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**Translating heteroglossia in contemporary Scottish fiction  
into German: the case of Ian Stephen's *A Book of Death  
and Fish* from theoretical and practical perspectives**

Part 1

*Theoretical discussion*

Karin Bosshard

PhD in Translation Studies

School of Literatures, Languages and Cultures

University of Edinburgh

2023

## ABSTRACT

This thesis investigates the translation of linguistic variation from theoretical and practical perspectives, using the case of contemporary Scottish prose fiction where the use of different regional and social dialects is seen to be particularly prevalent. In translation studies, it has been argued that such linguistic heterogeneity provides a major challenge for translators and that a general tendency of standardisation and homogenisation can be observed. Taking a translator-researcher perspective, this thesis challenges current theoretical positions on the translation of linguistic varieties: firstly that linguistic variation, in particular when caused by regional dialects, is a “problem” (and an unsolvable one at that) in translation and secondly that using geographical target language varieties is not a workable translation approach.

Mikhail Bakhtin’s (1981) notion of heteroglossia forms a key theoretical grounding of the thesis, as a tool to dissect and interpret the complexity of a linguistically heterogeneous source text and as a theoretical foundation for a translation approach that seeks to reconstruct this diversity in the target text. These questions are explored using the case of Ian Stephen’s novel *A Book of Death and Fish* (2014), which is written in an idiosyncratic blend of colloquial Scottish English, Hebridean dialect, dialects of Scots and individual Gaelic words. The German translation of an extended extract from *A Book of Death and Fish*, which forms an inherent part of the thesis, combines dialect-to-dialect translation – implemented by using Swiss German dialects – with the preservation of cultural elements. By testing a theoretical model on a real case in an iterative process, this thesis highlights the potential of employing regional target language dialects in combination with other strategies to retain linguistic variation in fictional prose. In doing so, it also sheds new light on the role of the translator-researcher and the function of translation practice as a research tool.

## LAY SUMMARY

This thesis explores from theoretical and practical perspectives how literary texts containing different social and geographical dialects can be approached in translation. It focuses on contemporary Scottish fiction, specifically on Ian Stephen's novel *A Book of Death and Fish* (2014) which is written in a blend of Scottish English, Hebridean dialect, dialects of Scots and Gaelic.

The thesis first investigates the functions of literary dialect in prose fiction and the different strategies used to render them in their target language. Much of the research in translation studies observes a tendency for translators to standardise dialect or homogenise variation. It has also been argued that regional dialects are not a suitable translation solution for non-standard language because, among other reasons, they create a mismatch between the language the characters speak and the setting of the novel. This thesis addresses both these points: firstly it investigates the linguistic complexity of Stephen's novel in detail and proposes a translation approach to retain rather than tone down this complexity in the German translation. The theoretical translation model discussed in Part 1 of the thesis is then applied to an extended extract from *A Book of Death and Fish* which is translated into German (included in Part 2). In doing so, the thesis addresses the second point: it proposes that using regional dialects in the target language – in this case Swiss German dialects – can work to retain the literary and ideological functions of the dialect in the novel.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my profound gratitude to my supervisors Dr Hephzibah Israel and Dr Eleoma Bodammer. Their expertise, patient guidance and thoughtful feedback have been essential to the development of this thesis. I would also like to thank Dr Lori Watson, acting as a third supervisor in the early stages of my research, for her helpful comments on the literary uses of Scots.

My gratitude also extends to Ian Stephen for his warm-hearted enthusiasm for this research project from the start. Our conversations have been invaluable in furthering my understanding of *A Book of Death and Fish* and its cultural and linguistic background. Thank you also, Ian, for giving this landlubber a chance to experience a traditional sgoth in action.

I would also like to thank Sara Hunt from Saraband for her interest in this project and for clarifying my questions about copyright.

I am grateful to Bruce Eunson for providing background on Shetland Scots and to John Macaulay for answering my questions on Gaelic spelling and grammar.

This thesis would not have been possible without the unfailing support and continuous encouragement of my family and friends, in Scotland, Switzerland and elsewhere in the world. Thank you to you all, for being there, for believing in me and for encouraging me when I needed it. I really could not have done it without you.

## **LIST OF TABLES**

Table 1. Contributors to heteroglossia and main translation strategies.....	93
Table 2. Register variables.....	111

# CONTENTS

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Source text and author .....	2
1.3 Motivation, objectives and theoretical background .....	4
1.4 Methodology.....	7
1.5 Thesis structure and extract selection .....	12
<b>2. LINGUISTIC VARIATION AND ITS TRANSLATION: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES</b> .....	<b>13</b>
2.1 Translating linguistic variation: key issues in translation studies.....	14
2.1.1 Translation approaches .....	14
2.1.2 (Un)Translatability of regional variation.....	17
2.2 Towards a theoretical model for translating regional variation.....	19
2.2.1 Addressing the arguments against dialect-to-dialect translation .....	19
2.2.2 Implementing dialect-to-dialect translation .....	24
2.3 Heteroglossia: linguistic variation in the novel from Bakhtin’s perspective.....	27
2.3.1 Heteroglossia in context .....	27
2.3.2 Key aspects of heteroglossia .....	28
2.3.3 Heteroglossia and the novel.....	31
2.3.4 Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and translation studies .....	33
<b>3. THE SCOTTISH CONTEXT: REGIONAL VARIATION IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE</b> .....	<b>35</b>
3.1 Scotland’s sociolinguistic landscape .....	35
3.1.1 Historical background.....	35
3.1.2 Questions of distinction, status and linguistic identity .....	37
3.1.3 Regional varieties relevant for <i>A Book of Death and Fish</i> .....	40
3.1.3.1 <i>Hebridean English</i> .....	40
3.1.3.2 <i>North-east Scots</i> .....	42
3.1.3.3 <i>Shetland Scots</i> .....	43
3.2 Heteroglossia in Scottish literature.....	44
3.2.1 Regional variation in the Scottish novel .....	44
3.2.2 Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and Scottish literature .....	47
3.3 Heteroglot Scottish novels in translation .....	49
<b>4. ANALYSING HETEROGLOSSIA IN <i>A BOOK OF DEATH AND FISH</i></b> .....	<b>52</b>
4.1 Heteroglossia through “compositional-stylistic unities” .....	52
4.2 Heteroglossia through “speech types” .....	54
4.2.1 “Social dialects” and “professional jargons” .....	55

4.2.2 “Linguistic dialects” and “hybrid constructions” .....	59
4.3 Heteroglossia through “external linguistic features” .....	62
4.4 Conclusion .....	64
<b>5. TOWARDS THE TARGET TEXT: REGIONAL VARIATION IN GERMAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE</b> .....	<b>66</b>
5.1 Sociolinguistic perspectives on regional variation in German.....	66
5.1.1 Dialect and standard: historical developments .....	66
5.1.2 Dialect and standard: distinctions and classifications .....	68
5.1.3 Regional dialects of German .....	69
5.1.4 Linguistic identity and attitudes to language .....	71
5.2 Regional variation in German literature .....	74
5.2.1 Historical perspective .....	74
5.2.2 Dialect in German novels of the 21 <sup>st</sup> century .....	75
5.3 Heteroglot Scottish fiction in German translation.....	79
5.3.1 Overview and common approaches .....	79
5.3.2 Two case studies: tales of quines and loons in German.....	80
5.3.2.1 <i>Case 1: The Nessman</i> .....	81
5.3.2.2 <i>Case 2: Sunset Song</i> .....	84
5.4 Conclusion .....	91
<b>6. TRANSLATING A BOOK OF DEATH AND FISH INTO GERMAN</b> .....	<b>92</b>
6.1 Translating heteroglossia: concretising the theoretical model.....	92
6.2 Translation strategies in practice: examples from <i>A Book of Death and Fish</i> .....	97
6.2.1 “Linguistic dialects” .....	97
6.2.2 “Social dialects” and “external linguistic features” .....	101
6.2.3 “Hybrid constructions” .....	105
6.2.4 “Incorporated genres” and “professional jargons” .....	107
6.3 Conclusion .....	112
<b>7. CONCLUSION</b> .....	<b>114</b>
7.1 Purpose and findings.....	114
7.2 Contributions.....	115
7.3 Limitations .....	117
7.4 Suggestions for future research.....	118
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	<b>121</b>
<b>APPENDIX</b> .....	<b>138</b>
A1 Sources for reviews of <i>Lied vom Abendrot</i> .....	138

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background

Translation theorist and literary translator Antoine Berman (1985/2004: 279) points out that literary prose is a genre where different varieties of a language are assembled and intertwined with each other. How translators approach this “Babelian proliferation of languages” (ibid.) – for instance regional vernaculars, social dialects, slang, different accents, registers and idiolects – has been much debated within translation studies. The consensus among researchers and practitioners of translation appears to be that linguistic variation in literary texts presents a serious obstacle. It has been regarded as an “extreme case of translation problems” (Sanchez, 2007: 128) and deemed one of the principal problems literary translators encounter (Brodovich, 1997; Kopetzki, 2015). Rabassa (1984: 24) even calls it “another of the impossibilities of translation”. Linguistic variation, in particular regional dialect, is seen as a dilemma, a daunting challenge for which there is often no satisfactory solution and one that frequently means loss of some kind. What does this rather bleak outlook mean for translating literary dialects? Does it influence or even restrict the kind of approaches taken? The investigation of the scholarly literature and of relevant novels in translation in this thesis appears to confirm that solutions to the “problem” of linguistic variation often mean decreasing the linguistic diversity in the text. There is a clear tendency to tone down or even standardise dialect and to homogenise linguistic variation. While some scholars (and translators) take a fairly prescriptive view of translating linguistic variation (see 2.2), Federici (2011a: 1) advocates a more open-minded approach. He argues that the issue of translating non-standard language should be seen “as a constructive, productive, and creative challenge” (ibid.). Thus, while linguistic variation is still regarded as a “problem”, a term with inherent negative connotations, it can also be seen as an invitation to be creative. Federici (ibid.: 20) hopes that experimenting with linguistic varieties will be perceived as a “creative opportunity” rather than as “a mere linguistic challenge”. Therefore, the constraint of linguistic variation could in fact generate creative solutions, making the outlook rather less gloomy than the above comments would suggest.

This thesis explores the question of translating linguistic variation from a theoretical and practical perspective, using the case of contemporary Scottish prose fiction where linguistic heterogeneity is seen to be particularly prevalent. Corbett (2010: 3) for instance highlights the frequent “shifting between languages and language varieties” as a defining characteristic of Scottish literary texts that presents significant challenges for translators. Employing Ian Stephen’s novel *A Book of Death and Fish* (2014) as a case in point, this thesis investigates linguistic variation through the prism of literary stylistics, sociolinguistics and translation

studies. A theoretical model for reconstructing the heteroglot nature of the text will be developed and then tested by translating an extended extract from Stephen's novel into German. Through an iterative practice-based methodology, it challenges current theoretical positions on the translation of linguistic varieties: firstly that linguistic variation, in particular when caused by regional dialects, is a (mainly unsolvable) "problem" in translation and secondly that using geographical target language varieties is not workable as a translation method. The suggested approach combines dialect-to-dialect translation, making use of Swiss German dialects, with the preservation of cultural elements. By applying the theoretical model to a real case, it highlights the potential of using target language dialects in combination with other strategies to retain linguistic variation in fictional prose. In doing so, the thesis also aims to shed new light on the role of the translator-researcher and the function of translation practice as a research tool.

## 1.2 Source text and author

Ian Stephen's novel *A Book of Death and Fish* (*ABODAF*) was published by independent publisher Saraband (Glasgow, now based in Manchester) in 2014. It received critical acclaim for its use of language and its originality (see e.g. Adair, 2014; Gunn, 2014; McWilliam, 2014; Macrae Burnet, 2015), and has been hailed as a "major landmark in the fiction of the Islands [and] a landmark in Scottish literature and in contemporary fiction more broadly" (Macfarlane, 2014).

Ian Stephen (b. 1955) is a writer, storyteller and artist who is based in his native Stornoway on the Isle of Lewis. After completing a degree in English, drama and education at the University of Aberdeen, he served in the coastguard for 15 years before starting to work full-time in the arts in the mid-1990s. He has published several volumes of poetry as well as narrative non-fiction works and plays. *ABODAF* is his first novel. Like his narrator, Stephen's life is closely connected to the sea; he is an experienced sailor, and boats have played an important role in his life. Although there are numerous parallels between Stephen's biography and that of the narrator, Stephen is keen to highlight that *A Book of Death and Fish* is a work of fiction and "most of it is made up" (p. 563). He emphasises that the "views of [the narrator] and other characters in this book are not those of the author" (p. 565). However, as a writer of the realist tradition, he notes that he tries to "write about what actually happened", mixing and matching biographical and physical elements from real characters with fiction (Scottish Writers' Centre, 2015).

*ABODAF* is the tale of Stornoway man Peter MacAulay (born 1955) who sits down to write his will, taking the occasion to tell us about his life and the events that shaped him and the history of the Hebrides and Scotland more broadly. The novel pretends to be a kind of memoir; a collection of stories, reflections and documents accompanying Peter's will and forming "the MacAulay archive" (p. 191) he has seemingly been compiling. The connections between the short chapters (104 in total), which in some cases read like stand-alone stories, are loose and often based only on motifs and themes. Although their order is broadly chronological – from the narrator's childhood and youth in Stornoway and Clackmannanshire, his time as a student in Aberdeen and his return to Lewis where he works as a coastguard officer and in various other jobs, marries and has a daughter, to his illness and death – there are frequent tangents and deviations from linear progression, both within the chapters and in the way the chapters are ordered. Ellipsis is an important narrative tool, as key events in the narrator's life, for instance the separation from his wife Gabriele, are left out or merely hinted at. Aspects of Peter's story are glossed over to the point of obscurity, forcing the reader to be patient and fill the gaps until a clearer picture gradually emerges.

Peter is an autodiegetic narrator in Genette's (1983) terms, a first-person narrator who is also the protagonist of the story. He is a confident and self-aware storyteller, opinionated and rambling in some places, concise and poetic in others. The perspectives of the other characters appear primarily through the insertion of texts within the text, for instance a story typed by his mother, letters from his wife-to-be or emails from his daughter. Together with other documents, such as part of a doctoral thesis, a note to a teacher or the actual will and testament, these texts accompany Peter's account, or "these musings" (p. 544), as he terms them. The combination of the often conversational tone of the storyteller with the inclusion of written documents leads to an interesting tension between the oral and the written, further contributing to the heterogeneous character of the novel.

In sociolinguistic terms, the narrative voice is an idiosyncratic mix of Scottish English, Hebridean dialect, Gaelic words, Stornoway vernacular terms and idiolectal elements as well as the jargon of sailors, fishermen and other professional groups. The narrator frequently mediates language by explaining terms commonly used on the island or by reflecting on their meaning. Other characters – mainly the protagonist's mother, who was raised on the east coast of Scotland, and her relatives – speak in a Scots dialect (Doric). Its use results in a clear distinction of the voices of characters from the Isle of Lewis and those from the east coast of Scotland. Other Scots dialects, such as Glaswegian and Shetlandic, although infrequent, contribute to the linguistic heterogeneity.

As the analysis in Chapter 4 confirms, *ABODAF* exploits the potential of heteroglossia in varied and innovative ways and is therefore an excellent case for studying linguistic variation in translation. Moreover, the novel was well reviewed, is original in form and language and sufficiently challenging for a PhD project. In more practical terms, it is also suitable for this project because Stephen's work (with the exception of a small number of shorter pieces) has not been translated into German yet, and the translation rights for the novel are still available. Lastly, linguistic variation in the contemporary literature of the Scottish Highlands and Islands as well as the translation of such works have received relatively little attention, as much of the focus of scholarly discussion has been on the urban contexts of Scotland's Central Belt (see e.g. Schoene, 2007; McGuire, 2009, see also 3.2). Selecting Stephen's work for this project can therefore go some way in addressing this imbalance.

### **1.3 Motivation, objectives and theoretical background**

Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia forms a key theoretical grounding for this thesis. It is valuable for this project in two main ways: as a tool to dissect and interpret the complexity of a linguistically heterogeneous source text and as a theoretical foundation for a translation approach that seeks to reconstruct this diversity in the target text. The Russian linguist, literary critic and philosopher of language Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) proposed heteroglossia as a social phenomenon manifesting itself in everyday language as well as in literary discourse. Bakhtin (1975/1981: 271) understands language not as an abstract grammatical system, but as an expression of different worldviews and as suffused by ideology (discussed further in 2.3). Linguistic diversity is therefore not merely a phenomenon on the surface of a text or utterance; rather, the different voices of heteroglossia are manifestations of a socially and ideologically heterogeneous world. For Bakhtin, the novel is the literary genre in which heteroglossia is represented most fully. Thus, the novel is (and should be) a representation of all social and ideological voices of its era; it is a "microcosm of heteroglossia" (ibid.: 411).

For this thesis, Bakhtin's understanding of heteroglossia firstly presents a framework for a critical translation-focused investigation of linguistic heterogeneity in the novel studied here. It allows for an in-depth exploration of novelistic language, generating a nuanced understanding of *ABODAF* as a linguistically diverse text, which will be crucial for addressing the challenges it poses in translation. Boase-Beier (2006: 110) has offered convincing arguments for the need for translators to carry out such stylistic investigations of their source texts: it can help explain more compellingly a reading of a text that was reached intuitively and,

in doing so, stylistically-aware translation can strengthen its interpretation of the source text (bearing in mind that the translator's interpretation is only one among many). In textual terms, heteroglossia in the novel has two aspects: it incorporates diversity on the level of stylistic components (formal elements such as narration, character speech or incorporated genres) and on the level of linguistic variation (the different "speech types" such as registers or dialects). The analysis of extracts from *ABODAF* combines heteroglossia with categories from modern sociolinguistics to demonstrate how the different elements interact with each other and with the social and ideological context.

Secondly, the concept of heteroglossia provides the theoretical justification for a translation approach that seeks to retain the linguistic diversity of the source text in translation. Considering heteroglossia a fundamental principle of the novel, Bakhtin (1975/1981: 332) postulates that a novelist should not assume an untouchable unitary language, but should always regard language as "something stratified and heteroglot". The same holds true for the translator who, in an extension of Bakhtin's argument, will find it valuable to look upon language and the novel from this perspective. Thus, one of the key questions this thesis tackles is what kind of translation approach can help retain or reconstruct heteroglossia. While translation studies on occasion draws upon Bakhtin's heteroglossia to describe different kinds of linguistic diversity in literary texts (see 2.3.4), the concept has not yet been used as a framework in a practice-based study. This thesis addresses this lack of engagement and explores Bakhtin's concept more fully as a theoretical framework and analytical tool.

To achieve the goal of preserving heteroglossia, the translation in Part 2 relies on what Federici (2011a) terms an "experimental" approach to translating linguistic variation. Standing in opposition to "conservative" approaches such as standardising, it encompasses cases where translators challenge literary norms and reader expectations to reveal the linguistic diversity of the source text (ibid.). Chapters 2 and 6 clarify what such an "experimental" approach could look like for the case of *ABODAF*. It is based around the use of a regional target language dialect to help reconstruct the novel's linguistic diversity in German. As the discussion of key debates around the translation of linguistic variation highlights (see 2.1), many consider dialect-to-dialect translation a suboptimal, even controversial, approach. The criticism centres on the untranslatability of regional dialects, the tension arising from perceived ties between language and place and the apprehension that a disjunction between the setting of a novel and the language the characters speak could confuse readers. This thesis seeks to address these points of contention. It aims to show that dialect-to-dialect, in conjunction with other translation strategies, is a workable approach for a translation that seeks to retain the heteroglot character of the text.

Moreover, in demonstrating how an “experimental” approach can be implemented in practice, this thesis seeks to reframe linguistic variation in literary prose as a creative opportunity, thereby challenging the traditional perspective of regarding it primarily as a problem or obstacle. Bakhtin’s notion of heteroglossia supports this perspective, as it frames linguistic diversity as a positive aspect, even desirable, and inherent in novelistic prose. A practice-based methodology is well suited to bringing to light the opportunities of such an “experimental” translation approach. The methods described in the next section outline how this thesis sheds new light on translation practice as a research tool.

Before discussing the overall methodology, a brief consideration of the terminology used to describe linguistic diversity is necessary. In sociolinguistics, the term “linguistic variation” refers to “the different linguistic forms which can be used to express the same denotational meaning” (Wardhaugh and Fuller, 2021: 409). This variation can be according to user, for instance based on social groups (diastratic) or regions (diatopic), but it can also reflect variation in the use of a single person, for instance according to situation. This thesis is concerned with the representation of such variation in fictional prose. “Linguistic variation” is thus understood as the presence of different language varieties in a text and as continual shifts between them. Although the term “heteroglossia” is sometimes used in translation studies to describe a linguistically diverse literary text without necessarily referring to Bakhtin, this thesis will make a clearer distinction: “linguistic variation” will be used as the general term to describe a linguistically heterogeneous text, while “heteroglossia” is reserved for the more specific Bakhtinian understanding of linguistic diversity as a social fact, manifesting itself in everyday utterances as well as in their representations in literary texts (as discussed in detail in 2.3).

The main form of variation discussed in this thesis is literary dialect in a standard-language narrative. In everyday use, a “language” usually denotes both the superordinate category and the standard variety, and a “dialect” is a subordinate variety of this language and therefore “non-standard”. However, in modern sociolinguistics, all varieties are generally considered dialects, including the standardised variety (Wardhaugh and Fuller, 2021: 27). The criteria for one variety to be regarded as the standard or as a language rather than a dialect are socio-political rather than linguistic (ibid.; Trudgill, 2000: 3). As the discussion of Scots and Scottish English shows (see 3.1), this distinction can be blurred and highly complex. For the purpose of this study, “dialect” is understood in the general sense, corresponding to the definition given by Matthews (2014): “any distinct variety of a language, especially one spoken in a specific part of a country or other geographical area.” The distinctive features of dialects are not confined to pronunciation; they also differ based on grammatical, lexical and idiomatic markers. As McArthur *et al.* (2018) note, “dialect” can extend to cover forms of speech of

different social groups, classes or occupations. However, in this thesis, following Matthews (2014), “dialect” denotes a regional variety; “sociolect” or “social dialect” will be used to refer to diastatic varieties specifically (bearing in mind that a clear distinction is not always possible, see 2.2). Thus, the dialect-to-dialect strategy specifically refers to a case where a regional variety in the source text is translated with a regional variety of the target language.

## 1.4 Methodology

The overall methodological approach is practice-based, making the creative process and the creative product an integral part of this project. This type of research is well established in the creative, performing and fine arts fields of study under differing labels such as “Research through Creative Practice”, “Performance/Practice as Research” or “Practice-led research” (see e.g. Smith and Dean, 2009; Nelson, 2013). For this thesis, the term “practice-based research”, as defined by Candy (2006), will be employed, as its parameters are most directly applicable to the scope of this project. According to Candy (2006: 1), practice-based research in the arts can be defined as:

[...] an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice. In a doctoral thesis, claims of originality and contribution to knowledge may be demonstrated through creative outcomes in the form of designs, music, digital media, performances and exhibitions. Whilst the significance and context of the claims are described in words, a full understanding can only be obtained with direct reference to the outcomes.

Applied to this study, the “practice” in question is translation, more specifically literary translation, and the “creative outcome” is the German target text. While the contribution to knowledge is demonstrated in the theoretical part, engagement with the translation itself enables a “full understanding” of the claims and contributions of the project. Thus, the premise that knowledge is partly generated through practice and its outcomes applies. For the person undertaking such research, the term “practitioner-researcher” has been established in the arts (Barrett, 2007; Nelson, 2013). Accordingly, this thesis uses the term “translator-researcher” following Tarantini (2021: 4) who describes translation practice not as “a stand-alone creative enterprise”, but as a process through which research questions can be formulated and addressed. Tarantini’s (2021) monograph on theatre translation is one of the few extended studies in the field of translation studies to thoroughly apply the translator-researcher

viewpoint and this kind of practice-based methodology.<sup>1</sup> At a doctoral level, projects adopting the translator-researcher perspective are also still comparatively rare. This is particularly true for projects where the translation is part of the thesis body, as is the case for this thesis where the target text makes up a significant (approx. 35%) part of the word count (see 1.5).<sup>2</sup> Although Tarantini's (2021) study focuses on the additional element of performance, it nevertheless constitutes an excellent point of reference for this thesis in that it demonstrates how translation can simultaneously be the object and the method of scholarly investigation.

While the scope of this thesis is significantly different from that of Tarantini's (2021) study, the methodology is a similarly iterative process. The translator-researcher workflow involves the following steps: first, the research questions are formulated. They are prompted by the challenges and characteristics of the source text and its context, but they also address wider issues in literary translation. Based on pertinent theoretical frameworks, the translator-researcher then proposes a theoretical model to address these challenges in line with the translation goals. To develop concrete translation strategies, further methodological tools are employed, namely review of existing translation approaches, stylistic analysis of the source text, analysis of comparable translations and/or paratextual material and investigation of contextual aspects. The proposed approach is then tested by producing a draft version of a significant part of the source text. The creative process of translation generates further research questions and/or prompts the translator-researcher to adapt the initial questions. These insights from practice will then enable the translator-researcher to flesh out the theoretical model, which in turn will be tested again by reworking the draft version. Several iterations of this process refine the theoretical model as well as the target text. The result is two-fold: one part is a translation that has a professional standard and addresses the challenges in the focus of the research questions successfully in line with the translation goals. It provides an example of the practical application of the translation model. The second part consists of the now refined and tested

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<sup>1</sup> In a smaller-scale study, Wright (2006) makes use of a comparable translator-researcher methodology when she explores how translation can become a creative space by rendering the same text in three very different ways. Gauthier's (2015) study is similarly practice-based, but only includes a brief extract from the "creative outcome" as part of the article.

<sup>2</sup> There have been a number of PhD projects in literary translation studies employing a practice-based methodology, and in recent years, more British universities have started to advertise different forms of practice-based PhDs in translation studies (e.g. University of Edinburgh, University of Warwick, University of Birmingham, Goldsmiths London and Bangor University). At the University of East Anglia, the "translation and commentary PhD" is an established pathway (see Rossi, 2016; 2018a). For examples of such theses submitted at UK universities, see De Martino (2018), Kelly (2015), Milsom (2008) and Seccia (2014). Tarantini's (2021) monograph is also based on a doctoral thesis. These theses have different structures and vary considerably in their methodology, e.g. whether the translation is included as a thesis chapter or as an appendix or whether the translation was presumed to be for publication or first and foremost used as a scholarly exercise.

theoretical model for translating linguistic variation. Although its development was based on a specific source text, it is anticipated that it can now be adapted and applied to other texts presenting similar challenges. Even though the theoretical part of this thesis discusses examples from the target text to illustrate the application of the translation approach, what Candy (2006: 1) terms “direct reference to the outcomes”, i.e. engaging with the translation, will enhance the understanding of its contribution. The target text is therefore an inherent part of the research outcome. The theoretical model could not have been developed without the practice element, and both parts contribute equally to answering the research questions.

There is an additional argument for including the target text as part of the thesis body (and not in an appendix for instance): translation in the sense of creative practice is not only a research method as outlined above, but it can also be seen as an act of academic research itself. As Harrison (2015: 8ff.) notes, translation is an exacting practice requiring “high levels of specialized knowledge and scholarship” which can be evaluated in the same way as “traditional” research outputs within academia. More crucially, Harrison (*ibid.*) argues, translation as a form of interpretation can further a scholar’s understanding of a text, influencing further research activity and teaching. Therefore, a translation that is “original, significant and rigorous” – like my translation of *ABODAF* – can contribute “to the creation, development and maintenance of the intellectual infrastructure of subjects and disciplines” (*ibid.*: 8).

One of the key contributions that this practice-based methodology makes to the field of translation studies is that it contributes to reframing the relationship between literary translation theory and practice. Theory and practice of translation are often seen as very distinct with a considerable gap between them that needs to be bridged. Even if many scholars of translation are (or have been at certain points of their careers) also practitioners, as for instance contributions in Loffredo and Perteghella (2006) and Nelson and Maher (2013) testify, translator and researcher are often considered separate roles in practice, suggesting that one cannot be both at the same time. The notion of the translator-researcher challenges this assumption. The practice-based approach suggested here, where translation is object and method of research, highlights theory and practice as two sides of the same coin; one does not exist without the other. The basis for this image is a broad understanding of theory as “thinking about” and of practice as “doing”. Thus, a theory of translation does not need to be rigid, systematic or explicitly formulated, even if it can be all those things. As Boase-Beier (2011: 75/82) posits, theories can be understood as “fluid mental constructs” which describe “how translation works but also – directly or indirectly – [affect] how it is done”. The practice-based methodology of this thesis demonstrates that the creative process (“doing”) of translation and conceptual research (“thinking about”) complement each other to address research questions

and generate new ones. In doing so, this thesis also addresses a further gap in translation studies research, namely the lack of studies applying conceptual frameworks to real cases, as pointed out by Williams and Chesterman (2002: 75).<sup>3</sup>

In this introduction, translation has so far been defined as a creative practice or process and the resulting target text as a creative product or outcome. As creativity is an important concept within the methodology used in this thesis, a brief discussion is necessary here. In current scholarship in translation studies, there is general agreement that translation is fundamentally a creative act, and that creativity is central to literary translation in particular (see e.g. Bassnett, 2011; Rossi, 2018a; Malmkjær, 2019). As Robinson (2016: 284ff.) outlines, in an initial phase of theorising creativity in translation studies starting in the mid-1990s, the main argument was that translators require semantic, syntactic and pragmatic creativity in order to create the impression of a faithful translation, or the illusion of “slavishness” as he terms it. This perspective has broadened in more recent thinking on translation and creativity – if even the most faithful translation requires creativity, does this not mean that all translation is creative? (ibid.). Taking this argument further, Robinson (2016: 281f.) argues that the increased understanding of translation as creative also contributes to the questioning of ideas of equivalence and faithfulness, a perspective which acknowledges that translation transforms the source text and the target language. The argument of translation as an inherently creative process is further supported by rethinking translation as a creative writing practice as well as by highlighting the translator’s subjectivity (see e.g. Loffredo and Perteghella, 2006; Nelson and Maher, 2013; Rossi, 2018b). Despite creativity being a central issue in literary translation research, the concept is elusive and is considered notoriously difficult to define. One of the reasons for this complexity is that linguistic creativity can be regarded from at least four very different perspectives. As Jones (2016: 1) notes, an investigation of linguistic creativity has to take into account the materials available to speakers or writers, the cognitive mechanisms, the social processes and the resulting product. Acknowledging this complexity, Jones (ibid.) refers to Sternberg and Lubart (1999: 3) who define creativity as “the ability to produce work that is both novel (i.e. original, unexpected) and appropriate (i.e. useful, adaptive concerning task constraints)”. Definitions of the concept in translation studies, if they are attempted, tend to highlight these two aspects: Bayer-Hohenwarter and Kußmaul (2020: 312) posit for instance that a creative process or product must fulfil the criteria of novelty and adequacy in relation to

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<sup>3</sup> It should be noted, however, that this project is different from “applied research” as traditionally defined in translation studies (see e.g. Rabadàn, 2010) which would be concerned with translation activities focusing on specific goals or users, for example in connection with translator training, working practices or quality assessment.

the purpose of the translation. In one of Loffredo and Perteghella's (2006: 10) definitions, creativity is conceptualised in a more technical sense as a "skill of innovative (and adaptive) problem-solving". Focusing on poetry translation, Jones (2006: 69) also emphasises the "novelty" aspect of Sternberg and Lubart's (1999) definition when he concludes that creative acts are those that generate new features, making the target text a poem in its own right, rather than merely reproducing source text features. In the light of these perspectives on creativity, Federici's (2011a) call for more "experimental" strategies can therefore be read as an invitation for creative approaches to literary dialect, as a call for translations that are novel, unexpected and unconventional as well as adapted to the task of recreating linguistic heterogeneity. "Experimental" also carries notions of putting something to the proof, testing a hypothesis and gaining new knowledge through experience ("doing"), thus tying in well with the practice-based methodology employed here.

Even though the translation functions primarily as a methodological tool and a locus for critical and creative engagement with linguistic variation, the goals for the target text still need to be defined. Tying in with the overarching objective of retaining heteroglossia, the translation seeks to convey the different narrative functions of the linguistic variation, most crucially the impression of orality, the rural connotations, the sense of otherness and the distinctiveness of the speech of the different characters. It also aims to retain the links to the Scottish setting(s), making it possible for the reader to be immersed in the geographical and cultural place. Stylistically, the translation aims to replicate as much as possible the reading experience of a story that is gradually revealed as the pieces fall into place.

In addition, some practical parameters are determined as part of the translation brief. The independent Berlin publisher Guggolz is envisaged as an assumed commissioner of the German translation. Guggolz specialises in prose translations, often by authors from areas which are in their own words "far from the cultural centres" (Guggolz, 2022, my translation). Over the past six years, the publisher has commissioned (re)translations of a number of works by Lewis Grassie Gibbon, two of them supported by a grant from Creative Scotland, showing that they are interested in publishing Scottish literature. As the case of Esther Kinsky demonstrates, the publisher is open to more unconventional translations (see 5.3.2.2) and may therefore be willing to take on an unusual novel like *ABODAF*. In this hypothetical translation brief, it is therefore assumed that the publisher supports a creative approach in order to retain the linguistic heterogeneity as a key feature of the text. Based on their portfolio, it can be assumed that they feel that their readers are generally open-minded towards more challenging texts and may actively seek them out. The presumed target audience are readers in all German-speaking countries who have an interest in Scottish literature, but may not be familiar with

Hebridean culture specifically. It is not presumed that they are necessarily dialect speakers themselves, so they may or may not be familiar with the dialects used in the target text. The prospective date of publication is summer 2023.

## 1.5 Thesis structure and extract selection

Following the methodology outlined above, this thesis consists of two parts. Part 1 contains the theoretical discussion and Part 2 the German target text, making up 65% and 35%, respectively, of the total word count. Following this introduction to Part 1, Chapter 2 provides the theoretical grounding on linguistic variation in translation, discussing and challenging existing theoretical positions as well as introducing key concepts, most importantly Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia. The chapter sets out the theoretical arguments for the translation approach, which is developed further in the following chapters to tailor it to the case of *ABODAF*. Chapter 3 discusses linguistic variation in the Scottish context, both from a sociolinguistic and literary perspective. The conceptual tools mapped out in Chapters 2 and 3 are then used for a translation-relevant source text analysis in Chapter 4, generating a detailed understanding of the linguistic and stylistic complexity that *ABODAF* presents. Chapter 5 shifts the perspective towards the target text, exploring the sociolinguistic conditions in terms of geographical variation in the German-speaking territories (concentrating on Germany, Austria and Switzerland) and the uses of these varieties in contemporary German prose fiction. The chapter concludes with an extended discussion of the German translations of two Scottish novels comparable to *ABODAF*. In Chapter 6, the practical and theoretical aspects are brought together most closely, integrating the different aspects of the translator-researcher workflow. After outlining how the translation approach around dialect-to-dialect is tailored to *ABODAF*, it uses examples to illustrate its implementation. The concluding chapter summarises the contributions of the thesis, while also addressing limitations and highlighting opportunities for further research.

The German translation is included in Part 2. As representative extracts, 31,500 words (approx. 17%) of *ABODAF* were selected. Since the chapters often work as stand-alone episodes, it was possible to use excerpts from different parts of the novel. To provide a sense of how the narrative progresses and of how the chapters connect thematically, the first eight chapters (*Attic, Providence, Westview, Stella, Strandings, Yarns, Migrations, The Move*, pp. 3-42) are included as a unit. The remaining chapters (*Andra, Bhalaich Ghriomsiadair, Patterns, Seagull, Willum's Mary, Steel* and *Andra 2*) were selected because of the prevalence of linguistic variation.

## 2. LINGUISTIC VARIATION AND ITS TRANSLATION: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

The focal point of the theoretical discussion in this chapter is the function of regional dialect as a contributor to linguistic variation in literary texts; firstly because regional variation is the most prominent contributor to heteroglossia in *ABODAF*, and secondly because regional dialects are generally regarded as most challenging in translation and are therefore much debated in translation studies.

