociology of translation and on the description and pedagogy that underpin and interact with these foci. We welcome contributions with a theoretical, empirical, or applied focus.

Underlying any claims about the relative dominance of different areas of Translation Studies are, however, two issues, both related to what we could call the 'scope' of specialised translation. The first concerns designations, the second, classifications.

The many designations in English assigned to what *JoSTrans* calls 'specialised translation' are indicative of a scoping problem; they include the following:

- 'non-literary translation' (everything that is *not* 'literary', whatever that happens to be?)
- 'non-fiction translation' (equivalent to 'non-literary'?)
- 'commercial translation' (financial/legal or anything you get paid for?)
- 'documentary translation' (see for instance the Finnish Association of Translators and Interpreters who distinguish 'document' translation from 'professional literary' and 'audiovisual')
- 'scientific-technical translation' (possibly a sub-category of 'specialised translation', alongside, say, 'legal' translation? Does it include 'medical'?)

- 'technical translation' (as understood in 'sci-*tech*', or a synonym for the much broader 'specialised translation'?)
- 'LSP translation' (Language/s for Special Purposes) (a synonym for 'specialised translation'?).

This leaves us asking: what actually *is* the object of study? The categories used in the surveys reported above already suggest that the binary classification of literary *versus* non-literary or 'specialised' translation is inadequate for describing the current scope of translation/Translation (Studies). The categories used for the three surveys reported in Rogers (2015) were originally based largely on the guidance for authors provided by each of the journals. For the *JoSTrans* survey, these were and still are:

- Features of specialised language
- General and practical issues in translation and interpreting
- Subject field translation issues, i.e. medical, legal, financial, multi-media, localisation, etc
- Theoretical issues in specialised translation
- Aspects of training and teaching specialised translation
- Revision and post-editing.

(*JoSTrans.* "About")

However, the analysis revealed that two categories needed to be added to more accurately reflect the coverage of the journal, namely audiovisual translation (AVT) and literature, accounting for 19% and 6% respectively of the 201 articles surveyed and published between the journal's launch in 2004 and 2014. In fact, the whole issue of categorisation — the second problematic issue for scoping specialised translation — turns out to be crucial to understanding how the whole discipline is developing (Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding 2015). One early and authoritative bibliography of Translation Studies (van Hoof 1972, cited in van Doorslaer 2007: 218) includes categories which are still familiar in contemporary classifications: general, history of translation, theory of translation, teaching in translation, the translator's profession, typology of translation (including religious, literary and technical-scientific translation), machine translation and bibliographies. New categories such as audiovisual translation, localisation and multimedia/multimodality have since emerged and, as has become evident, Translation Studies research is characterised increasingly in some areas by 'crossovers' between categories, including within specialised translation. As van Doorslaer points out in relation to the making of the online *Translation Studies Bibliography*, multidimensional views (my term, not van Doorslaer's) commonly feature when trying to conceptualise the mapping of Translation Studies as a discipline (2007: 228). There is no reason to suppose that, within that broader landscape, the task of mapping that of specialised translation today — both terminologically and conceptually — is any different as borders become more porous in problem-focused rather than strict (sub)-discipline-focused studies.

Categorisation is equally important for a number of more practical reasons, whichever area of translation or Translation Studies is concerned: it helps students and researchers from other disciplines to find points of orientation (or even researchers within the discipline), it circumscribes the remits of academic journals, it helps guide authors' decisions about publication outlets, it maps out the remits of funding bodies, and it supports keyword searches in online databases. All these issues have consequences not only for professional issues such as organisational membership and support structures but also for translator training e.g. curriculum design.

In this article, I am aiming to map out on the basis of articles published in *JoSTrans* over its lifespan some developments in what is understood by 'specialised translation,' suggesting a changing model which is no longer based on the binary of 'literary' and 'non-literary' (see also Rogers forthcoming). As argued in a relatively recent article on the state-of-the-art in Translation Studies: "the traditional inclination of Translation Studies towards literary translation is now only one among many and varied preoccupations" (Brems, Meylaerts and van Doorslaer 2012: 3). It is precisely this variation which gives cause for reassessing what we understand by 'specialised translation' in a non-binary translation world.

