

## THE PREFACE AS A GENRE IN ENGLISH TRANSLATIONS IN THE 17<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

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**1.** I would like to define exactly what I mean when I refer to the terms *prologue* or *preface*. The prologue concept is related to the dramatic genre and classical oratory. Its antecedents belonged to the tradition of Greek tragedy. Thus, we find the first definition of the word prologue in the Oxford English Dictionary as *the preface or introduction to a discourse or performance; a preliminary discourse, proem, preface, preamble; (esp.) a discourse or poem introducing a dramatic performance*. If we go to the definition of *preface* we also find a revelatory definition: *The introductory part of a speech; an introduction*. We see therefore that from these notions of the prologue one finds the sources that are fundamental for the understanding of the value that the preface will have to the translator of the studied text, the theatrical and oratorical sources which we shall see in some of the analysed texts.

Following the definitions given by the OED. we propose to analyse the value of these preliminary texts that are defined as *the introduction(s) to a literary work, usually explaining its subject, purpose, scope and methods* (this being the first definition offered by the OED).

**2.** The first thing that surprised us on starting this work was the lack of literature available that would relate the *prologue* to the literary genre or genre in general. If one considers that the word *genre* already is somewhat problematic and ambivalent in the way it is used nowadays and as the words of John M. Swales (1990:93) warn us: *Genre remains a fuzzy concept (...). The word is highly attractive- even to the Parisian timbre of its normal pronunciation- but extremely slippery*, we find that relating the concept of genre to that of prologue is an even bigger problem.

It is curious to note that great literary theorists who have studied genre such as A. Fowler (1979,1982), K. Spang (1984), T. Teodorov (1976) or Schaeffer (1983) make no mention whatsoever of the prologue in their studies and classifications of literary genres. In recent studies in the Spanish language no mention has been made either [(e.g. Garcia Berrio & Huerta Calvo (1992)]. It seems that the notion and study of the prologue is no longer fashionable. In any case we would make an exception of the notion coined by G. Genette (1987) of *paratexte*.

We must go back to the study made by A. Porqueras Mayo in 1957 using Classical Rhetoric as a basis, *El prólogo como género literario*. It can be affirmed that the prologue is a codified literary genre. However, the concept of literary genre has to be defined and specified although that is not the purpose of this paper. The definition given by A. Porqueras Mayo, seems to me to be sufficiently illuminating despite its imprecision and its faithful reflection of the time when it was written. Let me quote it in its original language, Spanish: *Género literario es algo que viene definido por unas estructuras determinadas impuestas por tradición que se hace ley (...) algo con su forma externa*

*y estructura interna que constituye una unidad artística autónoma, con su propio estilo, con sus propias leyes, con su mensaje estético capaz de crear belleza literaria, como los demás géneros.*

To complete this definition the words of Todorov might be appropriate: *In a society, the recurrence of certain discursive properties is institutionalised, and individual texts are produced and perceived in relation to the norm constituted by that codification of discursive properties.* (Todorov, 1976:162).

Swales (1990) emphasises the socially- determined nature of genres describing them as *communicative events which are socioculturally recognisable*. Genres are social events not only in terms of the social roles and purposes of those who create them as speakers or writers but because the communicative function of the resulting spoken or written text is recognisable to a particular community of listeners or readers.

The place of the preface is in the enunciation; it is an important element for literary communication. The notions of discourse and communication appear to be particularly important for defining the prologue. But genres are not only typified by communicative function, organisation features, syntax and lexis, and the social circumstances in which they arise. There are also powerful expectations about the discourse to be found in particular genres. We could say therefore that particular discourses are characteristic of particular genres. We are going to see how this is reflected in some translators' prefaces and statements of some English renderings of Spanish Golden Age works with the aim of finding their common discursive and surface features and their internal coherence which derives from a strong intertextual element linking.

The metalanguage of Renaissance translation in the vernacular languages was fashioned in the wake of the spectacular upsurge in translations from about the second quarter of the sixteenth century on. As in the other countries of Western Europe, there developed in England, directly in the wake of this growing tide of translations, a theoretical and critical reflection that accompanies, explains, justifies and legitimises the translator's practice. It is this discourse that I am concerned with in this paper.