Dialect in novels appears in a variety of narrative modes. The most frequent case is the incorporation of dialect in direct speech, which contrasts with the reporting clause in the standard language, creating an obvious hierarchy between narrator and character. Dialect can also occur in the narrative voice, creating the impression of a narrator who seems to be speaking directly to the reader. Use of dialect in free indirect discourse blurs the distinction between two voices and is most common in cases where the thoughts or the speech of a dialect-speaking character are relayed within a standard-language narrative. Authors mark dialect on different levels: sound, lexis and grammar. Hodson (2014: 102) observes that dialect markers on a grammatical level are generally less significant than those indicating pronunciation or vocabulary. Perhaps the most striking function of literary dialects in novelistic prose is related to characterisation. Literary dialects provide information about a character (or a group of characters), their identity, their social standing as well as cultural and geographical background. Dialects can also be means of differentiation between characters, for instance to indicate class hierarchies or to distinguish the locals in a place from those who are outsiders. A second function is their contribution to the impression of orality, by creating what Fludernik (2014: 95) terms “pseudo-orality”. This in turn evokes closeness and an atmosphere of familiarity, drawing the reader into the fictional world (Schröder, 2005: 671). Moreover, dialect traditionally also has had a comical function through humorous exaggeration. Further functions, as noted by Schröder (*ibid.*: 677), are promoting the impression of realism, acting as vehicle for social criticism, achieving an effect of defamiliarisation or being a tool of linguistic experimentation. Examples from *ABODAF* and other novels in the following chapters will illustrate these uses and functions of literary dialect.

Investigations of translated literature frequently observe weakening of linguistic variation or standardising of dialect (see e.g. Czennia, 2004; Meylaerts, 2006; Ghassempur, 2011), a tendency also found in many translations of Scottish literature (see 3.3 and 5.3). More fundamentally, toning down of linguistic variation in translation has been proposed as a potential “universal” of translation, for instance as part of Toury’s (1995) “law of growing

standardization” or as one of Berman’s (1985/2004) “deforming tendencies”. In the light of this, section 2.1 examines key debates in translation studies and specific translation strategies for regional dialects. As Chapter 6 shows, at the core of the proposed translation approach emerging from the translator-researcher workflow is the dialect-to-dialect strategy, implemented by using Swiss German dialects to render Scots. Exploring arguments from sociolinguistics, stylistics and literary theory, this chapter, in particular section 2.2, argues theoretically why dialect-to-dialect can be a valid translation strategy to retain linguistic variation. The discussion highlights the potential of this approach and critically addresses theoretical arguments brought forward against it. Finally, section 2.3 elaborates on Bakhtin’s notion of heteroglossia, which connects aspects of literary stylistics and sociolinguistics and serves to explore the aesthetic and ideological functions of linguistic variation in the novel.

## **2.1 Translating linguistic variation: key issues in translation studies**

### **2.1.1 Translation approaches**

The question of how translators can deal with linguistic variation caused by dialect when they encounter it in a literary text is important to address as a first step. As noted above, Federici (2011a: 10) distinguishes two broad types of translation strategies for dialectal features in literary texts: “conservative” and “experimental” approaches. The former refers to strategies where translators work in line with norms of the target language and do not challenge them by introducing non-standard varieties. Conversely, when translators seek to defy expectations and reveal the diversity of the source language, they use experimental approaches (*ibid.*).<sup>4</sup> The norms and expectations the translators can either flaunt or adhere to will vary between languages, cultures and settings. However, as the discussion in this and in later chapters highlights, there appears to be a strong tendency to standardise or tone down linguistic variation. Use of a geographically specific variety of the target language on the other hand is comparatively rare and can be considered an experimental approach in this sense. Ramos Pinto’s (2009) model illustrates the decision-making process for linguistic variation well, offering a similar distinction between two broad approaches. She posits that at the start of the

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<sup>4</sup> While “experimental” approaches are not defined further in this introduction, some of the studies in the volume discuss ways of dealing with non-standard varieties that can be considered “experimental” in Federici’s sense (see Federici, 2011b; Morillas, 2011; Ortega Sáez, 2011). However, none presents a detailed example of how regional varieties of the target language could be employed systematically in practice.

process, the translator decides whether to homogenise or to retain diversity; any decisions about strategies and procedures on the micro-level follow on from that (ibid.: 292).

Once the broad decisions about the approach to linguistic variation have been made, what micro-level procedures are available to the translator? The following discussion collates lists of translation procedures suggested by Berezowski (1997), Delabastita (2002), Czennia (2004), Ramos Pinto (2009) and Epstein (2012). It is intended as an overview of the main strategies available to translators; their application, for the case of *ABODAF* in particular, is discussed in later chapters.

Translators can choose to standardise dialect, thereby homogenising variation. There are degrees of standardisation: from full standardisation according to the conventions of written language to the use of a near-standard form which contains some markers of oral discourse, for instance elliptic sentences or non-standard word order. Berezowski (1997) distinguishes a further form of standardisation that he terms “lexicalisation”. It involves standardising all dialect in a text with the exception of (a small number of) lexical elements. These individual words are translated into a social or geographical dialect, a virtual dialect or colloquial language. To mitigate the loss of linguistic variation caused by standardising, translators can also introduce metalanguage. For instance, a reporting phrase can indicate that a character is speaking in a non-standard variety, even if their speech is represented as standard or near-standard. Epstein (2012: 206) extends this “explanation” strategy to the use of intratextual comments (i.e. in-line explication) or paratextual material (introductions, footnotes etc.) which can either serve to make readers aware that the source text contained dialect or provide information about the connotations of dialect use that have been lost due to standardisation. Czennia (2004) highlights a further case of standardisation where the first few instances of a character’s speech are rendered using a sociolect or regiolect, but the dialect in the rest of the narrative is standardised. This strategy presents a kind of middle ground in that it indicates non-standard speech (and its connotations), but does not “burden” the reader with dense dialect in the rest of the narrative.

A second cluster of translation strategies for linguistic variation applies particularly to regional variation and can be summarised with Delabastita’s (2002) term of “delocalisation”. In his case, it is defined as the translation of a regional non-standard variety into a sociolect or idiolect, so a non-standard variety that is not geographically specific (ibid.: 322). In others of the above taxonomies, such “delocalising” strategies also include translating a regional form with a specific register (e.g. according to age or profession), colloquial language or oral discourse, all of which are not geographically marked. Specifically for the rendering of regional dialects with colloquial language which is not specific to a geographical area or social group,

Berezowski (1997) coins the term “colloquialisation”, which this thesis uses (see 6.1). It also becomes apparent here that although the strategies are often set out as distinct, their boundaries are blurred. For instance, the use of near-standard language with oral features, as described above, and a “delocalising” strategy employing colloquial language will be difficult to distinguish in practice. Therefore, although it can be helpful to consider the different translation procedures as distinct, many of them can be regarded as part of a continuum of strategies.

A very different strategy for translating regional variation is what has been termed “popularisation” (Berman, 1985/2004) or “relocalisation” (Delabastita, 2002). This approach, labelled “dialect-to-dialect” in this thesis, applies to procedures that render a regional dialect with a geographically specific variety of the target language. This can include “full” representation of a recognisable dialect or the inclusion of selected lexical, phonetic and/or morphosyntactic features of a specific regional variety. If the dialect features used are few and mainly lexical, it could be classified as a case of “lexicalisation”, as introduced above, showing again that the micro-strategies are difficult to delineate exactly. As a further distinction, Berezowski (1997) offers the label “rusticalisation” for cases in which a translator chooses a regional dialect with distinctly rural connotations in the target language.

In some cases, translators may decide to retain features of the source text dialect in the target text. This usually means preservation of individual words or expressions. Such preservation strategies are outlined in several of the taxonomies above and can be employed in different ways: for instance, when a lexical item appears in a third language or language variety and therefore already stands out in the source text or when the term or phrase is deemed easily understandable for the target reader due to similarity or context. This “direct import of lexical features”, to use Ramos Pinto’s (2009) phrase, includes cases where the word is preserved verbatim as well as cases in which the spelling is adapted to target language conventions or transliterated.

Instead of employing a specific regional variety or recognisable sociolect, translators may also rely on features from different target language dialects. Combining varieties that speakers in “real life” would not normally mix leads to artificial varieties or virtual dialects. Arguably this is a question of degree, as literary varieties are abstractions from reality and therefore by definition somewhat artificial. However, in this instance, an artificial dialect would be a variety that is not recognisable as belonging to a specific place, time or other setting. Further strategies proposed in the taxonomies listed above emphasise deficiency, for instance by suggesting a speech defect using phonology markers, eye dialect, use of a pidgin variety or grammatically incorrect language. As Berezowski (1997: 74) and Epstein (2012: 225f.) both highlight, these

procedures should be used with caution, as equating dialect with “incorrect” language is fundamentally problematic. That said, translators might decide to employ them in specific cases, for instance, when the source text variety already indicates deficiency and this is important for characterisation. A further strategy that is mentioned in several of the above typologies, but is perhaps used less frequently, is omission, i.e. deletion of entire sentences or dialect passages. As Epstein (2012: 212f.) notes, this strategy can be found in children’s literature, where dialect may simply be considered too challenging or otherwise unsuitable for young readers.

After having set out the practical ways linguistic variation can be approached in translation, the discussion will now move on to a more fundamental theoretical question, namely whether regional variation can be translated. The debate on whether regional varieties can be successfully rendered in translation, and if the answer is not a categorical no, how they are best translated, is ongoing among theorists and practitioners of translation. The key arguments are outlined in the next section.

### **2.1.2 (Un)Translatability of regional variation**

Many translation scholars consider regional dialects the most challenging form of linguistic variation for translators. For instance, Alsina (2012: 150) argues that it is difficult, impossible even, to find a satisfactory equivalent for a geographical non-standard variety, while social or temporal variation is easier to replicate. Sanchez (1999: 304) takes this point further, positing that regional or local speech is not only challenging, but also practically untranslatable. Others have supported this argument:

No dialect travels well in translation. However reluctantly, the translator must recognize that dialect, at least at the level of one-to-one transference, is untranslatable. (Landers, 2001: 117)

Rustics are rustics the world over, but it is absurd and outlandish to have a Brazilian *sertanejo* talking like an Appalachian mountain man. [...] The transfer of local or regional idiom into another language, therefore, must be listed another of the impossibilities of translation. (Rabassa, 1984: 24)

The point that Landers and Rabassa, both theorists and practitioners of literary translation, are getting at in their wider argument is that regional dialects cannot be translated with a regional variety of the target language. In other words, the dialect-to-dialect strategy is unsuitable or unworkable. Instead, “the best we can hope for” according to Landers (2001: 117) is reproducing generic features of spoken discourse. This criticism of strategies using target

language dialects is often based on the relationship between language and place, as expressed here by influential translation theorist (and translator of literature) Antoine Berman:

[Translators may be] striving to render a foreign vernacular with a local one, using Parisian slang to translate the *lunfardo* of Buenos Aires, the Normandy dialect to translate the language of the Andes or Abruzzese. Unfortunately, a vernacular clings tightly to its soil and completely resists any direct translating into another vernacular. (Berman, 1985/2004: 286)

Berman argues that a regional dialect is literally rooted in a specific place from which it cannot be detached; it “clings tightly to its soil”. This argument is underpinned by the assumption that there is a direct and unchangeable link between what Berman terms “vernacular” language, a regional dialect in this case, and a specific geographical location. If these ties are severed, this is seen to create a serious mismatch because the cultural differences are simply too great, as Rodríguez Herrera (2014: 282) claims. Kahn (2011: 104) contends that this discrepancy between language and place not only leads to a loss of the atmosphere created in the source text, but is an “utter falsification of the original intentions [of the authors]”. Ghassempur (2011: 54) raises a similar point when she claims that the regional target language dialect will simply evoke stereotypes that do not match those evoked by the source text. Like Landers (2001), these scholars advocate the use of non-regional varieties or colloquial language features to render geographical dialects. Thus, the argument is that regional dialects are translatable, but should not be rendered using a geographically marked target language dialect. In short, only “delocalising” strategies (see 2.1.1) are seen as appropriate.

Other critics of dialect-to-dialect strategies, for instance Brodovich (1997) and Kopetzki (2015), focus on the reception of translations, implying that the mismatch between language and setting confuses or alienates readers. Čerče (2017: 73f.) argues that using target language dialects would limit the readership, as readers will likely be unfamiliar with a dialect from a region other than their own and would therefore struggle to read it. It has also been claimed that this tension between language and setting would make it difficult for readers to immerse themselves in the narrative, as the “willing suspension of disbelief” necessary when reading fiction is hindered or even made impossible (Epstein, 2012: 208; Heim, 2014: 455). Lastly, some scholars have argued that painstaking “relocalisation” of dialects, to use Delabastita’s (2002) term, is simply not necessary. Instead, it is deemed sufficient to use some markers of non-standard language to replicate the function of dialect (Newmark, 1988: 195), and a “sprinkling of words or constructions” is (in most cases) seen as enough to make the reader aware that dialect is present (Heim, 2014: 462).

Despite this generally critical stance towards dialect-to-dialect approaches in translation studies, there have been some positive appraisals. These mainly concern the use of regional dialects in the translation of dramatic works, as observed in translations of Shakespeare plays (Delabastita, 2002), in a Scots translation of Gerhard Hauptmann's German play *Die Weber* (Findlay, 1998; Anderman, 2007), in translations of plays between Scots and Quebecois French (Findlay, 1995; Bowman, 2000; Woodham, 2006) and in a translation of George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion* into Spanish (Sanchez, 1999). More recently, there have also been studies judging this approach positively (or at least as partially successful) in literary prose. Cimer and Babić Sesar (2017) find positives in the way the Croatian translator employed a regional dialect to render the Bavarian speech in Thomas Mann's novel *Die Buddenbrooks*. In her study of Polish translations of F. H. Burnett's children's novel *The Secret Garden*, Szymańska (2017) notes some positive effects of using a regional dialect. While also pointing out some limitations, Wouterse and Genegel (2018) outline some, in their view, successful uses of dialects in Dutch translations of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*. Although these studies make a more positive case for dialect-to-dialect, they do not address theoretically the fundamental criticism that has been directed at this approach.

While the question whether regional dialects can be translated presents an interesting theoretical conundrum, the question of translatability is ultimately not a fruitful one for the translator-researcher. After all, translators will have to find practical solutions for dealing with regional variation, and simply framing it as an unsolvable problem does not provide these. The discussion must therefore move from the issue of translatability of regional dialect to the question whether dialect-to-dialect is a suitable strategy for approaching this kind of linguistic variation. The next section tackles the main points of contention on a theoretical level – the tensions arising from ties between language and place as well as the assumption that any disjunction between the setting of the novel and the language the characters speak could confuse readers –, providing the foundation for the development of a translation approach that foregrounds target language dialects.

## **2.2 Towards a theoretical model for translating regional variation**

### **2.2.1 Addressing the arguments against dialect-to-dialect translation**

The rootedness of regional dialects in a specific place is usually brought forward as an argument against dialect-to-dialect approaches. Berman's (1985/2004: 286) claim that “a vernacular clings tightly to its soil and completely resists any direct translating into another

vernacular” therefore expresses a frequently voiced opinion. To address this point, it is necessary to first investigate the notion of “place”. A useful conceptualisation is proposed by Johnstone (2004: 68) who distinguishes between “place as location” and “place as meaning”. The former refers to place as an objectively given space that can be delimited based on geographical criteria. The latter is understood as a symbolic and socially constructed space which can be viewed subjectively, based on (collective) experiences or values (ibid.). Berman’s argument draws on “place as location”. It assumes that a dialect is rooted in its own fixed geographical space, in its “natural habitat” so to speak. However, as sociolinguists have argued, this perspective can only work if the speakers of that language or language variety are not taken into account or if they are assumed to be essentially monolingual and immobile (Auer, 2013; Cornips and De Rooij, 2018). Leaving the speakers out of the equation would mean, however, that the complexities of the concept of “place” are not fully considered. When investigating how sense of place is conveyed in a novel, it is therefore fruitful to include the perspective of “place as meaning”. This accounts for the fact that place (in “reality” and in the fictional world of a novel) is not an absolute entity, but a construct. It is not, as Berman claims, simply the “soil” in which linguistic varieties are literally rooted. Research on regional variation has shown how “speakers use language to construct and create social meanings around place”, as Moore and Montgomery (2017: 5) note. Place should therefore be seen as “symbolic, socially constructed, and culturally defined, as much as it is physically delimited” (ibid.).

The perspective of “place as meaning” is thus helpful for translation because it opens up the possibility of considering regional varieties more strongly in terms of their social and ideological function and as contributors to identity construction, thereby enabling new translation approaches. In other words, if evoking a specific location is no longer seen as the main (or even the only) function of a geographical variety in a literary text, the argument that we cannot translate it with a regional form of the target language becomes more difficult to sustain. Moreover, as Reed (2020: 2) points out, what matters is the relationship a speaker has with a place. Different speakers orient to place in different ways and “how a speaker feels toward a region can influence their usage of features that index (point out) a certain regional background” (ibid.). It can therefore be argued that this relationship can be reconstructed in translation, by retaining variation and the metalanguage that makes this variation explicit. What is more, the conceptualisation of “place” as “meaning” emphasises that the distinction between social variation and regional variation is not as clear-cut as it is sometimes made out to be in translation studies. In much of the debate about linguistic variation in translation studies, the former is seen as translatable whereas the latter is not, as outlined above. However, the consideration of sociolinguistic arguments has revealed that the boundaries between the two

are blurred; they interlink, overlap and merge with each other. Arguing that social dialects can be used in translation but regional ones cannot is therefore a crude simplification.

The argument so far has relied on sociolinguistics and more specifically on highlighting the complexity of the relationships between language and place. However, when making the case for dialect-to-dialect, literary dialect also needs to be considered as a stylistic tool. As is the case for all representation of language in literature, the representation of non-standard varieties is governed by literary conventions. When discussing speech in fictional prose, Leech and Short (2007: 131) stress that authors do not “aim at a completely realistic representation of the features of ordinary conversation”, for instance omitting features of non-fluency such as hesitations, false starts or syntactic anomalies. In the same vein, McHale (2014: 817) describes fictional speech not as a “faithful imitation”, but as an effect generated by a combination of selection, convention and contextualisation. These processes are also at work in the case of literary dialect. Rather than representing a dialect “fully” on the page, authors select certain recognisable features. While there are writing conventions (e.g. use of apostrophes to indicate sound loss) which govern this process, the literary representation of dialects is fundamentally “an inexact process”, as Hodson (2014: 13) observes. This understanding of regional varieties as literary approximations is based on the broader argument that any language in literature is an artistic construct. Bakhtin (1975/1981: 300/336) describes language in the novel as a “structured artistic system”, creating an “image of a language”. These images are not mirror images, but refractions. In other words, literature “does not stand in some reflective, symmetrical, one-to-one relation with its object”, but instead deforms, refracts and dissolves this object (Eagleton, 1976: 51). In this case, the object is the regional language or, more broadly, a place and the languages associated with it. Here, the key point for the discussion of dialect-to-dialect strategies is that this perspective highlights the aesthetic function of literary dialects. Within the narrative, these varieties for instance emphasise the impression of orality or signal diversity and difference from an implied standard. These characteristics can be reconstructed in translation through use of a regional dialect, or rather, the literary approximation of such a dialect.

Associated with this point is an aspect that resonates with some of the arguments against dialect-to-dialect above: the notion of “authenticity”. For instance, in his criticism of the use of target language dialects, Berman (1985/2004: 286) posits that vernacular language is “more physical”, “more iconic”, “richer” and “more expressive” than standard varieties. These adjectives point to an understanding of dialect as more “authentic”, as tied more closely to a concrete, or “real”, setting than the standard. Hodson (2014: 219) points out that a desire to represent “life as it really is” in novels often leads to portraying “language as it really is” by

including non-standard varieties. She goes on to argue that although it has long been recognised that literary dialect is fictional and artistic, the desire to validate certain works by asserting that they represent dialect particularly “authentically” is strong (ibid.: 20). “Authenticity” can therefore imply a value judgment; “authentic” means “(linguistically) accurate” which in turn is seen as a marker of quality. Translation adds a further dimension to this: should authenticity be measured in relation to the source or target context? For the critics of the dialect-to-dialect strategy such as Berman, the main reference point for this linguistic accuracy in a translation seems to be the geographical setting of the source text. From this perspective, a dialect-to-dialect translation will never be “authentic”, as it always creates a disjunction. However, authenticity is a complex notion. As Hodson (2014: 226) stresses, it should be seen as a subjective judgment underpinned by social and political factors rather than as a neutral quality. What matters in connection with literary dialect is the illusion of authenticity. Moreover, following on from the argument above, since source and target dialects are considered refractions of “real” dialects through the lens of the author, neither can be considered a fully authentic representation. As Leech and Short (2007: 127) note, authors “enter into a contract of good faith with the reader, a convention of authenticity”. As with other aspects of realist fiction, readers need to be convinced that it *could* be real. To explain how this kind of “realistic” fiction writing can be achieved, Leech and Short (2007) employ two key concepts: verisimilitude and credibility. The former is defined as “the sense of being in the presence of actual individual things, events, people and places” (ibid.: 126); it is the semblance of something or someone being true to life. For dialect in literature, this means that the variety has to be represented with sufficient detail in order to be recognisable as dialectal. This leads to the second and related concept, the notion of credibility. According to Leech and Short (ibid.: 127) a work of fiction “tends to be credible to the extent that it overlaps with, or is a plausible extension of, our ‘real’ model of reality”. Thus, the reader needs to be able to believe that a variety could potentially be a “real” dialect, a process that is made easier if the representation of dialect is consistent and coherent.

The two points made so far – how language links with place and the creation of fictional worlds – come together in another frequently made argument against the use of target language dialects: the perceived risk of alienating or confusing readers by presenting them with characters who speak a dialect that does not match the setting of the narrative. Encountering, for instance, a Scottish farmer who uses expressions from Low German (see discussion of *Sunset Song* in 5.3.2.2) is seen as preventing readers from performing “willing suspension of disbelief”. Coleridge’s famous phrase refers in literary criticism to the experience of all readers of realist fiction who are willing to momentarily pretend that the characters in the fictional

setting are real or inhabit a recognisable world. The reader gives in to an act of literary illusion, accepting the events in the story as real or at least plausible. As noted above, it has been argued that suspension of disbelief is more laborious when reading translations (Heim, 2014: 455) and becomes almost impossible when translations contain regional dialects (Epstein, 2012: 208) due to the perceived linguistic mismatch. However, just like all readers of realist fiction, readers of translated fiction can and do suspend disbelief. In fact, they have to do this to a greater degree because most forms of literary translation by their nature involve linguistic anachronisms, that is, characters in one location speaking the language of another. Consequently, this linguistic disjunction is an inherent feature of translation, and the fact that translations of literary works exist and are read widely proves that readers are generally able to make this leap of the imagination. Otherwise, it would arguably also mean, for instance, that novels written in English could only be set in a place where everyone speaks English. Taking this point further also addresses the second part of the argument, namely that suspension of disbelief is even more difficult when translations involve regional varieties. To employ an example from *ABODAF*, it can be questioned why it would be appropriate for a Scottish barmaid to be represented as conversing in Standard German, but not in a Bavarian or Swiss dialect. Simply put, why would the linguistic anachronism introduced through standardisation be acceptable, but not that created by target language dialects? After all, a barmaid in a Fraserburgh pub would be as unlikely to converse with her guests in Standard German as she would in a regional German dialect. A further case in point here are the reviews of Esther Kinsky's German translation of *Sunset Song* praising her innovative use of Low German dialect terms (see 5.3.2.2). Reviewers argue that Kinsky successfully manages to convey "the impression of a 'regional [rural] language'" (Hirsch, 2018) and moreover that the language "seems to come directly from the mouths of Scottish farmers" (Staude, 2018).<sup>5</sup> The latter comment in particular demonstrates that suspension of disbelief is possible even if translations involve target language dialects.

To sum up, the links between language and place do not need to be considered insurmountable obstacles for a dialect-to-dialect strategy. If target language dialects are used in a nuanced and coherent way, they can provide readers with a credible version of a dialectal voice. That is, by respecting the principles of verisimilitude and credibility that govern the representation of language in realist fiction generally, a dialect-to-dialect translation can prove a fruitful approach. Aspects to be considered when putting into practice such an approach will be addressed next.

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<sup>5</sup> My translations from German.

### 2.2.2 Implementing dialect-to-dialect translation

While a dialect-to-dialect translation can recreate social meanings of place, it cannot convey geographical aspects of place in the same way. Thus, although the target language dialect may broadly evoke a rural environment, a certain social context, class or age group, the language itself does not link the narrative to its specific geographical setting as it would in the source text. In short, the dialect-to-dialect strategy can convey “place as meaning” but not “place as location”. To address this tension, it is necessary to acknowledge that sense of place in a novel is not only created by regional variation. Descriptions of the geographical backdrop, local culture and traditions as well as the appearance and behaviour of characters also contribute to it. In the case of *ABODAF*, on top of the regional varieties such as north-east Scots or the Stornoway vernacular, the work of situating the narrative in its geographical setting is done by localised jargon of professional groups such as fishermen, sailors or members of the coastguard, by the inclusion of Gaelic terms and through metalinguistic elements. In addition to these linguistic means, references to local traditions, geography, history and way of life also create a connection to the different Scottish settings. Therefore, geographical aspects of the constructed place (“place as location”) can be conveyed in translation by preserving or recreating these elements. Preservation of cultural elements (in translation studies generally termed “cultural references or “culture-specific items”) does not only mean lexical borrowing. Translation strategies can also include explanatory additions, intratextual glosses or orthographic adaptations of culturally specific terms (see Aixela, 1996; Davies, 2003). In summary, to convey the geographical as well as the socio-ideological aspects of regional varieties in translation, a blended approach is necessary: target language dialects are combined with what is termed “cultural preservation”.

Studies discussing how the dialect-to-dialect strategy can work together with cultural preservation in practice are rare. A useful case in point are the translations of dramatic works between Quebecois French and Scots by Martin Bowman and Bill Findlay (Findlay, 1995; Bowman, 2000). Although concerned with drama rather than prose, their work is highly relevant for this thesis, as it also challenges the notion that a mismatch between location and language is an insurmountable obstacle for readers (or audiences more generally). Bowman (2000) describes his approach using the case of a translation of a dramatised version of Irvine Welsh’s novel *Trainspotting* (1993). In the target text, the characters speak the vernacular French of Montreal, but the references to the Scottish context are preserved. While Bowman (*ibid*: 29) decided to retain some of the cultural references verbatim, he introduced subtle explanations for others. Similarly, when translating a play in the Quebecois dialect into Scots, Bowman and Findlay preserved references to the Canadian context. Bowman (*ibid*.: 30) argues that while

these cultural and geographical references may seem “absurd in the equivalent Scottish time and place [...] they are not problematic in the Scots language of the text”. Woodham (2006: 415) posits that the “type of disjunctive approach” Bowman and Findlay employ where the regional dialect has undergone a kind of linguistic relocation, but the cultural references relate to the source text setting is “highly effective”. Although she does not demonstrate it in practice, she proposes it as a fruitful approach that would “permit the vernacular to be adopted to convey all of the socio-economic, age and era information that would normally be associated with it, whilst displacing the geographical information that it connotes” (ibid.). Woodham’s (2006: 416) point on the effectiveness of the “disjunctive approach” is based on what she terms a “strategy of collusion”, obliging “the reader to read in one language whilst ‘believing’ that language to be another, foreign language”. In this sense, “collusion” refers to the mechanism of suspending disbelief that governs all reading of realist fiction. As discussed above, readers of fiction in translation in particular are suspending disbelief, as (in most cases) the characters in the target text speak a language that is different from that of the source text setting. The mechanism of “collusion” therefore does not only apply to fictional works containing dialect. However, it is a powerful tool that enables dialect-to-dialect translations to be successful. A translation respecting the principles of verisimilitude and credibility in its representation of dialect, as outlined above, makes it easier for the readers to suspend disbelief.

Another point of tension to consider when implementing the dialect-to-dialect approach is the reaction of readers not only to a perceived disjunction between language and setting, but to dialect in literature in general. Dialectal elements in a standard-language narrative act as bumps interrupting the flow of reading, forcing the reader to slow down. If dialect passages are densely marked and/or long, readers will have to increase their efforts in order to still grasp the meaning. They may be inclined to read less closely or even skip dialect passages altogether, thereby possibly missing crucial information. Toolan (1992: 34) terms this phenomenon “reader resistance”. It presents writers with a genuine dilemma: should they represent dialect lightly and in line with conventions based on only a few well-known markers and run the risk of being accused of inaccuracy or, worse, stereotyping? Or should they render the dialect in a more “rounded” way (or more “realistically”) which could make it hard to decode? Toolan (ibid.: 34f.) argues that “reader resistance” stems from an in-built bias against dialect-speaking characters. Because of an overfamiliarity with the standard language, which is considered the prestige form, and the expectation that novels should promote “fine writing”, readers can feel alienated by characters speaking dialect, perhaps considering them quaint or comical, but also uneducated and generally less worthy of respect (ibid.). For authors, this presents an artistic challenge, neatly summarised by Hodson (2014: 114): “how can the voice of a character be

represented in a way that indicates something about the character's speech patterns, but without immediately triggering the response that the speaker so represented is being denigrated?" More precisely, unless dialect is intended to highlight a social hierarchy of some kind (e.g. between characters, between narrator and characters or between the reader and the characters), authors need to find ways to indicate difference rather than deficit. This challenge is also one that translators seeking to use target language dialects need to address; they need to consider how the dialect-to-dialect strategy can be implemented without introducing this element of stigma. The following chapters will demonstrate how careful analysis of source and target text contexts can help address this tension.

As well as entailing the above-mentioned complexities, dialect-to-dialect translation can also bring about particular opportunities that are worth highlighting. Bowman (2000: 29) acknowledges that different members of any audience will react differently to the plays that have undergone "linguistic relocalisation", but argues that many of them are able to ignore the perceived disjunctions between language and geographical setting, in particular those who are dialect speakers themselves. Thus, it could be argued that speakers of Scots watching the play set in Montreal will be well aware that the characters would "in reality" be speaking a Quebecois dialect. Although they will participate in the mechanisms of collusion to immerse themselves in the story told on stage, they will also be conscious of the parallel relationship between standard and dialect. They may be able to connect their own experience of language use to the situation presented in the play. Observing a comparable dialect-standard relationship will allow them to engage with dialect and the politics of language in their own context. Consequently, rather than simply striving to make the audience or reader "ignore" any linguistic mismatch, translators could regard a dialect-to-dialect approach as an opportunity: target language dialects can encourage readers to engage critically with linguistic variation and raise awareness of linguistic differences. Dialect-to-dialect can therefore not only be a suitable translation strategy for the linguistic or aesthetic reasons mentioned above, it can also make a political point, namely challenging the use of standard languages as the literary norm and promoting linguistic diversity. It is thus fruitful to consider target language dialects in translation not merely in terms of "impossibilities", "loss" and "the best we can do", but as an opportunity for "gains" in translation.

This section has made the theoretical case for a translation approach that centres on a dialect-to-dialect strategy in combination with cultural preservation. Bakhtin's notion of heteroglossia supports these arguments. For Bakhtin (1975/1981: 291f.), language is not uniform, but consists of a diversity of interacting "social languages", distinct forms of language, each expressing its own socio-ideological meanings and world views. Since he understands

heteroglossia as a fundamental principle of the novel, it also counters the assumption that linguistic heterogeneity is unusual per se. Rather, it invites a fresh perspective on literary dialect as something inherent in the novelistic form, even if not all novels exploit it to the same degree. As the exploration in the following sections demonstrates, Bakhtin's heteroglossia also strengthens the focus on social and ideological aspects of regional dialects, linking with the perspective of "place as meaning". It therefore strengthens the arguments made above on the complex nature of the construct "place", supporting the theoretical case for using regional target language dialects.

## **2.3 Heteroglossia: linguistic variation in the novel from Bakhtin's perspective**

### **2.3.1 Heteroglossia in context**

While Bakhtin was clearly influenced by the work of the Soviet sociolinguists of his time (Brandist, 2004; Brandist and Lähteenmäki, 2010), his ideas are generally seen as most closely connected to Russian formalism. Bakhtin considered himself a "respectful opponent" (Morson, 2006: 212) of the formalist school of thought. He is seen as a figure who influenced the movement and was influenced by it even if today he is not regarded as part of it (Castle, 2007: 184). To understand Bakhtin's ideas on the stratification of language better, it is helpful to compare his thinking to the theories of the formalists, who were his contemporaries.

The formalists regarded literature as autonomous – free from social and political forces – and focused on the form of an artwork and on the artistic devices employed to produce it. Bakhtin on the other hand was fundamentally interested in the social and ideological underpinnings of language and literature. While the formalists focused on the study of literary devices and mechanisms, such as those with whose help the defamiliarisation effect is achieved, Bakhtin saw literature as more encompassing. As Morson (2006: 218) puts it, he considered it a "repository of human knowledge" rather than a mere "set of clever formal devices". The formalists were concerned with the definition of literariness, attempting to separate the poetic language of literature from the practical language of everyday use. Bakhtin did not ascribe the same importance to this distinction. In his view, literary and everyday language come together naturally in literary texts from the perspective of heteroglossia. This is illustrated for example by his examination of "artistic" and "extra-artistic" genres embedded in novels, showing how everyday language can fulfil literary functions (see 4.2.1). Moreover, Bakhtin did not agree with the Formalist notion of treating the study of literature as a science. As put forward by Morson

(ibid.: 218f.), he argued instead that our most important knowledge about people and society cannot be treated in a scientific way and that not everything can be classified according to a set of rules or forces. There will always be aspects of “human possibilities and needs” that do not fit neatly into any of the existing categories, which Bakhtin termed “the surplus” (ibid.: 219). This rejection of the scientific approach with its strict categories will become evident in the discussion of the different “languages” of heteroglossia. For instance, while Bakhtin maps out the different “speech types”, some of the categories are vague and there is overlap. Therefore, what could be seen as a flaw in the concept of heteroglossia may in fact be quite deliberate and in line with his thinking; he was not primarily interested in categorisation. Renfrew (2015: 3) summarises the interplay between Bakhtin’s work and formalist notions as follows:

One of the basic constants of Bakhtin’s work is a desire to break down the apparent opposition between theories of the immanence of the literary text (formalist approaches) and theories of its determination by the external environment (contextual, sociological, historical approaches); [...] Bakhtin’s core ideas on the dialogic nature of speech and writing suggest that meaning is in one sense immanent in the utterance or the literary work, while it is at the same time intensely connected to the environment in which it is produced.

One of these “core ideas” is heteroglossia. The following section discusses the central aspects of heteroglossia relevant for the investigation and translation of a linguistically heterogeneous novel such as *ABODAF*.

### **2.3.2 Key aspects of heteroglossia**

Heteroglossia in the Bakhtinian sense is a basic characteristic of language arising from the consistent tension between centralising and de-centralising forces. This tension is caused by the fact that every utterance, all language-in-use, is pulled in two opposing directions at any given moment: towards a unitary language by the centripetal forces (centralising tendency) and towards stratification by the centrifugal forces (diversifying tendency) (Bakhtin, 1975/1981: 272). Consequently, in any language at any given time, whether written or spoken, there is a constant struggle between language becoming more unified and becoming more diverse. Heteroglossia therefore has to be understood as a basic condition of language, as “the ‘reality’ against which the centralizing and centripetal forces of official culture struggle” (Renfrew, 2015: 99).

It has to be acknowledged that the concept of heteroglossia is complex and Bakhtin’s writing style can be unsystematic (see also Vice, 1997: 3), not helped by the fact that his (and/or the translators’) use of terminology is not always consistent, as set out below. While care has

been taken to address contradictions and ambiguities, the scope of this thesis does not allow for an in-depth exploration of all facets of heteroglossia. Instead, the focus is put on the three key aspects “linguistic stratification”, “dialogic relation” and “ideological saturation” to enable the use of heteroglossia as a tool for a translation-relevant textual analysis.

The first of these aspects is arguably the most central characteristic of heteroglossia. “Linguistic stratification” describes the fact that a language – what Bakhtin terms “a national language” – is never unitary; instead, it is a multi-faceted and complex construct, made up of different forms of social speech. Bakhtin (1975/1981: 271f.) understands language as

stratified not only into linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word (according to formal linguistic markers, especially phonetic), but also [...] into languages that are socio-ideological: languages of social groups, ‘professional’ and ‘generic’ languages, languages of generations and so forth.