Standing on the translation 'bridge,' many perspectives on the surrounding landscape are possible: "The landscape of translation studies has changed considerably in the last decades and those changes are viewed differently according to the position of the actors" (Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding 2015: 165). As writers/translators, researchers and teachers concerned with specialised translation, we are arguably in a position to counter a view which is often constrained by an oversimplified and narrow understanding of its scope and content and therefore of the translator's agency across a wide range of material and content. All this in turn suggests that the originally envisaged scope of the then welcome conception of *JoSTrans* as a (the?) journal of specialised translation might be in need of a fresh look, as the view now seems to have taken in a greater part of the translation/Translation (Studies) landscape.

2. A developing and burgeoning academic discipline

The problematic issue of how to scope 'specialised translation' can usefully be seen in the context of an interdisciplinary Translation Studies with a rapid quantitative growth in the volume of publications over the last 20-30 years and a now broadly defined coverage.

Regarding the quantitative issue, it has recently been estimated (Rovira-Esteva, Orero and Franco Aixelá 2015: 159) that there are over 110 "living specialized journals" in Translation Studies and over 60,000 publications (books, book chapters, journal articles, PhDs, not to mention dictionaries and encyclopaedias) of which 40,000 have been published in the last 20 years. The "increase in the number and accessibility of journals across

Translation Studies" has also been noted by Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding (2015: 163). In the light of the significant number of publications appearing — estimated at an insurmountable reading challenge of 3000 annually[4] — Rovira-Esteva, Orero and Franco Aixelá (2015: 160) argue that translation scholars now need "to know what we are doing and where we are". Drawing bibliometrically based "maps" of the discipline can, they suggest, help us to understand "how [they] are drawn" rather than being "unconsciously steered by them" (*ibid.*). But as acknowledged in their bibliographically based study of research resources, Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding (2015: 178) concede that the databases in their analysis are primarily intended to provide a mode of access to published material relevant to a particular topic of study for students and researchers. Hence, expedient decisions may sometimes be made with respect to the structuring of categories based on prominence. One example is that of "legal translation," which, it is argued, should be separated from "specialized translation," as it:

> arguably deserves its own label separate from that of 'technical and specialized translation,' not because legal texts are a particularly distinctive genre as compared to, for example, scientific articles, but simply because it has attracted more attention from Translation Studies scholars (*ibid.*).

A review of the main categories used in each of the databases discussed amply illustrates the challenge of attempting to map the Translation Studies landscape (Table 1) of which 'specialised translation' is a part.

Database	**Subject categories N=**	**Notes**
TSA (*Translation Studies Abstracts*) No longer active (since 2015)	27	Established 1998 (St Jerome; later Routledge/Taylor & Francis). Moved from print to exclusively online 2009. Multiple classifications of items possible. 60k records, including abstracts. Categories revised and extended over time. Acquired by John Benjamins 2015 (see *TSB*).
BITRA (*Bibliografía de Interpretación y Traducción*)	12 (with many sub-categories in some areas e.g. 'genre', 'problem', 'theory')	Established 2001 (Franco Aixelá, University of Alicante). 69k+ records; nearly 50% with abstracts. https://dti.ua.es/en/*BITRA*/introduction.html
TSB (*Translation Studies Bibliography*)	Not listed on *TSB* website but see van Doorslaer 2007 (600 'keywords' cited at the time).	Established 2004 (John Benjamins). 28k 'annotated' records. Classification based on a conceptual 'tree' derived originally from Holmes/Toury. Now complemented by entries from *TSA*. https://www.benjamins.com/online/*TSB*/

Table 1. Key facts on bibliographic databases of Translation Studies publications (based on Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding's 2015 analysis, updated and amended September 2017)

For our present question regarding the scope of specialised translation and its possible components, the two hierarchically organised list-based bibliographies, *TSA*[5] and *BITRA* provide an interesting comparison in

attempting to position 'specialised translation' in the Translation Studies landscape.

It is inevitable when comparing 12 with 27 categories that even where labels appear similar, the coverage of each topic will differ. The distribution also varies according to whether the topic is assigned the status of a main or a sub-category. For example, where 'literary translation' and 'specialized and technical translation' are both one of *TSA*'s 27 main categories, in *BITRA* they are both sub-categories of 'genre,' one of the 12 main categories, with even finer distinctions being made for 'technical translation' (business, IT, legal, medicine, localisation). The corresponding categories in van Hoof's much earlier *International Bibliography of Translation* and in *TSB* are respectively 'typology of translation' and 'fields of translation.' It seems then that 'specialised translation' is understood in these resources mainly in terms of its focus on non-fictional subject matter, although why *TSA* chooses to separate out "technical" from "specialized" is unclear.