**3.** There have been several studies and monographs that have attempted to describe and explain the state of translation in England in the 16th and 17th century. What is certain is that since the publication of *Translation: An Elizabethan Art* (F.O. Matthiessen, 1931) and *Early Theories of Translation* (F. Ross Amos, 1920) this area has not ceased to interest students of translation history.

From the reign of Henry the Eighth to the end of the 17th century there was a lowering of English prose and a growing interest in foreign literature that was reflected in a tremendous expansion in the number of translations of works of many types from Europe. Amongst the many qualified to speak on this subject we should remember the words of D.B. Randall (1963) : (...) *Translation during the English Renaissance was of the greatest importance, aesthetically, intellectually, linguistically, and even politically.*

T.R. Steiner indicated in his work *English Translation Theory from 1650-1800* that

the publication of A.F. Tytler's *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (1791) was the culmination of a process that had been developing for the previous hundred and fifty years.

Thus we can say that the seventeenth century was an innovative period, because it was then when we find the classification of translation methods in Great Britain, which was vital for the later developments of Tytler and Pope. The majority of those who have studied and analysed the state and evolution of translation theory during this period -Spingarn (1908); H.B. Lathop (1933); P.E. Russell (1953); T.R. Steiner (1975); Kitagaki (1981); F.M. Rener (1989); T. Hermans (1992) among others-, have done so by the detailed study of the prologues and the texts of English translations of classical works while translations of vernacular texts have only been sporadically studied. The view is even more desolate when one considers the study of translation into English of Spanish works.

Studies of diverse translations or translators have been criticised for being too atomistic and not fitting themselves into a more generalised and global theoretical model. I feel that a valid and illuminating starting point would be the study and analysis -and if possible, the systematisation- of the often ignored statements of the translators themselves. I refer of course to the prologues and prefaces of those translators and more specifically to the English translators of Spanish classical authors during the period previously mentioned.

F. M. Rener (1989) has indicated that one method to follow in order to study and systematise the translation theory of the age would be the analysis of these prologues and the declarations of the translators which are, in Rener's words, *the primary sources*.

When approaching the works of those English translators who made Spanish Golden Age literature accessible to the English reader, it would be natural to think that their comments would be the same as those of the translators of Greek-Latin and Hebrew works. However there does not appear to have been any serious and concrete attempt to systematise these prologues and the consequent conclusions.

**4.** The value of the prologue as literary genre has been demonstrated by some authors (Curtius, 1943). The prologues from any work can be studied separately and are of value *per se*. More than thirty years ago, J. Laurenti and A. Porqueras Mayo (1971:2) said that it was a pity that researchers studying a particular preface were not better informed about the general bibliography of the prologue as literary vehicle with its own character. The matter is worse still, I feel, when referring to the prologues of the translations because study continues to be geared towards the analysis of the translations and attention towards prefaces is usually justified in relation to the biography of the translator or the justifications and explanations on their translations given by the translators. This work is not normally put in any context in order to collect the influences amongst them or to sift through or deduce from the information contained in them the theoretical directions the translators proposed. Another difficult aspect is studying how these intentions and declarations of the prefaces were reflected in the English versions. Besides, even when the translator means what he says

about his craft or his good intentions there is no guarantee that he will act accordingly, but that is another story and is not within the scope of this paper.

Today when considering the state of translation in this century I think the words of F. Rener (1989: 5) to be true: *The study of the theory of translation does not appear as a field of research but as an archipelago with many islands and no bridges.*

I feel that the prologues could well serve as bridges so as to relate all the translations of one period and thus elaborate the translation theory that is still lacking.

One must consider that the translators in their prefaces or “Notes to their Readers” followed traditional rhetoric with *topoi* or common places, which also appeared not only in the works of their compatriots and contemporaries but also in all the texts of that period and those before. It is therefore logical to assume that as they drank from the same well of classical sources and followed the same conventions of Greek Roman rhetoric the prologues would not differ greatly. This is to some extent true as on many occasions the author (or translator) started by apologising for something which he sees himself under obligation to do for reasons of tradition and that will be of little interest. Thus the translator of Quevedo’s *Los Sueños*, Roger L’Estrange wrote in 1627: *This preface is merely for Fashion-Sake, to fill a space and please the Stationer, who says ‘tis neither usual or handsome, to leap immediately from the Title-Page to the Matter. So that in short, a Preface ye have, together with the Reason of it, both under one: but as to the Ordinary Mode and Presence of Prefaces, the Translator desires to be excus’d.* (The Visions of Dom Francisco de Quevedo).