In this definition of the diversity of language, Bakhtin makes a distinction between linguistically distinct varieties (*raznoiazychie*) and the different socio-ideological speech types (*raznorechie*) within a language.<sup>6</sup> Brandist and Lähtenmäki (2010: 73) note that the former refers to “the presence of multiple dialects and languages, which differ according to certain linguistic features, within the confines of a particular linguistic community”. However, Bakhtin is not primarily interested in plurality as a purely linguistic phenomenon. Instead, he is concerned with the social and ideological meanings this linguistic plurality can come to express when *raznoiazychie* (e.g. different regional dialects marked by grammatical, phonetic and lexical features) becomes *raznorechie* (e.g. social discourses, jargons, registers), that is, when a speaker realises that the languages or dialects they speak in different situations are associated with different ideological perspectives (ibid.). Therefore, *raznoiazychie* and *raznorechie* can be understood as different manifestations of the stratification of language. This ties in with the understanding on variation in modern sociolinguistics which posits that all linguistic variation is socially meaningful (see Wardhaugh and Fuller, 2021: 6ff.), strengthening the point made above, namely that regional dialects also construct social meanings.

However, as Brandist (2004: 147) points out, the distinction between the two forms of linguistic plurality is obscured in the English translation by Emerson and Holquist (1981), as they are both rendered with “heteroglossia”. More specifically, Eskin (2000: 103) notes that Emerson and Holquist translate *raznoiazychie* as “diversity of languages”, “heteroglossia” or “polyglossia” and *raznorechie* as “diversity of speech types” or “heteroglossia”. Other

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<sup>6</sup> In the literature, Bakhtin’s Russian terms have been transliterated from the Cyrillic script in a number of ways, in the case of heteroglossia *raznorechie* or *raznorečie*. This chapter follows the former spelling, in line with Brandist (2004), except for one case where the latter spelling is used in a quotation from Bakhtin (1975/1981).

translations render *raznorechie* as “heterology” and *raznoiazychie* as “heteroglossia” (Zbinden, 1999: 45), complicating matters further.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, in the secondary literature, the distinction between the two types of intralingual variation Bakhtin sets out is generally not made, thereby following Emerson and Holquist’s approach. In the light of this, I use the term “heteroglossia” in the same way for both *raznorechie* and *raznoiazychie* in this thesis. The different elements contributing to the heteroglot nature of the novel will be considered using terms of modern sociolinguistics, e.g. idiolect, regional dialect or register, in addition to Bakhtin’s terminology, thereby accounting for aspects of *raznorechie* and *raznoiazychie*.

The second key aspect of heteroglossia is “ideological saturation”. As mentioned above, it is important to note that Bakhtin (1975/1981: 291f.) understands all “languages of heteroglossia” as “specific points of view on the world, forms for conceptualizing the world in words, specific world views, each characterized by its own objects, meanings and values”. In other words, the “languages of heteroglossia” are not merely linguistic phenomena on the surface of a text or in a specific utterance but are suffused by ideas; they are “ideologically saturated” (ibid.: 271). In Bakhtinian thinking, a unified “monoglot” language would point to “ideological unification and centralization” (ibid.) and therefore be contrary to his understanding of the world as socially and ideologically diverse. It is important to note that ideology in the Bakhtinian sense simply refers to a system of ideas and not to a particular ideology in political terms. Every speaker – whether in the real world or in the novel – is therefore an ideologue in the Bakhtinian sense. This aspect of heteroglossia has important implications for the novel in Bakhtin’s view, because it is the literary genre in which the various “ideologically saturated” languages are represented most fully. The third important characteristic of heteroglossia follows on from the second: since all the different speech types of heteroglossia express different points of view, they can co-exist, complement or contradict one another and can be “interrelated dialogically” (ibid.: 292). Thus, heteroglossia does not

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<sup>7</sup> A number of studies explore translations of Bakhtin’s work specifically. Generally, inconsistencies in the rendering of key terms are often noted as a flaw of the English editions (Hirshkop and Shepherd, 1989: 160; Brandist and Shepherd, 1998: 19; Zbinden, 1999: 160; 2006: 160). The differing or seemingly misleading translations of the term *raznorechie* are seen as particularly problematic. Zbinden (1999; 2006) and Grutman (1993; 2006) criticise in particular the conflation of *intralingual* and *interlingual* variation in the French and Italian translations, where Bakhtin’s idea of heteroglossia as diversity within a language is rendered in the sense of plurilingualism. This interpretation in the sense of multilingualism is inaccurate, because Bakhtin has primarily *intralingual* diversity in mind – for both *raznorechie* and *raznoiazychie*. Given that many readers will only have access to Bakhtin through translations of his works, the conceptual challenges are exacerbated by these inconsistencies in the translated texts. For instance, as Volek (2014: 186ff.) concludes in a study of the reception of Bakhtin’s theories, heteroglossia in the novel is often equated with a multilingual novel or otherwise simplified or misunderstood.

mean a simple collection of independent “social speech types”, but a system of interconnected “languages” that “mutually illuminate each other”, as Bakhtin (1975/1981: 364) puts it.

As with all Bakhtinian thought, it is valuable to consider the concept of heteroglossia in the political and historical context that it stems from. Holquist (2002: 8f.) posits that – in the context of the political situation in the 1920s – Bakhtin’s desire to always take otherness into account and strive for variety and plurality “lent itself to the new conditions as arguments against the increasing homogenization of cultural and political life in the Soviet Union that would culminate in the long night of Stalinism.” Thus, Bakhtin regards heteroglossia as the desirable state, a condition all should strive towards. He makes this explicit when he calls for society to acknowledge linguistic and cultural diversity:

It is necessary that heteroglossia wash over a culture’s awareness of itself and its language, penetrate to its core, relativize the primary language system underlying its ideology and literature and deprive it of its naive absence of conflict. (Bakhtin, 1975/1981: 368).

This statement emphasises that although heteroglossia manifests itself on a textual level, it has ideological foundations giving it much wider implications.

### **2.3.3 Heteroglossia and the novel**

For Bakhtin, there is an intimate connection between heteroglossia and the novel. In fact, heteroglossia is at the very core of his definition of the genre:

The novel can be defined as a diversity of social speech types (sometimes even diversity of languages) and a diversity of individual voices, artistically organized. The internal stratification of any single national language into social dialects, characteristic group behavior, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, tendentious languages, languages of the authorities, of various circles and of passing fashions, languages that serve the specific sociopolitical purposes of the day, even of the hour [...] – this internal stratification present in every language at any given moment of its historical existence is the indispensable prerequisite for the novel as a genre. (Bakhtin, 1975/1981: 262f.)

In this sense, not the plot nor the characters or themes are at the centre of the definition of the novel, but the diversity of “social speech types” it contains. Thus, the novelist’s primary task is the organisation of these different elements of heteroglossia – and of the ideological stances expressed through them. In this process of “orchestrating” or “artistic reworking”, the social voices of a language are refracted and organised into a system conveying the socio-ideological position of the author (ibid.: 299f.). The novel is therefore a dialogised representation of ideologically loaded discourse (ibid.: 333).

On a textual level, Bakhtin (ibid.: 261f.) understands the novel as a multiform phenomenon combining “several heterogeneous stylistic unities” that are “often located on different linguistic levels and subject to different stylistic controls”. Heteroglossia in the novel can thus be considered as taking place on two distinct, but interlinked planes: the “heterogeneous stylistic unities” (also “compositional-stylistic unities”, ibid.: 262) on the one hand and the “different linguistic levels” on the other. The former refers to the stylistic and formal building blocks of a prose text, whereas the latter incorporates the various “social speech types”.<sup>8</sup> This idea is expressed even more clearly when Bakhtin (ibid.: 263) states that

[a]uthorial speech, the speeches of narrators, inserted genres, the speech of characters are merely those fundamental compositional unities with whose help heteroglossia [*raznovečie*] can enter the novel; each of them permits a multiplicity of social voices [...]. (italics in the original)

It therefore seems pertinent to take both perspectives into account when investigating heteroglossia in the novel (see 4.1/4.2).

Although Bakhtin generally regards all novels as fundamentally heteroglot, as the definition at the start of this section clearly indicates, there are some contradictions in *Discourse in the Novel* in this regard. Just as he is ambiguous on whether heteroglossia is a “quality of language itself” (all languages are heteroglot) or “a quality of *a* language at a particular historical moment” (a language could also be monoglot at a certain point in time), as Vice (1997: 18) notes, the same ambiguity applies to the novel. Have novels always been heteroglot or was there a stage in the development of the genre where this dialogic interplay between the different “languages” of heteroglossia entered the novel? The definition at the start of this section implies the former. However, elsewhere in his essay, Bakhtin (1975/1981: 414) describes how in the nineteenth century dialogised heteroglossia became the basic feature of the novelistic genre, therefore suggesting that novels were not always heteroglot.

The question can also be asked more broadly: Are all novels heteroglot or only some? Are some novels more heteroglot than others? In this regard, Bakhtin appears to have undergone a shift from defining heteroglossia as a specific quality of only some novels to regarding it as a characteristic of – or even a prerequisite for – all novels. As Renfrew (2015: 86) argues, this transition is noticeable from Bakhtin’s work *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* (1963/1984), which he completed in 1929, to *The Dialogic Imagination* (1975/1981), which was finished in 1934-5. While in the earlier work, the ability to organise dialogic discourse and

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<sup>8</sup> Quotation marks are used throughout for Bakhtinian terms with the exception of established concepts such as heteroglossia, polyphony and dialogism. This is to indicate that general terms such as “social dialect” or “speech type” are used in Bakhtin’s sense specifically.

heteroglossia is seen as confined to certain novelists – with Dostoevsky as the prime example –, in his later work, heteroglossia is described as a characteristic feature of the novel as a genre. It therefore seems justified to argue that all novels are inherently heteroglot, but that the dialogic interplay of the “languages” of heteroglossia is more prevalent and more apparent in certain texts – that there are degrees of heteroglossia. In short, some novels exploit the potential of heteroglossia more fully than others do.

### 2.3.4 Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and translation studies

A review of the relevant literature shows that Bakhtinian ideas of language in the novel have not yet found frequent in-depth discussion in translation studies.<sup>9</sup> Concepts such as polyphony, dialogism or heteroglossia are occasionally referred to, but rarely applied in-depth to textual aspects of translation or to particular literary translation problems. However, there are notable exceptions. What follows is a brief overview of the most relevant of the studies that rely on Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and/or the related notions of dialogism and polyphony.

Dialogism has been employed to reflect on the dialogic nature of translation, for example the interplay between translator and text or between source and target texts (Kumar and Malshe, 2005; Greenall, 2006; Mehta, 2018). Kumar (2015) also draws on dialogism when conceptualising translation as a type of dialogue between cultures. Summers (2017) combines Bakhtin’s heteroglossia with narrative theory to investigate shifts in the voices of narrator, author and translator in the work of Christa Wolf. A number of studies focusing on the challenges of linguistic heterogeneity for translation rely at least partly on Bakhtin’s heteroglossia, using it for instance to explore intralingual variation in drama translation in Singapore (Lee, 2009) or Turkish translations of D. H. Lawrence’s *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* (Erkazanci, 2017). Other studies of heteroglot texts in translation apply heteroglossia to intralingual *and* interlingual variation (Meylaerts, 2006; Boyden and Goethals, 2011), even though in Bakhtin’s sense it does not include literary multilingualism. Grutman (2006) argues that this conflation should be avoided and therefore coins the term “heterolingualism” for interlingual variation specifically, a distinction which Lee (2009) follows.<sup>10</sup> While each of these studies focusing on linguistic aspects refers to Bakhtin, heteroglossia is not explored much

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<sup>9</sup> Based on a search in the *Translation Studies Bibliography* database (<https://www.benjamins.com/online/tsb/>) in April 2022 using the keywords “Bakhtin”, “heteroglossia”, “polyphony” and “dialogism” as well as an investigation of the following handbooks and companions: Baker and Saldanha (2019), Bermann and Porter (2014), Boase-Beier *et al.* (2018), Gambier and van Doorslaer (2010-), Malmkjær and Windle (2011), Munday (2008; 2016) and Washbourne and van Wyke (2018).

<sup>10</sup> As noted above, this use of heteroglossia in the sense of multilingualism may in part be due to this interpretation in translations of Bakhtin’s work.

beyond the “internal stratification of language” aspect. As a result, the ideological and social underpinnings of the concept and aspects such as the incorporated genres that Bakhtin deems so important are not given as much weight. Bandia (2008; 2012) uses “literary heteroglossia” in connection with multi-dialectal and multilingual African writing. Although he acknowledges that Bakhtin’s heteroglossia is concerned with intralingual variation, Bandia (2008: 138) broadens the concept to apply it to multilingual modernist fiction. In other cases, the term “heteroglossia” is relied upon for the investigation of linguistic heterogeneity in translation, without linking it to Bakhtinian thought (see Barnaby, 2000; Assis Rosa, 2012; Hagemann, 2014).

This review of the relevant literature indicates that there is scope to explore heteroglossia in more depth as a theoretical tool in translation studies, and this thesis goes some way towards this aim. Chapter 4 maps out the elements of heteroglossia in the novel in detail and demonstrates how the framework functions as the basis for translation-relevant text analysis. As indicated in the introduction (see 1.3), the concept of heteroglossia can also provide justification for a translation approach that strives to retain linguistic heterogeneity. As a whole, this chapter shows the main ways in which linguistic variation is dealt with in translation, both in theory and practice, and strengthens the theoretical case for translation approaches retaining it. It argues that the dialect-to-dialect strategy is not only a valid and workable approach, but also particularly suitable for the source text at the heart of this project because it allows for complex linguistic variation to be replicated. The following three chapters serve to develop and refine the translation approach for *ABODAF* before the detailed translation strategies are outlined in Chapter 6.

### **3. THE SCOTTISH CONTEXT: REGIONAL VARIATION IN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE**

*ABODAF* represents many facets of the complex sociolinguistic diversity within Scotland. For the translator-researcher, it is paramount to gain a nuanced understanding of these complexities, since in particular regional varieties are a significant contributor to the heteroglossia of Stephen's novel. Starting with a brief outline of historical developments, this chapter first provides an overview of the different languages and dialects spoken in Scotland, focusing on the varieties relevant for *ABODAF*. This serves to refine the analytical tools for the investigation of heteroglossia as well as providing sociolinguistic context for the translation approach more generally. The second part of the chapter is devoted to the use of these linguistic varieties in Scottish literature. After providing a brief historical overview, it relates the heteroglossia of *ABODAF* to the literary uses of linguistic varieties in comparable Scottish novels. The section also demonstrates how Bakhtin's concept has been used to engage critically with linguistically diverse Scottish works, followed by a discussion of how translators of contemporary Scottish literature have dealt with linguistic variation.

#### **3.1 Scotland's sociolinguistic landscape**

##### **3.1.1 Historical background**

The multi-faceted linguistic landscape we see in Scotland today is the result of linguistic shifts and widespread language contact between English, Scots, Gaelic and, until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Norn (a descendant of Old Norse). In the early Middle Ages, Gaelic was the dominant language in the area that is now Scotland, prevailing in the Church, in law and in literature. After the Norman invasion of 1066, the dominance of the Celtic vernacular waned. Gaelic initially lost its status in courts and among the aristocracy to Norman French, and subsequently in the eastern and central Lowlands to Scots as a result of the creation of English-speaking boroughs (MacKinnon, 2007: 200).

The language that is now known as "Scots" was initially termed "Inglis", referring to varieties of English in both Scotland and England. It emerged as a consequence of immigration, dialect contact and language shifts in the Scottish Lowlands and is therefore an amalgamation of Old English, Old Norse and French with borrowings from Gaelic and other languages (Lawson, 2014: 5). Scots (or then, "Inglis") gradually expanded from the centres of power in the Lowlands, driving Gaelic to the north and west, and became the language of officialdom,

used for legal documents, Acts of Parliament and religious texts (*ibid.*). To distinguish the language from its southern neighbour, the term “Inglis” was replaced by “Scottis” and later “Scots”. As Millar (2018: 5) notes, by the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Scots had become the language of political, economic and cultural power in Scotland, while Gaelic was more and more associated with the distinct culture of the Highlands and Islands, considered “foreign” by Lowlanders. The 1500s were a time of mixed fortunes for Scots; the century witnessed “the summit of achievement for Scots as an independent language”, including a flourishing of Scots literature, but it also brought the beginnings of its dialectalisation (*ibid.*). In the process of dialectalisation, a variety once considered a discrete language becomes regarded as a dialect of a related variety which is associated with economic, political and cultural power (Millar, 2018: 1f.). The reasons for this decline in status of Scots are varied, but the main factors are generally considered to be the dominance of the English Bible and the lack of printing in Scots during the Reformation in the 1560s and the political unions between Scotland and England (the Union of the Crowns in 1603 and the Union of the Parliaments in 1707), the latter causing many literate Scots to move linguistically and politically towards the new centre of power in London (see Lawson, 2014; Millar, 2005; 2018).

Although most non-Gaelic speaking inhabitants of Scotland continued to use Scots, English had established itself as the language of official texts by the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Scots remained “the language of the people” and the medium of “a vibrant folk art tradition” (Millar, 2018: 7), but was increasingly reserved for domestic settings and spoken situations (Corbett and Stuart-Smith, 2012: 74). Among the urban middle classes, English became the “proper” language to be aspired to. While the working classes continued to speak Scots, the middle and upper classes favoured English, which led to the development of Scottish Standard English (SSE) as the new prestige variety distinct from Scots and from the English south of the border. With Norn (spoken in Shetland and Orkney) becoming extinct in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and Gaelic being pushed back to the western Highlands and the Hebrides, the Scottish linguistic landscape became more and more defined by Scots and SSE. While at the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the relationship between Scots and Scottish English could be described as a diglossic one, with each variety being used in different situations, this distinction is less marked today. As Millar (2018: 10) suggests, speakers now frequently “code mix” between Scots and SSE, employing features from both languages in a seemingly random way which can be taken as a sign that the two codes are no longer separate in the speakers’ minds. While the ongoing political and cultural debate about the status of Scots is not within the scope of this thesis, the relationship between Scots and Scottish English is a salient aspect of Scotland’s linguistic landscape and therefore pertinent to the discussion here.

### 3.1.2 Questions of distinction, status and linguistic identity

In the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries, before Scots was subject to dialectalisation under English, it was as much a separate language from English as Dutch was in relation to German (Millar, 2018: 1f.). This argument supports the view of many linguists that Scots and SSE are separate, but closely related descendants of Old and Early Middle English (Johnston, 2007: 105; Millar, 2018: 140) and are therefore to be treated as distinct languages, despite many overlapping features. As alluded to above, there are signs that speakers no longer view Scots and SSE as entirely different codes, meaning that the situation of diglossia (two distinct varieties with largely separate functions) has developed into a state of diaglossia with a range of intermediate forms between the two poles.<sup>11</sup> Most scholars therefore describe the linguistic situation of the Scottish Lowlands today on a continuum ranging from dense varieties of Scots (also termed “Broad Scots”) to the most standard forms of SSE (see Corbett *et al.*, 2003; Lawson, 2014; Millar, 2018). Thus, rather than switching between two distinct varieties, speakers shift along the diaglossic continuum.

At one end of this continuum is SSE, the standardised transregional variety of English spoken in Scotland. While it shares most features with southern Standard English, SSE exhibits considerable influence from Scots (and Gaelic) in its vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Features of present-day Scots grammar that have been carried over into SSE are, for example, differences in the use of modal verbs (preference for “will” and “can” over “shall” and “may”), extended use of the progressive verb form, passive constructions with “get” and more frequent use of the definite article in phrases such as “He went to the church” (McArthur *et al.*, 2018). Lexical influence from Scots and Gaelic on SSE can be seen in Scotland-specific terms such as “bannock” (oatmeal cake), in general words carrying a specific meaning in Scottish English, e.g. “to uplift” (to collect), in Scottish technical terms such as “advocate” (barrister) or “convenor” (chairperson) and in some colloquial or regional terms like “haar” (cold sea mist) or “dreich” (wet and cold weather) (*ibid.*).

For Broad Scots at the other end of the spectrum, the situation is more complex. It consists of a range of overlapping regional varieties; the Scots spoken in the rural north-east of Scotland differs in terms of vocabulary and pronunciation from that in the Glasgow area, for example. Common grammatical features of Scots dialects – in addition to those also found in SSE – are distinctive verb forms such as “gie/gied/gien” for “give/gave/given”, irregular noun plurals (e.g. “kye” for “cows”), diminutives such -ie as in “bairnie” (small child), a

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<sup>11</sup> Diglossia/diaglossia: this terminological distinction is based on Auer (2011). See also discussion of the German context in 5.1.2

preference for the negation with the adverb “no” (or “nae”) or the use of the relative pronoun “that” for all numbers and persons (McArthur *et al.*, 2018; Millar, 2018: 139ff.). Scots shares much of its vocabulary with English, but contains many borrowings from other languages. Lexical sources are for instance Old English (e.g. “bide” for “to live in” or “bairn” for “child”), Norse (e.g. “lug” for “ear”) or Dutch (e.g. “loon” for “lad”). Other common Scots words are of uncertain origin, e.g. “bonnie” (beautiful) or “braw” (fine, excellent), or are recent creations, e.g. “skoosh” for a fizzy drink or “gallus” for “mischievous” or “brazen” (McArthur *et al.*, 2018).

It should be borne in mind that representing all varieties of Scots and Scottish English on a continuum presents a considerable abstraction from reality. As Maguire (2012: 3) emphasises, it is often more helpful to think of a “multi-dimensional sociolinguistic variation space” in which speakers in Scotland operate. Any particular variety spoken in Scotland can be assigned “all sorts of meanings, for example: Scots, SSE, Scotland-but-not-England, working-class, educated, local, Glasgow-and-not-Edinburgh, cool, different, old-fashioned, Catholic” (*ibid.*). In other words, as discussed above (see 2.2.2), social and geographical connotations of linguistic varieties interconnect and overlap with each other.

A discussion of language use in Scotland also needs to touch upon issues of status. (Scottish) English is the most widely spoken variety carrying most prestige. Scots – the varieties at the Broad Scots end of the language continuum – and Gaelic on the other hand have the status of “minor languages” or, to use a term coined by Chhim and Bélanger (2017), “heritage languages”. With the Gaelic Language (Scotland) Act in 2005, Gaelic gained the status of an official language of Scotland “commanding equal respect to the English language” (Scottish Government, 2005). Although the current Scottish government recognises that “the Scots language is an important part of Scotland’s culture and heritage, appearing in songs, poetry and literature”, Scots does not have the same official status as Gaelic (Scottish Government, 2020). Both Gaelic and Scots are recognised as regional languages by the Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, which was ratified by the UK Government in 2001, with a higher level of recognition given to the former (see Council of Europe, 1992).

Not least because of its clear legal status, Gaelic is perhaps the most clearly defined of the linguistic identities within Scotland, even though it is only spoken by a fraction of the Scottish population today.<sup>12</sup> It is predominantly used in a fairly well-defined area – broadly

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<sup>12</sup> According to the 2011 Census, 1.1% of the Scottish Population aged three and older speak Gaelic (58,000 people). The highest proportions of these Gaelic speakers are in the Western Isles (52%) and in the council areas Highland (5%) and Argyll & Bute (4%). There is also urbanisation within the Gaelic-speaking

speaking the Outer Hebrides and pockets of the Highlands – and as a Celtic language it is structurally distinct from English. As studies have shown (Ennew, 1980; Bechhofer and McCrone, 2017; Chhim and Bélanger, 2017), Gaelic also has a cultural, political and historical significance for many people that goes far beyond simple language use. For the other “heritage language” in Scotland, Scots, the picture is very different. As discussed above, Scots is linguistically close to English, making formal distinctions more difficult. Although it is more prevalent in some areas, e.g. the north-east and the Northern Isles, its usage is less clearly defined in geographical terms. Compared to Gaelic, Scots also suffers from stigmatisation more strongly. There is still a tendency to see Scots as “bad English”, in particular when it comes to grammar, as Unger (2010) finds in his study of attitudes to Scots. This seems to be particularly true for urban varieties of Scots, which even today often tend to be regarded as “ugly” forms of colloquial English, as Millar (2018: 194) notes. Unger (2010: 114) also finds that while many consider Scots an important part of their identity, it clashes with the perception that English is the language needed “to get on”. Scots is therefore seen as important in terms of cultural heritage and not as a functional communicative medium (*ibid.*). This argument is compounded by evidence from the PASL (Public Attitudes towards the Scots Languages) survey in 2010 which revealed that 64% of respondents did not consider Scots a language, but “more just a way of speaking” (Lawson, 2014: 8). Generally, rural dialects of Scots, such as the varieties spoken in the rural hinterlands of Aberdeen, seem to carry higher prestige than urban ones since the former are regarded as “pure” and “uncorrupted”, as Loester (2017: 341) concludes in her study.

To express their linguistic identity, speakers may use words or phrases that will stand out as Scottish, for example by incorporating a term from the Broad Scots end of the Scots-SSE continuum into their Scottish English discourse. These overt “Scotticisms” are a conscious and explicit signal of the speaker’s linguistic identity. This identity can also be regional rather than national, as Corbett and Stuart-Smith (2012: 81) note in their study of a large speech corpus. From Millar’s (2016: 154) discussion of the highly localised terms for “seagull” in the towns on the north-east coast, it becomes apparent that such overtly used local terms can become symbols for a local identity shared by a large number of speakers. Millar (*ibid.*) also observes that this usage as a marker of identity may have caused the words to be regarded as more locally distinct than they once were. This is a useful example of how speakers use language to construct meaning around place, as noted in 2.2.1, demonstrating that place is “socially constructed” and “culturally defined” (Moore and Montgomery, 2017: 5). That these

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community with large numbers of speakers living in Aberdeen, Edinburgh, Glasgow and Inverness (see Scottish Government, 2017).

linguistic and regional identities can be very localised indeed, will also become evident in the discussion of such themes in *ABODAF* (see 4.3). Three regional varieties playing an important role in Stephen's novel are now investigated more closely: Hebridean English, north-east Scots and Shetland Scots. Unlike with Hebridean English and north-east Scots, *ABODAF* only contains a small number of instances of the Shetland dialect. However, as these markers of Insular Scots represent a clear attempt to further showcase the linguistic diversity within Scotland, they are a contributor to the text's heteroglossia. A brief note on Shetland Scots is therefore included below.<sup>13</sup>

### **3.1.3 Regional varieties relevant for *A Book of Death and Fish***

#### ***3.1.3.1 Hebridean English***

Hebridean English (HebE) is the variety of English spoken in the Inner and Outer Hebrides on the west coast of Scotland.<sup>14</sup> It shares most of its characteristics with SSE, but has been shaped by the immediate and continuous contact with Scottish Gaelic. While in the Lowlands Gaelic was being replaced by the then prestige variety Scots in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, it was still widespread in the Highlands and Islands at that time. When Gaelic also began to decline in this part of Scotland from the 16<sup>th</sup> century onwards, its replacement was the new prestige variety Scottish Standard English. From the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the imposition of English and the elimination of Gaelic were promoted by the state and the religious institutions of the Lowlands, as Shuken (1984: 152) emphasises. This language policy was seen as an instrument for social control in a region of Scotland that was geographically inaccessible and culturally distinct and where governments struggled to exercise their authority (ibid.). The linguistic shift from Gaelic to English was helped by efforts to bring education, through the medium of English, to the Scottish Highlands and Islands (Maguire, 2012: 10). In the Hebrides, this shift took place relatively recently and has left traces in the local variety of English, in particular in pronunciation and syntax.

Research into HebE is sparse and the studies that have been conducted focus largely on phonology where the differences to SSE are most pronounced and the influence from Gaelic

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<sup>13</sup> For the reasons outlined in this section, the classification of Scots is complex. From a sociolinguistic perspective, this thesis treats Scots as a language that is closely related to English but has developed separately. It has several regional forms (e.g. Doric or Shetlandic). In the literary examples on the other hand, representations of Scots take on the function of a non-standard variety standing in relation to (Scottish) Standard English. Therefore, literary Scots is discussed as a "literary dialect" which relates to a standard that is either present in the text or implied.

<sup>14</sup> In some classifications, "Hebridean English" (or "Island English") is subsumed with other northern forms of SSE under "Highland English" (see e.g. Shuken, 1984 and McArthur *et al.*, 2018).

most obvious (Shuken, 1984; 1985; Bird, 1997; Clayton, 2018). The syntactic particularities of HebE are most salient in verb phrases, demonstrating the influence of Gaelic, as Sabban (1984; 1985) finds in her studies of speech data. Perhaps the most prominent of these is the use of a non-perfective verbal form when Standard English would require perfect tense, e.g. “I’m a widow now for six years” instead of “I have been a widow now for six years”. Sabban (1984: 13) draws parallels to Gaelic; it has no verb forms corresponding to the perfect tense in English. Another syntactic feature still common in HebE is the use of pronouns such as “himself” or “herself” in a non-reflexive way, e.g. “Himself is joining us for dinner”, when Standard English would use “he/him” and “she/her”, respectively. Again, it has been suggested that this could be owed to influence from Gaelic where reflexive pronouns are used in this way (Smith *et al.*, 2019).<sup>15</sup> Further syntactic features are enhanced use of cleft sentences, the formula “to be after doing something” replacing the regular perfect tense or elliptical sentences in addition to or instead of yes or no ( Sabban, 1984; 1985; McArthur *et al.*, 2018). In terms of lexis, HebE is largely the same as SSE, but there are some common regional terms. Although the influence from Scots is considered minor, more recently Scots vocabulary, particularly from urban varieties, has entered Hebridean speech, as Clayton (2018: 159) notes. Many Hebrideans, whether they are fluent Gaelic speakers or not, incorporate occasional Gaelic words into their English discourse (McArthur *et al.*, 2018).

Stornoway (population approx. 5000) is by far the largest settlement of the Western Isles and an administrative centre. Although Gaelic is widely spoken on the Isle of Lewis, Stornoway also has a strong English-speaking identity. As Shuken (1984: 155) observes, English speakers in Stornoway made (at least until the mid-seventies when the study was carried out) extensive use of local words, some clearly derived from Gaelic, others of unknown origin. Elsewhere, Shuken (1985: 147) notes that this “slang” seems to be dying out. However, more recent publications suggest that the Stornoway vernacular is still a part of the local linguistic identity, even if its use may have declined, becoming restricted to certain (age) groups.<sup>16</sup> The Stornoway vernacular terms can therefore be seen as one indicator of “place as meaning”, as their use has social and cultural connotations. This is illustrated for instance by a glossary in a book on the history of Stornoway aimed at the general public which explains local colloquialisms such as “hoil” (harbour) or “gelley” (fire), regarding them as part of a “language” requiring translation (Silver, 2009).

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<sup>15</sup> This extended use of reflexive pronouns is also found in some varieties of Scots (see Smith *et al.*, 2019).

<sup>16</sup> See for instance the *BBC Voices* programme (BBC Radio Scotland, 2005), the documentary *When Stornoway was dancing* (BBC Alba, 2017) and a number of blog posts on Stornoway’s history and way of life (*Colloquialisms*, 2013; *Some Stornoway Rhyming Slang*, 2010; *Stornoway Schooldays*, 2017).

### 3.1.3.2 North-east Scots

North-east Scots (NE Scots), also termed Doric, is spoken in Scotland's north-east, broadly covering the area from Elgin in the west to Montrose in the south, including coastal towns like Fraserburgh and Peterhead as well as the city of Aberdeen.<sup>17</sup> Morphology and syntax of NE Scots are largely congruous with the grammatical features of other Scots dialects. Differences are most pronounced in lexis and phonology. Perhaps the best-known phonological feature of Doric is the replacement of <wh> with /f/ at the beginning of a word, e.g. in “fit” for “what” or “fan” for “when”. In terms of vocabulary, NE Scots is – together with other varieties of northern and insular Scots such as Shetlandic – a relic area of Scots. Therefore, many of the words that make Doric distinctive were once widely used in other regional varieties of Scots, as Millar (2007: 79) notes. Due to the longer and more intimate language contact, Gaelic had a stronger influence on NE Scots than on other, more southern, dialects of Scots, manifesting itself in lexical borrowings of topographical and agricultural terms (ibid.: 98). Many distinct Doric words are still heard frequently, e.g. “quine” (girl, woman), “loon” (boy) or “muckle” (big, much). However, much of the Scots vocabulary of the north-east that was related to traditional ways of life, in particular farming and fishing, is being lost as these industries change radically or cease to be an everyday reality for most people (see Millar *et al.*, 2013; Millar, 2016). This kind of loss of lexical items also poses the danger of “heritisation”, as Millar (2007: 95) highlights. This can mean that some of these words survive only in what is essentially a cultural niche (the heritage sector), which is removed from the present-day experience of locals. In his study on the knowledge of traditional dialect terms related to fishing, Millar (2016: 159f.) finds for example that young women working in the heritage sector had knowledge of certain traditional terms, while other participants in the same age group were generally unfamiliar with them.

Although NE Scots is close to the other varieties of Scots in grammatical terms, some morphosyntactic features are particularly distinct or have remained more pronounced compared to other regions. It should be noted that assumptions about distinctive grammatical features of Doric can be very general only due to the lack of study of other comparable varieties of regional Scots. The following characteristics are therefore based on particularities of Doric that have been highlighted in the literature. The Scots Syntax Atlas (Smith *et al.*, 2019) reveals for instance that the use of “was” with plural nouns as in “The houses was built a hundred

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<sup>17</sup> The term “Doric”, previously applied to all Scots varieties, became restricted to NE Scots during the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Millar, 2007: 116). The issues surrounding the current debate around the use of the term are complex and would go beyond the scope of this chapter. “Doric” and “NE Scots” are therefore used interchangeably here to denote the variety of Scots spoken in the area mentioned.

years ago” is more widespread in the north-east. Similarly, the dropping of the verb of movement after “will” (“I’ll away to my room”) or the use of “was” with “you” (“You was supposed to meet me at your house”) are more common in Doric than in other Scots dialects. Doric also retains irregular plural forms (e.g. “een” for “eyes” and “sheen” for “shoes”) and present participles (e.g. “teen” for “taken”) (ibid.). The diminutive ending “-ie” appears to be more productive in the north-east, where formations like “wifie, mannie, loonie, quinie” are common, often (but not necessarily) adding an affectionate or humorous connotation (Millar, 2007: 66).

NE Scots historically exhibits considerable intraregional variation. The speech of the fishing communities on the coast, the farmers in the hinterlands and the townspeople of Aberdeen was distinct, based on their respective customs and professions. With the disappearance of these traditional ways of life, technological and economic development and migration, this variation has flattened. While many words were lost, some lexical items have become markers of local identity, exemplified by the distinct terms for “seagull” in the different towns, as discussed above. Millar (2007: 119) also notes that other terms, such as the greeting “Fit like” (How are you?), have evolved into stereotypical phrases that are used also by recent incomers to the area who otherwise do not speak Doric. Overall, it has been observed that dialect use in the north-east generally has not been associated with a particular (lower) social class as has been the case elsewhere in Scotland (Loester, 2017). Even the urban Doric of the city of Aberdeen seems to be less stigmatised than other urban varieties in Scotland (ibid.: 1). For many people in the north-east of Scotland, “the Doric” is an important part of their regional and linguistic identity, and currently many efforts are made to promote NE Scots in education, media and culture (see Elphinstone Centre, 2019).