Each database therefore segments the field differently in terms of groupings, and to some extent inventory (e.g. *BITRA* does not appear to feature 'intercultural studies' or 'translation and politics'), with what we might wish to identify as 'specialised translation' distributed across differently labelled (sub-)categories. Is this a case of 'fragmentation,' consisting of the creation of "taxonomies and maps that divide the field into separate units" as a strategy by scholars to "occupy or 'colonise'" the disciplinary space in particular ways (Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding 2015: 166; see also Brems, Meylaerts and van Doorslaer 2012: 3)? Or is it simply an inevitable part of fashioning fit-for-purpose research databases in a fast-developing area of study subject to varying conceptualisations? A case can be made for the answer to both questions to be 'yes,' although the colonising metaphor suggests — rather unjustly in my view — a wilful intent to exploit and denude rather than an understandable response to (a) particular sets [*sic*] of experiences with, and (b) perspectives on an ever wider-ranging (inter)discipline in terms of both research questions and, less prominently, research frameworks.

Indeed, the *Translation Studies Bibliography* defines translation and interpreting studies as "a broad field of transfer and mediation, containing aspects of intra- and interlingual translation, adaptation, interpreting, reformulation, localisation, multimedia translation, language mediation and terminology/documentation" (Translation Studies Bibliography. Introduction). This working definition, reaching beyond the interlingual and embracing the intersemiotic, draws attention to the ongoing debate about the boundaries of 'translation' and 'Translation Studies' in particular. Of note is the fact that the general thrust seems to be more concerned with what could arguably be considered to be non-prototypical translation issues — adaptation, reformulation, intralingual translation, localisation — as opposed to the different genres or fields of interlingual translation which tended to characterise earlier classifications, even around the millennium

as noted above (Section 1), such as religion, literature and technology/science. This shift in perspective raises issues about the ways in which disciplinary mappings or classifications are undertaken: strict ordering characteristics that typically underlie hierarchies — e.g. subject matter (literary or technical), medium (paper or digital), mode (language or image), channel (speech or writing) — risk missing important features of many types of modern communication and entertainment. The interlingual subtitling of audiovisual material, for instance, requires the translator to interpret dynamic multimodal material (speech, writing, images) and to encapsulate this in a written form which conforms to specified technical constraints as well as to agreed orthographic conventions. The subject matter could be an adaptation of a literary source in the form of a feature film, or a documentary dealing with any number of specialised subjects from wildlife to politics. A recent *JoSTrans* article illustrates the confluence of what might be considered separate if not entirely independent categories (italicised): "This paper discusses the introduction of *MT* in the *localisation* of *audiovisual* products in general and particularly *voiceover documentaries*" (Martín-Mor and Sánchez-Gijón 2016: 172, *emphases added*).

3. *JoSTrans* 2004-2017

This section reports on the extended survey of articles published in *JoSTrans* between 2004 and 2017. In 3.1, some changes made to the 2004-2014 survey are explained, outlining how and why the sub-categories were realigned in existing or new categories in order to produce a sharper picture of the distribution of topics. The quantitative results are tabulated in 3.2; this is followed by a discussion in 3.3.

3.1 Classification issues

The survey and classification of articles published in *JoSTrans* between its launch in 2004 and 2014 (reported in Rogers 2015: 15-18) retained the broad classification system set out in the journal's author guidelines with some refinements, adding, as noted earlier, two new categories: AVT and literary translation. In the current section, the categories of the original survey are revisited. Extended to 2017, the survey increases in size from 201 to 282 articles. The same set of sub-categories, of which there are 25 — some from the *JoSTrans* guidelines but elaborated according to my own judgment (see Table 2 below) — was retained but the *groupings* into categories (of which there are now 9) were reviewed for the extended survey with the aim of clarifying the distribution of articles across the spectrum of 'specialised translation', according to the *JoSTrans* view.

