

Regimes of comprehensibility: A perspectival approach to literary multilingualism

Stefan Helgesson, Stockholm University

*This brief conceptual essay addresses the fundamental antinomy between, on the one hand, promoting a multilingual approach to reading and, on the other, deconstructing linguistic boundaries and identifications as such. While the concept of multilingualism pragmatically challenges monolingual habits of thinking, it fails to take account of the porousness of linguistic boundaries. Multilingualism, in this respect, is still beholden to the monolingual paradigm. Conversely, however, the deconstruction of the unity of a language risks playing fast and loose with sedimented institutional and textual histories that not only give “a” language tremendous authority but also add continuously to its qualities as a conceptual and aesthetic resource. Drawing on two examples from Kiran Desai’s novel *The Inheritance of Loss* (2006), the article discusses author-, text- and reader-oriented approaches to literary multilingualism, in order to arrive at a more contextualizing and socially oriented notion that draws on current world literature scholarship. With “English” as its central case, a key claim here is that a regimes-approach makes it possible to speak of the multilingualism of “one” language.*

Keywords: Kiran Desai; lingualism; literary multilingualism; regimes of comprehensibility; reception; translation; World literature

This brief conceptual essay will attempt to address the fundamental antinomy between, on the one hand, promoting a multilingual approach to reading and, on the other, deconstructing linguistic boundaries and identifications as such. While the concept of multilingualism pragmatically challenges monolingual habits of thinking, it fails philosophically to take account of the porousness of linguistic boundaries, as indeed the sociolinguistic debates on trans-, poly- and metrolingualism have demonstrated (Pennycook, 2016). Multilingualism, in this respect, is still beholden to the monolingual paradigm. Conversely, however, the deconstructive view that the unity of a language is merely a “regulative idea” (Sakai, 2009, p. 73) risks playing fast and loose with sedimented institutional and textual histories that not only give “a” language tremendous authority but also add continuously to its qualities as a conceptual and aesthetic resource. As such textual histories accumulate, of course, place-specific inequalities between languages emerge and are perpetuated, which is yet another reason why it

Corresponding author’s email: stefan.helgesson@english.su.se

eISSN: 1457-9863

Publisher: University of Jyväskylä, Language Campus

© 2022: The author

<https://apples.journal.fi>

<https://doi.org/10.47862/apples.115265>

remains relevant to consider language not just as some endlessly fluid phenomenon, but as a space of differentiation and – sometimes – sharp boundaries. We need, in other words, a vocabulary that allows us to speak of language in the plural as well as to acknowledge power relations without falling prey to the habits of reification.

I approach these matters from the vantage point not of linguistics but of literary studies, where these and related issues have attracted a great deal of attention in recent years, yet without resulting in any coherent framework of study. It is my intention first to sketch out four methodological tendencies in the field, and then to suggest that the heuristic notion of “regimes of comprehensibility” might advance the discussion by avoiding the commonsensical take on linguistic boundaries and highlighting instead the adaptability of multilingual practices. Specifically, I want to claim that “one” language – in this instance the hyper-central language of our age, English – can function across multiple and otherwise discrete regimes of comprehensibility involving “other” languages. In that sense, the notion of regimes might have the potential to move beyond the aporia of the mono- and multilingual as two sides of the same coin. Some of these ideas emanating from literary contexts might seem idiosyncratic to readers of this linguistic journal, yet I trust there is also scope for unanticipated connections across fields. I even wish to argue that literary works can function as metatexts of multilingualism. That is to say, literature not only “is” a multilingual phenomenon, but it provides us with a privileged vantage point from which to conceptualise the perspectival nature of multilingualism.

Why should this be so? Mainly for two contrasting reasons. First, print literature – which is my concern here – could be described as crafted language that has a license (but no obligation) to draw on all registers of language. “Crafted” means here that it is precisely not to be confused with spontaneous utterances but is filtered through the writer’s accumulated linguistic sensibility. Secondly, the license of literature goes hand in hand with constraints at various levels. This has been theorised most comprehensively by Bourdieu (1992) and Casanova (1999), regarding how different agents in the literary field compete for legitimacy and recognition. For the purposes of this article, constraints of specific relevance are the economic and editorial conditions of publication, but also fundamental aspects of print such as orthography, accepted grammatical and syntactic standards of acceptability, expected readership, not to mention the weight of literary tradition itself. Taken together, the license and constraints of literature make it a linguistically condensed phenomenon unlike any other. Hence, we might nuance my claim to its “privileged” status by stating that literature presents us with highly specific instances of language use that cannot be substituted for other types of utterances – and that its modes of multilingualism therefore require a distinct set of approaches.