### ***3.1.3.3 Shetland Scots***

The variety of Scots spoken in the Shetland Isles, often classified as “Insular Scots” together with Orkney Scots, is heavily shaped by Scandinavian dialects. Influences of Norn can be found in pronunciation, lexis and grammar. The linguistic situation in Shetland can be described as bidialectal, as many speakers have access to two distinct linguistic forms (Shetland Scots and SSE with a local accent); however, there is significant “mutual interpenetration” between the two, as Millar (2007: 16) points out. In terms of phonology, Shetlandic has a distinctive vowel system and some localised consonant features. Of the latter, the most relevant for this study is the frequent “TH-stopping” in initial position, so the use of /t/ or /d/ instead of /θ/ or /ð/, for instance in “da” and “dis” for “the” and “this”, respectively (Millar, 2007: 62; Melchers and Sundkvist, 2010: 28). Morphosyntactic features of Shetlandic

not found in other varieties of Scots are for instance the use of the informal form of address “du” (sing. you), irregular plural forms (e.g. “breider” for “brother”), use of gender-marked pronouns when referring to weather or time phenomena or the use of “be” (instead of “have”) as a perfect auxiliary (Melchers and Sundkvist, 2010). Shetland Scots vocabulary in particular has been heavily influenced by Norn; examples of commonly used words are “peerie” (little), “dastreen” (yesterday), “glaep” (to gulp) or “skoit” (to take a look) (Graham, [1984]/2009). While a shift away from dialect can be observed in some domains and here too there is a danger of “heritigisation” (Millar, 2007: 134f.), attitudes towards Shetlandic are generally positive, and many Shetlanders see it as an important part of their identity (see Durham, 2014; Shetland For Wirds. Promoting Shetland Dialect, 2022).

## **3.2 Heteroglossia in Scottish literature**

### **3.2.1 Regional variation in the Scottish novel**

The complexity of Scotland’s linguistic landscape is reflected in its literature, and linguistic diversity has long been regarded as a key characteristic of Scottish fiction. In the contemporary Scottish novel in particular, interactions between dialects of Scots, Scottish English (ranging from colloquial to standard forms) and Gaelic are regarded as a driving force, as posited for instance by Craig (1999: 75). This has led to what McGuire (2009: 41/44) considers a “sense of verbal dexterity” and “linguistic innovation” in today’s Scottish writing, as writers “celebrate rather than lament their lack of linguistic homogeneity.”

While the shifting between Scots and English traditionally played a role in the work of many Scottish poets – probably most famously in the songs and poems of Robert Burns (1759–1796) –, the first major writer to exploit the potential of Scots in the novelistic form was Walter Scott (1777–1832). In his novels, Scott represents individuals from all levels of society, depicting how their lives interlink with historical events. In doing so, he provides the fiction of the 19<sup>th</sup> century with “a vivid heteroglossia of languages, styles and discourses, including popular speech” (Duncan, 2012: 107). However, this popular speech only appears in dialogue passages; the narration is in literary English, the language of authority, while Scots is confined to character speech, indicating a rural background, lower social class or lack of education. This “Scott model” became the primary way for integrating Scots into narrative prose: English is the default literary language, while Scots provides some “local colour”, often placing characters on the social and geographical margins. While the decision to represent non-standard language in this way can be taken for several reasons – attempting to access the widest possible audience,

wishing not to alienate readers, understanding dialect markers as merely illustrative, for instance – it always establishes a hierarchy. Craig (1999: 78) posits that in this situation

[a] dialect-speaking character is always the inhabitant of a linguistically less significant world than that shared by author and reader: the dialect-speaking character is seen as being either in declension from, or in aspiration towards, the moral and intellectual standards – the full humanity – of standard English and its literary traditions.

Although there were some notable exceptions, such as Lewis Grassie Gibbon's *Sunset Song* (1932), the "Scott model" was not seriously challenged until the 1980s and 1990s. One of the first Scottish novelists to seriously contest this hegemony of (Scottish) English narration was Glasgow writer James Kelman (b. 1946). The striving for realistic representation in terms of language and content is central to his fiction, as Craig (*ibid.*: 100) notes. Kelman's working-class narrators speak in a vernacular Glasgow voice, and he employs forms of free indirect discourse, phonetic re-spelling and other stylistic techniques to create fluid boundaries between the voices of characters and narrator, thereby breaking down the English/Scots hierarchy. Irvine Welsh's influential novel *Trainspotting* (1993) also relies on the literary device of dialect narration. He uses a highly stylised Edinburgh dialect to give the characters – a group of drug addicts in 1980s Leith – a distinctive voice. Although their work is different in many ways, both Kelman and Welsh are interested in the artistic potential of working-class speech. As McGuire (2009: 43) highlights, their writing aims to "validate the experience of those who have been historically marginalised within mainstream society" by using characters who have been silenced in traditional literary fiction. This use of Scots dialect features as means of social criticism is also apparent in more recent prose fiction. Graeme Armstrong's debut novel *The Young Team* (2020) is set in the housing schemes of Airdrie, a small town in the former industrial heartland near Glasgow. It is the coming-of-age story of Azzy Williams who is a gang member and drug user, but dreams of another life, away from violence, addiction and hopelessness. Armstrong's decision to use dialect in the narrative voice stems from the desire to represent and include a community – a community that is also his own – that has generally remained unheard. In an essay written in Scots, Armstrong (2021) asserts these goals:

While many readers see dialect as an exotic challenge, the people who connect most meaningfully wae it ir the possessors, local people often excluded fae literature. Exclusion starts fae birth in a deprived community. Books ir the preserve ae yir betters, lots huv nae relationship wae them at aw. Understandable, if yir life trajectory n language ir notably absent. These highfalutin things exist in other places, fur other people. Never being represented creates another layer ae cultural exclusion fur the excluded.

Like Kelman and Welsh, Armstrong criticises the pattern of restricting any non-standard voice to character speech. In this traditional model, he argues, where the dialect is reserved for

characters, they “become linguistic puppets dangled on strings ae supposed authenticity” (ibid.). Thus, the “possessors” of the dialect remain excluded, as they see their voice having to be couched in the seemingly more palatable Standard English. Azzy, the teenage protagonist of *The Young Team*, narrates his story entirely in Scots; Standard English is only present in the speech of some more minor characters. As this short passage from the beginning of the novel demonstrates, dialect features are represented on all levels of language:

The rain n wind ir fuckin howlin. We’re aw stood intae a wee corner oot the wet n away fae the eager eyes ae Strathclyde’s finest. At weekends our area is jumpin wae polis, aw lookin tae bust yi. They never wanted tae git their boots muddy walkin doon the Mansion but, so yi wur usually safe in here. (*The Young Team*, p. 3)

Scots pronunciation is represented in line with conventions (e.g. “oot” for “out”, “tae” for “to”) as well as through phonetic representation of the local accent (e.g. “ir” for “are”, “yi” for “you”).<sup>18</sup> Scots is apparent in the lexis (e.g. “polis”) and in morphosyntactic features, such as the idiomatic use of “but” (instead of “though”) at the end of a phrase or verb tense (e.g. “are ... stood” instead of the progressive form “are ... standing”). Like Kelman and Welsh, Armstrong does not use apostrophes to mark sound loss (“n”, “howlin”) which would put the Scots in relation to the “correct” English. It is apparent that this is a stylised form of the Scots dialect, but one that has a high degree of verisimilitude, making it recognisable for speakers of the variety – in line with Armstrong’s aims.<sup>19</sup>

Although Stephen’s novel is stylistically and thematically very different from Armstrong’s work, not least because the setting is distinctly rural rather than urban, there are interesting parallels in the approach to language. Like Armstrong, Stephen is firmly anchored in the realist tradition, striving to create the impression of an authentic portrayal of different Scottish linguistic and cultural settings. When asked about the language in his novel, Stephen stressed the goal of getting the Hebridean voice into writing, in the same way as this had been done for the urban voices of Glasgow and Edinburgh (Kaye, 2015). He describes the Stornoway setting of his novel as “a linguistic community of hundreds” and wanted to bring this assembly of “the voices you hear and the voices you know” into the novel (ibid.). Thus, although the regional varieties of Scots and Scottish English are, for the most part, less dense in *ABODAF* than the Scots in the example above, there is a clear commitment to conveying

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<sup>18</sup> Although various attempts have been made to develop systematic guidelines for Scots spelling (see Eagle (2022) for a detailed discussion), there are currently no agreed rules for pan-dialectal Scots orthography. However, there are spelling conventions such as those suggested by Wir Ain Leed (2020).

<sup>19</sup> In recent years, a number of Scottish authors have also challenged the (still commonly used) “Scott model” by employing Scots dialects for the narrative voice *and* character speech. In addition to Armstrong’s work, notable examples are Ely Percy’s novel *Duck Feet* (2021), Chris McQueer’s short story collection *Hings* (2017) and Emma Grae’s novel *Be Guid Tae Yer Mammy* (2021).

diverse regional voices. *ABODAF* therefore fits well into a Scottish literary tradition that regards linguistic diversity as a strength rather than a weakness.

The discussion of linguistic variation in Scottish literature is often restricted to the Scots–Scottish English continuum; however, Gaelic is also a contributor to the linguistic heterogeneity in narrative prose, as seen in *ABODAF*. Other contemporary Scottish novelists writing in English have also employed this technique, for example Andrew Greig (b. 1951), Alasdair Campbell (b. 1941) or Kevin MacNeil (n. d.).<sup>20</sup> As Macleod (2007) points out, Gaelic terms in an English narrative, either with or without an in-line translation, serve as supposed “markers of authenticity” and are one way of maintaining the “resistant Gaelicness” that she observes in English prose texts by bilingual authors. Others chose to express the Gaelic voice through an entirely different means. Iain Crichton Smith (1928-1998), who also wrote in both languages, explains in the foreword to his novel *Consider the Lilies* (1968) that he deliberately avoided incorporating Gaelic expressions. Instead, he used a “rather simple and almost transparent” style of English to recount conversations and present interior monologues which would mainly have taken place in Gaelic (Crichton Smith, [1968]/1987: v). Although this somewhat counter-intuitive use of a “simplified” form of English to capture the richness of Gaelic creates a certain otherness, it is hard to see how it can convey this richness to the reader in the same way the inclusion of Gaelic terms in the English text does. What is more, this technique could be regarded as giving in to the dominance of English rather than merely highlighting it. A few decades before Crichton Smith, Neil M. Gunn (1891-1973) had used the same means to render Gaelic through the vehicle of English in his Highland novels (e.g. *Highland River* (1937), *The Silver Darlings* (1941)). Through this act of “translation”, instead of making the language accessible, he “recaptures and re-presents the world of a Gaelic-speaking community in the very language which has displaced and destroyed that community and its language” (Craig, 1999: 81). These examples indicate that even in seemingly monolingual Scottish texts there are allusions to the characteristic linguistic heterogeneity. As the analysis of *ABODAF* demonstrates (see 4.2), Bakhtin’s notion of heteroglossia is also a useful tool for exploring such more subtle forms of linguistic variation.

### 3.2.2 Bakhtin’s heteroglossia and Scottish literature

To interrogate linguistic variation in Scottish writing, Scottish literary criticism has regularly drawn on Bakhtin’s notion of heteroglossia. In particular the late 1980s and the 1990s were a

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<sup>20</sup> A discussion of the role of Gaelic prose within Scottish literature would go beyond the scope of this thesis, and therefore Gaelic is only addressed as a contributor to heteroglossia in English and Scots works. For an overview of contemporary Gaelic writing, see Watson (2011).

period of intense engagement with Bakhtinian thought (see Renfrew, 1997; 2006 for a detailed discussion). Scholars turned to heteroglossia to investigate specific writers, for instance the double-voiced character of Burns' poetry (Morris, 1987; McGuirk, 1991), or to characterise the Scottish literary tradition as a whole (Crawford, 1994; Craig, 1999). Crawford's (1994: 57) essay has been particularly influential, as he argues that Scotland is (and has long been) a place where languages and diverse cultures are assembled, a pluralist rather than a monocultural nation, and that Bakhtinian thought provides models to consider this culture and link it to the wider world. His article is exemplary for the support that Bakhtin's ideas provided to the notion that Scotland's linguistic diversity is an asset rather than an obstacle for its literature. Although this perspective now prevails in Scottish literary criticism, as highlighted above, this was not always the case. As Craig (2004: 234) notes, Bakhtin served as a theoretical basis to challenge the long-standing criticism that the lack of a single and unified literary language had weakened Scottish literature. This idea of a Bakhtinian Scotland therefore stands in opposition to the view that a common language is a precondition for a national imagination and literature – a position that was most notably maintained by Edwin Muir ([1936]/1982).

In this celebration of Bakhtinian thought, there have however been critical voices as well. Renfrew (2006: 6) observes a certain oversimplification and misunderstanding of Bakhtin's ideas and warns that Scottish literary criticism

has been too willing to read heteroglossia in over-simplistic terms, on one hand as a purely literary property, and on the other, paradoxically, as something socially one-dimensional, and the process of its passage into literature as unproblematically transparent.

This use that Renfrew observes as not sufficiently nuanced could be due to the often very striking linguistic diversity on the text surface with English, Scots and Gaelic in various forms. The overreliance on the obvious "linguistic stratification" could have led to a neglect of other aspects of heteroglossia in the Bakhtinian sense, for instance the fact that monolingual texts can also be dialogic or the ideological underpinnings of the different "social languages". In a similar vein, Craig (1999: 89) warns of the danger of regarding heteroglossia as a tradition that is specific to Scotland. This thesis continues the critical engagement with Bakhtin's ideas on language in the novel in the Scottish context, attempting to address the issues identified by Renfrew and Craig. As outlined above, the investigation of heteroglossia in this thesis goes beyond the linguistic diversity on the text surface, taking into account the different ideological and social perspectives. Moreover, heteroglossia is understood as a feature of all novels, even if it is seen as a dimensional concept (i.e. some novels may be more heteroglot than others). Consequently, heteroglossia is not considered a purely (or even particularly) Scottish phenomenon. However, this thesis argues that the theoretical notion of heteroglossia is

particularly fruitful for analysing and interpreting texts produced in a sociolinguistically complex context – such as Scotland –, as is the case for *A Book of Death and Fish*.

### 3.3 Heteroglot Scottish novels in translation

As with linguistic variation in general, the linguistic heterogeneity of Scottish narrative prose is often regarded as an obstacle, as a challenge translators have to overcome. Corbett (2010: 3) contends that – perhaps not surprisingly – the biggest difficulty is not finding an equivalent for individual terms, but dealing with “the endless shifting between languages and language varieties that is characteristic of Scottish texts”. This section presents a brief overview of the main approaches translators of Scottish fictional prose of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries have taken when addressing this challenge.

Irvine Welsh’s *Trainspotting* (1993) is a useful case for comparison, as the novel has been published in a large range of languages, and several studies investigate how the Edinburgh vernacular is rendered in translation. It soon becomes apparent that translators have chosen largely similar approaches: Firstly, there is a translation into colloquial urban Spanish that is geographically non-marked and does not belong to a particular social class (Alsina, 2012: 149; Muñoz Martín, 2014: 17f.). Similarly, the translations into French and German, respectively, employ language varieties that are colloquial, “youth speak” or slang, but not specific to a certain region (Barnaby, 2000; Ashley, 2010; Gauthier, 2015). More generally, Ashley (2010: 124) observes the rendering of a socio-geographical variety in *Trainspotting* with “inner-city speech patterns” conveying education and social status without being regionally defined as a general trend in translations of Welsh’s work. These approaches are in contrast to the strategy employed in the Polish translation. In her analysis, Korzeniowska (2007: 98) criticises the translator who she claims “managed to deprive the work of its Scottishness” by letting the main character, Renton, speak fully correct Standard Polish at one time and, in the translator’s own words, “terrible Polish” full of obscenities, careless speech and ungrammatical language at another, foregrounding his emotional and physical “degeneration”.<sup>21</sup> Thus, the Polish version appears to (over)emphasise deficiency while the strategy of “colloquialisation” and the use of markers of orality (see 2.1) seem to dominate in the Spanish, German and French translations. The Turkish translation of the novel goes even further towards homogenisation

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<sup>21</sup> Renton does in fact use different registers and linguistic varieties, as he is extremely apt at adapting his speech to the situation (e.g. he speaks a very formal English when he is defending himself in court). Whether these shifts in the source text could have influenced the translator’s approach is not mentioned in Korzeniowska’s (2007) study.

of variation, as it is largely standardised with only occasional markers of spoken language (Erkazanci, 2008). In all translations, the regional aspect of the non-standard language is not retained. A contrasting approach – dialect-to-dialect translation – is observed for a dramatised version of the novel when the play *Trainspotting* is translated fully into another geographically and socially marked dialect, namely Montreal vernacular French (see Bowman, 2000, discussed in 2.1).

Other studies on the translations of Scottish novels confirm the trend towards the “colloquialising” of regional dialects and the diluting of linguistic variation. Comparing two Spanish translations of George Douglas Brown’s *The House with the Green Shutters* (1901), McClure (2020) finds that both Spanish versions (from 1947 and 2014) significantly flatten the complex idiolectal and dialectal variation, generally standardising the language. Thomson (2004) investigates a Danish translation of Alan Warner’s debut novel *Morvern Callar* (1995). She observes that the lexical and grammatical features of Scots peppering the eponymous narrator’s idiolect are rendered with colloquial expressions or are standardised in the Danish text. Bosseaux (2018) and Crickmar (2014) come to similar conclusions in their analyses of translations into French and Polish, respectively, of works of detective fiction. Investigating a French translation of Christopher Brookmyre’s *Quite Ugly One Morning* (1996), Bosseaux (2018) finds that while the social element of non-standard registers is retained, obscenities for instance, regional or Scotland-specific features are not. In an analysis of translations of Denise Mina’s *Paddy Meehan* trilogy (2005-2007), Crickmar (2014) observes that the translators rendered Scots terms in colloquial, regionally non-specific Polish while standardising morphosyntactic markers of Scots. There is little evidence of the use of synthetic varieties to render Scottish regional dialects or sociolects. Demissy-Cazeilles (2010), who investigates the French translations of Iain Banks’ (1954-2013) novels, points out the pitfalls of using an artificial dialect, in particular the loss of socio-cultural associations.

The studies cited here confirm that the trend towards homogenisation of variation and the loss of the geographical aspects of dialects observed in the translation of literary prose in general also applies to Scottish literature. The same tendency can also be found in translations of Scottish prose fiction into German specifically (see 5.3.1). What many of the studies introduced here have in common is a narrative of a certain loss, of translators failing – in different ways – to render the Scottish voices in a nuanced way. Thus, they emphasise the impression that literary dialects are an insurmountable problem in translation. Corbett (2010: 3) goes as far as to argue that the “failure” of translators to respond to this challenge “raises unsettling issues about the general reception of Scottish literature abroad”. This focus on the “inadequacies” of the translation is one aspect that this thesis attempts to address, by

highlighting opportunities heteroglot prose presents. One such opportunity might be that a dialect-to-dialect translation would – somewhat counterintuitively – emphasise linguistic diversity in Scottish literary texts. More precisely, the fact that there is regional dialect in the target text could lead readers to assume that the Scottish source text would be similarly heterogeneous. This might prompt them to (re)consider the linguistic diversity present in Scottish literature. Chapter 4 demonstrates how the sociolinguistic and literary contexts addressed in this chapter feed into the analysis of the heteroglossia of *ABODAF*.

## 4. ANALYSING HETEROGLOSSIA IN *A BOOK OF DEATH AND FISH*

Drawing on the theoretical discussion of Bakhtin's framework and the investigation of the sociolinguistic context, this chapter presents a detailed analysis of heteroglossia in the source text. To reiterate Boase-Beier's (2006: 110) argument, stylistic awareness gained through systematic investigation can help translators make a particularly convincing case for their interpretation of the source text, because it explains "how we get to the reading that we intuitively arrive at". Within the scope of this practice-based thesis project, the goal of the translation-focused text analysis is to gain a nuanced understanding of the complex linguistic diversity of *ABODAF* and its ideological underpinnings. Therefore, source text analysis is one of the tools that will enable me as the translator-researcher to refine the translation approach and its practical implementation.

Based on Bakhtin's writings, textual manifestations of heteroglossia can fruitfully be considered from two broad perspectives. This investigation therefore first takes the perspective of formal narrative elements – the "compositional-stylistic unities" – and then explores the linguistic building blocks for these formal elements, the "speech types". The inclusion of the sociolinguistic categories – the regional varieties used within Scotland – introduced in Chapter 3 enhances the exploration of the "speech types" in particular. The investigation covers the three interlinked aspects of heteroglossia introduced above, focusing on "internal stratification" while also pointing out instances where the "ideological saturation" and the "dialogic relation" become particularly apparent.<sup>22</sup>

### 4.1 Heteroglossia through "compositional-stylistic unities"

"Compositional-stylistic unities" enable heteroglossia to enter into the novel. From the list Bakhtin (1975/1981: 262, see also 2.3.3) sets out, three of these formal narrative elements are particularly relevant for *ABODAF*. The first is termed "stylization of the various forms of oral everyday narration". This refers to narrative discourse creating an illusion of orality, a style also known as *skaz*. The term *skaz* is generally associated with Russian formalism and describes the use of colloquial speech in first-person narratives, in particular when the narrator's language is characterised by non-literary and informal features and other signs that the narrative should

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<sup>22</sup> For all passages from *ABODAF* in Part 1, the page numbers added in square brackets refer to the source text as given in appendix A1 in Part 2.

be read as spoken rather than written down (Baldick, 2015). As Renfrew (2015: 84) notes, this distinguishes the narrator implicitly from the author “who is assumed to conform to the norms of the prevailing style”. Peter, the narrator in *ABODAF*, is telling a story, his life story in fact, and does so in a colloquial style strewn with contractions and elliptic sentences. He frequently addresses the reader directly (“Hope you’ve got all that.”, p. 358 [153]) and regularly reminds his audience that he is not making anything up (“I’m not kidding [...]”, p. 359 [154]). In the following short passage, the *skaz* features of the narrator’s voice are apparent. He describes how his elderly mother interacts with her carers:

So you had no doubts she was taking everything in. She got her home-helps trained. None of them would talk down to her. Otherwise the olaid would get aggressive. No wonder. (p. 358 [153])

The use of the second-person singular “you” to refer to himself, the short sentences (in the case of the last one elliptic) and the idiolectal term “olaid”, a spoken form of “old lady” to refer to his mother, contribute to the impression of orality.

The second element in Bakhtin’s list refers to written rather than oral narration, namely the “stylization of the various forms of semiliterary (written) everyday narration”. It is concerned with written texts that are integrated into the narrative, according to Bakhtin (1975/1981: 320) one of the most fundamental ways of bringing heteroglossia into the novel. The “incorporated genres” usually preserve their “structural integrity” as well as their “linguistic peculiarities” and they can be “artistic” or “extra-artistic” (ibid.: 320f.). In *ABODAF*, the inserted texts are frequent and set apart formally by different fonts. The former category is represented by folktales, songs and poems, the latter among others by letters, recipes, emails, part of a testament and an extract from a doctoral thesis. Bakhtin (ibid.) emphasises that in bringing their own “languages” into the novel, these texts “stratify the linguistic unity of the novel and further intensify its speech diversity in fresh ways”. Although some of the “incorporated genres” could be classed as spoken, such as the folktales or stories told by characters, the fact that the narrator supposedly includes them into the personal archive he is compiling with physical documents suggests that they were also available in written form. This blurs the boundaries between oral and written genres, creating an interesting tension, for instance when a written genre is realised by a “speech type” normally associated with spoken language as in the case of Mary’s story, which she has typed in NE Scots (see 6.2.4).

The third element is the “stylistically individualized speech of characters”. This refers to direct speech and dialogue that seemingly is not mediated by the narrator. Closely connected to this is a fourth category that does not appear in Bakhtin’s initial list of “stylistic unities”, but is discussed on several occasions throughout his essay. Bakhtin (1975/1981: 355) terms it

“dialogized transmission of another’s word”. He regards the transmission and assessment of another’s discourse as “one of the most widespread and fundamental topics of human speech” (ibid.: 337). In *ABODAF*, this relaying of discourse that is not the narrator’s is most obvious in incorporated texts (such as letters and emails) and direct speech. However, it also extends to cases where the “other” speaker’s discourse undergoes “special artistic reformulation” (ibid.: 355). Bakhtin does not elaborate on the stylistic elements in which this particular artistic re-working applies, but his description could be taken to refer to types of speech representation such as (free) indirect discourse or instances where the narrator paraphrases or summarises a conversation. In the following passage, the narrator transmits his mother’s words. Having recently suffered a stroke, she now finds it difficult to speak to her daughter, Kirsty, on the phone:

She kept asking if I could understand her. She missed talking to Canada on the phone, but she got flustered when Kirsty couldn’t make out what she was saying. I told her not to worry. I’d let her know if she wasn’t making sense. (p. 359 [153])

Sentences one, three and four are clearly marked as indirect discourse (free indirect discourse in the last case). In the first sentence, the narrator relays his mother’s question, in the third and fourth, he conveys his own reassurances. The second sentence is more ambiguous, as we cannot be sure whether the narrator deduces from his mother’s behaviour that she misses the phone calls to her daughter in Canada or whether he is simply reporting a statement she made. Recognising such ambiguities inherent in some instances of “transmission of another’s word” is important in order to replicate them in translation.

The “compositional-stylistic unities” in the novel are realised through different “social speech types”, also termed “languages of heteroglossia” (Bakhtin, 1975/1981: 291). The following sections investigate heteroglossia in *ABODAF* from this perspective.

## **4.2 Heteroglossia through “speech types”**

Bakhtin (1975/1981: 356) describes a “speech type” as “a concrete socio-linguistic belief system that defines a distinct identity for itself within the boundaries of a language that is unitary only in the abstract”. The boundaries between these different “speech types” with their distinct identities are at times difficult to determine, firstly because Bakhtin’s own terminology is not always consistent and secondly because the distinctions between the different kinds of linguistic variation as we know them from modern sociolinguistics were not available to Bakhtin. As noted above, Bakhtin distinguishes between two different kinds of “speech types”

causing the stratification of language: linguistically distinct forms and socio-ideological “languages”. Linguistically distinct varieties (*raznoiazychie*) can take on socio-ideological meanings, but the diverse socio-ideological “speech types” (*raznorechie*) do not have to be grammatically, lexically or phonetically distinct to express different socio-ideological perspectives. The analysis of heteroglossia in *ABODAF* covers both aspects: diversity caused by “linguistic dialects in the strict sense of the word” (ibid.: 271), which includes regional dialects, as well as by “social dialects”, “professional jargons” and “generic languages” (ibid.: 262). The fact that the boundaries between the different “speech types” can be blurred does not detract from the usefulness of heteroglossia as an analytical tool. On the contrary, heteroglossia is suited to investigating linguistic variation precisely because it highlights links and interdependencies in texts where one variety fades into another. It acknowledges that a neat classification is not paramount to gain a deeper understanding of the significance of diversity as well as of the ideological and social information that the dialogically related elements provide – and it is this understanding that is the main purpose of the analysis within the translator-researcher workflow.

#### **4.2.1 “Social dialects” and “professional jargons”**

The first type is what Bakhtin terms “social dialects”, referring to dialects of social groups. In *ABODAF*, the narrator’s discourse can be considered a social dialect, as the dialect of a native of Stornoway of a certain generation and social stratum. Peter was born in the mid-1950s in a working-class family. His family have close connections to the crofting and fishing communities, and he knows the town and its people inside out. Within the concept of heteroglossia, Bakhtin’s focus is very much on social stratification rather than regional diversity. Therefore, the voice of the narrator (and that of another Hebridean character) is explored through the social lens in this section, even though many of the characteristics also point to regional variation. This supports the argument that social and geographical variation are difficult to separate, both from a sociolinguistic and from a Bakhtinian perspective (see 2.2.1 and 2.3.2). Moreover, the narrator’s Hebridean voice is an example of how linguistically distinct forms of language (“linguistic dialects”), in this case Hebridean English as a regional dialect, can construct social and ideological meaning. It thus illustrates the two kinds of diversity summarised under the umbrella of heteroglossia (*raznoiazychie* and *raznorechie*) as outlined above.

One of the key features of the narrator’s “social dialect” are the frequent references to local culture that are only partially explained. In the following example, the narrator uses an agricultural term when he recounts an episode from his childhood. Young Peter helps with

tending the sheep on his grandmother's croft (an agricultural smallholding typical of the Highlands and Islands):

Fanks were best. Other people would come and then there would be two or three dogs and a smell like Dettol. I liked that smell. So did most of the people. One man put his dog [into] the bath when the sheep were finished. (p. 25 [108])

A "fank" is a pen for gathering the flock, for example before shearing. The term likely originates from the Gaelic "fang" for a sheep pen and is mainly found in Hebridean and Highland English (OED; DSL). In this case, "fank" specifically refers to the event of gathering the sheep of all local crofts in the communal pen to drive them through a sheep bath for the prevention of parasites. Although a partial explanation is given in the last sentence, the narrator assumes some background knowledge on the part of the readers; they are expected to understand the importance of these events in the crofting calendar.

A further lexical feature of the narrator's "social dialect" are vernacular terms specific to Stornoway. One of the recurring words is "hoil", the local name for Stornoway harbour, as the narrator explains:

Thought it was maybe like a stroll down the hoil for a fry of mogs and skeds. Our own words, found nowhere else, except for a pocket or two in Drumchapel or Christchurch, New Zealand. This means going down by the harbour to scrounge mackerel and herring. (p. 13 [98])

This passage in fact contains several examples of this Stornoway vernacular. "Sked", the local name for herring, is derived from the Gaelic "sgadan". "Mogs" does not have a connection with Gaelic (where "mackerel" is "rionnach"), so it appears to simply be a derivation from the English term. The usage of "fry" meaning "a small number of fish for frying, especially when presented as a gift" (DSL) is generally Scottish, but seems to have survived only in the Highlands and Hebrides in this sense. It is no coincidence that the examples of the Stornoway vernacular given here belong to the semantic field of fishing. The sea and the associated trades and traditions play a central part in the Hebridean way of life; this significance is reflected in common dialectal terms. Thus, these local terms carry important social meaning, expressing a sense of belonging.

Some of the Stornoway vernacular terms in the source text could also be classified as another of Bakhtin's "speech types", namely the "languages of generations and age groups". For instance, "goodies" (sweets, p. 10 [95]), "gellie" (bonfire, p. 13/14 [98]) or "caydie" (beret, cap, p. 26 [105]) are introduced and explained as words from Peter's youth, highlighting his sense of belonging to a particular generational group: having grown up in Stornoway in the 1950s and 1960s, from a working-class background, with English rather than Gaelic as their

main language. As in the extract above, “external linguistic features” – Bakhtin’s term for metalinguistic elements – make this generational aspect explicit. This can be observed for instance when teenager Peter describes the name he and his friends used for the landfill site in Stornoway: “Only for us, grown in the town, it was now the okeroch.” (from Gaelic “òtrach”, rubbish dump) (p. 98). “External linguistic features” are an important tool for highlighting heteroglossia in the novel as a whole (see 4.3).

In this thesis, “Hebridean English” will be used to describe the narrator’s voice in regional terms, even if specific linguistic markers of the Hebridean variety are not immediately obvious in every one of the short extracts discussed. This is because HebE shares many characteristics with SSE, with the most striking differences being in pronunciation (see Clayton, 2018) which are usually not replicated in writing. However, as a whole, the narrator’s voice reveals many of the lexical features of HebE mentioned so far as well as syntactic markers (see 3.1.3.1). In grammatical terms, there is for example recurring evidence of the use of a non-perfective tense when Standard English would require the perfect (e.g. “Did you hear now, the Ranais seaman’s story about the coffin?”, p. 27 [109]), extended use of cleft constructions and reflexive pronouns (e.g. “It was usually just myself, the uncle took along.”, p. 25 [108]). These contribute to linking the narrative to the Hebrides as a place, both in social and geographical terms.

Gaelic words and expressions are a further feature of the narrator’s “social dialect”. Although Bakhtin’s heteroglossia is primarily concerned with intralingual variation, in this particular context it seems appropriate to include Gaelic, technically a case of interlingual variation. Firstly, this is because Gaelic in *ABODAF* appears exclusively as individual words embedded in HebE discourse, rather than as whole sentences or longer passages. Secondly, the narrator himself is not fluent in the language, and therefore the Gaelic words are only part of his idiolect rather than a second language available to him. In the following example, Peter talks about a local farmer. He uses the Gaelic word “bodach” (old man) to refer to the elderly father of his coastguard colleague John:

Right then the *bodach* came running over. I’m not kidding, he was like a whippet. He’d been dozing in the chair, out the back door but he just woke up and came running. “The battery,” he said. “It’s the battery. John’s got terminals in a box.”  
So we found them together. It wasn’t long before I had one connected to replace the cracked one. But before I could step aboard, the *bodach* was in the seat and the Fergie was away and nearly took the gate off.” (p. 359 [154], italics in the original)

The incorporation of Gaelic words in English discourse can serve to distinguish the narrator’s social group – people who grew up on Lewis and have lived in Stornoway for a long time – from other social groups in the area, for example people who recently moved to Lewis and

have no knowledge of Gaelic or of colloquial terms used locally. The passage also provides information about the narrator's position on his own language: he uses the Gaelic term knowing that the audience (in all likelihood non-Hebridean) will not be familiar with it. Nevertheless, he foregrounds his own voice and leaves it to the reader to deduce the meaning of the word from the context. It shows how the narrator orients to place, illustrating the "ideological saturation" of heteroglossia.

Generally, vocatives and terms of address are the most common case of Gaelic in the novel, as shown in the following passage:

Then [my uncle] Ruairidh would say, "This won't pay the rent, *a bhalaich*. Nor put bread in the mouths of the bairns. (p. 25 [108], italics in the original)

Ruairidh addresses Peter with "a bhalaich", the vocative form of "balach" (boy, lad). In other cases, the Gaelic terms relate to fishing (e.g. "bradan" for "salmon"), food (e.g. "marag" for [black] pudding) or activities such as peat cutting (e.g. "caoran" for a small peat). Sometimes the Gaelic terms are accompanied by an in-line explanation, in other instances, the context clarifies the meaning or the term is taken up again in a later chapter.

Parts of the extract showing the use of "bodach" above could be classified as a further "speech type" from Bakhtin's list, namely "professional jargons", illustrating the dialogic relation between two elements of heteroglossia. In this case, the professional group are farmers or mechanics of agricultural machinery. Although not a crofter himself, the narrator has strong connections to the crofting community and would have solid knowledge of agricultural machinery. This is illustrated by his use of jargon. Some terms would be considered standard technical terms ("starter", "terminals", "cracked" terminal), others are more colloquial expressions used only by those familiar with this particular area ("to give her a warm-up" or "the Fergie", the colloquial term for a Ferguson TE20 tractor). Professional jargons play an important part in constructing heteroglossia in *ABODAF* overall. Technical terms and the lingo of several professional groups appear frequently – for instance fishermen, sailors, members of the coastguard, builders and weavers – also making it clear that the narrator is conversant in several of these jargons, ranging from fairly general terms as in this example to highly localised or specialist language as in the case of much of the nautical terminology. However, Bakhtin's (1975/1981: 289) "professional jargons" go beyond the lexical and cover all aspects of professional discourse as language in use, for instance ways in which intentions or evaluations are expressed or forms of conceptualising phenomena. The concept of register, most prominently developed by M. A. K. Halliday as part of Systemic Functional Linguistics (see Eggins, 2004), proved a useful aid when dealing with the complexities of these jargons in translation (see 6.1 and 6.2.4). "Professional jargons" are markers of identity, used by the

narrator to demonstrate that he is part of these professional groups that also function as social groups. Thus, jargons express belonging, demarcating insiders and outsiders to a group. As Bakhtin (1975/1981: 289) argues, for speakers of specific jargons, these are “directly intentional” and express themselves without mediating, whereas for outsiders to the professional group “these languages may be treated as objects, as typifications, as local color”. Thus, this again highlights the “ideological saturation” of heteroglossia.

#### 4.2.2 “Linguistic dialects” and “hybrid constructions”

As noted above, regional dialects such as the dialects of Scots can be regarded as “linguistic dialects” in the Bakhtinian framework. The discussion focuses on Doric, the most prevalent dialect of Scots in the source text.

Doric appears through the voice of the narrator’s mother and some of his other relatives hailing from Fraserburgh, a fishing town some 40 miles north of Aberdeen. In formal terms (i.e. in terms of the “stylistic unities”), the NE Scots voice is found predominantly in the direct speech of these characters. However, it also appears in a longer section, presented as an “incorporated genre” in which the narrator’s mother relays an episode from her youth (see 6.2.4 for a detailed discussion). Moreover, there are several passages where the narrator’s HeBE voice is coloured by his mother’s Doric in “hybrid constructions”, as shown below. Markers for NE Scots include phonological, morphosyntactic and lexical characteristics.