The translator plainly says therefore that he is aware that he is writing something that has to be done for reasons of tradition (“Ordinary Mode”) and at the same time excuses himself for doing so. These *topoi* of which the previously quoted is but one example, were common to writers of different countries and periods, the reason being that they utilised a common theory of language and communication and to a certain extent a shared theory of translation.

Some years ago theorists of the history of translation such as Randall (1963:31) said: *The simple fact is that most (Renaissance) translators, whether rendering Spanish Fiction or something else, neither cared much for the theories of their predecessors nor for making theories of their own.* For him, as well as for others, the declarations contained in the pages of the prologues and dedications were not sufficiently trustworthy to sustain a theory of translation. Randall has even stated: *The Renaissance translators of Spanish fiction generally displayed either unconcern or at best a rather unsystematic awareness.* These opinions contrast with those of F.R. Rener (1989:7) who, after several years of study of European translations from the 15th to the 18th century, declared : *Fragments of the system are scattered over the entire continent both in terms of time and place. By assembling the tesserae of this mosaic, a whole manual of translation has been compiled which, though never written, nevertheless existed and was known to all translators and particularly to their critics.*

The problem resides in the dispersion and fragmentation of the information contained in the prologues, dedications and “Notes to the Reader”. However the information is there and it is the task of the scholar to find and rebuild the mosaic mentioned by F. Rener (1989). In this task one must know how to recognise authentic to-

*poi* and commonplaces of real value. This would entail a great deal of compilation and analysis of many and varied prologues and also to bear in mind that many of these would be nothing more than *mere crafty cogging*, as Randall (1963:25) called them. Eric Jacobsen (1958:137) warned of the danger of excessive repetition of so many *topoi* and stereotyped formulae saying that it makes work more difficult and that up to this time their study had given a poor crop: *(their) slender harvest yields little in the threshing and winnowing*.

5. Given the limits of space and the fact that we cannot devote ourselves to the detailed study and analysis of any one particular prologue, I thought it would be interesting to concentrate on some aspects and characteristics that could clarify things by using several prologues as examples. We shall see some of the conventional components and stylistic elements from which prefaces were built.

Translator's prologues have a rather ambivalent status due to the prologue referring to both the author's work and the translator's own rendering of it. After the renaissance, the prologue gradually lost its halographic character -a term coined by Genette (1987)- and developed an authorial character, with the translator commenting on his version and even giving his opinion on the quality of the original text. Many have expressed approval of these prologues. Thus, P.E. Russell (1953:66) declares: *It is the translator's comments and explanations placed at the beginning of such works that English criticism of Spanish literature really begins*. One should remember that Shelton's opinions in the long preface to *Don Quijote* in 1612, raised a great deal of interest amongst cervantists and literary historians like Ticknor (1863), E.B. Knowles (1941), Fitzmaurice-Kelly (1905, 1967), or E. A. Peers (1947) among others. In 1612, at a time when political relations between England and Spain were not exactly conducive to making Spanish works of literature public, Shelton was highly complimentary about Cervantes' work: *Courteous reader: to seeke thy approbation of this booke by any faire and plausible inductions were to distrust, if not impaire the worth of it. 'Tis folly to light a candle to the sunne, as likewise that which, in itself, is all praiseworthy*. It should not be forgotten that according to Shelton's own words his translation was accomplished *in the space of forty daies*, a period of time which although short allowed him to see the value of the Spanish original work, published only three years before.

The prologues we have analysed are translations of works of diverse genre, they are nearly all versions of prose works. I will not list them all as this would make for a long and tedious presentation. It is enough to say that, we have tried, whenever possible, to use the most representative in Spanish literature including, the picaresque, the pastoral, chivalry, allegorical and devotional genres. We have found that the translators insist on the verisimilitude of the stories and the good work of the writer.