As a result, articles on multimedia/multimodal topics were, for instance, no longer classed as 'Subject-field translation issues,' but included under a new category of 'Technology,' to which localisation was also added. MT, the WWW and the former sub-category of technology were also moved from

'General and practical issues in translation and interpreting' to a new 'Technology' category. The 'General' category — rank 1 in the 2004-14 survey, accounting for one quarter of all articles — was further sub-divided and the sub-categories re-distributed so that more specific groupings could be established. For example, the sub-category general LSP issues was combined with terminology in the existing 'Features of LSP' category, interpreting was assigned its own category, and professional issues was combined with the existing 'Training and teaching specialised translation' category as training is an essential marker of professional status.

In any system of classification there are always those items which do not fit easily into one or more of the available (sub-)categories. These items might be suggestive of new developments, oversights or idiosyncratic topics. In the 2004-2014 survey, 21 items — classed as translation (other) — were assigned to the 'General and practical issues in translation and interpreting' category. These items were reviewed for the 2004-2017 survey and in some cases (n=7) reassigned to more specific sub-categories. 'Translation (other)' then became its own category, making clear the residual level of classification difficulty (discussed below).

'Theoretical issues in specialised translation' — somewhat problematic in so far as 'theory' is not a discrete issue — was removed, as all articles were assigned to more specific categories. An indication of the way in which such general categories can encompass topics of very different kinds and types can be illustrated by the *BITRA* classification of 'theory,' which includes 20 sub-categories, ranging from terminology to ethics through equivalence and process. Hence, overall, the original eight categories of the 2004-2014 survey became nine.

Each article in the survey and the extended survey was assigned to only one (sub)-category in order to produce the distributions presented below in Tables 2 and 3, as was also the case for the 2015 survey (Table 4). The decision concerning this primary classification was based in each case on the Abstract in the first instance (not on the keywords or the headings in the table of contents within an Issue), and on a closer reading of the article in cases of doubt. In order to capture the often multidimensional nature of some articles, however, secondary classifications were also assigned where appropriate (Table 5). In this case, more than one additional classification could be added; secondary classifications ranged from 0 to 3 per article.

3.2 Survey results

The revised classification is presented in Tables 2 and 3: Table 2 shows the detail, including sub-categories assigned or re-assigned to each category, and Table 3 summarises the overall distribution.

Subject category/sub-categories	**n=**		**Subject category/sub-categories**	**n=**	
AVT			**Revision and post-editing**		
AVT general	7		revision	6	
audiodescription	9		post-editing	4	
games	1		*Sub-total*		*10*
subtitling / dubbing	37		**Traditional LSP subject-focused translation**		
voiceover	3		legal	11	
Sub-total		*57*	medical	7	
			political	4	
Interpreting (all)	14	*14*	scientific	6	
			technical	7	
Literary	15	*15*	tourism	3	
			LSP other*	6	
LSP features			*Sub-total*		*44*
LSP general	2				
terminology	21		**Translation (other)**	17	*17*
Sub-total		*23*			
			Technology		
Prof. issues/training			localisation	7	
crowdsourcing	2		multimodality	6	
professional issues	24		MT	3	
quality	4		web	2	
training/ pedagogy	43		technology (other)	11	
Sub-total		*73*	*Sub-total*		*29*
			***Grand total* N=**		***282***

*Note: includes academic, advertising, institutional and administrative, social science.

Table 2. Frequency distribution of *JoSTrans* articles between 2004-2017 by category and sub-categories (N=282).

Subject Category	**n=**	**n/N**	**Rank**
Professional issues and training	73	26%	1
AVT	57	20%	2
Traditional LSP: subject-focused translation	44	16%	3
Technology	29	10%	4
LSP features	23	8%	5
Translation (other)	17	6%	6
Literary	15	5%	7
Interpreting (all)	14	5%	7
Revision and post-editing	10	4%	9
N=	**282**	**100%**	

Table 3. Overview: frequency distribution and rank order of *JoSTrans* articles between 2004-2017 by category (N=282).

For ease of comparison, the 2004-2014 survey results are repeated in Table 4 below:

Subject category	n=	n/N	Rank
General & practical issues in Translation & Interpreting	51	25%	1
Training and teaching LSP translation	39	19%	2
AVT	38	19%	3
Subject field translation issues	37	18%	4
LSP features	18	9%	5
Literary translation	13	6%	6
Revision & post-editing	5	2%	7
Theoretical issues in specialised translation	0	0%	8
N=	**201**	**100%**	

Note: Grey rows show additional categories beyond *JoSTrans* original categories

Table 4. Frequency distribution and rank order of *JoSTrans* articles between 2004-2014 by category (N=201) (form adapted from Rogers 2015: 16).