One of the most striking features of Doric pronunciation represented in *ABODAF* is the consistent realisation of <wh> in interrogative pronouns with /f/, e.g. “fan” for “when” or “fit” for “what”. Other recurring representations of Doric phonology are “nivver” (never), “wid” (would), “jist” (just) or “hiv” (have). The /x/ sound, which NE Scots has preserved more strongly than other Scots dialects, also occurs frequently, for instance in “dochter” (daughter), “nicht” (night), “licht” (light) or “richt” (right). The grammatical features of Doric are dense in these passages, including those now infrequent in other varieties of Scots. Among the more salient features are the relative pronoun “that” instead of “who” (“That quine that drove kent fit she wis about ...” p. 33 [114]), the use of the three-part spatial pattern with demonstrative pronouns (this – that – thon) (“The odds werena jist that great for thon pair loons.” p. 33 [114]) and the omission of the verb before an adverbial phrase of motion (“So I’ll jist along tae oor breakfast club in the mornin ...” p. 436 [163]). The diminutive ending -ie is more common in NE Scots compared to other regional varieties, and this tendency is also apparent in *ABODAF*. The diminutive is not only used for people (“wifie”, “bairnie”), but also in phrases like “down the roadie” or “a wee stashie of tins”. Apart from general Scots

words and localised spellings of Scots terms, the text contains a number of vocabulary items specific to the north-east. These range from the frequently occurring “loon” (boy, lad) and “quine” (girl, woman) to verbs such as “bide” (to stay, to live) or “claik” (to gossip, chat) and toponyms such as “The Broch” for Fraserburgh or “Blue Toon” for Peterhead.

The contrast between SSE and Doric is illustrated well in the following passage. To explain why she does not want to go to church, Peter’s mother Mary tells of a recent conversation she had there:

‘Last time I went there I got naethin but cheek. We’d just seen a coffin oot o the kirk and oer tae the men tae carry her. A neebor fae Westview cam up to claik. *You knew her well, Mary?* she asks. Aye, says me, weel enough, poor soul. She’s at peace the noo. *Was she a good age, Mary?* the other ane asks. No really. I dinna think she was saxty-five. *How old are you yourself, Mary?* Saxty-four, I says. *My word*, she says, *do you think it’s worth your while going home?*’ (p. 358 [153], italics in the original).

In formal terms, this is a complex case of “transmission of another’s word”. Mary’s voice is represented as free direct discourse, seemingly unmediated by the narrator. Mary, in turn, relays the words of a neighbour she meets at a funeral. Her own speech is represented as NE Scots, whereas the neighbour is shown to speak SSE. The markers of Doric are mainly phonetic. In addition, “claik” (to gossip, chat) and “the noo” (just now) are lexical markers. The use of the third-person “says” in the historical present reporting voice (“aye, says me ...”) is a grammatical feature of Scots, common when telling a story. Mary and the neighbour would be of a similar social stratum (presumably), as they both live in Westview Terrace, the same housing estate of Stornoway. Therefore, the linguistic difference at first seems to be purely regional. However, the fact that Mary still speaks Doric even if she has lived in Stornoway for decades gives clues about her linguistic identity. It therefore seems likely that Mary not only recounts the conversation in Scots, but that she actually spoke Scots to the neighbour. Perhaps she still feels like an incomer, but is not uncomfortable in this role. Consequently, although Doric is classified as a regional variety, in this context it also signals that Mary belongs to a particular social group – incomers to Stornoway from other parts of Scotland. She came to the Isle of Lewis as a young woman to work in the fishing trade, is proud of her east-coast heritage and has not lost her native dialect. In this particular case, Mary may also be keen to establish a deliberate linguistic distinction between her and the neighbour to illustrate that they are different, not least to show that the other woman seems to have an overly direct, and rather tactless, manner (which of course creates the humorous effect). This passage is therefore a clear illustration of the “ideological saturation” of heteroglossia, also hinting at the “dialogic relation” between the two speech types.

The clear distinction between the narrator's Hebridean dialect and his mother's Scots is apparent in the following extract from the same chapter. Peter describes changes in her speech:

Her speech never really recovered from the big stroke. [...] But you could tune into her new voice. She'd a memory for turns of phrase. I offered to get her to the kirk one week, if she wanted. We might need a shottie o a chair. (p. 358 [153])

While the first four sentences can clearly be attributed to the narrator's HebE, "We might need a shottie o a chair." presents a more complex case. "Shottie" is the diminutive form of "shot" as in "have a shot of sth." meaning "a brief loan/temporary use of sth." (DSL). The passage is an example of what Bakhtin terms "hybrid construction", an artistic device in the novel and a contributor to its heteroglot nature. It is also a place where the "dialogic relation" aspect of heteroglossia is salient. "Hybridization" is a "mixture of two social languages [or "speech types"] within the limits of a single utterance" and an encounter "between two different linguistic consciousnesses, separated from one another by an epoch, by social differentiation or by some other factor" (Bakhtin, 1975/1981: 358).<sup>23</sup> Here, the distinguishing factor is regional and possibly also generational. As Bakhtin (ibid.: 360) stresses, it is not so much the mixing of linguistic markers that is important, but the collision of different points of view implied in these forms of language, which again highlights the "ideological saturation" of all elements of heteroglossia. At first glance, the separation of this phrase into "We might need" (narrator, English) and "a shottie o a chair" (character, Doric) seems straightforward. However, before the hybrid construction is cleared up by the Doric sentence following it, it can actually be interpreted in several ways. On its own, "We might need a shottie o a chair" is ambiguous. It could be read as a statement Mary makes in Doric and which Peter then relays as free indirect discourse. It could be Peter who suggests using the wheelchair. If the suggestion does come from him, it is not clear whether he does so in English ("We might need to borrow a chair"), and the hybridisation happens when the words enter the text or whether his spoken utterance is already coloured by his mother's dialect. It may also indicate that Peter slips into Doric regularly when he speaks to his mother. As with all "hybrid constructions", this ambiguity cannot be fully resolved by formal or grammatical means, as the boundaries between these "languages" and their associated "belief systems" are blurred (ibid.: 305). In this case, Mary's witty riposte in Doric makes it clear that the suggestion came from the narrator: "A hope it's ane wi wheels you're speakin about and no ane wi electricity tae fry me', she said." (p. 358 [153]).

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<sup>23</sup> In Bakhtin's wider theory, "hybridization" is not confined to the "hybrid constructions" as defined here. For instance, Bakhtin (1975/1981: 359/361) applies "hybrid" to the novel as an artistically organised form ("novelistic hybrid") and discusses "hybridization" as a fundamental device for representing language in fictional prose.

### 4.3 Heteroglossia through “external linguistic features”

The last contributor to heteroglossia considered here is what Bakhtin (1975/1981: 357) terms “external linguistic features”. These denote metalinguistic elements, which “are frequently used as peripheral means to mark socio-linguistic differences, sometimes even in the form of direct authorial commentaries on the characters’ language” (ibid.). They straddle the two perspectives introduced previously, as they combine elements of the formal “stylistic unities” and the “social speech types”. They also link with the “transmission and assessment of the speech of others” (ibid.: 337) since the relaying of another’s speech is often accompanied by elucidation or judgement through direct comments about the language.

In *ABODAF*, such metalinguistic narratorial comments are frequent and range from explanations on the usage of certain words and opinions on regional differences to comments on the way a person’s speech changes according to their mood. These elements therefore bring out the narrator’s ideological position on language most clearly, highlighting the importance linguistic heterogeneity has for him and emphasising the links between linguistic and cultural diversity. In this first example, the narrator explains an idiomatic expression from his mother’s hometown:

Her speech never really recovered from the big stroke. In The Broch they say a body has ‘taen a shock’. (p. 358 [153])

The narrator assumes that the narratee is not familiar with the term “taen a shock” (lit. “taken a shock”, suffered a paralytic stroke) used in Fraserburgh when he makes the connection to his mother’s native dialect. That “The Broch” is the colloquial name of the town does not need to be clarified here, as the narrator did this at an earlier point in the novel. He incorporates the Scots name into his own speech, even though he does not speak Scots otherwise. The expression “a body” (Scots and (rarely) colloquial Scottish English for “somebody”, “an individual”; also “one/oneself”) is integrated into the narrator’s discourse without being signalled as “other”. Thus, in addition to “taen a shock”, which is clearly marked as a “foreign” expression, the narrator’s voice itself is also coloured by his mother’s speech. This sentence is therefore another case of Bakhtinian hybridisation. It combines two “linguistic consciousnesses” that are impossible to separate based purely on linguistic markers: would the narrator use “a body” in his own speech or should the whole expression “a body has taen a shock” be attributed to Doric, i.e. not a dialect he would naturally speak?

Mary came to Lewis to work as a typist in the Stornoway fishmart, although she “had really been employed as an interpreter” (p. 37 [118]), as Peter’s father notes. This “interpreting” is clearly not related to language alone, even if the Doric of the fishermen may have proved

difficult for the locals to understand. Mary would have been mediating between cultures, and as “a Broch quine”, a woman from Fraserburgh, she would have been trusted by the east-coast fishermen to be on their side getting their point across. This is illustrated by the rest of the passage where Peter conveys his father’s observation:

She’d really been employed as an interpreter, my olman said. She’d need to get across the gist of what some irate East Coaster had to say about arrangements made on his behalf. He’d not be best pleased if his vessel had to be slipped at Goat Island for some inspection, when the herring were running. (p. 37 [118])

Although Mary retains her Scots dialect even after having lived in the Hebrides for decades, as shown above, she does seem to adapt her speech to some degree. When Peter hears her speak Doric with a fisherman from Fraserburgh on one occasion, he observes: “I realised how her language was never really flowing when she was on the island.” (p. 32 [113]). Mary’s Doric is clearly an important means of characterisation; however, it also serves to illustrate differences in linguistic and regional identity across Scotland, creating a contrast with the HebE voices. This is also the case in passages such as this where heteroglossia is highlighted through metalanguage only. The extract contains another case of localised “professional jargon”, as it is not explained that Goat Island (a small island in the harbour, now connected by a causeway) is the location of the Stornoway boatyard. It is thus illustrated how heteroglossia is a narrative presence in the novel even when the linguistic diversity is not apparent at the text surface.

The “external linguistic features” also provide important clues about the narrator’s perspective on the Gaelic language. On the Isle of Lewis, he would have grown up with Gaelic and English being used alongside each other. Although Peter’s father has Gaelic as his first language, he does not write in it or use it with his children. Peter cannot speak the language fluently; he only “picked up a bit but not enough to follow the sermons” (p. 134), as he reflects later. As a child, he hears Gaelic at his grandmother’s house in the village of Grimshader (8 miles south of Stornoway) where the adults sit around the fire chatting and telling stories:

Then they’d get laughing, jumping back and fore between Gaelic and English. ‘I’ll tell you after,’ Ruaraidh would say but I’d tug at my grannie’s sleeve while she was laughing away. ‘*A ghràidh*, it’s not the same in English.’ (p. 26f. [109], italics in the original)

The grandmother’s comment suggests that Gaelic was the language for casual conversation and storytelling and that some of the humour simply was seen as untranslatable into English (although, admittedly, in this case parts of the conversation were perhaps not meant for a young boy’s ears, which would explain the reluctance to translate what was said). This is also another case of the embedding of a Gaelic phrase in HebE (“a ghràidh” is the vocative of “gràdh”, here meaning “my dear” or “pet”). Incorporating Gaelic words is a common feature of HebE, as discussed above, but in the narrator’s case, they are frequently accompanied by a

metalinguistic commentary. For certain objects, it appears that Peter is not aware of the English term and therefore uses the Gaelic word, for example for a type of fishing hook (*dorgh*, p. 105 [134]) and for a wooden tray he finds in his father's weaving shed: "I know it's called a *scumaig*, but I don't know an English word for it." (p. 102 [135], italics in the original).<sup>24</sup>

For translation, particular attention has to be paid to the narrative function of these instances of metalinguistic commentary. I therefore carried out a more systematic functional analysis of the "external linguistic features" in the source text. This analysis revealed the following main functions: explain meaning and usage, assert identity and belonging, highlight diversity or difference, evaluate language use, indicate language knowledge or specify which language (variety) is used. These different functions of the metalanguage inform the translation approach and its implementation (see 6.2 for examples). The exploration of "external linguistic features" has demonstrated further that regional identities and linguistic diversity are a key concern of the text. The continuous reflection on and evaluation of language not only emphasises the "dialogic relation" between the different elements, but it also makes the "ideological saturation" of heteroglossia explicit.

#### 4.4 Conclusion

The argument that the novel as a form disrupts a unified position – and thereby a single unified language – is central to the Bakhtinian argument. Bakhtin (1975/1981: 315) posits that even in seemingly homogenous "smooth single-linguaged" passages, novels express different points of view, value judgments and emphases through the speech of narrators and characters. In *ABODAF*, these judgements and ideas are orchestrated through a complex social diversity of speech types, as the analysis focusing on three key aspects of heteroglossia – "internal stratification", "ideological saturation" and "dialogic relation" – has shown. Most obviously, heteroglossia arises from the stratification of language with its plethora of "speech types". These "social languages", organised in the novel through the different stylistic elements, are in a dialogic relationship. Their "interillumination" (ibid.: 362) is particularly apparent in "hybrid constructions" and metalinguistic comments, but also in the interplay between "stylistic unities"

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<sup>24</sup> Interestingly, "scumaig", also spelled "scummaig" elsewhere in the novel, does not appear in Gaelic dictionaries. Possibly the narrator has misremembered the spelling and means "sguman", a bailing dish or scoop (see Am Faclair Beag; DASG Fieldwork Archive). The genitive case of "sguman" is "sgurnain" which is similar in sound to "sgurnaig", which might explain why the narrator remembers the word with an "-aig" ending. I am indebted to John Macaulay for the comments on Gaelic grammar and spelling regarding this example and the use of "mì-chàilear" in 6.2.

and “speech types” more broadly. Such dialogic relationships between the different elements are what make a novel “double-voiced”, because in it “heteroglossia is always dialogically arranged”, as Vice (1997: 20) phrases it. The dialogue takes place between the different “consciousnesses” underlying the linguistic markers.

This chapter has established Bakhtin’s heteroglossia as a useful tool for translation-focused text analysis, because it helps make the complex linguistic diversity visible, even if this linguistic heterogeneity is not always immediately apparent on the text surface. While a striving for verisimilitude and credibility (Leech and Short, 2007) in the literary representation of variation in *ABODAF* is apparent from the discussion so far, the different elements of heteroglossia should first and foremost be seen as literary tools. To come back to Bakhtin’s (1975/1981: 300) definition of the novel above, the “social speech types” are “artistically organised” by the novelist to create the “structured artistic system” of literary language. Heteroglossia is thus also a useful tool to analyse the “image of a language” (ibid.: 336). It serves to interrogate the constructed nature of literary dialect and its aesthetic function in addition to social and ideological meanings.

In line with Boase-Beier’s (2006) arguments, the increased stylistic awareness gained through systematic investigation supports more conscious decision-making in translation. This does not have to be seen as a contradiction to translation as a creative process. Instead, these insights into stylistic, linguistic and contextual aspects enable creativity in that they help me as the translator-researcher to explore new solutions that I would not otherwise have considered or give me confidence to look beyond the obvious translation options. Moreover, the analysis has highlighted the importance of the linguistic diversity for *ABODAF* and it thus strengthens the theoretical foundation for a translation that aims to retain the different levels of the novel’s heteroglossia. The next chapter shifts the focus from source text and context to the target language, exploring linguistic variation in the context of German language and literature and the implications of these conditions for translation.

## 5. TOWARDS THE TARGET TEXT: REGIONAL VARIATION IN GERMAN LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE

This chapter focuses on regional variation in German to offer target language contextualisation. It first provides an overview of the linguistic background, before exploring how literary dialects contribute to the heteroglossia of contemporary German prose fiction. These first two sections also set the scene for the discussion in the third part of this chapter, which investigates how German translators have approached the heteroglossia in Scottish novels. Within the translator-researcher workflow, this chapter plays an important role in the development and refining of the translation approach (outlined in 6.1). It serves to enhance dialect knowledge, both in sociolinguistic and literary terms, providing the basis for selecting the target language varieties, in particular Swiss German dialects and forms of colloquial German.

While this chapter concentrates on regional variation, it should be borne in mind that the concept of “place” underlying the regional dialects should not be understood purely as a fixed geographical territory. Instead, as noted in Chapter 2, “place” can also be considered as symbolic, subjective and socially constructed by its speakers. In other words, although the discussion here investigates dialects and regional standards as varieties used in certain territories, it also highlights aspects of “place as meaning”. It is this focus on the ideological and social meanings of regional dialects that will provide the key arguments for employing them in the translation of *ABODAF*.

### 5.1 Sociolinguistic perspectives on regional variation in German

#### 5.1.1 Dialect and standard: historical developments

This brief overview of the historical developments of language change follows the four stages suggested by Barbour and Stevenson (1990). As they point out, the emergence of standard written forms distinct from local dialects can be dated to the late medieval period (ibid.: 45). Although there was still writing in local vernaculars, a fairly uniform literary standard close to the dialects of the southwest came into use, now termed Middle High German (ibid.: 46). From the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, German started to replace Latin as the language of writing as the need for administrative and legal texts grew. Each major city developed its own written standards in their chanceries, which functioned as a kind of official language, for example in the cities of the Hanseatic League.

This first phase seeing the emergence of several written standards was followed by a period in which one written standard gained acceptance across most of the German-speaking area. Over the course of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, one of the chancery styles (Kanzleisprachen), namely that of the chancery of Saxony, became the accepted standard. As Barbour and Stevenson (1990: 47) note, the desire for supraregional standards had been heightened by the introduction of printing in the late 15<sup>th</sup> century, an industry that benefitted commercially from standardised forms of language. It was also promoted by the rise of a literate middle class not able to read Latin and the therefore growing demand for books in German. The factors for the increasing dominance of the Kanzleisprache of Saxony over other chancery standards, for example the “Gemeine Deutsch” of the imperial chancery in Vienna, are numerous. At the time, wealthy Saxony was a centre of learning and had a flourishing printing industry (ibid.: 48). In addition to the prestige of the variety, it was also seen as more widely comprehensible than others. Finally, the Protestant reformer Martin Luther wrote in this language. Fagan (2009: 200) highlights that Luther’s idiomatic and accessible translation led to the Luther Bible being widely read and accepted, which in turn gave more prestige to the language it was based on. As Barbour and Stevenson (1990: 48) summarise, the process of the adoption of a relatively uniform written standard language across the entire German-speaking area was virtually complete by the late 1600s.

The third phase in this development saw the rise of a standard spoken variety. By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Standard German – albeit with some phonetic diversity – had become the normal spoken medium for the middle classes in central and northern Germany (ibid.: 50). Although this development was less pronounced in southern Germany and Austria, there too, the everyday speech of younger, educated people moved from dialect to the standard variety. The process of standardisation of the spoken language was promoted by a number of factors: improved communication between people from different areas as a consequence of the industrial revolution, use of the standard as a medium of teaching, language as an expression for the increasing desire of German unity and a rising middle class wishing to distinguish itself from the dialect-speaking working classes (ibid.). An exception was the situation in Switzerland where the dialects still prevailed as the main spoken variety (see Sonderegger, 2003).

The fourth phase in the model used here brought about the modern speech continuum, as the standard – or near-standard – was gradually accepted as the normal spoken medium for most people. As Barbour and Stevenson (1990: 52) argue, this process was enabled and accelerated by the exposure to mass communications and great population movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In particular the latter caused dialect levelling and encouraged dialect speakers to learn the standard which in turn led to the development of new colloquial speech with

regionally and socially diverse forms. These relationships between dialect and standard are expanded upon next.

### **5.1.2 Dialect and standard: distinctions and classifications**

Barbour and Stevenson (1990: 37), acknowledging the linguistic fragmentation on a dialectal level, describe a situation where only one standard of the German language has developed. However, more recent research has challenged the notion of a single standard variety, leading to the conceptualisation of German as a pluricentric language (see Schmidlin, 2013; Ammon *et al.*, 2016). This modern understanding highlights the fact that German is a national or regional language in several countries, causing variation in the standard because each is subject to decentralised norms. Most importantly perhaps, pluricentrism means that the different national standards – German Standard German, Austrian Standard German or Swiss Standard German for instance – are seen as equal in status. As Ammon *et al.* (2016: XLI) highlight, the linguistic particularities of the standard in each country should therefore not be seen as deviations from a common Standard German norm, but as co-existing forms on an equal footing. Differences between the national standards primarily affect pronunciation, but also lexis, morphology and syntax as well as use of language (Schmidlin, 2013: 23, see also Ammon *et al.*, 2016). In many cases, there is no term that would be used in all German-speaking areas, hence no common or “gemeindeutscher” term. A case in point is the German word for “butcher”. As there is no shared lexical item, choosing one of the variants will immediately place the speaker in a certain area: “Metzger” in western central and southern Germany or in Switzerland, “Fleischer” in the east and north-east of Germany, “Schlachter” in north-west Germany and “Fleischhauer” in Austria (see Elspaß and Möller, 2003-; Ammon *et al.*, 2016).

The relationship between dialects and Standard German in many areas can be described as a continuum ranging from traditional regional dialects to the national standard variety (a situation also termed “diaglossia”, see 3.1.2). Between these two poles is the colloquial language (“Umgangssprache”) which, according to Fagan’s (2009: 214) definition, exhibits regional variation in grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation, albeit to a lesser degree than that found in dialects. The supraregional “Umgangssprache” is the widely accepted, mostly spoken language of everyday use (Duden, 2015). Some classifications distinguish between “standardnahe Umgangssprache” (closer to the standard) and “dialektnahe Umgangssprache” (closer to the dialect) (Barbour and Stevenson, 1990: 144). However, the boundaries between the different varieties on the continuum are often blurred, compounded by the fact that regional and social variation overlap. The nature of the continuum as a whole also differs

according to region. As Fagan (2009: 215/232f.) points out by way of example, in the north of Germany, the divisions between colloquial German and dialect are much sharper than in the Central German area; in the north, colloquial speech “is more a stylistically relaxed form of the standard” with little dialectal influence. This is because the dialects in the Low German area, which did not undergo the High German Consonant Shift (see 5.1.3), are further removed from the standard than the dialects in the Central German area, which historically made a greater contribution to modern Standard German (*ibid.*).

In Switzerland, the relationship between dialects and the standard is markedly different to the continuum described above. There is no colloquial language mediating between the two poles. Instead, there is a situation of diglossia with clear formal divisions between dialect and standard, each being used for different purposes and in different settings. Broadly speaking, the Swiss German dialects (subsumed under the term “Schweizerdeutsch” or “Schwyzerdütsch”) are the spoken variety that, independent of social factors, is used in everyday interaction, and Swiss Standard German is the written variety. However, the medium of interaction is not the only deciding factor for dialect or standard in the Swiss context, as the choice of variety can also depend on the degree of informality of a setting. Swiss German dialects are common in personal emails or text messages for example, and spoken Swiss Standard German is used in educational settings or certain media formats.

In addition to the diglossia-continuum distinction, it should be noted that the boundaries between dialects and regional forms of the colloquial language are not as clear-cut as the discussion in this section so far may suggest. As Löffler (2000: 2044) observes, by the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, there was a progressing transition from the very localised traditional dialects (Ortsmundarten) to regional varieties (Regiolekte). This development can be observed in Germany, Austria and Switzerland and is still ongoing.

### **5.1.3 Regional dialects of German**

The dialect landscape in the German-speaking territory is fragmented and complex. The broadest classification of modern German dialects is generally made based on the extent to which a variety was affected by the High German Consonant Shift, dividing the dialects into High German and Low German dialects according to phonological differences. The High German dialects are split into Upper German and Central German.

In geographical terms, Upper German dialects are spoken in the area south of the Speyer/Germersheimer line, which runs from Germersheim to the Erfurt area and then south again towards the Czech border. In the classification of Fagan (2009: 231 ff.), which this section

follows, the Upper German dialects are further divided into Alemannic (including Swabian), Upper Franconian and Austro-Bavarian. The Alemannic dialects, some of which are employed in the translation of *ABODAF*, are spoken, among others, in Switzerland, the Austrian state of Vorarlberg, the German state of Baden-Württemberg and parts of Alsace. This also illustrates that dialect areas are not necessarily congruous with modern political borders. The Central German dialects lie to the north of the Speyer/Germersheimer line and south of the Benrath line, which runs from east to west passing south of Berlin and just north of Cologne. They are grouped into East Central German (Thuringian and Upper Saxon dialects) and West Central German (Central Franconian and Rhenish Franconian dialects). The Low German dialects, spoken in the low-lying areas of northern Germany are traditionally further divided into West Low German and East Low German, the former including North Saxon, Westphalian and Eastphalian, the latter Brandenburgish and Mecklenburgish-West Pomeranian (ibid.: 238).<sup>25</sup>

The phonological changes brought about by the High German Consonant Shift – in the most basic terms the replacement of the plosive consonants /p, t, k/ with affricates /pf, ts, kx/ or fricatives /f, s, x/ – did not affect the dialects north of the Benrath line. Therefore, Low German dialects retained the older forms like /ma:ken/, /apəl/ and /va:tər/ for “machen” (make), “Apfel” (apple) und “Wasser” (water) when most High German dialects have /maxən/, “apfəl/ und /vasər/, respectively. Further phonological differences between the three broad groups of dialects affect the use of diphthongs/monophthongs, vowel characteristics and lenition (Barbour and Stevenson, 1990: 92; Stevenson, 1997: 67f.). Broad differences between Low and High German dialects can also be seen in some morphosyntactic features, namely in case forms, the number of plural verb forms and past tenses (Stevenson, 1997: 68). In addition to the differences in sound and grammar, German dialects also show considerable variation in their vocabulary. As Stevenson (1997: 68) highlights, characteristic lexis is often the most striking feature of a dialect. This lexical variation is particularly rich for terms of everyday life, as an investigation of the *Atlas zur deutschen Alltagssprache* (Elspaß and Möller, 2003-) illustrates. By way of example, for “Kante” (the heel of a loaf of bread), the atlas distinguishes between fifty different terms, even when disregarding extremely localised rarer variants.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> North Saxon is more commonly termed “Northern Low Saxon” (see e.g. Hammarström et al., 2022).

<sup>26</sup> For a detailed dialect map for this term see <http://www.atlas-alltagssprache.de/r10-f3h/> (*Frage 3b Anfangs- oder Endstück des Brotes*). It is worth noting that the atlas does not distinguish strictly between dialect, colloquial language and standard variants, and that therefore some of the dialect terms are also used in colloquial and standard forms of German, e.g. “Anschnitt” is common in Swiss Standard German as well as (with the pronunciation “Aaschnitt”) in some Swiss German dialects.

The Swiss German dialects used to implement the dialect-to-dialect strategy in this thesis, the St. Gallen and Bernese dialects, belong to the Alemannic group, more specifically to High Alemannic which is spoken in most of the German-speaking part of the Central Plateau area. Although the High Alemannic dialects exhibit considerable variation, in particular along an east-west divide, they share common characteristics distinguishing them from Swiss Standard German. Some of the key phonological differences, as noted by Rash (1998: 138ff.), are long monophthongs when Standard German has diphthongs (e.g. “Huus” for “Haus”, house), diphthongs where Standard German has long monophthongs (e.g. “Brüedere” for “Brüder”, brothers) or /x/ instead of /k/ in initial position (e.g. “Chuchi” for “Küche”, kitchen). Common morphosyntactic features are the lack of a genitive case (with the exception of a small number of set phrases), the extended use of “wo” as a relative pronoun, the absence of the simple past tense in the indicative or typical suffixes such as the diminutive ending “-li” (“Hündli” for “Hündchen”, little dog) (ibid.: 140ff.). As with other dialects, the vocabulary of High Alemannic is rich in terms of everyday life, such as traditions, foodstuffs or household equipment. Many lexical items are adopted from Standard German and adapted phonologically, sometimes replacing existing dialect terms (e.g. with “Träppe” for “Treppe”, stairs, replacing the more traditional “Stäge”), as Graf (2015) notes.

### **5.1.4 Linguistic identity and attitudes to language**

Until 2021, the state ministry of the German state Baden-Württemberg claimed on its website – somewhat tongue-in-cheek – “Wir können alles. Außer Hochdeutsch.” (We can do anything. Apart from Standard German).<sup>27</sup> The slogan, created as part of an advertising campaign in the late 1990s, plays on the assumption that the Standard German (here “Hochdeutsch”) of the southern German region is not “proper” Standard German and that southerners are only able to speak a flawed version of the “correct” northern standard. It also hints at the fact that speakers from the south are often thought to be speaking dialect when they are in fact simply using a southern variety of the standard (perhaps with some dialectal influences), and the only difference to the northern standard is in pronunciation. In marketing terms, the slogan was very successful, winning numerous awards, and it was also voted the most popular among comparable taglines of other German states (see Voeth, 2017). However, König (2013) argues

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<sup>27</sup> The tagline was used for many years and was live under <https://www.bw-jetzt.de/> until October 2021 when a new marketing campaign brought an update of Baden-Württemberg’s online presence. “Hochdeutsch” (High German) is used here in its non-technical sense to mean Standard German. As outlined above, in linguistics “High German” refers to the dialects affected by the High German Consonant Shift, broadly speaking those south of the Benrath line. Most native speakers are unaware of this latter technical sense of the term, and therefore the use of “Hochdeutsch” to mean Standard German is common.

that despite the humour and the subtle irony, the slogan cements the widespread (and unfounded) prejudice that the “real” Hochdeutsch is only found in the north.

The debate around this slogan is an excellent illustration of attitudes to linguistic variation in the German-speaking territory. It shows that the modern understanding of German as a pluricentric language with several equal national standards is not yet commonly accepted, outside academic circles in any case. Popular opinion still sees northern Germany as the place where the “best” Standard German is spoken, as Schmidlin (2011) finds.<sup>28</sup> Her study also indicates that there is a kind of hierarchy in this perception: within Germany, the ideal of Standard German is seen in the north, but when the perspective is widened, the standard in Germany as a whole is deemed better than the German in Austria and Switzerland. This notion of the German in Germany (in particular the north) as the “real” German and the German of Austria and Switzerland as less correct or even “merely” dialect appears to be very persistent in the minds of many German speakers (Schmidlin, 2013; Ammon *et al.*, 2016). Interestingly, this is also the case for German speakers in Switzerland, who are seen to have an ambivalent relationship with the national standard variety, often seeming to lack confidence when speaking it (Bickel and Hofer, 2011: 80; Ammon *et al.*, 2016: LI).

However, it would be wrong to assume that anyone speaking the standard with regionally influenced pronunciation, lexis or syntax would do so simply because they are unable to speak a more northern Standard German. The national form of the standard also functions as marker and reinforcer of (national) identity. For instance, as Bickel and Hofer (2013: 84) illustrate, it would be inconceivable for a newsreader on the Swiss national radio to speak with an accent that clearly places them in Germany. Referring to a debate around reactions to a German radio presenter who did just that, they show that some listeners reacted negatively, demanding that presenters should simply speak usual Standard German (“einfach ganz gewöhnliches Hochdeutsch sprechen”) (*ibid.*). The desired variety of “Hochdeutsch” in this case would of course be Swiss Standard German, implying that this is the “usual” language, the only standard acceptable in Switzerland.

Language also contributes to the construction of identity on a local level. Although local dialects are more and more being superseded by regional ones, they still serve as identity markers. A case in point of the degree to which dialect links to identity and a sense of belonging is Loester’s (2009) study of these aspects in a traditional Bavarian dialect. Her investigation reveals the complexity of the linguistic identity of speakers, torn between standard and dialect,

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<sup>28</sup> “Best Standard German” (bestes Hochdeutsch/Standarddeutsch) was used as a general term in Schmidlin’s (2011) study and was not further defined. There is therefore no indication how the participants perceived the category, e.g. whether they understood it to also include accents or forms containing other regional markers.

and demonstrates how dialect creates bonds between people and places. Moreover, the results illustrate the pride speakers take in their own vernacular while also recognising the ambivalence of some of their own attitudes to it (ibid.). This illustrates again how “place” in this context can be understood as a construct composed of the geographical perspective (“place as location”) and the sociocultural and ideological perspective (“place as meaning”). In Switzerland, the links between dialect use and identity construction can be seen as different from the situation in Germany or Austria. As mentioned above, the Swiss German (High Alemannic) dialects are used in the vast majority of spoken settings, and since they are the language of everyday interactions irrespective of social class, there is no stigma attached to their use. In many ways, German-speakers in Switzerland use dialect when speakers in Germany would use a form of colloquial language (Umgangssprache). It has been highlighted that German-speakers in Switzerland express different aspects of their cultural, regional and social identities through the use of dialects. Werlen (2005), for instance, points to the tensions between local dialects as an expression of regional identities and the national language (Swiss Standard German) as a means of expressing national identities. That this sense of belonging to and identification with a certain place can be very localised indeed is shown in Schiesser’s (2020) study of dialects in towns and villages of central Switzerland.

Outlining different regional forms of German, the discussion has highlighted aspects of “place as meaning”, thus foregrounding the social and ideological meanings regional varieties can construct. The regional dialects, in particular the Swiss German dialects used to implement the dialect-to-dialect approach in this thesis, can be seen as the “raw materials” which serve to create what Bakhtin terms the “image of a language” in the novel. Although literary dialect is an artistic construct rather than an “authentic” representation, this thesis follows Leech and Short’s (2007) argument that a degree of verisimilitude and credibility are necessary to achieve the illusion of a dialect in a literary text. Thus, gaining knowledge of the sociolinguistic “raw materials” of the target language is an inherent part of the translator-researcher workflow employed in this thesis. The discussion will now turn to the functions and aesthetic effects of these regional varieties in literary texts.

## 5.2 Regional variation in German literature

### 5.2.1 Historical perspective

Until the emergence of a written standard language in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century, authors habitually wrote in their own dialect. While the new standard written language was being established, dialects in German literature were suppressed, partially caused by the view that they represented spoken language as well as the discourse of the lower classes and the less educated (Bär, 2015: 135). As Hein (1983: 1627) observes, the increasing normative power of the New High German written language halted the inclusion of dialects in literary texts. Dialect was criticised as provincial or vulgar and as an undesirable deviation from the literary norm. This led many authors to strive for adherence to this norm, but also created opportunities for those seeking to rebel against the literary and societal rules of their time, as observed in dramatic works of the German Sturm und Drang period of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, which employ dialect for parodic effect (ibid.). The end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the Romantic period brought a renewed interest in dialects as the language characterising people and their customs (ibid.). Dialectal elements in literature served to idealise and paint an idyllic picture. As Hein (1983: 1627) states, in the Biedermeier and early Realism periods, interferences, connections and mixing of dialect and Standard German literary language increased. In this period, a desire to conserve dialect and an interest in the language of the people (“Sprache des Volkes”) is combined with a variety of different stylistic uses of dialect, for example to characterise a speaker according to their social standing or profession.

The inclusion of dialect in literary texts became more common during the periods of Realism and Naturalism in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. As Schröder (2005: 673) highlights, realist writers such as Theodor Fontane or Wilhelm Raabe employed dialect to achieve an “authentic” representation of contrasts and tensions in society that manifest themselves in the different ways of using language. Moreover, dialect functions as a vehicle of social criticism, for instance in the plays of naturalist dramatist Gerhart Hauptmann (e.g. *Die Weber*, 1892). Regional dialect was also used in prose. Thomas Mann’s family saga *Die Buddenbrooks* (1901), for example, intertwines Low German dialect and other non-standard varieties with literary standard language. According to Bär (2015: 142f.), the embedded dialect functions to highlight the joviality and good-naturedness of the speaker – the head of the Buddenbrook family – and display a closeness to the ordinary people and their way of speaking.

During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, dialect also assumed a more sinister literary function. Hein (1983: 1629) notes that the use of dialect to purport a problematic ideologisation of concepts such as “Volk” and “Heimat”, which had started during the Weimar Republic, intensified

under the Nazi regime. This misuse of dialect led to a negative image that persisted long after the war had ended. However, from the 1960s onwards, Hein (ibid.) observes a return to a more positive understanding of the function of dialect in modern literature, with authors and readers accepting that dialect can be employed in literary texts without the problematic ideological underpinnings it had in Nazi Germany.