The translators, authors of the prologues, were aware that they were subject to certain laws, a rhetoric that had dominated the genre since the Grecian-Latin period that was reflected in certain norms that gave the prologue a peculiar literary feature. The first impression we have is of being immersed in a world of traditionalism and unnecessary formality, of rhetorical *topoi*. This traditionalism makes the writer less concerned about creating as such and more concerned about following the well familiar *topoi*. However, as we have said before, the translators tried to manifest themselves and escape from the role that was expected of them. R. L'Estrange and his

translation of *Los Sueños* is a case in point. On occasions the translator appears to be challenging the reader, and at the head of the familiar declarations of humility (which is evident in the majority of the following quotes) we can see that the attitude of the anonymous translator of *The History of Don Fenise. A new Romance* (1651) could well be called self-justifying: By this time perhaps you like the Book, but doubt the translation. 'tis now in your power, and must speak for it selfe. All I aske would not pronounce upon it without comparing the Originall: otherwise you may do wrong to the Translator than he hath done to the Author.

The translator insists on his role as mediator between the two languages, as nearly all the following quotes show. However what is more interesting is the communicative aspect of the prefacial text and what it means.

The translator not only mediates between two languages but also between two individuals, the author and the reader. Literary criticism has recently begun to recognise the role of the audience in literature. This is of particular importance with regard to translation as without the reader's lacking knowledge of the original, translation would be unnecessary. Thus the reader is the very reason for the existence of translation.

Several factors determine the relationship between the translator and the reader. The fundamental one being that of language as a mechanism for giving signs. However rhetoric's particular interest was to ensure that by being pleasant and not boring the message would reach its destination. The intention of the translator was to have a receptive reader who would read the entire text without boredom or irritation... Translation at that time had the official title of *interpretatio*, as it did not belong to the field of language but to that of hermeneutics. The profession of translator was seen therefore as an indispensable one because it was the very medium of the explanation. Because of his function as an *explainer*, clarity (or *perspicuitas*, the term coined by traditional rhetoric) was the most important of the translator's obligations and purposes.

The prologue has a twofold function: firstly to introduce the work of a foreign author and secondly to introduce himself by using all the methods of classical rhetoric (*topoi* of *captatio benevolentiae*, false modesty, etc) so that the reader may judge and accept his translation and the work itself. In this respect, the receiver of the book is vital. I refer to the translations dedicated to kings, queens, the nobility and patrons or even just to the potential reader in those prologues titled "To the Reader". In order to catch the reader's attention and to establish communication with him/her the translator would use a wide range of devices or *topoi*. If his translation was put under the protection of someone to whom it was dedicated -these types of texts addressed *To the Right Worthie Honourable Lord (or Lady) X-* the prologue would be full of praise of all kinds, declarations of his incompetence as a translator, his lack of knowledge of the language, affirmations of the great social distance between him and the receiver and thankful statements of all kinds. In order to illustrate this point we have chosen one of these dedicatories: *Since then for pledge of the dutifull and zealous desire I have to serve your Ladiship, the great disproportion of your most noble estate to the qualitie of my poore condition, can affoorde nothing else but this small present, my praier shall alwaies importune the heavens for the happie increase of your high and woorthie degree, and for the full*

*accomplishment of your most Honorable and vertuous desires.* (B. Yong, Dedicatory to the Right Honorable and my very good Lady the Lady Rich, *Diana of George of Montemayor*, 1598).

If the introductory text is not addressed to anyone in particular but the reader in general the tone is much more moderate. The translator without abandoning the use of the established discursive formulae shows himself more. He even tries in his communicative purpose to establish a link of friendship with his reader. It is possible to adopt a more personal tone, he will make personal confessions, look for complicity and he will even joke about himself or his own translation: (...) *the poor Don has had a hard time, and a long Voyage of it, and therefore 'twould be inconsistent both with the discretion, and civility of any Body, that knows the World, to laugh at him, because his Cloathes are a little Thread-bare, for I can assure he has better at home.* (Anonymous, Preface to the translation of *El Celoso extremeño*, 1681).

This use of clothing imagery becomes a frequent image in many prefaces (as we can see on the quote taken from the translation of Alemán's *El Guzman de Alfarache*, by J. Mabbe). The change of habit often entailed more than just replacing one language with another. For some translators changing the dress meant the removal of stylistic features such as rhetorical embellishments.

As I have already said, the translator being himself both an explainer and a mediator, had to place *clarity* at the very top of his obligations and purposes. The comprehension on the part of the reader may be hindered not only by the foreign language but also by the obscure syntax and formulation used by the original author.

Whenever the translators come up against a text that is difficult to understand be it due to the ornateness of the original text or his own limitations in the source language he will refer to this in his preface. We have found that references to linguistic differences of both languages are frequent.