The so-called 'secondary' classifications are recorded for relevant articles in Table 5 below:

Subject category	n=	n/N	Rank
Professional issues and training	40	29%	1
Traditional LSP: subject-focused translation	32	23%	2
Technology	22	16%	3
AVT	14	10%	4
Interpreting (All)	10	7%	5
Other (Translation)	9	6%	6
LSP-specific features	6	4%	7
Revision and post-editing	4	3%	8
Literary	2	1%	9
N=	**139**	**100%**	

Note: multiple classifications per article possible

Table 5. Frequency distribution of 'secondary' classifications by subject category for *JoSTrans* articles between 2004-2017 showing rank order.

Once the 'General and practical issues of translation and interpreting', subsuming one quarter of the articles without providing any clear indication of the topics covered, were distributed to other existing as well as newly organised categories, the relative prominence of different topics became clearer in so far as the highest ranked four categories are more specific and less bunched. The extended analysis confirms the prominence assigned to professional issues surrounding specialised translation and the training which underlies and supports professional development. Arguably, this dominance, also evident in the secondary classifications, is characteristic of a profession which is still establishing itself — by comparison, for example, with legal and medical professions enjoying similar levels of higher education — in terms of authority, recognition, remuneration, qualifications, associations, and so on. The *JoSTrans* focus on this aspect of Translation Studies echoes the observations in Brems, Meylaerts and van Doorslaer's review of the whole subject field in which they stress the long-standing link between theory and practice, also evident, they point out, in the *TSB*:

> The concern for new training methods for future translators and interpreters illustrates the concerns of a discipline that has never/not yet lost its relationship with one of its applied counterparts: the training of professionals and of trainers (2012: 3).

With subtitling and dubbing accounting for nearly two thirds of the AVT articles published, audiovisual translation maintains its high ranking: this raises interesting questions about the evident categorisation of AVT as 'specialised translation,' to which we return below. The second 'new' category highlighted in the earlier survey i.e. literary translation, did not feature at all as such in the three years 2015-2017 with the exception of one article on ideology in poetry translation. Just over half of articles in the previous years are accounted for by one Special Issue, to which we also return below.

3.3 Discussion

What is often considered to be the core of specialised translation — the interlingual translation of texts dealing with a range of subjects in ways which are "transactional or informational" aiming to "influence or inform" as opposed to being "affective/aesthetic […] aiming to provoke emotions and/or entertain" (Jones 2009: 152) — is ranked only third, accounting for less than 20% of the published articles over the 14 years of *JoSTrans*. Related to this category is that dealing with features characteristic of LSP texts (ranked fifth). The majority of the articles in this category are concerned with terminology, nearly half of which appear in a Special Issue dedicated to terminology (Issue 18). Other LSP characteristics (see Stolze 1999: 21-4; Scarpa 2010: 35-59) such as text function, genre conventions, syntax, pragmatics, text organisation and so on, do not feature here. Such omissions notwithstanding, studies related in some way to LSPs as conventionally understood account for only one in four of the published articles.

The link between specialised translation and technology is often assumed to be much stronger than that between literary translation and technology: on the one hand, it can form the subject matter of LSP texts and on the other hand it can be a tool to aid translation of particular LSP genres. Although many other technological tools and resources are also commonly used by literary translators, from word processors through online lexical databases to internet search engines, these tools/resources are widely available and used outside the translation community and so are not generally considered to be 'specialised.' For our present purposes, the revised grouping of a number of sub-categories into a new 'Technology' category seems well motivated in the context of specialised translation in view of their close links (see Table 2) as well as their increasing interdependence such as that between MT and CAT, the most widely used translation technology, including notably translation memory. Yet despite

its widely assumed importance for at least the last decade —"CAT has become the predominant mode of translation in scientific and technical translation and localization" (O'Hagan 2009: 49) — only seven *JoSTrans* articles have appeared since 2004 on CAT, and only one in ten of the *JoSTrans* published articles fall into the broad area of 'Technology' as defined here. If the sub-category of multimodality is removed — its inclusion under 'Technology' does assume a multimedia perspective — only about 8% of articles deal with this topic.