### 5.2.2 Dialect in German novels of the 21<sup>st</sup> century

While the use of dialect has a long history in German literature, the investigation in this section concentrates on novels of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, as the context of contemporary dialect use is most relevant for this study. The examples discussed here go some way to confirm Hein's (1983) observation, showing that literary dialect has undergone a revival of sorts and is accepted again as an aesthetic tool. Dialect in dialogue passages, found in Mann's work as shown above, is also a feature of the work of contemporary novelists from Germany such as Dörte Hansen (*Mittagsstunde* (2018)), Judith Zander (*Dinge, die wir heute sagten* (2010)) or Patrick Hofmann (*Die letzte Sau* (2009)). In the first two cases, characters speak a Low German dialect, whereas Hofmann has his characters use a Saxon vernacular. Dialectal elements in direct speech or thought can also be found in contemporary Austrian prose, for instance in Robert Seethaler's *Der Trafikant* (2012) and Eva Menasse's *Dunkelblum* (2021). As Schröder (2005: 667) observes, dialect can also affect the narrative as a whole, either as dialect terms or phrases or as a more subtle dialectal underpinning of lexis and syntax. This is the case for instance for the two Austrian novels above. Although dialect is seen to have undergone a literary resurgence in Switzerland (Leuenberger *et al.*, 2014: 7), this appears to be focused on works written solely in Swiss German dialects, influenced by a flourishing spoken-word movement, most prominently perhaps by Bernese writers such as Pedro Lenz (b. 1965) and Guy Krneta (b. 1964).<sup>29</sup> The more traditional form of including dialect in character speech is rare in contemporary Swiss novels. However, Swiss authors seem particularly willing to experiment with literary hybrids, blending regional dialect and the national standard in the narrative voice, as the following two examples testify. They also present a useful contrast to the use of Swiss German dialects in the translation of *ABODAF* (see 6.1.).

As the title indicates, Silvia Tschui's historical novel *Jakobs Ross* (2014) – “Ross” being the Swiss German dialect term for “horse” – embeds a high density of dialect terms in the

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<sup>29</sup> Pedro Lenz' dialect novel *Der Goalie bin ig* (2010) was translated into Glaswegian Scots by Donal McLaughlin in 2013 entitled *Naw Much of a Talker*. It is a rare case of dialect-to-dialect translation of full-length prose fiction between German and English.

Swiss Standard German narrative. Together with cases of dialectal grammar, this creates an artificial mixture of the standard and non-standard varieties, an unusual, purely literary language that would not be heard in that way anywhere in Switzerland.

Ja, wenn das Elsie das Lied vom **Blüemlitaler** Bauern, **wo** vor Heimweh in der Fremde **verräblet**, nur wieder einmal in einem **Salong** singen und **fidlen** könnte, anstatt in diesem Finsterseer **Chuestall** nur das **Rösli** und das **Klärli** mit je einer **Hampflen** Heu in der **Schnörre** als Publikum zu haben! All den feinen Herren würd ob der traurigen Geschichte das Augenwasser nur so **heraussprützen**. Und am Schluss **täten alle klatschen**, und das Elsie wüsste, sie wär jetzt eine gemachte Frau. (p. 9, bold added)

[Yes, if only Elsie could sing and play the fiddle to the song about the farmer from Blüemlital, who perishes from homesickness in a foreign land, in a salon again, instead of having only Rösli and Klärli, each with a handful of hay in the mouth, as an audience in this cowshed in Finstersee! All these fine gentlemen would cry buckets [lit. the eye water/tears would spurt from them] because of the sad story. And at the end, everyone would applaud, and Elsie would know that she was a made woman now.]

This short passage with which the novel starts contains dialectal lexis, e.g. “verräblet” (perish), “Chuestall” (cowshed), “Hampflen” (handful) or “Schnörre” (mouth), and dialect-influenced syntax, e.g. the neuter definite article “das” before the name (“das Elsie”), “wo” instead of the standard relative pronoun “der” or “täten alle klatschen” instead of the standard “würden alle klatschen” (would all applaud). In the case of “heraussprützen” (to spurt from), the hybridisation is even apparent within one word, which would be “herausspritzen” in Standard German or then “useschrütze” in dialect. Other “hybrid terms” are the unusual spelling of “Salong”, alluding to the French pronunciation of “Salon” (drawing room) and the dialect-influenced “fidlen” (playing the fiddle). The Swiss Standard German term “Augenwasser” (lit. “eye water”) for “Tränen” (tears) also places the narrator firmly in Switzerland. The mixing of dialect and standard, of spoken and written, creates an almost humorous effect. It could be argued that the slightly comical nature of the language jars somewhat with the serious nature of the plot, the difficult life of a young farm maid in 19<sup>th</sup>-century rural Switzerland. Reviews of Tschui’s debut novel in the Swiss media were generally positive, praising for instance her skilful use of the “artificial dialectal language” and the linguistic inventiveness and poetic force (Arnet, 2014; Bucheli, 2014; Stephan, 2014). However, other reviewers were less convinced, criticising what they perceive as laboured attempts at humour through the artificial language (Pfister, 2014) and the lack of substance behind the synthetic idiom (Ebel, 2014; Caduff, 2015). Interestingly, one reviewer in Germany was not aware of the obviously constructed nature of Tschui’s literary language, simply describing the novel as written in “Swiss dialect” (hamlit.de).

The work of Grisons writer Arno Camenisch also relies on the creative interplay of dialect and standard language. In his works, whose polyphony is enhanced further by the

inclusion of Romansh, Swiss German dialect and regional Swiss terms interact with Standard German. The following extracts from *Sez Ner* (2014), a novel set on a remote farm in the Swiss mountains, serve to illustrate this:

Der Schweinehirt und der Kuhhirt tragen die verdorbenen Laibe durch die klare Nacht über den Platz durch den Stall bis hinter den Stall und werfen die Laibe in den **Güllenkasten**. (p. 5)

Er habe die Hände voll zu tun und könne nicht kommen und die Hirten seien **furt**. (p. 33)

Er glaube zwar nicht, dass dieser **Lappi** so weit komme wie der alte Graue, dafür sei er schon von Grund auf zu blöd. (p. 45)

Der Kuhhirt **springt** in der Morgenkälte im Nieselregen zur Nachtweide [...]. (p. 47, bold added)

[The swineherd and the cowherd carry the spoilt [whole] cheeses through the clear night across the yard through the barn to the back of the barn and through the [whole] cheeses in the liquid manure pit.

He had his hands full and could not come and the herdsmen had gone.

He did not believe that this idiot would make it as far as the old grey one, for that he was [for starters] simply too stupid.

The cowherd runs in the morning cold in the drizzly rain to the night pasture [...].]

Camenisch weaves dialectal terms (in bold) into the Swiss Standard German narrative voice: “Güllenkasten” instead of “Jauchegrube” (liquid manure pit), “furt” instead of “fort” (gone), the derogatory term “Lappi” (fool) and “springen” for “rennen” (run). The effect of this subtle incorporation of dialect is more akin to the German spoken in Switzerland than the language mix of Tschui’s novel. Camenisch’s narrative style captures the voices of the rural characters – a farmhand, a cowherd and a dairyman – without seeming artificial or comical. Compared to Tschui, Camenisch opts for a higher degree of verisimilitude rather than for the defamiliarising effect of blending dialect and standard syntactically as well as lexically. Dialect terms are embedded in a way that appears more natural in comparison, creating the impression of orality and capturing the jargon of the rural characters. It seems credible that the Standard German of these characters would be noticeably coloured by dialect, as they would likely not be used to speaking “Hochdeutsch”.

While in the above examples, dialectal elements appear on the morphosyntactic and lexical levels, phonetic features of dialects can also be present, indicated through spelling. Orthographical features to represent dialect in German fictional prose are discussed systematically by Berthele (2000). As the most prevalent of these features, he identifies sound or syllable loss, e.g. “aufm” for “auf dem” (on the) or “nich” for “nicht” (not), and clitisation (reducing two words into one as in “kommste” for “kommst du” (informal sing. “you come”),

which is often combined with sound loss as in the case of “fürs” for “für das” (for it). A further feature is termed modification which Berthele (ibid.: 595) defines as the orthographic representation of the phonetic processes of coarticulation and assimilation. The former term refers to the fact that phonemes are shaped by the sound of other phonemes near them and can overlap, and the latter describes the process of phonemes becoming similar to nearby sounds. Like clitisation, modification is often combined with sound loss, as can be observed with “hamse” for “haben Sie” (formal sing. “have you”) or “inner” for “in der” (in it). These orthographic features are employed generally to represent dialect (which may be regionally specific only in the broadest sense) and colloquial Standard German (Umgangssprache) of varying degrees of formality. They also signal spoken language and often characterise the speech of a person of lower social standing even if in spoken German most speakers use such “allegro forms”, short forms caused by fast speech. Writers attempting to represent a specific regional variety may also reflect its pronunciation, sometimes guided by spelling conventions for that particular dialect. This is illustrated in a brief scene from Eva Menasse’s novel *Dunkelblum* (2021). It is set in a fictional village with the same name in the Burgenland, an area in eastern Austria. A visitor from the city has a conversation with the receptionist when he is checking into the village’s small hotel:

Ist das auch ein schönes Zimmer, fragte er.

Sie zögerte, legte den ersten [Schlüssel] weg und gab ihm einen anderen: **Des scheenste, des wos i Ihna** geben kann.

Ich **werd** das genau überprüfen, sagte der Reisende [...]. (p. 25, bold added)

[Well, is this really a nice room, he asked.

She hesitated, put the first [key] away and gave him another one: The most beautiful [room] that which I can give you.

I will [make sure to] check that carefully, said the traveller [...].]

While the visitor’s speech is marked as colloquial through one instance of sound loss (“werd” instead of “werde” for “will”), the receptionist is shown to speak dialect. The dialect markers in the short passage are difficult to place exactly; they do not point to the specific dialect spoken in the area where the novel is set (Burgenland dialect, a Central Bavarian dialect). Instead, “des scheenste” (for “das schönste”, the most beautiful) and “i” (for “ich”, I) broadly indicate the pronunciation of the Austro-Bavarian dialect group. The double relative pronoun “des wo” (for “der”, which) is also found in Austro-Bavarian dialects generally (as well as other German dialects). The receptionist, a young girl, appears somewhat flustered, intimidated by the tongue-in-cheek remark of the guest, who is described as well dressed and urban. The fact that she falls back into her regional dialect instead of using Standard Austrian German – which she might otherwise do with guests who are not local – highlights the difference between the

two characters in terms of rural and urban. The dialect functions as a means of characterisation, emphasising the impression created of the girl as a somewhat unsophisticated country bumpkin in the eyes of the hotel guest. Compared to the language of *Jakobs Ross*, Menasse's representation of the Austrian dialect exhibits a higher degree of verisimilitude, attempting to create the illusion of authentic speech to place the speaker in a specific setting, both in terms of "place as location" and "place as meaning".

To sum up, although inclusion of dialect in German literature is still the exception rather than the rule, authors regularly incorporate regional and local vernaculars into otherwise Standard German works. Much of the dialect is found in direct speech; however, there are also more experimental approaches, as the two examples of Swiss writing testify. German dialects work to anchor the characters in their social, cultural and geographical setting, promote the impression of realism and spoken language and, in Tschui's case in particular, achieve what Schröder (2005: 677) terms the effect of defamiliarisation and de-automation.

The next section explores how German translators of Scottish literature exploit this linguistic and literary context. After a brief overview of how the heteroglossia of Scottish literary works, in particular that created by Scots dialects in Standard English texts, has been approached in German translation, the discussion concentrates on two Scottish novels which are comparable to *ABODAF*. The case studies investigate which of the stylistic means for dialect representation and translation strategies outlined so far are employed in translation and what effects they produce.

## 5.3 Heteroglot Scottish fiction in German translation

### 5.3.1 Overview and common approaches

Research into how German translators have approached the heteroglossia of contemporary Scottish literature is relatively sparse.<sup>30</sup> Most studies conducted so far focus on the translation of 20<sup>th</sup>-century poetry (see e.g. Krause, 2006; Galbraith, 2008; 2013; Hagemann, 2014). Hagemann's (2014) investigation presents a useful overview, examining *Beredter Norden* (Galbraith and Ransford, 2011), an extensive anthology of Scottish verse in German translation

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<sup>30</sup> This section focuses on translations from the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries, as these are most relevant for this thesis. However, it should be noted that there is a significant body of scholarly work on earlier Scottish writers addressing linguistic variation in German translation, in particular Robert Burns and Walter Scott. Investigations of Burns' poetry in German translation are especially interesting for this project, as they frequently address dialect-to-dialect strategies and hybrid forms; see e.g. Kupper (1979), Pender (2006) and the contributions of Bodammer, Mergenthal and Reitermeier in Pittock (2014).

and exploring the different strategies translators employed. She finds that the majority of Standard English poems in the volume were translated into Standard German, while most of the poems in Scots were rendered in a regional German or Austrian dialect (ibid.: 64). While some were translated into a recognisable regional dialect, others employ an artificial variety or a hybrid form of standard and dialect (ibid.: 65f.).

Translations of Scottish prose present a different picture. Hesse (2010) investigates 20<sup>th</sup>-century translations of Robert Louis Stevenson's gothic tales. She concludes that even though the German translators seem to be conscious of the need to retain linguistic variation, they appear reluctant to use regional dialects and instead resort to rendering the Scots in the source text with colloquial German (ibid.). As there appear to be no systematic studies dedicated to the translation of contemporary Scottish prose into German (with the exception of Zagratzki (2017) discussed below), I carried out a brief investigation of translations of Scottish novels with a high degree of heteroglossia. All of them contain Central Belt Scots spoken mainly by urban working-class characters. The analysis indicates that some translators chose almost full standardisation, as in the case of Anne Donovan's *Being Emily* (2008/2008). However, in most of the cases the translators opted for non-regionally specific colloquial German with varying degrees of slang and markers of orality. This was found for instance in Jeff Torrington's *Swing Hammer Swing* (1992/1995), Iain Banks' *The Crow Road* (1992/1996), James Kelman's *How Late it Was How Late* (1994/2004), Irvine Welsh's *Glue* (2001/2002) and Douglas Stuart's *Shuggie Bain* (2020/2021).<sup>31</sup>

In summary, while in the translation of Scottish verse a degree of experimentation, in particular using target-language dialects, can be observed, translators of prose seem to avoid dialect-to-dialect strategies. Therefore, the tendency to tone down heteroglossia and not to retain regional aspects of dialect that was observed for the Scottish novel in general (see 3.3) can also be seen in German translations. To investigate these aspects further, the next section explores two cases of regional dialect in German translation in detail.

### **5.3.2 Two case studies: tales of quines and loons in German**

*The Nessman* (Alasdair Campbell, 2000) and *Sunset Song* (Lewis Grassie Gibbon, 1932) employ NE Scots in different ways and to different effects. However, the German translators of the two novels faced a comparable task. Investigating the translation strategies employed for the

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<sup>31</sup> Of the novels mentioned here, the translation of the Scots dialogue in *Shuggie Bain* is furthest from Standard German. It also includes occasional elements of the Rhineland regiolect and Berlin dialect, so does contain some broad regional markers.

Doric sheds further light on the theoretical angles addressed in Chapter 2 and highlights some of the challenges for the Scottish English/Scots-to-German language pair. The discussion also takes into account contextual factors and, in the case of *Sunset Song*, briefly considers the reception of the German retranslation.

### **5.3.2.1 Case 1: *The Nessman***

Alasdair Campbell's coming-of-age novel *The Nessman* (2000) traces the story of Colin, a boy from the Isle of Lewis, from growing up in the village of Ness to secondary school in Stornoway and then university life in Aberdeen. Community ties, island way of life, leaving and coming home are key themes of the text. The narrator's voice is colloquial Scottish English, containing some of the lexical and syntactic features of Hebridean English, and there are recurring instances of Gaelic words and phrases. Doric is prominent in the last part of the novel when the protagonist moves to the east coast. In formal terms, it appears in the speech of the east-coast characters and occasionally colours the narrator's voice, the latter usually in a humorous function.

When Colin moves to Aberdeen to start his university degree, it is his first time living away from the island. A sense of being in a different world, away from the familiar people and places of Lewis, is compounded by the linguistic differences. The Doric, which many Aberdonians speak, is foreign to him, enhancing a sense of alienation. This is apparent in the following passage:

'Kings, is't?' the conductor asked.  
[Colin] held out a threepenny bit and nodded.  
'Mind an' get aff at the richt stop this time.' The conductor, who was not a young man, tore a ticket from his machine, handed it to him, and then said to the woman in the seat opposite, but loudly enough for the rest of the lower deck to hear: 'He's an affa loon, this, for falling asleep on public transport.' (p. 241)

The conductor embarrasses Colin in front of everyone, remembering that he has seen him falling asleep on a previous occasion. The linguistic contrast highlights the difference between the locals (the conductor and everyone else on the bus) and Colin (the incomer). Doric speech is marked through pronunciation (e.g. "aff" for "off", "richt" for "right") and lexical items (e.g. the frequently used "loon" for "lad", "young man"). "Affa" is Scots for "awful", but in this context the whole phrase should be read as "He's terrible for falling asleep on the bus, this one", so "affa loon" expresses a kind of affectionate (mock) irritation.

The extent and consequences of the linguistic differences are most obvious in the following scene. It also highlights again the impression of a protagonist who does not quite fit

in. In a letter to his brother, Colin retells an interaction with Bob and Meg Bruce, the couple he lives with:

Bruce is Bob (known as Aal Bob) and Margaret (Meg). We communicate. Me: Well ... I'm off now. Meg: Fessen the pints o' yir sheen, loon. Me: Pardon? Meg: Yir pints is lowsed. Me: What? Aal Bob (*at window*): It's fair abeen. Me (*wary*): Aye ... Enter Watty, husband of Maud, son-in-law of Meg and Aal Bob, they live upstairs, a mechanical genius. Watty (*holding aloft right hand dripping with blood, thumb sticking out at obtuse angle*): Far's the aye-a-deen? Aal Bob: Michty, begod, Watty min, fit's adee? Watty: I wis knypin' on at Fordie, ken, an' gied it a richt yark [...] Me (*exiting discreetly*): Well ... cheerie the now ... (*tripping over shoelace in the doorway*) Jesus! (p. 184, italics in the original)

The strongly marked Scots has a humorous function, illustrating that the assertion “we communicate” is in fact an ironic remark; Colin cannot make sense of the Doric, hence not understanding the warning about untied shoelaces. Formally, Doric is marked by replicating pronunciation (e.g. “aal” for “old”, “fessen” for “fasten and “yir” for “your” as well as the interrogative pronouns “fit” for “what” and “far” for “where”), regional lexis (e.g. “pints” for “shoelaces”, “sheen” for “shoes” or “knypin” for “working away”) and idiomatic phrases (e.g. “It's fair abeen” for “It's nice outside” or “fit's adee?” for “What's up?”). The use of the diminutive “Fordie” when referring to the car is another grammatical marker of NE Scots. Together these features create a strong impression of difference, of a dialect that would be hard to understand for Hebridean Colin, therefore showing the irony in his earlier statement “We communicate”.

*The Nessman* was translated into German by Swiss translator Lorenz Oehler. It was published by Austrian publisher Folio in 2018 entitled *Der Junge aus Ness* (lit. The boy from Ness). In the German translation, the often colloquial English of the Hebridean characters and the narrator is rendered with colloquial German, which, with the exception of a small number of terms, is not regionally specific. While the inclusion of Doric presents a clear contrast to the voice of the narrator in the English text, this distinction fades in German. The dialect of Scots is rendered with the same colloquial German (Umgangssprache) that is not geographically marked. This flattens the contrast between the boy from the Western Isles and the people from the east coast that the source text highlights through language.

In Oehler's translation, Colin's exchange with the bus conductor contains no regional markers:

„King's, stimmt's“, fragt der Kontrolleur.  
Colin hielt ihm eine Dreipennymünze hin und nickte.  
„Und steig heut an der richtigen Haltestelle aus.“ Der nicht mehr ganz junge  
Kontrolleur riss an seinem Kasten einen Fahrschein ab, gab ihn Colin und sagte dann

zur Frau auf dem Sitz gegenüber gerade so laut, dass es auch der Rest des Unterdecks hörte: „Is doch ’n Affe, der, pennt immer ein im Bus.“ (p. 263)

[‘King’s, isn’t it? the conductor asked.

Colin held out a threepenny coin to him and nodded.

‘And get off at the right stop today.’ The conductor, not really that young anymore, tore a ticket from his box, handed it to Colin and then said to the woman in the seat opposite just loud enough for the rest of the lower deck to hear it as well: ‘Really is a fool this one, always zonks out on the bus.‘]

The colloquial German is marked through sound loss (e.g. “’n” instead of “ein” for the indefinite article or “is” for “ist”) and informal lexis (e.g. “pennt” for “falls asleep”). There is also a change in meaning: “Affe” (lit. “monkey”, here “fool” or “idiot”) is more derogatory than the Doric term “loon” which is often used affectionately. Therefore, the conductor comes across as fairly unpleasant. After all, we might argue that falling asleep on the bus and missing a stop is not a crime that merits the label “idiot”. The tone in German is more accusatory, and what could be a jocular remark becomes a little insulting. This illustrates the difficulty of recognising and rendering nuances of meaning implied in dialect terms, thus highlighting the importance of dialect knowledge.

In the translation of the second passage, the toning down of the distinction between the two voices is even more apparent:

Die Bruces sind Bob (alle rufen ihn Aal Bob) und Margaret (Meg). Wir kommunizieren. Ich: Nun ... ich bin dann mal weg. Meg: Mach ma die Latschn richtich zu, Lümmel. Ich: Dilaatschn? Meg: Riemen sind auf. Ich: Was? Aal Bob (*am Fenster*): Schön draußen. Ich (*auf der Hut*): Jou ... Auftritt Watty, Schwiegersohn von Meg und Aal Bob und Mann von Maud, die beiden wohnen oben, ein echtes Technikgenie. Watty (*rechte Hand in der Höh, das Blut tropft, Daumen stebt in stumpfem Winkel ab*): Wo isn das Iod? Aal Bob: Sapperlot, wasn los? Watty: Na, hab halt am Ford rumgeschraubt, bisschen gezerrt. [...] Ich (*eleganter Abgang*): Na ... bis denne ... (*stolpere in der Tür über meine Schnürsenkel*) Jesses! (p. 201, italics in the original)

[The Bruces are Bob (everyone calls him Aal Bob) and Margaret (Meg). We communicate. Me: Well ... I’m off now. Meg: Tie yer shoes [derog.] properly, rascal [here: boy]. Me: Teyersshoes? Meg: Laces are open. Me: What? Aal Bob (*at the window*): Nice outside. Me (*on my guard*): Yep ... Enter Watty, son-in-law of Meg and Aal Bob and husband of Maud, the two live upstairs, a real technical genius. Watty (*holding aloft right hand, the blood is dripping, thumb sticking out at obtuse angle*): Where’s th’ iodine? Aal Bob: Good heavens, what’s happening? Watty: Well, was just tinkering with the Ford, yanked a little [...] Me (*discrete exit*): Well ... later ... (*tripping over my shoelaces in the doorway*). Good heavens!]

In comparison to the source text, the speech of the Aberdonian characters in this anecdote is less strongly marked. Sound or syllable loss (e.g. “Latschn” instead of “Latschen” for “shoes”) and clitisation plus sound loss (e.g. “wasn los” instead of “was ist denn los” for “what’s up” or “wo

isn” instead of “wo ist denn” for “where is”) are used to indicate informal speech. Although there are colloquial terms (e.g. the interjection “Sapperlot”, or “Lümmel” for “rascal” or just “boy”), and “Jesses” (good heavens) is indicative of southern Germany, the passage contains no dialectal lexis. On the whole, while the colloquial German used to render Doric is relatively informal, it is not regionally or dialectally marked, and the distinction to the speech of the narrator is less prominent. The comical effect achieved in the source text, due to the differences between the two varieties being so great that they cause comprehension difficulties, is lost. It seems implausible that Colin would not understand Meg’s warning about his shoelaces, as “Latschn” albeit informal, and slightly derogatory, is a common German term for worn old shoes. His question “Dilaatschn?” (sound loss and cliticisation of “Die Latschen”) which simply repeats what he hears is therefore unlikely. The same applies to the term “Riemen” (leather shoelaces) or the set phrase “Schön draußen” (nice outside), as it is implausible that Colin would not know their meaning. The German text creates the impression that Colin does not understand the warnings because he is not paying attention rather than because he is not familiar with Doric. Therefore, the passage loses an important function: highlighting linguistic and cultural differences and a sense of foreignness. Much of the irony in “Wir kommunizieren” (We communicate) is not retained.

Overall, although the colloquialisation strategy in *Der Junge aus Ness* produces natural spoken dialogues and narration, the distinctive voices of characters from different places are flattened. In the source text, language serves to highlight the connections of characters to place, both in the sense of “place as meaning” and “place as location”. In Colin’s case, the dominant impression is a sense of alienation he feels when living in Aberdeen. This effect is lessened in the target text. Since the NE Scots only has a key role in the last part of the novel, and the focus generally is much more on the Hebridean English and Gaelic voices, representing Doric in a distinctive way may not have been a priority for the translator. In the second work explored in this section, the case is very different, as the Scots permeates the entire narrative.

### **5.3.2.2 Case 2: *Sunset Song***

Lewis Grassie Gibbon’s novel *Sunset Song* (1932), the first part of the trilogy *A Scots Quair*, played an important part in the relaunch of the vernacular tradition in Scottish literature. The novel is set around the early 1900s in The Mearns, a rural area in the north-east of Scotland, south of Aberdeenshire. The narrative traces the life of a young woman, Chris Guthrie, who is torn between her roots and love for the land and her desire to continue her education.

As in *The Nessman*, issues of identity and belonging are expressed through language. In Grassic Gibbon's ([1934]/1980: 104) own words, he attempted "to mould the English language into the rhythms and cadences of Scots spoken speech" by introducing "such minimum number of words from Braid Scots as that remodelling requires". The narrative basis of his style is therefore close to Scottish Standard English, but is peppered with NE Scots terms and phrases. The main aim of this linguistic experimentation is not to replicate a recognisable, regionally specific form of Scots, but rather to provide an impression of the voice of this rural community. For the reader, this should provide "an approximation of the experience of *bearing* a version of Scots", an impression of how the people of the area might speak (Campbell, 1990: 272, italics in the original). It is also important to note the ideological function of the regional dialect. By incorporating Doric in the narrative, Grassic Gibbon attempted to highlight the poetic force of Scots, emphasising its validity as a literary medium and thereby challenging the literary norms of the time.

As part of the "moulding" of language, Grassic Gibbon also incorporated Scots words by disguising them through the use of an English word of similar orthography. This technique can be observed in the following passage:

Up here the hills were brave with the beauty and heat of [the wind], but the hayfield was all a crackling dryness and in the potato park beyond the biggings the shaws drooped red and rusty already. (p. 35)

The adjective "brave" can be read as replacing the Scots term "braw", meaning "fine" or "splendid". Although "brave" was used in English in this sense until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, it would have been obsolete by the time Grassic Gibbon was writing (OED). While readers may not be familiar with this usage of "brave", the meaning can be gleaned from the context, as it recurs throughout the novel. The passage also contains three further Scots words ("park" for a field, "biggings" for the (out)buildings and "shaws" for the stalks and leaves of potato plants), indicating the density of regional lexis.<sup>32</sup>

The following extract, describing events in the village of Kinraddie during a heatwave, serves to illustrate Grassic Gibbon's style further:

[...] but not a flick of the greeve weather had come over the hills, the roads you walked down to Kinraddie smithy or up to the Denburn were fair blistering in the heat, thick with dust so that the motor-cars went shooming through them like kettles under steam. And serve them right, they'd little care for anybody, the dirt that rode in motors, folk said; and one of them had nearly run over wee Wat Strachan a fortnight before and had skirled to a stop right bang in front of Peesie's Knapp, Wat had yowled like a cat

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<sup>32</sup> All three terms were also used in Scottish English, but were mostly restricted to dialect by the time Grassic Gibbon was writing (see OED; DSL).

with a jobe under its tail and Chae had gone striding out and taken the motorist man by the shoulder. And *What the hell do you think you're up to?* Chae had asked. [...]

Maybe that [hot weather] was the reason for half the short tempers over the Howe. You could go never a road but farmer billies were leaning over the gates, glowering at the weather, and road-menders, poor stocks, chapping away at their hillocks [...]  
(p. 35f., italics in the original)

Again, the passage contains a high density of Scots (some specific to the north-east) and Scottish English words and expressions, for instance “not a flick” (not a glimmer), “fair” (completely, quite), “dirt” (a troublesome person), “skirled” (shrieked), “jobe” (thorn), “farmer billies” (farm workers) and “stocks” (fellows, chaps).<sup>33</sup> The extract is a good illustration of Grassic Gibbon’s linguistic inventiveness: according to the *Dictionaries of the Scots Language* (DSL), both “greeve” and “shooming” are only found in his trilogy *A Scots Quair*. The former becomes accessible due to its similarity with “grave”, and perhaps “grief”, alluding to the negative connotation, in this case inclement weather. The latter does not require explanation thanks to its onomatopoeic quality evoking a gushing or humming sound. This passage demonstrates how Grassic Gibbon weaves Scots words into the narrative together with subtle neologisms, ensuring that their meaning becomes clear from the context without too much effort on the part of the reader.

The first German translation of *Sunset Song* was published in the German Democratic Republic in 1970. It was entitled *Der lange Weg durchs Ginstermoor* (lit. The long way through the gorse moor), appearing under the author’s real name James Leslie Mitchell after a lengthy, obstacle-ridden process, compounded by the sheer difficulty of the translation task (see Erich, 2019). Translator Hans Petersen attempted to capture the oral character of the novel by using a non-regionally specific German. Broadly speaking, it is a form of “Umgangssprache” that is relatively close to the standard but contains some informal terms and markers of orality. While this approach captures some of the impression of spoken language, the multi-layered effect and playfulness of Grassic Gibbon’s style as well as the ties to the place – in the sense of “place as location” and “place as meaning” – are weakened.

*Der lange Weg durchs Ginstermoor* was well received by critics and readers in the GDR, but never re-published following the reunification of Germany (Zagratzki, 2017; Erich, 2019). Several decades later, Berlin-based publisher Guggolz decided to commission a new translation of Grassic Gibbon’s seminal novel. The task of retranslating *Sunset Song* went to Esther Kinsky, an award-winning literary translator and writer of prose and poetry. As will become apparent from the extracts discussed below, Kinsky’s approach to the “Grassic Gibbon style” is much

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<sup>33</sup> Some of these terms were/are also used in northern English dialects (see OED).

more unconventional than the translation from 1970. Most importantly for the discussion here, she makes use of a regional variety of the target language, i.e. the dialect-to-dialect strategy.

Perhaps also owing to her prominent status, Kinsky was given the opportunity to explain her approach to the translation in a preface. Much of her preface is devoted to the challenge of rendering the poetic force of what she calls “Doric Scots”. The main difficulty, Kinsky (2018: 8) explains, was finding an “equivalent” idiom which presented a strong enough contrast to Standard German without seeming “exotic”. After some experimentation with different dialects, she decided to rely on vocabulary from Low German, weaving dialect words into the narrative to create a tone that replicated that of the characters from the east coast of Scotland. It becomes clear that Kinsky’s perspective on the dialectal elements centres on their poetic and creative force; her goal is replicating the speech “melody” which “carries” the text (ibid). Kinsky’s version of the passage discussed above serves to illustrate her approach:

[...] doch kein Fitzel vom rechten Wetter war über die Hügel gekommen, die Straßen runter zur Schmiede in Kinraddie oder hoch bis zum Denburn glühten ordentlich in der Hitze unter einer dicken Schicht Staub, sodass die Automobile hindurchwummerten wie Kessel unter Dampf. Und das geschah ihnen ganz recht, die scherten sich doch um nichts und an keinem, dieses Pack, das in den Automobilen fuhr, sagten die Leute, kaum vierzehn Tage war’s her, da hatte einer beinah den kleinen Wat Strachan überfahren und war schliddernd zum Halten gequitscht, eben genau vor Peesie’s Knapp. Wat hatte geheult wie eine Katze mit einem Stachel unterm Schwanz, und Chae war mit ein paar Sätzen draußen und hatte den Fahrer an der Schulter gepackt. *Was fällt dir ein, zum Deivel?*, hatte Chae ihn gefragt. [...]

Mag sein, dass das auch der Grund war für ein gut Teil der gretzigen Laune im ganzen Howe. An jedem Weg, den du gingst, standen die Bauernburschen an die Gatter gelehnt und starrten finster ins Wetter, und Straßenarbeiter, die armen Kerle, polkten sich müde an ihren Buckeln [...]. (p. 50f.)

[...] but not a shred of the right weather had come over the hills, the roads down to the smithy in Kinraddie or up to the Denburn were smouldering fairly in the heat under a thick layer of dust so that the motorcars boomed/hummed through like boilers/kettles under steam. And it served them right too, they didn’t care one bit for anything and anybody, these lowlifes, who were riding in the motorcars, people said, it was barely two weeks ago, when one of them had almost run over little Wat Strachan and had skiddingly screeched to a halt, just in front of Peesie’s Knapp. Wat had howled like a cat with a thorn under the tail, and Chae was outside in a few strides und had grabbed the driver by the shoulder. *What the devil do you think you’re up to?*, Chae had asked him. [...]

Quite possible that this was also the reason for a large part of the grumpy moods across the entire Howe. Along every path you walked stood the farmer lads leaning on the gates and staring gloomily at the weather, and the road workers, the poor chaps, poked around their humps/little hills until they got tired [...].

In the source text, this passage contains a large number of Scots words; however, in Kinsky's translation the density of dialectal terms is reduced. There are two regionally marked terms: "Deiwel" in the expression "zum Deiwel" (for "what the hell...", lit. "devil") and "polkten" (for "chapping away", lit. "fiddled", "poked around").<sup>34</sup> Both place the speaker in northern Germany, but are colloquial German rather than a specific Low German dialect. Other terms and phrases are archaic rather than regional, for instance "gretzig" (for "short tempers", lit. "irritable"). "Fitzel" (for "flick", lit. "a tiny bit"), "runter" (down towards) and "Buckel" (for "hillock", lit. "hump") are colloquial, but not regionally specific. In terms of spelling, there are cases of sound loss and clitisation ("beinah" for "beinahe", "unterm" for "unter dem" and "war's" for "war es"), all common in colloquial German; otherwise, there are no dialectal spelling markers. Like Grassie Gibbon, Kinsky frequently employs neologisms or creative adaptations of idiomatic phrases, often onomatopoeic. Here, "hindurchwummern" (for "shooming", also a neologism, lit. "booming through") and "schliddernd zum Halten gequietscht" (for "skirled to a stop", lit. "skiddingly screeched to a halt") can be counted as such ad-hoc creations.

This passage also brings to the fore that Kinsky, despite highlighting the use of Low German dialect in the preface, only includes a comparatively small amount of dialectal lexis. The section the above extract is taken from (pp. 50-59) reveals a number of further Low German dialect terms, for instance "Mäken" (girl), "slierig" (sneaking), "birsen" (to run), "Pladder" (rain), "Schiet" (shit, nonsense) or "Deern" (girl, woman). Kinsky also includes other markers of northern German such as the recurring emphasiser "man" (just, only) or the shortening of the pronominal adverb "dafür" to "für" in phrases such as "Da sorg du nur für." (You will see to that). However, despite these regional markers, the density of dialectal lexis is considerably lower than in the source text. The example therefore illustrates that dialect-to-dialect is only one of the translation strategies Kinsky uses to replicate Grassie Gibbon's style. The strategy works in conjunction with neologisms, play with sound, inventive re-appropriations of words and archaic terms as well as general markers of colloquial language. Kinsky's translation also frequently combines dialect-to-dialect with compensation. She uses both compensation in kind, for instance when replacing a Doric term with a non-regionally specific neologism or archaic term, and compensation in place, for instance when she standardises one instance of a dialect term, but then uses a Low German lexical item when the source text has a Standard English term.

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<sup>34</sup> The comments on the regional use of the terms in this and the next paragraph are based on Buurman (1962), DWDS (2023), NDR (2022) and Plattdüütskbüro (2023).