In the period in which national languages were trying to establish their identity, the period from the 15th to the 17th century (depending on the language), the prevailing feeling was that the language in question was poverty-stricken. It is evident that in such a situation the role played by the translators was going to be essential. Translators were among the individuals who were actively engaged in the progress and enrichment of their native languages.

In most of the analysed prefaces translators stated that there was a negative balance in terms of the lexical wealth of their native language (English) in comparison to others. The debatable credibility of this argument as to the poverty of their language could of course be used to conceal the reality of a bad translation or to ward off the attacks of possible critics.

For translators, the search and the selection of the *structural material* used in their translations called for a great deal of effort and skill. Finding words in the target language that are formally and dynamically *equivalent* (following Nida's terms) or *proper, pure and perspicuous* (according to what the Classical Rhetoric recommended) was a demanding assignment. Similarly, choosing the best method for closing lexical gaps, represented an important decision. The effort and the skill were directly pro-

portionate to the dissimilarity of the two languages, the lexical poverty of the target language, and the technicality of the original text.

In the different prefaces analysed we have seen that translators always try to justify their renderings, either by resorting to the special difficult *genius* or *wit* of the Spanish language or to the difficulty of their tasks as translators.

We can see examples of these attitudes in the following words:

- *I have followed the Spanish as close as the difference of the two languages could bear, which I did to preserve as near as possible as the Authors sense entire, without intruding any notions of my own (...) and I hope it will appear beautiful enough of itself without the help of any borrowed Ornaments.* (J. Stevens, Preface to *Fortune in her Wits*, 1697).

- *No digo mas, sino que me he engolfado en vn negocio muy dificultoso (...) Se de mi poco valor, y flaqueza, y que a lo menos si no he errado, he tropeçado...).* *El Picaro de Aleman ha mudado su vestido, su traje, no es & modo de España, sino de Inglaterra. Si lo he puesto en su punto y ser, muy venturoso soy.* (J. Mabbe, Preface to *The Rogue*, 1622).

Translators used to insist on the patriotic aspect of their task. An example of this attitude can be seen in the following words: *These will scarce bare any Translation, the Genius is so peculiar and the language so natural to the Spanish, that I question whether any other Tongue can express them in this significant way; but perhaps I may be mistaken, and wish that some able poetical Spirit may prove so, for the Satisfaction and Entertainment of the English Nation.* (J. Stevens, Preface to *The Comical Works of D. Francisco de Quevedo*, 1700).

As national states began to mature in the sixteenth century, a patriotic *strain* sprang up which continued on into the seventeenth century. Its primary function was enrichment from foreign stores of the English language and literature. This social dimension is present in almost all preface discourses and I consider that it is very important for the translator's recognition as an active member of the community. It is another reason that can give support to the consideration of the preface as a genre regarding its social and pragmatic purposes.

It can be said that the vast majority of translations at this time had a didactic purpose, the overriding consideration being that of *moralisatio*. This is reflected in the preface as one of a selfless attitude on the part of the translator who seeks the benefit of the entire community. The translator makes available books and ideas that, were it not for his efforts, would be unknown to the reader and to the language community and thereby promotes their welfare. At the same time the first priority of the translator is the safeguarding of moral values and social decorum. Thus his fidelity to the original is counterbalanced by his efforts to preserve the *bonum commune*.

Due to their interest in safekeeping the morality of the community, translators do not hesitate to omit any passage of the original text which might offend *the good manners* or *the good taste* of the readers. In their prefaces they always justify their omissions as well as their choice of the foreign text object of their renderings. We can see an example of this characteristic attitude in the following quotation: *The Country*



*Jilt, in Spanish call'd La Picara Justina, is not a Translation, but rather an Extract of all that is Diverting and good in the Original, which is swell'd up with so much Cant and Reflection, as really renders it tedious and unpleasant; for which reason all that unsavory part is omitted, and only so much render'd into English as may be Diverting and Instructing.* (J. Stevens, Preface to *The Country Jilt*, 1707). This last quote illustrates perfectly one of the main purposes and worries translators of the century had: their renderings should fulfil the traditional rhetorical norms of *docere, prodesse and delectare*.