But let us now set the stage for my argument with what seems to be a straightforwardly illustrative literary example. In her Booker-prize winning novel *The Inheritance of Loss*, Indian author Kiran Desai occasionally intersperses the narrator’s English diction with untranslated snatches of various Indian languages, notably Hindi and Nepali. Towards the end, we read for instance italicised phrases such as “[s]hopping ke liye jaenge, bhel puri khaenge” or “Ekdum bekaar!” (Desai, 2006, pp. 327, 329) that I, personally, am unable to decode. I have of course tried to unpack their meaning by searching on the internet (the latter phrase is apparently an expression of disgust, the former a description of what the speaker

intends to eat when shopping), but I am focusing at the moment less on *understanding* these particular phrases and more on the implications of including such “opaque” linguistic moments in a widely circulated English-language novel. What interests me is the blunt fact that the words are *there*, on the page, and that they draw attention to themselves by dint of their difference from the dominant (English) regime of comprehensibility in the novel. For the record, I could just as well have chosen comparable instances from any number of contemporary postcolonial writers, including Abdulrazak Gurnah, Zoë Wicomb, Mohamed Mbougar Sarr, Yvonne Adhiambo Owuor or Arundhati Roy. This article does not, however, aim for coverage, nor does it engage in depth with actual literary texts. I reserve the latter task for a companion piece to the present article, intended for the soon-to-be-launched *Journal of Literary Multilingualism*. The citations from Desai’s novel are used here simply to showcase an aspect of multilingualism as a literary technique, and it is the implications of this technique – essentially *before* we engage with any interpretive reading – that interests me here. At least to begin with.

Before assessing the citations in terms of regimes of comprehensibility, we need, however, to consider some of the other currently available options. In literary scholarship there are arguably four main methodological approaches to instances such as the ones from *The Inheritance of Loss*, each of them offering a different framing of the problem. The first would be the prominent line of multilingual enquiry that has focused on the author. Influentially, Steven G. Kellman considered how the “translingual imagination” of individual writers with bi- or multilingual competence enabled, when successful, “the creation of a new voice” and “the invention of a new self” (Kellman, 2000, p. 15). Kellman’s position is not really a theoretical one, but treats linguistic plurality as an empirical fact and places a strong premium on the creative capacity of the individual author. A comparable author-oriented approach has been elaborated by francophone scholars with an interest in the *exophonie* of non-native writers of literature in French. To draw on the explanation offered by Alice Duhan in her recent (2021) PhD thesis at Stockholm University, *exophony*, in its minimal usage, simply describes writers whose working language is another than their first language. Normatively however, it also “valorises the passage into a foreign language as beneficial for literary creativity” (“valorise le passage par une langue étrangère comme bénéfique à la création littéraire”, Duhan, 2021, p. 135), which recalls Kellman’s stance. This presupposes a strong focus on (and knowledge of) the individual author’s linguistic competence – although there is nothing in Desai’s novel that confirms whether she actually knows all the languages she is citing. It is also highly questionable whether Desai can be regarded as “exophone” in relation to English. Most importantly, as a print commodity, the novel is available for reading without requiring that its readers know anything about the biographical individual Kiran Desai. For the novel to do its multilingual work, in other words, the author’s competence is not all that relevant – the novel could just as well be *performing* certain modes of multilingualism externally, without being premised on any deeper knowledge of the cited languages. In its individualistic and biographical tendency, then, the author-oriented approach would seem to miss out on important aspects of the *de facto* function and reception of literary multilingualism.