In conclusion, the dialect-to-dialect strategy is clearly at the core of Kinsky's approach. She uses the vocabulary of a range of Low German dialects, and some markers of northern colloquial German, to recreate the layered language of the source text, combining it with linguistic experimentation, such as reshaping and inventing words, and archaisms. The resulting style evokes rural speech, even if it is not modelled strictly on a specific recognisable dialect. Kinsky may also have deemed this approach suitable because it formally replicates the use of NE Scots in the source text: the dialect markers are predominantly lexical, and the English/Scots distinction is not used directly to highlight the difference between the voices of characters (as it is for instance in the passage from *The Nessman* above).

As noted above, theorists and practitioners of translation have generally been critical towards the dialect-to-dialect approach due to the perceived danger of introducing stereotypes or of evoking the "wrong" place. A brief discussion of reviews of *Lied vom Abendrot* will examine whether reviewers argued similarly in their assessments of Kinsky's translation.

All reviews investigated contained specific comments on the novel's language.<sup>35</sup> Several also comment on the translator's task, highlighting the linguistic challenges *Sunset Song* posed. This is interesting because references to the translation process are rare in reviews of literature translated into German (where even the fact that a novel is a translation is often not acknowledged). Perhaps inspired by the translator's preface, the difficulties of rendering Grassic Gibbon's style in the German language are discussed. Several reviews also examine the novel from a reader's perspective, commenting on the experience of reading the multi-layered language of *Lied vom Abendrot*. "The deeper we enter into this fascinating world, the more natural the vocabulary becomes", Studer (2018) notes for instance, highlighting that words that seem foreign at first are soon easily understood. The vast majority of reviews praise Kinsky's use of language, in particular how she retains the rhythms of the original and recreates the evocative and inventive power of Grassic Gibbon's style. Through her use of dialect words and her creative approach to language Kinsky evokes a "regional [rural] language", as Hirsch (2018) argues. Similarly, Staude (2018) describes the language as seeming "to come directly from the mouths of Scottish farmers". This last comment would certainly tie in with how Grassic Gibbon's style in *Sunset Song* has been understood and with Kinsky's own aims for her translation. For Studer (2018), the translation with its onomatopoeia and coinages even adds to the target language by displaying "a sensuality that the German language normally rather lacks".<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Based on an analysis of the following corpus of reviews in April 2020: newspaper reviews (4), literature blogs or bookshop recommendations (7), and reader comments (3). See appendix for details.

<sup>36</sup> Translations in this and the next paragraph are mine.

Although Kinsky's translation received widespread praise, some critics had a less favourable attitude towards her approach. Kunisch (2018), for instance, finds fault with what he calls "odd crossbreeds" in the use of different dialects. While he deems it plausible to let an Irish character speak Bavarian dialect, he criticises the use of the Bavarian dialect modal particle "fei" for Scots-speaking characters (whose speech has Low German influence in the rest of the novel) (ibid.). His criticism seems to imply that different source language dialects should be mapped consistently onto distinct target language varieties to avoid confusion. Two reviews of *Lied vom Abendrot* take issue with the use of the Low German dialect more generally. Ibing (2018) argues that the use of some very typical Low German terms, not least the greeting "Moin", destroys the illusion of the Scottish setting for the reader and has an unwanted comical effect. The same criticism is raised by Hartmann (2018) who claims that the fact that Scottish characters greet each other with "Moin Moin" and use other Low German dialect words "throw readers totally off course" and make it "difficult to take this text seriously".

In summary, the majority of reviews judge Kinsky's handling of the linguistic challenges of the source text favourably. The number of pieces taking issue with the use of a target language dialect is surprisingly small; only one of the fourteen reviews investigated seems to disagree with the dialect-to-dialect approach in principle. While others raise some minor points of criticism, the tenor is generally positive towards the use of a target language dialect. This presents a contradiction to the more critical views found in translation studies.

The investigation of two cases of Doric translated into German has highlighted some of the language-pair specific challenges when translating literary dialect. Although the Scots dialect fulfils different narrative, stylistic and ideological functions in the two novels, the German translators were faced with similar constraints and opportunities. While in *The Nessman*, Doric is found only in the latter part of the novel and almost exclusively in direct speech, the Scots permeates narrative and character speech in *Sunset Song*, appearing as embedded words and phrases rather than entire sentences. However, in both cases, translators had to find ways of rendering the contrast between standard and dialect, of creating idiomatic speech and of evoking a sense of the setting. Whereas Petersen and Oehler broadly speaking opted for a standardisation and colloquialisation approach, respectively, Kinsky relies on dialect-to-dialect translation. In a break with the norm, she uses a regional dialect in the target language that, in combination with other micro-level strategies, enables her to recreate much of the heteroglossia of the source text. Although she does not mention this in her preface, this approach is in keeping with the ideological underpinning of the use of dialect as a literary medium in the source text. Like Grassie Gibbon, she demonstrates that regional dialect is a valid literary language with the same poetic force as the standard variety. While Oehler's

rendering of regional dialect with a non-geographically specific colloquial form is in line with other German translations of Scottish works (see 5.3.1), Kinsky's approach is a clear departure from this tradition. The reviews of *Lied vom Abendrot* discussed above also indicate that readers can react favourably to such less conventional approaches in a case such as this where the use of target language dialect is well-justified, precise and consistent.

## 5.4 Conclusion

This chapter is concerned with the sociolinguistic context of the German translation and the linguistic and literary tools available to apply dialect-to-dialect translation. Within the translator-researcher workflow, it provides linguistic background for the translation approach and directly informs its development and implementation. Moreover, it demonstrates that literary dialect – even if still the exception rather than the rule – is used in contemporary German literature, fulfilling a range of aesthetic and ideological functions. Some works, in particular the two Swiss novels introduced above, exploit the potential of heteroglossia to a particularly high degree. The critical success of the novels introduced in 5.2 also demonstrates that regional dialects can be regarded as a fully-fledged literary language.

Although Kinsky's way of implementing the dialect-to-dialect strategy is formally different from the use of dialect in my translation of *ABODAF*, it nevertheless provides a useful blueprint. It is a prime example of the kind of “experimental approach” that Federici (2011a) calls for. Firstly, it demonstrates that the strategy can serve to retain a text's heteroglossia. In the Bakhtinian sense, this means that Kinsky's approach not only retains the stratification of language, but that these elements of heteroglossia also interact dialogically and retain their “ideological saturation”. Moreover, and crucially for this project, her translation demonstrates that dialect-to-dialect can be approached with a certain playfulness, with an eye on creative experimentation, rather than focusing primarily on potential “risks” such as the often-cited mismatch between language and setting. Although my translation employs regional varieties in different ways, it is done in the same spirit of open-minded creative engagement with literary dialect.

## 6. TRANSLATING *A BOOK OF DEATH AND FISH* INTO GERMAN

This chapter outlines how the translation approach developed in the iterative translator-researcher workflow can be tailored to *ABODAF*. Following on from the theoretical points made in Chapter 2, it then discusses the suggested micro-level strategies and illustrates their implementation with examples from the German translation. The target audience of the German translation is defined broadly as readers in Germany, Austria and Switzerland. This is a heterogeneous group, both in terms of familiarity with dialect – in general and for the specific dialects used – and ideological stance to (literary) dialect. The discussion in this chapter will therefore take into account certain contemporary perceptions and show how the diverse readership affects the choice of target-language variety.

### 6.1 Translating heteroglossia: concretising the theoretical model

Before detailing the translation approach, it is helpful to summarise the translation goals that emerged from the discussion in the previous chapters. Most importantly, the translation aims to retain the text's complex heteroglossia, addressing the different varieties ("linguistic stratification"), the links between them ("dialogic relation") and their ideological perspectives ("ideological saturation"). Secondly, it seeks to convey the literary functions of heteroglossia in German: the impression of orality, the distinctiveness of the voices of the different characters, the poetic quality and the impression of a certain "otherness". Thirdly, focusing on the dialect-to-dialect strategy in particular, the translation seeks to present the reader with a coherent German version of literary dialect, based on the principles of verisimilitude and credibility. This is in line with Stephen's aim of creating the illusion of an authentic Hebridean voice (see 3.2.1). The translation also takes care to avoid introducing the impression of deficiency, as this kind of stigma is not evoked by the source text. A fourth goal is to retain the links to the Scottish settings, enabling readers to immerse themselves in these cultural and geographical places. Lastly, the translation seeks to replicate the experience of reading a narrative that is gradually revealed as the pieces of Peter's story fall into place.

To achieve these goals, the different contributors to the novel's heteroglossia require individual treatment in translation, using a range of strategies. Table 1 summarises the results of the analysis in Chapter 4, showing how the "speech types" occur in the different formal units, the "stylistic unities", and how they could be described in sociolinguistic terms. The

right-hand column indicates the main translation strategies for each of the “speech types”. It is important to note that the translation approach proposed here should be seen as a guide rather than as hard and fast rules. Translation is a creative practice, and in this practice, the choices of particular solutions in individual cases are governed by many variables. Therefore, while the table presents a direction of travel, it does not mean to imply mechanical replacement of one variety with another. In the case of some words and phrases, the optimal translation solution was decided ad-hoc based on specific stylistic, linguistic and contextual considerations. Examples for such ad-hoc choices are offered in the next section.

Bakhtin’s categories		(Sociolinguistic) Varieties	Translation strategies
Speech types	Stylistic unities		
social dialect [linguistic dialect]	oral everyday narration ( <i>skaz</i> ) stylistically individualized speech of characters dialogized transmission of another’s word incorporated genres	HebE [SSE] idiolect	Colloquialisation Features of oral discourse
social dialect [linguistic dialect]	individual terms (part of <i>skaz</i> )	Stornoway vernacular	Preservation (with orthographic adjustment)
linguistic dialect	stylistically individualized speech of characters incorporated genres	Dialects of Scots: Doric, Shetlandic	Dialect-to-dialect
national language	individual terms (part of <i>skaz</i> )	Gaelic	Preservation (without orthographic adjustment)
professional jargons	oral everyday narration ( <i>skaz</i> ) incorporated genres stylistically individualized speech of characters	Jargon	Replicate based on register variables
hybrid constructions	oral everyday narration ( <i>skaz</i> ) dialogized transmission of another’s word	Dialect of Scots: Doric HebE [SSE]	Combination of colloquialisation and dialect- to-dialect
external linguistic features	oral everyday narration ( <i>skaz</i> ) dialogized transmission of another’s word	HebE [SSE] Dialect of Scots: Doric Gaelic	Functional approach

Table 1. Contributors to heteroglossia and main translation strategies

My translation solution for the narrator’s “social dialect”, containing markers of HebE and idiolectal features, can be defined as “colloquialisation” in Berezowski’s (1997) sense, because specific regional markers of the narrator’s speech (some Scottish lexis as well as HebE grammar and lexis) are not retained. I relied on general features of colloquial language (“Umgangssprache”) and markers of oral discourse. As the narrator’s voice is close to SSE in many places, I opted for “standardnahe Umgangssprache”, which is closer to the standard than to dialect, replicating features such as short and elliptic sentences, non-standard syntax and informal vocabulary. Orthographic features for representing spoken language were used sparingly to avoid any impression of lower social standing. Thus, I only used common forms of sound loss and cliticisation such as “drüber” (for “darüber”, over), “durchs” (for “durch das”, through it) or “war’s” (for “war es”) which are not marked for deficiency. As noted above, it is very difficult (or even impossible) to write in a form of German that is entirely geographically neutral. Since I am most familiar with the colloquial German in southern Germany, the narrator’s voice tends towards these southern forms when no neutral form is available. The decision not to use (colloquial) Swiss Standard German for the narrative voice is based on two considerations: firstly, it would not have achieved sufficient contrast to the Swiss German dialects used to render the Scots; the effect of “otherness” created by the St. Gallen and Bernese dialects would have been lessened. Secondly, some of the Swiss German Standard terms, in particular when it comes to culturally specific concepts such as governance or institutions, may not be readily understandable for parts of the target audience, which includes readers from all German-speaking countries. The German (Germany) terms for these concepts are generally perceived as more geographically neutral and are accessible for Swiss readers too.

I chose a different approach when Stornoway vernacular terms appear as individual lexical elements as part of the “stylistic unity” *skaz* (“oral everyday narration”). In these cases, the dialectal term was treated akin to a culture-specific item and preserved through lexical borrowing. This “direct import of lexical features” (Ramos Pinto, 2009) is known in the literature on translating culture-specific items as “preservation” (Davies, 2003) and can occur with or without orthographic adjustment, e.g. capitalisation of nouns in the case of German. I took the same preservation approach for the Gaelic terms, which are part of the narrator’s *skaz*. These strategies compensate to a degree for the loss of aspects of “place as location” caused by the colloquialisation strategy.

As a key part of the translation approach, dialect-to-dialect is used to render the Scots (classified as “linguistic dialects”). The German variety employed for the instances of Doric is the regional dialect of the St. Gallen area in north-eastern Switzerland (“St. Galler Dialekt”). The primary reason for choosing it over another German dialect is a practical one. As a native

speaker, I have the necessary knowledge of the dialect, its tone and connotations. This enables me to represent it in a coherent and credible way, supported by the extensive background research into the target language dialects (see 5.1. and 5.2). To distinguish the voices of the Doric-speaking characters from those of the Shetlanders in the translation, I made use of a different Swiss German dialect, “Berndeutsch”. This High Alemannic dialect of the Bern region in the west of Switzerland is markedly different from eastern varieties of High Alemannic such as the St. Gallen dialect. Although I am not a speaker of the Bernese dialect, I am familiar with it through contact with dialect speakers as well as reading and hearing it in the media. Moreover, Berndeutsch has a flourishing dialect literature, and more recently also spoken-word culture, and is well documented, making the necessary research possible.<sup>37</sup> In addition to these practical reasons, the Swiss German dialects as a predominantly spoken variety also capture the oral qualities of Scots. In Switzerland, the Alemannic dialects are not stigmatised; they are simply the means of spoken interaction in most everyday situations. Therefore, like Doric and Shetlandic in *ABODAF*, they do not automatically indicate lower social class or lack of education, thus demonstrating difference rather than deficiency. The rural connotations are a further reason for selecting the Bernese and St. Gallen dialects. Although many speakers of these dialects live in cities or larger towns, in my experience Swiss dialect speakers are often perceived as coming from the countryside by other German speakers who are not familiar with the dialects. Lastly, the difference in grammar, lexis and pronunciation between the two Swiss dialects, i.e. between eastern and western High Alemannic, is comparable to the difference between NE Scots and Insular Scots.

While the Alemannic dialects of Switzerland have no set spelling rules, different writing systems have been suggested (see Elmiger, 2019: 50ff.). Swiss authors generally develop their own methods for writing dialect rather than relying strictly on existing conventions, as Caduff (2015) notes, either tending towards the orthographic rules for Standard German or writing according to sound. To ensure consistent representation, the spelling of Swiss German dialects in this thesis is based on the principles of the writing system by Dieth and Schmid-Cadalbert (1986). It leans towards writing according to sound, but is still close enough to the spelling of Standard German to be accessible for German-speaking readers who are not familiar with Swiss varieties.

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<sup>37</sup> The labels “Berndeutsch” and “St. Galler Dialekt” follow the convention of naming Swiss German dialects according to Switzerland’s political subdivisions, the cantons. These general names (also termed “Kantonsdialekte” (Elmiger, 2019: 37)) should be understood as umbrella terms, as they cover a range of linguistically diverse local dialects within each canton. In this thesis, the “Berndeutsch” used is broadly that spoken in and around the city of Bern, whereas the St. Gallen dialect is that of the region between St. Gallen and St. Margrethen in the canton’s north-east.

To retain the crucial distinction between the HebE and the Scots voices in the translation, dialect-to-dialect was only used for the latter. There are two reasons for this: firstly, as already outlined, HebE functions as a social variety in the novel, expressing belonging to “place” as a social construct. The focus is on the colloquial tone and the confident voice of the storyteller. This can be achieved by using non-regionally specific colloquial German. Part of the connection to the Hebrides as a geographical place, which the narrator creates through his use of language, can be replicated by preserving some individual Stornoway-specific terms, as noted above. Secondly, I reserved the Swiss dialects for the Scots varieties to ensure overall consistency. Using another set of regional German dialects to represent the HebE could have led to the unsystematic mixing of language varieties that Bakhtin (1975/1981: 366) criticises, rather than achieving a consistent and convincing representation of heteroglossia. “Mixing” of target language varieties only happens in the case of the “hybrid constructions”. To recreate these, dialect-to-dialect (for the Scots elements) is combined with colloquialisation (for the HebE/SSE elements).

To replicate the “professional jargons” in German, the concept of register, developed as part of Systemic Functional Linguistics, has proved worthwhile, as it is designed to describe functional variation in language. In the most general terms, Halliday (1985: 38) defines register as “a variety of language [which is] corresponding to a variety of situation”, describing variation according to use in a specific context and with a specific communicative purpose. Thus, register can be understood broadly, as “features of speech or writing characteristic of a particular type of linguistic activity or a particular group when engaging in it” (Matthews, 2014). Three register variables are seen to determine the use of language in a particular situational context: field (topic, type of social activity, degree of technicality), tenor (role relationship between the interactants, e.g. power dynamics and level of familiarity) and mode (amount of feedback and role of language, e.g. oral vs. written interactions) (see Eggins, 2004). Considering these variables for each instance of jargon in the source text helps recreate the language of the different professional groups. The variables can serve as a guide to determine how a character would speak (or write) in German in the same situation, i.e. if the register variables were the same.

The “external linguistic features” are somewhat of a special case because they straddle the formal and the stylistic categories (see 4.3). Translating these metalinguistic commentaries as contributors to heteroglossia relies on a functional approach. The main function of each “external linguistic feature” which was established through analysis is replicated in the target text as closely as possible. For many of the “external linguistic features” recreating is only possible because the other contributors to heteroglossia are retained in translation.

## 6.2 Translation strategies in practice: examples from *A Book of Death and Fish*

### 6.2.1 “Linguistic dialects”

Two excerpts serve to illustrate the dialect-to-dialect strategy for regional varieties of Scots. In this first passage, the narrator visits his elderly uncle Andra (NE Scots for “Andrew”) in Fraserburgh where he finds him in a bar instead of at home. Andra, a Doric speaker, attempts to convince Peter that his being in the pub for large parts of the day is no cause for concern:

[1] Then he leaned over to tell me again, he **didna** drink **at hame**. A thing he **jist didna dae**. But they had a wee club **goin** in the morning. That was his usual. The taxi took him **hame** in time for his dinner. The **hame-help** had it ready for him. He **wisna dain** bad.

[2] ‘**Nae baud**,’ I said.

‘You’ve a **smatterin o** the lingo,’ the barmaid said.

Did she know my cousin **Willum**? Fishing skipper.

[3] ‘**Willum that** lost his boy? He just lost **hert**. Finally gave up and took the **boatie** across to Denmark. **Ten year aul, the boatie. Jist** eligible for **the** decommissioning. Young **Andra**, he **wis** a fine enough **loon fan** he **wis** young.’ (p. 434 [162])

The passage illustrates different formal ways of incorporating the NE Scots. First this happens with a number of dialect markers in what Bakhtin terms “dialogized transmission of another’s word”, in this case (free) indirect discourse (in [1]). The narrator’s HebE voice is coloured by the older man’s Doric, as he relays his uncle’s words. In the rest of the passage, [2] and [3], Doric appears in the direct speech of the narrator and the barmaid, in the latter case partly mediated by the narrator, partly as free direct speech. The dialect markers (in bold) are predominantly phonological (“hame”, “jist”, “hert”), but also lexical (“loon” for “boy” or the diminutive “boatie”) and morphosyntactic (“that” instead of “who” and “ten year” instead of “ten years [old]”).

In part [2], the narrator imitates his uncle’s Doric (“nae baud” for “not bad”). By using “the lingo” – convincingly, as the barmaid’s comment reveals – he asserts his belonging to a place through language. He occupies a space between two cultures and languages, a fact that he is clearly conscious of. Peter wants to make it obvious that he is no outsider to Fraserburgh, signalled through his use of Doric, which he does not normally speak. This illustrates that “place”, in this case a fishing town on the north-east coast of Scotland, is not just a physical geographical location, but has cultural, social and ideological meaning. It is also made explicit through the way the barmaid talks to Peter about the specifics of fishing. She refers to the decommissioning scheme for fishing trawlers that was in force at the time without explaining

it. She assumes, assured by the narrator's use of "the lingo", that he will be familiar with the concerns of the Fraserburgh fishermen.

Although the density of dialect markers in [1] and [3] is similar, there is a functional difference between the two: Part [1] is a "hybrid construction" in Bakhtinian terms, a place where two different "speech types" and their ideological perspectives are so closely linked that they cannot be neatly separated. In part [3], however, the barmaid's Doric appears as free direct speech. Based on what we know about her – born and bred in Fraserburgh, working-class background – the barmaid would likely not be speaking the kind of hybrid form that is indicated, but a more marked Scots. She very probably would be saying "jist" for "just" and "tae" instead of "to", and therefore her speech would be more strongly marked as Doric than what is represented on the page. In the translation, I chose to highlight this functional difference. Part [1] replicates the "hybrid construction", creating a blended form where the uncle's dialect shines through in the narrator's voice. In part [3] the barmaid's speech is represented fully in St. Gallen dialect, as indicated by the markers in bold:

[1] Dann beugte er sich zu mir herüber, um mir nochmal zu versichern, dass **er dähei nie öppis trinki**. Mache er **eifach nööd**. Aber man treffe sich **do am Morge**. So macht er das immer. Ein Taxi bringt ihn dann rechtzeitig heim für **de Zmittag**. **De Pfllegdiensch** habe das Essen schon parat. Er **hegs nöd schlächt**.

[2] „**Nöd schlächt**“, wiederholte ich.

„**Bi dir ghöört mer au e Spuur vom Dialekt**“, stellte die Barfrau fest.

Ob sie meinen Cousin **Willum** kannte? Kapitän auf einem Fischkutter.

[3] „**De Willum, wo sin Bueb verloore hät? Er hät eifach nüme möge**. Schliesslech hät er **ufgee und isch mit em Boot uf Dänemark übere**. **Zääjöörig isch er gsi, de Kutter**. **Gad alt gnuag für d'Abwrackprämie**. **De jung Andra isch kein schlächte Kerli gsii, woner no jung gsii isch**.“ (p. 85)

[1] Then he leaned over to me to tell me again that he **never drank anything at home**. **Just didn't** do that. But they always met here **in the morning**. That's what he always did. The taxi would take him home in time for **the lunch**. **The mobile nursing service would** have the meal ready for him already. He **wasn't doing badly**.

[2] 'Not badly,' I repeated.

'**I can hear a trace of the dialect [with you]**,' the barmaid observed.

Did she know my cousin **Willum**? Skipper on a fishing trawler.

[3] 'The **Willum who lost his boy? He just lost heart**. **Finally he gave up and went across to Denmark with the boat**. **Ten years old it was, the fishing boat**. **Just old enough for the scrapping allowance**. **Young Andra wasn't a bad lad when he was still young**.'

While Scots and SSE can be regarded as two poles of a continuum along which speakers move, this is not the case for Swiss German. In Switzerland, the situation is a diglossic one with a clearer functional separation between dialect and standard (mainly spoken vs. written, but not

exclusively). It is therefore unlikely that a Swiss speaker would use a mixed form such as the one represented in parts [1] and [3] of the source text extract. Precisely this blending of dialect features and Swiss Standard German is what gives the narrative voice in Silvia Tschui's *Jakobs Ross* a synthetic quality, resulting in an almost comical effect (see 5.2.2). However, in line with the translation goals for *ABODAF*, such a defamiliarising effect is not what is intended. As a writer of the realist tradition, Stephen attempts to create the illusion of an authentic portrayal of the Scottish voices, of “the voices you hear and the voices you know” (Kaye, 2015). My translation attempts to replicate this, thus avoiding any mixing of languages that could be perceived as overly artificial. For a German-speaking reader, it will be easier to give in to the illusion of an authentic dialect if the barmaid speaks in a way that is closer to a recognisable dialect, thus providing a higher degree of verisimilitude, as defined by Leech and Short (2007). That said, the case is different for the “hybrid construction” in part [1], as it is more obviously a literary tool. I recreated this mixed form in the translation, even if in reality it would sound unidiomatic if the codes were blended in this way. While the two “linguistic consciousnesses” underlying the blending of “speech types” are not apparent in Tschui's novel and the hybridisation seems to be first and foremost a literary tool, the hybridity in part [1] of the above extract is motivated by the two distinct voices of Peter and Andra. The “hybrid construction” expresses the connection that Peter feels with Fraserburgh and his uncle through language.

Furthermore, the dialect-to-dialect strategy makes it possible to retain the metalinguistic commentary in part [2] of this passage. The comment highlights linguistic difference and works to establish the connection to place, clearly important for the narrator's identity. Through use of a target language dialect phrase (“nöd schlächt”, lit. “not badly”) the impression that the narrator identifies with Fraserburgh as a place even though he does not live there, is retained. If we only considered place in the geographical sense, we might argue that the direct connection which typical Doric markers such as “fan” (when) or the diminutive “boatie” create with the north-east of Scotland are lost in the target text. However, if place is seen as a social construct to which speakers orient in different ways, as argued before, the link to place can be re-established through a target language dialect. Geographical aspects of place can be retained by other means, such as keeping cultural references and jargon carrying cultural meanings. The reference to the scrapping allowance was thus deliberately left unexplained, as in the source text, because the non-explanation gives important clues on how the barmaid and the narrator orient to the place.

These considerations on using a Swiss German dialect also apply to the second example. The following passage containing the variety of Scots spoken in Shetland serves to illustrate how I preserved the distinction between two different varieties of Scots in translation.

Peter visits his university friend Robbie in Lerwick. On a windy day, the pair head out in a small motorboat to check Robbie's lobster pots:

There was a couple of old guys yarning by the boats, leaning against the archetypal harbour rail.

**'No yous** are not going out today, boys, not far anyhow?'

Robbie told them he'd just get out to lift a few pots. He'd to recover them before the sea got up.

'Well if **du lads** are set on going, it'll have to be **da sooth** way.'

Robbie grinned. His look said, *Aye, northabout as planned.* (p. 158 [149], italics in original, bold added)

Here, Shetland dialect occurs in the direct speech of two elderly locals. There is a clear attempt to represent features distinctive of Shetlandic, evidenced by the use of "da" for "the", "sooth" for "south" and "du" for the informal "you" (see 3.1.3.3). Even if a reader is not able to place these features as belonging to Shetland Scots, the markers shown are sufficiently different from NE Scots and HebE to create the impression of "otherness". The dialect markers work as a literary tool, emphasising the differences between the two characters and their cultural background, which is a theme in this chapter of the novel.<sup>38</sup> The German translation reads as follows:

Zwei alte Knaben standen bei den Booten und hielten ein Schwätzchen, gegen diese Geländer gelehnt, die es an jedem Hafen zu geben scheint.

**„Dir weit aber hüt nid öppe usefaare, Giele, uf jede Fau nid wiit?“**

Robbie meinte, er würde nur rausfahren, um ein paar Hummerkörbe einzuholen. Er müsse sie holen, bevor die See zu schwer würde.

**„We dir würklech use weit, de mässter gäge Süüde häbe.“**

Robbie grinste. Sein Blick sagte: ja, nordwärts, wie geplant. (p. 71)

[Two old boys were standing by the boats and had a natter, leaning against these rails which seem to exist in every harbour.

**'You won't want to go out today though, boys, not far in any case?'**

Robbie said he'd just get out to lift a few lobster pots. He'd to recover them before the sea got too heavy.

**'If you really want [to go] out, you'll have to head/veer south.'**

Robbie grinned. His look said: yes, northabout as planned.]

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<sup>38</sup> Although some typical markers of Shetlandic appear in this passage, the literary representation of the dialect is not always in line with grammatical and orthographical conventions (see e.g. Graham, [1984]/2009). For instance, the pronoun "yous" (you, pl.) common in colloquial Scottish English is not found in traditional Shetlandic, and the specific use of "du" in the direct address "du lads" (you boys) is unusual. A more idiomatic representation of the Shetlandic in these two lines of dialogue would be "No, you are **no** going **oot dada, no far anyhoo?**" ... "Well if you boys are set on going, it'll have to be **da sooth wye.**" However, despite these "inaccuracies", the crucial point is that Shetlandic is distinguishable from Doric in the novel, and it should therefore be treated as a separate regional variety.

I would like to thank Bruce Eunson for his comments on the Shetland dialect in *ABODAF* from the perspective of a native speaker. His suggestions for a more idiomatic representation of the Scots have informed this section.

As mentioned above, the Bernese dialect used to represent the Shetland voice is markedly different from the St. Gallen dialect. Some of the Bernese words will feel fairly foreign to a non-Swiss reader, even in comparison to the St. Gallen dialect, for instance “dir”, “weit”, and “Giele” for Standard German “ihr” (you, informal pl.), “wollt” (want) and “Jungs” (boys), respectively. To improve readability, I opted for words that are cognate with the standard in some cases, even when a “purer” dialect option would have been available. For instance, “uf jede Fau” (anyhow, in any case) is closer to the Standard German “auf jeden Fall” than the more natural sounding (to a Swiss ear) adverb “emel” expressing the same meaning. Overall, the markers of Bernese dialect create a similar impression as the Shetlandic “du lads” and “da sooth way” in the source text. They serve to retain the aesthetic quality of the Scots dialect, the impression of orality and its function as a means of characterisation.

### 6.2.2 “Social dialects” and “external linguistic features”

In the following extract (see also discussion in 4.2.1), Peter relays an episode from his childhood, a conversation between his father and his school friend Kenny whose own father and brother are fishermen.

And how was the fishing?

He said this, only to hear Kenny F say, ‘*Mì-chàilear.*’ It wasn’t just the word but the tone and the shake of the head with it. The other stock answer was ‘I suppose we’ll just about cover the diesel’. I think that meant a good week.

[...]

Funny thing was, he said, they [the fishermen] always say the weather’s *Mì-chàilear*. If it’s any better you don’t want to risk breaking it by saying so and if it’s worse, that’s a thing you don’t spell out.

What sort of night is it? This time *Mì-chàilear* meant something damn near a hurricane. Same word, different tone of voice.

I knew the word, but didn’t know it was real Gaelic. Thought it was maybe like a stroll down the hoil for a fry of mogs and skeds. Our own words, found nowhere else, except for a pocket or two in Drumchapel or Christchurch, New Zealand. This means going down by the harbour to scrounge mackerel and herring.

Gellie is another of our words. This one sounded Gaelic to me. It could be any fire, like your own living-room one, when the shovel of coal was flashed up by a good draught. Or at Kenny Fs when a bucket of *caorain* was thrown on. We’d all gathered these up. Most people in and around Westview still cut peats and everyone helped to bring them home. Us kids gathered up the broken and small bits and got goodies while the grown-ups were at their feast, the work done. (p. 12f. [97f.], italics in the original)

The passage displays many of the characteristics of the narrator’s social dialect with features of HebE such as Stornoway vernacular terms (hoil, mogs, skeds, gellie) and the inclusion of Gaelic words highlighted in italics (*mì-chàilear*, *caorain*). It also shows some of the typical

markers of *skaz*, narrative discourse creating an illusion of orality that is characteristic for the narrator's voice (e.g. short or elliptic sentences, the generic "you", colloquialisms such as "damn near" or "us kids"). The metalinguistic remarks, "external linguistic features" in Bakhtin's classification, are particularly salient here. They highlight the importance linguistic diversity has for Peter when he introduces local terms and explains their meaning. With phrases such as "our own words, found nowhere else" and "another of our words", he emphasises the importance of language as a marker of local identity and belonging. As in the example with Doric above, sense of belonging is tied to a place that has geographical, social and cultural meaning.

This extract also reveals the different degrees of detail in the inline glosses. For "mogs", "skeds" and "hoil" an explicit translation is given and marked as such: "This means going down the harbour to scrounge mackerel and herring." For "gellie", possibly derived from the Gaelic "gealbhan" for "fire", the explanation ("It could be any fire...") is marginally less explicit, but still fairly obvious. For the two Gaelic terms, the explanations are more subtle. In the case of "mì-chàilear", all we learn is that it must be a weather-related term used by fishermen. The meaning of "caorain" becomes apparent from the context. For readers who are not familiar with the fact that peat is used as heating fuel on the island, this is clarified in the following sentences which also imply that the Gaelic term must refer to smaller or broken blocks of peat. As is the case throughout *ABODAF*, much remains unexplained, and it is left to the reader to fill in the gaps. My translation recreates these features of the narrator's social dialect:

Und wie lief die Fischerei?

Worauf Kenny F antwortete: „*Mì-chàilear*“. Es war nicht nur das Wort allein, auch der Tonfall und das Kopfschütteln dazu. Die andere Standardantwort war: „Wird wohl grad mal für den Diesel reichen“. Ich glaube, das hieß, es war eine gute Woche gewesen.

[...]

Das Seltsame dabei sei, dass sie das Wetter immer als *mì-chàilear* beschrieben, meinte er. Ist es besser, willst du keinen Umschwung heraufbeschwören, indem du es laut aussprichst, und wenn es schlechter ist, dann redet man sowieso auf keinen Fall drüber.

Was für eine Nacht ist es denn? Diesmal bedeutete *mì-chàilear* etwas, das einem Orkan verdammt nah kam. Dasselbe Wort, anderer Tonfall.

Ich kannte das Wort, wusste aber nicht, dass es richtiges Gälisch war. Dachte, es sei vielleicht ein wenig wie ein Spaziergang zum Hoil runter für eine Portion Mogs und Skeds. Unsere eigenen Wörter, man fand sie nirgendwo sonst, außer vielleicht an einigen Orten in Drumchapel, Glasgow, oder Christchurch, Neuseeland. Das heißt, man schlendert hinunter zum Hafen, um sich ein paar Makrelen und Heringe zu erbetteln.

Gellie ist auch eins unserer Wörter. Für mich hörte es sich gälisch an. Es konnte irgendein Feuer sein, wie das im Wohnzimmer, wenn eine Schaufel Kohlen in einem

kräftigen Luftzug Flammen schlug. Oder bei Kenny F zu Hause, wenn man einen Eimer *caorain* drauf warf. Wir hatten diese aufgesammelt. Die meisten Leute in und um Westview stachen noch Torf und alle halfen mit, ihn nach Hause zu schaffen. Wir Kinder lasen diese zerfallenen Blöcke und kleinen Stücke auf und bekamen Naschzeug, während die Erwachsenen bei ihrem Festmahl saßen, nach getaner Arbeit. (p. 12f)

[And how was the fishing going?

To which Kenny F replied: ‘*mì-chàilear*.’ It wasn’t just the word alone but also the tone and the headshake with it. The other standard answer was: ‘It’ll [supposedly] just about cover the diesel’. I think that meant it had been a good week.

[...]

The odd thing with it was that they always described the weather as *mì-chàilear*, he said. If it’s any better, you don’t want to conjure up a break in the weather by saying it aloud and if it’s worse, then you don’t talk about it anyway [by no means].

[So,] What sort of night is it? This time *mì-chàilear* meant something that came damn close to a hurricane. Same word, different tone of voice.

I knew the word, but didn’t know that it was real Gaelic. Thought it was maybe a bit like a stroll down the hoil for a portion of mogs and skeds. Our own words, you found them nowhere else, except perhaps in some places in Drumchapel, Glasgow, or Christchurch, New Zealand. This means you stroll down to the harbour to scrounge a few mackerel and herring.

Gellie is also one of our words. For me it sounded Gaelic. It could be any fire, like that in the living room when the shovel of coal was flashed up in a good draught. Or at Kenny Fs when you threw a bucket of *caorain* on. We had gathered these up. Most people in and around Westview still cut peat and everyone helped to bring it home. Us kids gathered up the broken blocks and small bits and got goodies while the grown-ups sat at their feast, the work done.]

The casual tone of the “oral everyday narration” (*skasz*) is replicated in German using elliptic sentences (“Dachte, es sei vielleicht ...”), colloquial terms such as “runter” (down) or “verdammt nah” (damn near) as well as modal particles (e.g. “denn” in “Was für eine Nacht ist es denn?”), all contributing to the chatty tone. As it is not always possible to retain the markers of orality in the same place, I used the compensation technique, introducing markers of colloquial language in a different place in the target text.