The prevention of boredom and the obtention of pleasure became thus an important issue for translators. They even declare in their prefaces how much they enjoyed performing their task of rendering the original text. The next quote illustrates this point: (...) *that the Englishing of them has been a diversion to me, and I hope to others they will not be unpleasant.* (L'Estrange, *The Spanish Decameron*, 1687).

Besides the *topos* of *docere delectandi* we have discovered the frequent presence of the *topos* of *request on order* and the rhetorical commonplace that states that they are doing the translation as an exercise *so as not to forget the foreign language*. They often declare that people of culture have encouraged them to publish a translation made in their youth when their knowledge of the language wasn't so good. Again we come across the *topoi* of *false modesty* and of *captatio benevolentiae*, very frequently found in most of the prefaces.

We can see that defence is one of the principal motives of the prologue. Defence of the original text, of the foreign author, of his own translation. Prefaces have therefore a threefold function (as Arnaud Tripet indicated in 1989) which creates interesting relationships that unfortunately we don't have time to look into now.

It is in the last and concluding part of the preface that the translator summarises the main points of his discourse and in a humble tone puts his case (the translation) before the Readers. The sort of concluding statement we are referring to is illustrated by the following last quote, corresponding to the Preface by Paul Rycaut, English translator of Gracián's *El Criticón* (1651): *And thus, Reader, having given thee some intimation concerning the substance of this Book; the occasion on which it was translated; and the Reasons, why after so many years, it came to be published. I leave thee to a perusal of it, which I beseech thee to do, with the same candour, which is to be allowed to the Works of Youthful Fancies. Farewel.* (P. Rycaut, Preface To *The Spanish Critick*, 1681).

The different quotations were selected to show that the relationship and communication between the translator and the reader was a permanent factor in the English preface of the time. It was the translator who decided on the importance and the role played by his preface as F. Renier (1989:243) indicates: *Obviously every translator used the preface differently owing to his personal preference, to the type of work he translated, and, above all, to the picture he had of his audience.*

**6.** After having analysed different prefaces written by translators of the age we could establish their main structural components which are the following:

1. Different formulae of address, depending on who is the clear addressee of their translations, either someone belonging to the nobility or the common and "benevolent reader".

2. Defence of the source book, of his/her author and of the topic of the book.
3. Defence of their translations using all the rhetorical formulae and *topoi* of the age.
4. Observations about the way they have translated the text and allusions to previous translations and the different ways of translating of the time.
5. Insistence on the importance and value of the translated text on the grounds of the enrichment of the country and the English language.
6. Different closing formulae according to the devices and *topoi* Classical Rhetoric offered them.

The translator regards classical rhetoric as a means of communication. The classical idea of translation as *interpretatio* comprises not only the transferring of the text but includes also social and moral norms.

The reader can be seen as playing the role of judge whose judgement of the book effectively decides if the translated work will be a success or not. The translator uses the preface as a kind of *proemium*, an oration that functions as a way of establishing a cordial relationship between the speaker and the judge. One can see that the rhetorical foundation of the relationship between the translator and the reader has been proven. Prefaces to translations, as has previously been stated, are known to function as repositories of occasional statements about the theory of translation. But we also feel that any prologue from any age is of value in itself and can be studied separately.

Just to finish, let me quote and make mine the words of one of the translators of Quevedo, J.Stevens: *Sir, I am obliged to draw to a conclusion, lest I should be condemned for incurring the same Fault I blame in others, which is Tediousness.* The consideration of prefaces as literary genres was our purpose in this paper. Genres are not simply assemblies of more-or-less similar textual objects but, instead, they are coded and keyed events set within social communicative processes (Todorov 1976; Fowler 1982). As Schauber and Spolsky (1986) observe, genres form an open-ended set. The binding element of this set, of the metatexts of the English translation in this century is a common theory of language, Rhetoric and communication and an equally jointly shared idea of translation.

We have tried to demonstrate that the translator's membership of the community, the social context and their rhetorical heritage are reasons enough to maintain that the preface as a genre is the result of certain communicative purposes and rhetorical devices. And if the principal basic features and criteria that turn a collection of communicative events into a genre is some shared set of communicative purposes (Swales 1990), prefaces written during the period under consideration seem to have fulfilled these requirements. We should consider that the prefaces written by those 17<sup>th</sup> century translators constitute a special kind of genre that focuses on conventionalised communicative events embedded within disciplinary or professional practices (Bhatia 1993).

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