These remarks push us in the direction of a more stringently text-focused approach, which is the second of the tendencies in this overview. I will mention

just one of the more intriguing attempts to devise a text-oriented theory of literary multilingualism: the German scholar Robert Stockhammer's (2017) distinction between two lingual qualities in literature, namely, *linguality* (or *Sprachlichkeit*) and *lingualism* (or *Sprachigkeit*). The terms derive from *langage* (the abstract notion of language – *linguality*) and *langue* (specific language – *lingualism*) in French, explained by Stockhammer as follows:

The connotative reach of *langage*, as opposed to *langue*, differs in two regards. First, the definitional spectrum of *langage* indeed includes non-lingual sign systems (“*langage de signe*”) as well as idioms that, though they are lingual, are not distinguishable by way of geographic criteria, such as vocational jargon or sociolects (“*langage des jeunes*”). Looking more closely at Anglophone usage affords us a quick way of testing the difference (though not an entirely disambiguating translation of it): if *tongue* can replace the word *language* in a certain context, it refers to the concept of *langue*. If this substitution is not possible, one is dealing with a *langage*. (p. 34)

To me, however, the pure abstraction of *langage* seems hard to sustain. I am not aware of any language, or indeed system of signs, that is not also mediated and hence specific and situated when it is brought to one's awareness. My hermeneutic instincts as a literary scholar tell me that language unread or unheard or unuttered may be potential language, as when books slumber on their shelves, but that it is only when engaged that the event of meaning occurs. *Linguality/langage/Sprachlichkeit* seems instead to refer to that illusion of absolute transparency that effortless comprehension can produce, but that we slip out of as soon as a “foreign” element enters the text. *Linguality*, I submit, is therefore *lingualism* disguised. Hence, I would suggest that the notion of *linguality* does provide us with a key to how regimes of comprehensibility can function: it is when a regime of comprehensibility is strongest and most uncontested that the illusion of *linguality* seems to prevail.

But if *linguality* is *lingualism* disguised, we need to reexamine Stockhammer's understanding of *lingualism*. “When certain texts are obviously multilingual”, he writes, “they are particularly distinct signs of more-lingualism – an intensified confrontation with the substantive fact that every text relates in a specific way to more than one *langue*” (Stockhammer, 2017, p. 35). *Lingualism*, then, has to do with (the visibility of) the signature of language. This may have to do with how we conventionally name and identify languages as entities, but it is equally about the irreducible linguistic signature of a given literary text. If, as I am arguing, any literary text is steeped in *lingualism*, the operative word in the quotation above is “intensified”. The excerpts from Desai's novel show this clearly. By confronting us, metonymically and in a unified script, with multiple systems of signification, its *lingualism* is foregrounded and becomes “obvious” in Stockhammer's sense.

In order to distinguish between different ways of intensifying *lingualism* in literature, Stockhammer devises a rather elaborate terminology. The Desai example would count as “*glottamimesis*”, or the representation of other languages, which is different from “*glottadiegesis*” (Stockhammer, 2017, p. 41), or the talking about other languages. Interestingly, he also identifies a mode of “*glotta-aporetic*” *lingualism* (Stockhammer, 2017, p. 44), which is when the text makes the identification of language undecidable – a not uncommon situation in fiction, particularly in genres such as fantasy or science fiction. Such terminology can be

extremely useful for analytical purposes, but even so, this is where Stockhammer's text-focused, philological approach to multilingualism begins to waver. Comprehension and identification of languages – not to mention experiencing certain languages as “other” – are not static textual qualities, after all, but an integrated aspect of a reading experience that will differ significantly depending on *who* is doing the reading. As I will discuss further down, readers in India (to state this schematically and without implying any national essentialism) will have a much greater likelihood of understanding “[s]hopping ke liye jaenge, bhel puri khaenge” or “Ek dum bekaar!” (Desai, 2006, 327, 329) than most readers in Europe, such as myself. To speak of lingualism in this literary sense, in other words, necessarily implicates the labour of reading and the variability of linguistic competence among readers.

Although there is more to be said about text-focused approaches – besides Stockhammer, the contributions of Till Dembeck (2014) deserve special mention – we are confronted here with one of their limits. Lingualism and comprehensibility depend, after all, on the elusive nature not only of reception but of *assumed* reception. The author, editor and publisher will inevitably shape a string of language on the basis of numerous assumptions, but once published, it will have to fend for itself, and it will do so differently depending on the readers. We need therefore to consider the third, reader-oriented approach to literary multilingualism. As first suggested by Doris Sommer (2004), it is precisely the variability of the reader's (or readers', rather) linguistic competence and repertoire that is at stake here. *The Inheritance of Loss* does, after all, put my own readerly ability under scrutiny. When do I understand what I read? When don't I? And when does the difference between the two matter? Most intriguingly, can *not* understanding add to the meaning of a literary work? I would tend to agree with Sommer that it can, insofar as it alerts me to the placing of the narrative (culturally and geographically) and also introduces a certain roughness or difficulty to my reading experience. Paradoxically, then, literature apparently has the capacity to introduce a semantic dimension to non-comprehension, but this can only be accounted for in relation to the totality of a given text, and from a given readerly position. The moments of opacity in the novel position me, after all, as a *particular* reader, distinct from those to whom the phrases are not opaque at all. Somewhat controversially, Sommer even privileges the less competent reader from an aesthetic point of view: “the delays or difficulties that English-only readers may encounter in a multilingual text probably make them better targets for aesthetic effects than readers who don't stop to struggle” (2003, p. 30).