In the present 2004-2017 *JoSTrans* survey, 17 items fall into the residual 'Translation (other)' category, i.e. 6% of the total, as they could not be easily accommodated in other categories. Examples include: the intercultural hybridity of source texts, literary *and* non-literary translation, trust and translation, singing in unknown languages, translation and editing, semiotic resources in sight translation, and so on. No particular trends could be identified which could have justified the introduction of new categories at this stage.

Interpreting and translation are distinguished by their respective channels of communication, but often linked at the more abstract level of research: the 2nd edition of the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, for example, retains the 1st edition's five entries on interpreting (Community, Conference, Court, Dialogue and Signed Language) as well as over 60 page references in the index (Baker and Saldanha 2009). All three online databases analysed by Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding also cover articles on interpreting despite neither *TSA* nor *TSB* having 'interpreting' in their title (2015: 169). By including articles on interpreting, *JoSTrans* has pursued a similar policy, with one in twenty of its publications relating to interpreting as the main topic. A small number of articles related to interpreting were mainly concerned with training and were classified accordingly in that category (n=7).

Despite their material differences, one area in which specialised translation and interpreting overlap is their subject matter: interpreters largely deal with communicative situations in which specialised varieties of language are prominent — as reflected in the *Routledge Encyclopedia* entries— requiring a sound and often broad knowledge of registers beyond the general language (e.g. technical, legal, business, medical), albeit largely in the context of spontaneous speech in all its forms. Signed-language interpreting does deal on occasion with feature films and TV series, but other modes of interpreting do not.

It might be considered odd that articles on literary topics appear at all in a journal concerned with 'specialised translation'. However, one of the earliest *JoSTrans* articles makes a case for seeing the translation process as a "totality […] whatever the kind of text to be translated and its degree of specialisation" (Basílio 2005: 7). Rejecting a view which envisages "fuzzy, merging frontiers around categories" (*ibid.*: 8), the perspective adopted is

an interdisciplinary one —Linguistics, Philosophy, Translation Studies— in which the creation of meaning in discourse can be viewed as occurring on an "unbroken continuum" in which "the various text types, ranging from the most technical, functional, non-literary texts to the most poetical literary ones" can all be accommodated (*ibid*.). A related point has been made by Harvey who, while acknowledging the differences between the propositional content of literary and non-literary texts (1998: 277), as also between their respective functions, argues that the linguistic and stylistic devices which are used to fulfil those functions are less easily categorised. Harvey had metaphors in mind, but there is a whole range of features which are critical to a successful translation, regardless of the subject matter or communicative purpose. These include culturally specific items, genre conventions, lexical choices, textual patterns e.g. of cohesion, relations between verbal and non-verbal text, and so on in the light of readership expectations and intended setting. Nevertheless, even though certain features may be shared to a greater or lesser extent across many areas of translation, in a publication dedicated to something called 'specialised translation', the relevance of such features — when approached from a literary perspective — still needs to be established.

The articles classified as 'Literary' for the purposes of the 2004-2017 *JoSTrans* survey (n=15) cover a range of topics, with over half appearing in the Special Issue (number 22) on "Crime in Translation" (Seago, Evans and Rodriguez de Céspedes 2014). The 15 topics covered are diverse, even within the Special Issue. Secondary classifications (Table 5) in institutional/administrative translation, terminology, the WWW and professional issues give a 'specialised' flavour to the main literary topic, e.g. legal terminology in a popular TV series about a mafia family. One topic which attracts particular interest is that of adaptation: from literary work to film, video game and graphic novel, touching on audiovisual translation and multimodality. Otherwise, the focus of interest ranges widely from, for instance, metaphor through terminology and retranslation to the influence of literary translations on target-language development. The link with a conventional understanding of specialised translation, even allowing for a broader scope encompassing some AVT and multimodal texts, is tenuous in a number of topics e.g. translation strategies for humour, the manipulative translation of poetry for colonial purposes, and the reception of 'translations' — or retellings — which are target-oriented. Such topics appear to reach beyond the rather broader invitation of the *JoSTrans* guidelines also welcoming "contributions from related disciplines such as linguistics, philosophy and cultural studies which touch on issues of specialised translation" (*JoSTrans*. "About") and could therefore be regarded as outliers for current purposes.