The markers for HebE in the narrative voice in this passage are predominantly lexical, mostly Stornoway-specific terms. These lexical items are treated akin to cultural references. “Hoil”, “Mogs” and “Skeds” as well as “Gellie” are retained as borrowings in the translation. As in the source text, the reader will be able to deduce their meaning from the context. I took the same approach for the two Gaelic terms, which stand out in the German text as they do in the source text (assuming that an English-speaking reader would not have Gaelic either). In doing so, the “external linguistic features” can be retained and play their important role in highlighting and making heteroglossia explicit. They function to clarify the meaning and usage of Stornoway vernacular words, assert local identity and evoke place (both “place as location”

and “place as meaning”). A closer look at the term “*mì-chàilear*” illustrates the complex decisions involved: Although a translation is not given in the source text, it is apparent from the context that “*mì-chàilear*” (distasteful, unpleasant) refers to varying degrees of inclement weather. In this case, Peter’s explanation suggests that the use of the term is complex, with its meaning varying from mildly unpleasant weather to severe storms, depending on the tone of voice. The text creates the impression that non-Gaelic speakers like Peter would be familiar with this usage of the term; perhaps he has learnt it from his father who speaks the language. Even Peter’s daughter Anna, who does not have any Gaelic either, knows the word, albeit not with the correct spelling, as is apparent when she writes to her father about her studies: “... the degree will be mediocre. Not *mikalor* or however you write it – not miserable like a puddle of drizzle – just medium.” (p. 509). “*Mì-chàilear*” can therefore also be described as a case of “professional jargon”, understood by someone like Peter who is an experienced sailor and coastguard member. Including this jargon in the translation recreates the impression that as an old seadog he would be conversant with this kind of lingo, something that he is clearly keen to demonstrate, showing that he belongs to the wider social group of local seafarers.<sup>39</sup>

From this passage, it is also evident that Peter has at best rudimentary Gaelic. Although he recognises some terms as Gaelic, he is less certain with others. Lexical borrowing of the Gaelic term into German achieves a comparable effect. German readers will in all likelihood not understand Gaelic, and therefore the process of meaning-making will be similar to that of the English-speaking reader. Overall, the translation recreates the reading experience of having to deduce the meaning of unfamiliar terms from the context or the mostly subtle inline explanations. The only addition here is in the case of the reference to Drumchapel, which a Scottish reader would be able to place in Glasgow, whereas I added this information for the benefit of the German reader. While I use preservation with adaptation of spelling (capital letters) for the Stornoway vernacular terms, the Gaelic terms are borrowed without adaptation and retained in italics. The italicisation of Gaelic in the source text was an editorial decision. According to the editorial note at the start of the novel, it serves to “avoid any confusion for readers unfamiliar with the language by what might appear to be the indefinite article (in English) in common Gaelic phrases such as *a ghràidh* [vocative of “*gràdh*”, meaning “my dear”]”. Although this specific issue does not arise in German, the typographical distinction

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<sup>39</sup> “*Mì-chàilear*” and the similar sounding “*mì-chàileil*” are both listed in Gaelic dictionaries (Am Faclair Beag, [learngaelic.net](http://learngaelic.net)) as meaning “not to one’s taste”, “uneasy”. I would like to thank John Macaulay for pointing out that the narrator could also be referring to the more common “*mì-chàirdeal*” (unfriendly), which is also used to describe weather, and that Anna’s use of “*mikalor*” may also be derived from the phonetic spelling of “*math gu leòr*” (good enough). It is not impossible of course that the narrator does not remember the word correctly when he is thinking back to his childhood.

of Gaelic words gives them more weight, helping to make the reader aware that both English and Gaelic are spoken in the Hebrides. As in the source text, the italics heighten the impression that the narrator experiences Gaelic as a language that is in many ways foreign to him.

### 6.2.3 “Hybrid constructions”

The discussion of the passage below (see also 4.2.2) illustrates the strategies used to render “hybrid constructions”, demonstrating further how dialect-to-dialect translation is combined with colloquialisation. In this case, the “hybrid construction” is realised through speech types which have been previously defined as a “social dialect” (the narrator’s HebE) and a “linguistic dialect” (the mother’s NE Scots, highlighted in bold). Peter explains how a recent stroke affected his mother’s speech:

[1] Her speech never really recovered from the big stroke. In The Broch they say **a body has ‘taen a shock’**. [...]

[2] But you could tune into her new voice. She’d a memory for turns of phrase. I offered to get her to the kirk one week, if she wanted. We might need **a shottie o a chair**.

**‘A hope it’s ane wi wheels you’re speakin aboot and no ane wi electricity tae fry me,’** she said.

[3] The kirk means the Church of Scotland. Not the one on Kenneth Street. Definitely not the one on Scotland Street. Nor the Bayhead division, nor the new one, out Sandwick way. And of course the new Catholic Church, also on Scotland Street isn’t in the equation. Hope you’ve got all that. (p. 358 [153])

Translation:

[1] Ihre Sprache erholte sich nie so recht vom heftigen Schlaganfall. In der Broch sagt man, **öpper hät „e Schlägli ka“**. [...]

[2] Aber ihre neue Stimme wurde einem bald vertraut. Ihre Gabe für Sprachwitz behielt sie. Ich bot ihr an, sie einmal zur Kirk zu bringen, wenn sie wollte. Wir könnten uns **villicht en Stuel uusleene**.

**„I hoff, du meinsch eine mit Räder und nöd en elektrische zum mi bröötle“**, sagte sie.

[3] Mit der Kirk ist die Church of Scotland gemeint. Nicht die in der Kenneth Street. Ganz sicher nicht die in der Scotland Street. Auch nicht der Ableger in Bayhead oder die neue, draußen Richtung Sandwick. Und natürlich kommt auch die neue katholische Kirche, ebenfalls in der Scotland Street, nicht in Frage. Hoffe, du konntest dir das alles merken. (p. 75)

[[1] Her language never really recovered from the heavy stroke. In the Broch one says **someone has had “a little shock”**. [...]

[2] But her new voice soon became familiar. Her gift for linguistic humour she retained. I offered to take her to the kirk one day, if she wanted. We could **perhaps borrow a chair**.

**‘I hope you mean one with wheels and not an electric one to fry me’**, she said.

[3] The kirk means the Church of Scotland. Not the one on Kenneth Street. And definitely not the one on Scotland Street. Neither the offshoot in Bayhead or the new one, out towards Sandwick. And of course the new Catholic church, also on Scotland Street, is out of the question too. Hope you got all that.]

In the sentence “In The Broch they say a body has ‘taen a shock’.” in part [1], two “speech types” and, more importantly, two underlying “consciousnesses” interact. Although it is difficult to divide the linguistic markers neatly (as for all of Bakhtin’s “hybrid constructions”), the use of the target language dialect makes it possible to recreate the hybrid effect. In the German translation, the transition from the narrator’s colloquial German voice to Mary’s dialect takes place mid-sentence, replicating the pattern of the source text. This strategy also allows for the metalinguistic comment explaining the meaning of the regional term for stroke to be retained. The metaphor of a stroke as a physical shock is very similar in the St. Gallen dialect, where a stroke is conceptualised as a “Schlägli” (the diminutive of “Schlag” for a “blow” or “knock”). Although technically “Schlägli” refers to the milder form of strokes known as transient ischaemic attacks, this distinction is not generally observed in everyday usage. It is therefore likely that a speaker who is not medically trained would use the term. Preserving the dialect makes sure that Mary’s voice shines through, despite the stroke having had a detrimental effect on her speech.

The ambiguity inherent in the “hybrid construction” in [2] is also retained. In “We might need a shottie o a chair”, it remains unclear whether Mary or her son suggested the use of a wheelchair. If it is the latter, it is not evident whether he would normally speak Doric to his mother or is simply using it in this sentence, perhaps to make her feel at ease in what must be an unsettling situation. The ambiguity is only resolved by the sentence following it. The translation recreates the heteroglot pattern. The fact that Mary has a “memory for turns of phrase” is also illustrated in part [2]. Again, by representing her Scots in direct speech, Mary is given a strong voice; she may be infirm and reliant on help, but she has not lost her mental sharpness and sense of humour. The dialect-to-dialect strategy helps retain the distinctive dialectal voice as a crucial tool of characterisation.

Part [3] starts out with an “external linguistic feature”, the explanation of the SSE and Scots word “kirk”. The narrator then launches into a detailed discussion of the churches in the town. Most readers of the English text will likely not be aware of the specific congregations he refers to. They most probably would not know that the churches on Scotland Street and Kenneth Street are places of worship of the Free Presbyterian Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland, respectively. However, they may be able to determine from the tone (“definitely not”, “of course”) that he is referring to, from his perspective, more radical

congregations that his mother as a member of the Church of Scotland would not think of attending or might even disapprove of. The German translation retains this effect. Much of the information can be deduced from the context. For instance, the fact that the Church of Scotland is a Protestant Church is made clear by the remark that “the Catholic Church ... isn’t in the equation”. German readers with some background knowledge of Scottish culture may be aware of the religious setting already and may be conscious of the important role religion still plays on the Isle of Lewis. However, even if they are not, by retaining the terms “Kirk” and replicating the narrator’s laconic tone, in particular the sarcastic remark at the end (“Hoffe, du konntest dir alles merken.” for “Hope you’ve got all that.”), they can glean that this is a semi-serious take on Stornoway’s religious diversity. This preservation approach not only retains the heteroglossia on the surface by keeping the terms “Kirk” and “Church of Scotland” as well as the street names as culture-specific items, but it also replicates their “ideological saturation”, namely the narrator’s perspective on the diverse congregations in his hometown.

Although Doric is rendered with the St. Gallen dialect in the translation, I employed a different strategy in a small number of cases where Scots words appear individually, taking on the function of cultural references. This is the case for “The Broch”, the Doric name for the town of Fraserburgh where the narrator’s mother is from. The narrator frequently incorporates the Scots name into his HebE discourse, as in this example. It is likely that it will take readers who are not familiar with the geography of the north-east of Scotland and its culture some time to interpret the name. However, leaving things unexplained and forcing the reader to be patient until meanings reveal themselves is a recurring stylistic tool in the novel. It is therefore important to not only retain the linguistic variation, i.e. the dialectal toponym, but also not to over-explain it, in order to leave the reader with a similar reading experience. I therefore treated the dialect term akin to a cultural reference using the preservation strategy (with some grammatical adjustment). It should also be noted that by this point in the novel the reader will be familiar with the Doric term, and so the defamiliarising effect of preserving it – including the use of the definite article (“die Broch”, “in der Broch”) – will have been lessened. This example demonstrates how dialect-to-dialect translation links with complementary strategies to preserve culture-specific terms.

#### **6.2.4 “Incorporated genres” and “professional jargons”**

For Bakhtin, stylised forms of “semiliterary (written) everyday narration” are a key contributor to a novel’s heteroglossia. The translated section of *ABODAF* in Part 2 of this thesis includes five such “incorporated genres”: a story from WW2 told by a coastguard officer (pp. 22-23

[105-106]), snippets from a casual conversation about current events (p. 26 [109]), a folktale about Mac an t-Sronaich, a shadowy figure of Lewis legend (pp. 28-30 [110-112]), an autobiographical piece by the narrator's mother (pp. 32-35 [114-116]) and an (unusual) testament by the narrator's father (pp. 103-112 [133-141]). The first three texts would have been spoken, and the narrator types them up as he compiles his archive; the last two he has supposedly already found in written form. The "incorporated genres" as a formal category are realised by a variety of "speech types".

For the story, the conversation and the folktale, my translation recreates the casual tone by using similar orality markers such as colloquial terms and short or elliptic sentences or by directly addressing the reader. Retaining the structural integrity of the folktale about the notorious outlaw Mac an t-Sronaich told by Peter's uncle Ruairidh is particularly important given the cultural significance of storytelling on the Isle of Lewis. This is also made explicit later when the narrator states: "See the appetite we've got for stories [folktales] like that, on Lewis. We're insatiable." (p. 116). Thus, the translation carefully replicates the setting of the scene, the arc of suspense and the denouement of the tale as well as the informal tone. In my translation, I also take care to recreate the "jargon" of the storyteller, for instance when he directly addresses his audience ("Now you've got to think back a few years", p. 28 [110]; "Jetzt müsst ihr euch ein paar Jahre zurückversetzen." p. 25; lit. "Now you have to think yourselves back a few years.").

Of all the incorporated texts, Mary's autobiographical piece contributes most strikingly to the novel's heteroglossia. In Bakhtinian terms, the "stylistic unity" of the "incorporated genre" is realised through the "speech type" of the "linguistic dialect" Doric. Mary writes about an event that took place during WW2 when she was a young woman in Fraserburgh:

I'd ging aff tae a dance wi ten Woodbine in a Players packet. Aa the quines did. The few men still hingin aroon likely didna hae tae bather. A lot o them didna bather muckle about learning tae dance aither. Ane o the quines quid get the works truck, nae the bus like. Jist the richt size to tak the sax or seevin o's, fae The Broch tae Peterheid. Aa about the toon. Ane o oor crood fae Inverallochy, anither fae Cairnbulg, ane fae Rosehearty if I mind richt. (p. 32 [114])

Mary flaunts the rule stating that dialect belongs to the realm of oral language and confidently types her story in NE Scots. The passage is densely marked as Doric, in terms of grammar (e.g. "ging" for "go", and the parenthetical use of "like"), lexis (e.g. "muckle" for "much" or "fae" for "from") and pronunciation (e.g. "aff" for "of", "richt" for "right"). Although he comments on her use of language in the general sense in that paragraph, Peter does not seem surprised to find his mother's account written in her native dialect. Mary, who as a typist would certainly be used to writing in Standard English, has quite obviously made a conscious decision to tell

her story in Scots. Thus, the use of regional dialect acts as a literary tool to strengthen the character's distinctive voice and provide information about her linguistic and cultural identity. My translation demonstrates that this effect can be recreated using the dialect-to-dialect strategy:

I bi immer mit zää Woodbine versteckt ime Päckli Player's z'Tanz gange. Da hend alli Fraue so gmacht. Di wenige Mane, wo no ume gsii sind, hend sich die Müe worschinli nöd müese mache. Und di meischte hend sich au nöd grooss Müe ggee, tanze z'lerne. Eini vo üüs Fraue hät chöne de Lieferwage vo de Firma ha, nöd öppe de Bus, gell. Genau di richtig Gröössi für sechs oder sibe vo üs, vode Broch uf Peterhead. Dürs ganz Städtli. Eini vo üüs isch vo Inverallochy cho, en anderi us Cairnbulg, eini us Rosehearty, wenn i mi rächt erinnere. (p. 32)

[[all in dialect] I always went to the dance with ten Woodbine hidden in a Player's packet. All women did it this way. The few men who were still around probably didn't have to go to this [kind of] trouble. And most of them didn't trouble themselves too much to learn to dance either. One of us women could have the van from the company, not the bus mind. Exactly the right size for six or seven of us, from the Broch to Peterhead. Through the entire town. One of us came from Inverallochy, another one from Cairnbulg, one from Rosehearty, if I remember right.]

Swiss German dialect is normally reserved for oral registers. Its use in this allegedly written account is therefore similarly unusual as this is the case for Doric in the source text. The dense representation of St. Gallen dialect therefore recreates the reading experience, evoking a sense of the unfamiliar and unexpected. This effect would also be true, albeit to a lesser degree, for readers familiar with the Swiss German dialect because they would not expect to find it in a Standard German novel. As in the source text, digesting long passages of densely marked dialect requires effort from the reader. Caduff (2015) finds that in this new way of reading, readers are forced to read slowly, sounding out letters until they recognise words through sound. Although I aimed for an effect of “foreignness”, accepting that the reading requires a degree of effort, I took care not to make the dialect passage too impenetrable overall, for instance by using consistent spelling. For the same reason I occasionally chose a term cognate with the standard even if a more specific dialect term would have been available.

To retain the link to geographical aspects of “place”, I preserved the cultural references, in this case the cigarette brands and place names. Mary's admission that she used to hide the cheaper Woodbines in a packet of the more expensive Player's is not explained in the source text. While some readers, depending on their age perhaps, may not be familiar with the brands as such, the meaning can be gleaned from the context. It becomes apparent soon that this is wartime where goods are sparse and that the young women working in factories would not be able to afford expensive products anyway. Still, going to a dance deserves a little glamour, so

they draw lines on the back of their legs to create the illusion of tights, as is revealed later, and pretend to smoke costly Player's when all they can afford are Woodbines. Perhaps hiding unfiltered cigarettes is also an attempt to appear more ladylike or to conform to the social expectations of the time. To make the subterfuge slightly more explicit for the German reader, for whom the reference to the cigarette brands is harder to access, I added "versteckt" (hidden) in the first sentence.

The "testament" Peter stumbles upon in his late father's shed is a ledger where the older man, a weaver by trade, noted ideas for new pattern designs. This pattern book contains a story in which he recounts a formative incident from his youth. It is clear that the narrator's father is an accomplished storyteller, albeit in a style that is less chatty than that of Peter. The story, a tale of a memorable fishing trip he undertakes as a boy with the old men of the village, is told in SSE with some markers of HebE, and has a high density of fishing jargon and maritime terminology including many toponyms. Even a short extract makes the level of technicality of this "professional jargon" apparent:

I was guided into steering her upwind till there was a small shake at the front edge of the sail. Then the skipper on the sheet took in the slack and when I eased her off the wind we heeled a bit. (p. 107 [137])

The narrator of the story is clearly an accomplished sailor even though he was only a boy at the time of the voyage. He seems to assume the readers will understand the technical terms ("sheet", "took in the slack", "we heeled") and manoeuvres ("steering her upwind", "eased her off the wind") in question. This is the confident language of someone who has been around boats all their life. In the story, the jargon is often not explained or toned down for the reader; instead, we get a glimpse of how the men on the boat communicate, of the idiomatic expressions and colloquial terms they use. This maritime language forms a connection to the place, in terms of its geographical and social meaning. As set out above, the concept of register proved a useful aid when recreating the "professional jargons" as a contributor to the text's heteroglossia. The parameters governing the use of language in this particular situation on the fishing boat, the register variables, could be described as follows:

<b>Field</b> (topic, degree of technicality)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Topic: sailing and line fishing, traditional wooden boat, early 20<sup>th</sup> century</li> <li>○ Medium degree of technicality; specific terms, but not those of professional sailors or technical manuals, instead, colloquial and regional terms</li> </ul>
<b>Tenor</b> (role relationship between interactants)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Older men (too old to fight in the war) and a young boy from the same village</li> <li>○ High degree of familiarity between the men; they have fished together many times before; a close-knit group</li> <li>○ The men are more experienced, but treat the boy as one of the crew, because they depend on his help; they show him what he needs to know without explaining much</li> </ul>
<b>Mode</b> (amount of feedback and role of language)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Spoken, interactants are in the same boat</li> <li>○ Non-verbal communication important, not many words are made</li> </ul>

Table 2. Register variables

Based on these variables, my translation thus attempts to replicate the impression of being privy to a conversation between characters for whom going to sea is second nature. German technical terms and sailor’s jargon (“gegen den Wind steuern”, “Schot”, “das Segel dichtholen”, “abfallen”, “krängen”) recreate the voices of the men in the boat.

Sie zeigten mir, wie ich sie gegen den Wind steuern konnte, bis die Vorderkante des Segels leicht flatterte. Dann holte der Kapitän an der Schot das Segel dicht und als ich sie abfallen ließ, krängten wir ein wenig. (p. 57)

[They showed me how I could steer her against the wind, until the front edge of the sail began to shake slightly. Then the skipper on the sheet tensed up the sail and when I let her fall off, we heeled a bit.]

This strategy accepts that the reader may not understand all technical terms fully, but it establishes the connection Peter’s father had with the sea from a young age. This helps retain the close relationship between islanders and the sea as a central theme of the novel. This aspect is more important to convey in translation than explaining all the technical terminology.<sup>40</sup> Guided by the register variables, the same approach was taken to replicate the other instances of jargon in the text including the speak of coastguard officers, war veterans, builders and crofters, as well as further instances of the discourse of sailors and fishermen.

<sup>40</sup> To replicate the maritime jargon in this and similar passages, extensive research into comparable registers used by fishermen and sailors in German was necessary as part of the translator-researcher workflow. Kube’s (2013) study of the everyday life and traditions of fishermen in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was particularly useful, as it contains transcripts of the fishermen’s own accounts of their work. Although the kind of fishing and boats described are different, the register variables are comparable in terms of the level of technicality and relationship between speakers. For a list of the main terminology resources consulted for the translation of *ABODAF* see the bibliography in the appendix to Part 2.

### 6.3 Conclusion

The German translation of *ABODAF* in Part 2 retains the complex linguistic diversity of the source text. As the examples above make apparent, the three key features of heteroglossia are recreated in the German text: the diversity of “speech types” and “stylistic unities”, the close links and interactions between these elements and the ideological underpinnings of the linguistic diversity. The discussion of the “hybrid constructions” and the “external linguistic features” in particular illustrates the complex relations between the elements of heteroglossia and their social and ideological meanings.

The dialect-to-dialect strategy lies at the core of the translation approach. The Swiss German dialects were chosen based on comparable sociolinguistic and literary contexts as well as my personal dialect knowledge. The representation of the St. Gallen and Bernese dialects is nuanced and consistent and shows a high degree of verisimilitude, establishing them as a fully-fledged literary medium. Thus, the dialects in the target text are not seen as exoticisms or oddities – a potential danger in texts where only a “sprinkling” of dialect is used – but are an inherent part of the fabric of the heteroglot text. As illustrated, dialect-to-dialect is not used for all types of regional variation; instead, it is combined with other strategies, namely the use of non-regionally specific colloquial language and (cultural) preservation through lexical borrowing. Specifically, the narrator’s voice, in itself highly heteroglot, is rendered into German by echoing the often chatty tone and by retaining the Stornoway vernacular and Gaelic terms in their function as cultural references. The latter not only contributes to recreating heteroglossia, it also retains the links to the Hebridean setting in geographical terms. Recreating the narrator’s frequent metalinguistic comments and his use of jargon adds a further layer to the “linguistic stratification” of the text.

The discussion of the use of target language dialects in practice also brings into focus two further areas of tension connected to dialect representation. Firstly, it highlights the tensions between literary dialect as an artistic construct and a striving for verisimilitude. In other words, there is a balance to be struck between the creative literary uses of dialect and attempting a literary voice that readers recognise as dialectal. With the former, more weight is given to the freedoms of an “experimental” approach to linguistic variation in translation, whereas the latter emphasises the desire to take into account what the target readers might be familiar with or what they might perceive as “authentic”. In my translation of *ABODAF*, I have sought to balance these two aspects. As this chapter shows, this is a complex undertaking, not least because of a second area of tension that surrounds the concept of verisimilitude itself: as the assumed target audience of the translation is heterogeneous, it is difficult to make

universal judgments about how German readers would perceive the representation of the Swiss dialects. Nonetheless, it is likely that readers familiar with Swiss German dialects whose point of reference is the dialect used in “real” life will judge verisimilitude and credibility differently to readers who only encounter the Swiss dialect words in their literary representation (and perhaps are not even aware of the diglossic situation in Switzerland). This perception is one of the factors influencing the reception of literary dialect in the translation of *ABODAF*, also affecting any discussion of the connections the target readers make with place. This and other conclusions will be expanded upon in the final chapter of this thesis.

## 7. CONCLUSION

### 7.1 Purpose and findings

One of the main objectives of this thesis is to destabilise established perspectives on how linguistic variation in fictional prose is approached in translation. Firstly, it aims to challenge the notion that linguistic variation, in particular when caused by regional varieties, is an insurmountable obstacle in translation where the best possible outcome is limitation of loss. Secondly, the thesis questions the often-made assumption that dialect-to-dialect translation cannot be implemented successfully. Following Federici (2011a), who calls for more experimentation when dealing with heteroglot texts in translation, the thesis shifts the focus away from the ultimately not very fruitful discussion of the (un)translatability of literary dialect. While it considers the challenges that heteroglossia clearly presents in translation by critically addressing current debates in translation studies, the thesis also highlights the creative opportunities this linguistic diversity brings. It attempts to demonstrate what translation can do with heteroglot texts rather than what it cannot. In doing so, this study is a piece of what Buschmann (2015: 190) terms “Ermöglichungsforschung” – “research of making possible”. Arguing that translation studies has concentrated too much on the problem of translation (“Problem der Übersetzung”), Buschmann (ibid.) advocates a fundamental change of perspective to direct the focus of research towards the opportunities and successes of translation. This thesis contributes to this shift towards the “making possible” by exploring the opportunities of using regional dialects in the target language to render linguistic variation. Dialect-to-dialect translation has received relatively little theoretical attention, and it is not routinely used in practice. The assumption that it is not a workable translation strategy is rarely called into question. Taking on the role of the translator-researcher has allowed me to question this idea and the reasons for it from a theoretical and practical perspective.

Another key objective of this thesis lies in its practice-based methodology. It addresses the lack of research which applies conceptual frameworks to real cases in translation studies (see Williams and Chesterman, 2002: 75). This study not only develops conceptual tools and tests them on a real case; it also demonstrates that this testing of a theoretical model helps refine the conceptual framework itself. It presents an alternative way of linking theoretical and practical viewpoints in an iterative translator-researcher workflow where translation simultaneously functions as an object of research and as a research tool. In doing so, this thesis demonstrates that connecting the perspectives of “reflecting on translation” (or “theory”) and “doing translation” (or “practice”), reframing them as symbiotic, can prove valuable for literary translation studies in general and the investigation of heteroglossia in translation in particular.

In line with its two-fold methodology, the thesis is divided into two parts that make an equal contribution to the research outcome. Part 1 outlines the theoretical tools and explores the linguistic and literary contexts necessary to develop an approach for translating *ABODAF* into German. Part 2 contains the target text, the “creative outcome” in Candy’s (2006) definition of the practice-based methodology. It illustrates in practice how the strategies mapped out in the theoretical chapters can work together in line with the aims of the translation. Even though the translation approach and the target text are presented as the “finished article”, it should be noted that they were developed in a number of iterations (see 1.4). For instance, producing a draft of parts of the source text after having developed initial theoretical solutions for translation, helped shape the translation strategies further. Implementing this adapted approach to re-work the translated chapters in turn led to refining the target text. The examples discussed in section 6.2 illustrate the translation choices and the reasons underpinning them. Yet, to gain a fuller understanding of the translation strategies and their overall aesthetic effect, it is necessary to engage with the creative outcome, i.e. the translation itself. It is thus demonstrated how the originality and the research contributions of this thesis are shaped through the theoretical discussion as well as the target text.

## 7.2 Contributions

Further to the objectives described above, the contributions of this thesis to translation studies lie in four broad areas. Firstly, it is one of the few studies that investigate in-depth the use of target language dialects as a means to retain the heteroglot nature of fictional prose and, as far as could be determined, the first that does so from the viewpoint of the translator-researcher.<sup>41</sup> Addressing current theoretical debates on translating linguistic variation from sociolinguistic and stylistic perspectives (see Chapter 2 in particular), it suggests fresh perspectives on the links between “place” and literary dialect in a translation context, acknowledges anastrophe as an inherent feature of translation and explores how “suspension of disbelief” can work to manage these. Bakhtin’s concept of heteroglossia presents a compelling rationale for maintaining linguistic diversity in translation. Following on from his arguments, this thesis builds a case for dialect-to-dialect translation as a fruitful strategy to retain linguistic diversity and as one that is particularly appropriate for rendering the complex heteroglossia of *ABODAF*. Chapter 6 demonstrates how dialect-to-dialect is combined with other translation

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<sup>41</sup> Gauthier’s (2015) study is also practice-based, but the target text as the “creative outcome” is not included as part of the article.

strategies, not least the preservation of cultural references and other elements linking the narrative to its setting. Although the thesis concentrates on the case of one heteroglot Scottish novel translated into German, it provides the theoretical arguments to test the proposition that was developed in the translator-researcher workflow on other texts and language combinations.

Secondly, building on the work of Boase-Beier (2006), this thesis highlights the value of systematic analysis of the source text. It demonstrates the direct benefits such detailed examination of its stylistic and linguistic characteristics has for the translation process. The analysis in Chapter 4 shows convincingly that *ABODAF* exploits the potential of heteroglossia to a high degree and that linguistic and cultural diversity are key themes of the novel. This textual and contextual knowledge enabled me as the translator-researcher to understand and describe the text's linguistic complexities, without which it would have been much more difficult (perhaps even impossible) to reconstruct the multi-layered linguistic variation in line with the translation goals. This study is, as far as could be established, the first attempt in translation studies at employing Bakhtin's heteroglossia systematically as a tool for such translation-relevant text analysis. In translation studies, heteroglossia is sometimes used as a mere synonym for "linguistic variation" when discussing literary dialect (see 2.3.4). However, this thesis explores the concept and the ideas underpinning it more fully, not least by including variation based on use (e.g. register, jargon) and user (e.g. dialect), while also addressing ambiguities and contradictions. It takes care to retain Bakhtin's terminology throughout and link it with terms from modern sociolinguistics. This allowed me as the translator-researcher to critically investigate the linguistic complexity in order to make informed translation decisions.

Furthermore, by situating *ABODAF* and its heteroglossia within Scottish literature (see in particular Chapter 3), this thesis sheds light on the diverse rural voices in contemporary Scottish fiction, which are generally underrepresented in scholarly discussion. It reveals that the representation of linguistic variation is by no means confined to novels set in the urban centres of the Central Belt even if these are discussed most frequently in the literature. Returning to the point made in the introduction (see 1.4), it can also be argued that the translation process as an act of interpretive reading generates new knowledge about the source text. This new understanding of aspects of the text, in this case the interplay of the different language varieties and their social and ideological meaning, can feed into further scholarship studying linguistic variation in contemporary Scottish literature, in particular that of the Highlands and Islands and the east coast.

Lastly, the nuanced implementation of the dialect-to-dialect strategy establishes the Swiss German dialects as serious aesthetic tools. In the translation in Part 2, dialects do not have merely humorous function or provide local colour; they are a literary medium in their own right. Their use in the translation of *ABODAF* challenges the idea of Standard German (from Germany) as the primary literary language. As highlighted in Chapter 2, this presents the readers with an opportunity to reflect on dialect-standard tensions in their own linguistic context and may encourage them to challenge the standard language ideology. Depending on the target reader's linguistic background, knowledge of and attitude to (literary) dialect, the use of the Swiss German varieties challenges the expectations of the target audience in different ways (see 2.2.2 and 6.2). Overall, the German translation of *ABODAF* can contribute to a body of prose fiction in the German language that openly exploits the potential of heteroglossia.

### 7.3 Limitations

Although this thesis makes a strong case for dialect-to-dialect translation as part of an “experimental approach” in Federici's (2011a) sense, it does not argue that this strategy would be suitable for all heteroglot texts nor that it is always the best option. The selection of the dialect must be carefully considered, since it needs to have similar connotations on different levels: urban versus rural voices, social meaning, historical and political connotations, level of stigmatisation as well as the impression of difference or deficiency. As illustrated in Chapter 6, the St. Gallen and Bernese dialects work well to render Doric and Shetlandic because these connotations are comparable to a large degree. However, in some cases, no suitable dialect might be available in the target language. As a consequence, the appropriateness of the dialect-to-dialect approach and the specific form of its implementation ultimately need to be decided for each text individually. It also has to be acknowledged that for dialect-to-dialect translation to be successful, translators must be comfortable in using regional dialect(s); however, not all translators have access to dialects in their target language. Although some background knowledge on dialects and their literary representation can be acquired through reading and engagement with other resources, a certain familiarity with the target language dialect is necessary to be able to write in it idiomatically and use it creatively. Therefore, it should be borne in mind that as a dialect speaker within the Swiss context I am in a unique position in this regard. My linguistic background – with the St. Gallen dialect in effect being my native language – shapes my role as the translator-researcher, both in terms of attitude to dialect and knowledge of it. The discussion of the implementation of the dialect-to-dialect approach and

its effects is therefore coloured by this personal experience of and positive perspective on dialect. When using target language dialects, it is therefore particularly important for the translator to be aware of their own linguistic background and ideological stance to linguistic variation.

While a hypothetical translation brief is assumed for this project, the translation primarily functions as a research tool rather than as an undertaking under real-life conditions. The attitudes of a potential publisher to the dialect-to-dialect approach were therefore not investigated. Moreover, although it is demonstrated that regional dialects are used in German prose fiction (see 5.2 and 5.3), the potential reception of my translation of *ABODAF* in the German literary market was not explored. The assumption that Guggolz might be interested in publishing Stephen's novel in German is purely hypothetical for the purpose of this thesis project. Further research would be necessary to determine how willing commercial publishing houses would be to accept a dialect-to-dialect translation and what the reasons for any reservations might be.

In a similar vein, while reader reactions are briefly discussed for the case of *Sunset Song* (see 5.3.2.2), a detailed investigation of reader attitudes to dialect-to-dialect translation was not possible within the scope of this thesis. The heterogeneity of the proposed target audience in terms of familiarity with and attitudes to literary dialect was not explored in depth. However, as is of course true for the reception of the source text as well, reactions to texts containing dialect are very individual (see also 6.3). More systematic exploration of the reception of such translations would be needed to assess aspects such as the attitudes to literary dialect and the effects the “mismatch” between regional language and setting might have on different readers. It would also serve to explore mechanisms of the “willing suspension of disbelief” in relation to linguistic variation in translation and investigate how readers deal with the inherent anapisms in translation more generally.

## 7.4 Suggestions for future research

This study raises a number of questions that would prove worthwhile areas for further research. A natural progression of this work would be research into how practicing literary translators outside the academic sphere approach linguistic variation. It was initially planned to analyse translators' accounts in essays, interviews or blogs and paratexts such as translation prefaces in order to explore the reasons behind their translation choices. For instance, it would be worth investigating whether fiction translators are mainly influenced by practical

considerations (such as guidance from publishers) or whether they make decisions primarily based on their own aesthetic considerations, stylistic preferences and/or knowledge of dialects. Within the scope of this study, it was not possible to explore these questions, but it would be particularly relevant to examine from the perspective of practicing literary translators why dialect-to-dialect strategies are chosen so rarely.

In this context, it would also be fruitful to research the links between linguistic variation as a constraint and the notion of creativity more systematically. Do translators experience literary dialect as restricting or as liberating? Does the argument that translational creativity is directly proportional to the constraints a text provides (see e.g. Loffredo and Perteghella, 2006: 10) also apply to literary dialect? Does complex linguistic heterogeneity encourage creative solutions or are translators opting for more “traditional” translation strategies? The literature review in Chapter 2 suggests the latter. However, it would be worth investigating whether this would also be the case in a setting where practical considerations such as the commercial viability of a translated text do not come into play. To explore this question, a workshop-like research set-up could be envisaged in which translators produce different versions of extracts of linguistically heterogeneous texts. In this format, a performance element could also be introduced where the texts would be read aloud to test their effect. This kind of performance experiment could also be used to investigate the reaction of an audience, for instance to explore whether the reaction differs between hearing and reading literary dialect. In this scenario, the translation would serve as a “stepping-stone” for further exploration, as suggested by Tarantini (2021).

Due to the space constraints, the inclusion of a translator’s preface or afterword was not investigated as part of the translator-researcher workflow. However, as the example of Esther Kinsky shows (see 5.3.1), such paratexts can be a powerful way to make the reader aware of the text’s linguistic diversity and to highlight the key aspects of the translation approach. The potential function of translation paratexts in addressing reader resistance or more generally making it easier for readers to engage with the text’s heteroglossia could be explored further. In this context it would also be fruitful to explore the use of a glossary, e.g. to clarify dialect terms for the reader, as part of the translation approach.

In conclusion, this study has offered a new perspective on heteroglossia in contemporary Scottish fiction in translation by highlighting the opportunities linguistic diversity presents. Rather than conceptualising linguistic variation as an inherent problem of translation, the thesis attempted to demonstrate that unconventional solutions, “experimental approaches” in Federici’s (2011a) terms, are workable. In the light of the definitions of creativity presented in the introduction, I argue that my translation of *ABODAF* approaches literary translation

creatively, firstly, because it breaks the mould by using regional target language dialects in new ways and, secondly, because in doing so it fulfils the task of recreating the text's complex linguistic variation set in the translation brief, underpinned theoretically by Bakhtin's heteroglossia. It is hoped that this thesis can give an impetus for further research into translating linguistically heterogeneous texts, both from a theoretical and a practical viewpoint.

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# APPENDIX

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