In this line of thinking, partial competence, or even non-competence, is seen not as a drawback but as a condition of literary reception and a potential writerly resource. Picking up from Sommer, the idea has been developed by, among others, Julia Tidigs and Markus Huss, for whom “the reader is an active participant in the multilingualism of the text” (2017, p. 210). The implication of such an active participation is that not just the multilingualism of a text, but even the recognition of what we take to be its lingualism (its linguistic signature), is contingent on the reader. By making language palpable in its materiality as sounds and signs, variable comprehension thereby disrupts the automaticity of everyday language use. This can, in turn, be exploited by writers to considerable aesthetic effect. In an article on the Finnish poet Ralf Andtbacka, who makes use of the strangeness of a Finland-Swedish dialect in his poetics, Tidigs argues that “the destabilisation of orthographical norms paves the way for a re-introduction of the acoustics of

language through deviant spelling that brings about a de-automatisation of the alphabet's ability to 'reproduce' sound" (Tidigs, 2020, p. 765). As we could see already in the quote above from Sommer, the connection to Russian formalist ideas on "defamiliarisation" in literature should be clear, but this time with a less objectifying conception of the text. The *degree* of defamiliarisation achieved depends after all entirely on the reader's competence and previous cultural experiences.

At this point in the argument, it is becoming increasingly clear that literary multilingualism branches out into much wider social and historical concerns. It can't be reduced to a purely individual matter relating to the author, nor can it credibly be isolated as a purely technical and formal matter. Or, to elaborate on my gloss above regarding the linguistic density of literature, the author's crafting, the editor's publication and the readers' responses all implicate the different dimensions of the social totality. Specifically, we see here how the irreducible, unpredictable diversity of linguistic competence among readers, and hence of comprehension writ large, will exceed the charmed circle of author-text-reader. This takes us then to the fourth methodological tendency that has been developed not least in the context of recent world literature scholarship. It is characterised by sometimes breath-takingly broad historical perspectives that show how any instance of literature is inevitably shaped by forces, conventions and modes of thinking that far exceed the individual writer, publisher or reader. Influentially, Yasemin Yildiz targeted in *Beyond the Mother Tongue* (2012) the assumption of monolingualism as the "natural" mode for literature. She dated this assumption, according to which "individuals and social formations are imagined to possess one 'true' language only, their 'mother tongue', and through this possession to be organically linked to an exclusive, clearly demarcated ethnicity, culture, and nation" (Yildiz, 2012, p. 2), more or less to the era of Romanticism. In his *The Invention of Monolingualism* (2016), David Gramling identified rather the European seventeenth century as the key moment for this development (Gramling, 2016, p. 1). Both these studies tend nonetheless to add further credibility to Benedict Anderson (1983) and Ernst Gellner's (2006) earlier accounts concerning the post-Romantic consolidation of national languages and literatures in the nineteenth century as not an organic process, but rather an active construction of a standardised commons that facilitated the creation of "imagined communities" (Anderson, 1983) of strangers. This is a two-way street, insofar as languages construct nations and vice versa. Or as Robert Young puts it: "Like states, languages do not simply exist as a fact of nature; they have to be created" (2016, p. 1207-1208).