As noted earlier, the original *JoSTrans* guidelines did not explicitly mention AVT and to date, they remain unchanged. The extended survey confirms, however, the high profile of AVT in the articles published over the whole of the journal's life span. In the revised classification of topic distribution, as

noted earlier, AVT ranks second after 'Professional Issues and training' and ahead of 'Traditional LSP: subject-focused translation' (see Table 3), accounting for one in five articles. This striking *de facto* acknowledgment of AVT as a member of the class 'specialised translation' deserves attention from the perspectives of both form and content.

In terms of form, all audiovisual translation from subtitling through audio description to voiceover involves some kind of multimedia technology, regardless of whether it integrates writing (sub- or surtitles), speech (dubbing, audio description or voiceover) or image (signing) with an original multimodal product or 'text,' or whether the translation is interlingual, intralingual or intersemiotic. The technological character of the medium suggests links with other technology-based 'texts' such as mobile-phone and software interfaces i.e. with localisation. Yet if we look at the content of the AVT articles published since 2004, a clear majority deal with subject matter which falls into Jones' (2009) broad functional characterisation of literary texts. In other words, they are "affective/aesthetic […] aiming to provoke emotions and/or entertain," although the AVT articles analysed here usually fail to match other features such as "canonicity" and "'poetic' language use" (2009: 152). Whether these characteristics are essential to an understanding of what is 'literary,' is, however, arguable: we can recall Hermans' sardonic comment that literary scholars "gave up trying to define literature a long time ago" (2013: 77), and note an acknowledgement in a standard reference work on literary terms and literary theory that 'literature' is a "vague term" (Cuddon 1999: 472). Accordingly, novels such as those of Ian Fleming are excluded, whereas selected philosophical, biological and historical works — or, we could add, what might otherwise be characterised as 'specialised' topics — are included "by virtue of the excellence of their writing, their originality and their general aesthetic and artistic merits" (*ibid.*). For our current classification purposes, I prefer to avoid the slippery ground of perceived quality and focus on function, which indicates that the content of much AVT tends more to the literary than the non-literary. Indeed, of the 57 AVT articles published, around seven in every ten take as their subject matter feature films, non-documentary TV programmes and the performing arts, whereas only about one in ten deal with documentary material (film, TV and museums) or news broadcasts.

So in what sense is AVT 'specialised'? To provide some kind of answer we can return to the not unproblematic issue of the actual term itself (see also Scarpa 2010: 1-3): the English 'specialised translation' is related to terms such as 'languages for *special* purposes' or '*special* languages,' a wider concept than what are often regarded as equivalents in some other European languages, particularly the Germanic, such as *Fachsprache* (German) and *Fackspråk* (Swedish), which relate explicitly to the languages of subject fields or domains and contrast with the 'general language,' which requires no specific training. Designations usually considered equivalent in the Romance languages — e.g. *langues de spécialité* (French) — are consistent with the broader scope of the English designation, for which

'specialised' or 'special' needs to be interpreted in a way which is not usually required for the more specific 'subject field' or 'domain' i.e. *Fach* or *Fack*. Although the studies of AVT discussed here favour subject matter which aims to entertain, the multimedial nature of the material distinguishes it from literary material in the print medium, rendering its content dynamic rather than static. Some literary print material is, however, multimodal e.g. — graphic novels, comics, children's literature — as also some LSP publications which include illustrations, graphics and photographs, meaning that multimodality is a less helpful distinguishing criterion. We can conclude that, in the fast-changing world of Translation Studies, AVT has become a prominent source of *JoSTrans* publications largely as a result of its technological medium and perhaps because its identity has been uncertain, emerging as it did into a translation world of what was largely print-oriented texts and in which literary translation was the dominant object of study.

Of much less importance in terms of its low frequency of articles is the category 'Revision and post-editing,' ranked ninth. As conventionally understood, revision and post-editing take place under different circumstances, at a late stage of the human and the machine translation processes respectively, in the latter case when raw output is not fit-for-purpose. But there is a certain lack of clarity about the meaning of the terms. The human translations of specialised and literary texts are both likely to undergo 'revision,' which is defined in one relevant standard as "bilingual examination of *target language content* […] against *source language content* […] for its suitability for the agreed purpose" but then restricted to being carried out by a translator "other than the [original] translator" (BS EN ISO 17100:2015: 2.2.6; 5.3.3; *emphasis* in the original), a view not universally agreed (see, for instance, Palumbo 2009: 102). It is unlikely, for example, that a literary translation would be revised by a second translator. 'Post-editing' of raw MT output is sometimes said to include both revision and review, a monolingual exercise (Olohan 2016: 13), just revision (Ping 2009: 164), or arguably just review: "edit and correct *machine translation output*" (BS EN ISO 17100:2015: 2.2.4; *emphasis* in the original). Nevertheless, both exercises involve making changes to a draft translation to effect some kind of improvement so that a text is fit-for-purpose in the new language.

The *JoSTrans* articles in this category confirm a degree of terminological confusion within the area of 'specialised translation,' reflecting a range of practices. This category includes two metastudies, a case study of practice in an international organisation and a discursive contribution focused on another international organisation. But over half of the articles in this small category report on empirical studies (of both revision and post-editing; n=6), demonstrating a particular concern to provide an evidence base for what could be regarded as two sub-competences with considerable importance for contemporary translator training and professional practice relating to specialised texts, belying their low ranking.

4. Concluding remarks

Looking out from the *JoSTrans* bridge, we have one view of the landscape of 'specialised translation.' The view from another bridge will inevitably be different. Even the same view is likely to be described in different terms by those standing on the same bridge, not only for designatory reasons — "given the lack of consensus on the metatheoretical terminology" (Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding 2015: 167) — but also for conceptual reasons: the perceived interrelations between the various areas, as well as the inventory of items assigned to the periphery or the core, can vary.

If we adopt a quantitative view of current translation *practice*, specialised translation — understood as the interlingual translation of LSP genres — is central but this is not reflected either in the broad field of Translation Studies as a whole or, perhaps surprisingly, in the distribution of topics within *JoSTrans.* The survey of nearly 300 *JoSTrans* articles published between 2004 and 2017 reported here has demonstrated a much wider view of what is considered by editors and contributors to comprise 'specialised translation.'

Given the accepted and essential link between theory and practice in translation/Translation (Studies), the high ranking of 'Professional issues and training' is understandable, although its outranking of 'LSP translation' and 'Technology' is perhaps less expected. The fact that it accounts for just under one in three secondary classifications adds further weight to the relevance of applying studies of other topics to areas linked directly to practice.

The prominence of studies of AVT is arguably related to the fact that there is no dedicated journal to which authors can yet turn. The volume of publications as indicated by bibliometric data also shows a sharp increase at the beginning of the present decade (Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding 2015: 172). Nevertheless, many AVT authors — free to submit to any number of journals — choose to contribute to a journal dedicated to 'specialised translation.'

To conclude, we can ask whether it really matters if the specialised translation landscape reaches to the far horizon, is shrouded in mist at the periphery or is restricted in some way to a much closer view. In my view it does matter, and I would favour a broader view for three reasons.

Firstly, the rapid development of Translation Studies as an interdiscipline means that new areas of research and consequent interconnections are opening up the whole field. It would be a pity if 'specialised translation' were to exclude itself from new perspectives and methodologies. Secondly, all translation shares certain features — sometimes more, sometimes

fewer — meaning that topics such as agency, linguistic resources and cultural conceptualisations can reveal synergies between types of translation which may otherwise be regarded as disparate. And thirdly, our decisions as teachers regarding the design of curricula for programmes to train future translators can be tailored accordingly to reflect these commonalities as well as the differences, thereby providing students with the flexibility to find their own strengths and to choose their own professional path.

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Biography

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[1] Other journals such as *trans-kom, Fachsprache* and *Terminology* also publish material on specialised translation but their overall remit is not exclusively translational.

[2] This is clearly a crude benchmark as it implies a direct relation between the volume of translation carried out in a particular area and its degree of academic interest and potential scholarly value. But it can serve as a useful trigger to reflecting on the distributions of professional and scholarly practice.

[3] Since the 2014 survey was undertaken, a few changes have been introduced into these guidelines. *The Translator* now includes mention of "a range of disciplinary perspectives and methodologies" and a commitment to "providing a meeting point" for "both researchers and practitioners." *Target* has added a particular welcome for "topics at the cutting edge of the discipline."

[4] Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding (2015: 162) cite a figure of 2000 per annum in the same journal issue.

[5] Although TSA has been inactive since 2015, the analysis provided by Zanettin, Saldanha and Harding (2015) is still a valuable starting point for a topic-based analysis of the field as it remains recent and provides detailed data on the distribution of publications across different topics and languages, as well as some indication of emerging trends over time.