Here we arrive once again at the possibility that multilingualism really is little more than the mirror image of monolingualism, to the extent that it endorses what Naoki Sakai calls the "regulative idea" of strictly separate and identifiable languages. In Sakai's deconstructive understanding, "[i]t is not possible to know whether a particular language as a unity exists or not. It is the other way around: by subscribing to the idea of the unity of language, it becomes possible for us to systematically organize knowledge about languages in a modern, scientific manner" (2009, 73). The unity of language, on this understanding, is more ideological than actual, and the degree to which it is effective has everything to do with power struggles. Pushing such a view in a postcolonial direction, Aamir Mufti (among others) has also insisted that the way we think about language and literature today, and especially how it is exploited politically, is really the result

of European imperial rule and the nineteenth-century philological revolution, which were intertwined developments. His central example – and this returns us to the example of Desai – is the scientific ordering and subsequent political instrumentalisation of languages in South Asia, most notably in the split between Urdu and Hindi. If Urdu, written in Arabic script and strongly influenced by Persian, is the bearer of an old, cosmopolitan literary heritage, its twin language Hindi, written in Devanagari script, was only consolidated fairly recently in the national space of India. “Modern Hindi”, Mufti writes, “emerged in conflict and competition, on the one hand, with Urdu, which under the sign of the nonindigenous, it wished to eject from the space of the nation, but also, on the other, with a range of other forms of the northern vernacular [in India] about which it remained instead fundamentally ambivalent, wishing to incorporate them into its own prehistory” (2016, p. 126).

There is no space in this article to enter the full complexity of Mufti’s discussion, but the point I am deriving from him (and Yildiz and others) is that the more tightly focused approaches to literary multilingualism – be they author-, text-, or reader-oriented – need to incorporate larger historical, political and indeed economic considerations in respect of how languages are “made” and identified to begin with. By way of conclusion, I will therefore schematically demonstrate how this can be done in relation to the two examples from Desai’s novel. This, finally, is where I also hope to show “regimes of comprehensibility” enables a perspectival approach to literary multilingualism.

The first observation is that *The Inheritance of Loss* can be claimed to operate within and along the fault lines between multiple regimes of comprehensibility. Most obviously, the author, the publisher and the target readers all have the regime of “English” in common. Conversely, however, this supposedly single language is activated in *different* regimes. I have already noted the diverse readerly positions among those who know Hindi and those who don’t. In India, the cited sentences will be received differently by English-speaking readers than among most readers in Europe and North America. We can in other words posit an English regime of comprehensibility in India (typically associated with the elite) where Hindi is included, which differs from English regimes elsewhere. And *within* that English-Hindi regime, we should add, the double burden of imperial and national history discussed by Mufti is brought to bear on the reading – whereas it easily can be ignored in other regimes.

The upshot of this discussion is that regimes should not be imagined as rigid entities, but as contextually adaptable depending on readership. Describing *The Inheritance of Loss* as an internationally marketed novel in English is in other words not sufficient to pinpoint the different regimes that it will activate. This is related yet different to what Walkowitz coined as the “born-translated” novel in English that is “designed to travel” and thereby anticipates its entry into multiple literary fields (2009, 570). Yet, for Walkowitz, such novels “tend to veer away from the modernist emphasis on linguistic experimentation” (570), which doesn’t quite capture what we see happening in *The Inheritance of Loss*. More importantly, the text of Desai’s novel does not of itself control how its multilingualism will be inflected through different regimes, regardless of its anticipation of a heterogeneous readership.

Put differently, regimes will bend the lingualism of the novel in different directions. Ultimately, there is a point where the bending will break it, and the novel becomes reconstructed in another language – which is what we normally

think of as translation. I have until now been treating *The Inheritance of Loss* as a single source text, but it is in fact widely translated and can therefore be described as an expandable, multilingual “textual zone” (Helgesson, 2018) that cuts across an even wider range of regimes of comprehensibility than those covered by what is recognised as English.

It is well known that English is the hypercentral source language for translations in the world today (Heilbron, 2000, p. 14), which essentially guaranteed that Desai’s prize-winning novel would be picked up by numerous publishers in diverse languages. A risk with such a translational dynamic in the international system of publishing and translation is that it invites a mere repetition of conventional conceptions of languages as unities. Sakai’s warning (2009) that translation actively participates in consolidating the regulative of idea of separate languages is worth keeping in mind. A regimes-oriented approach to translation will however underscore the inherent multilingualism of English. As a hypercentral language it becomes what tends to be called a vehicular language, and the translations of *The Inheritance of Loss* therefore allow us to consider just how many different regimes of comprehensibility English is involved in.

In Sweden, as is the case in most translation cultures today, the dominance of English as a source language for translation is crushing. Publishing statistics from 2018 show that more than 70% of published translations in Sweden are from English (Nationalbibliografen, 2018, p. 10). But this is not so surprising if we consider that on the national level the prevailing regime of comprehensibility today can be described as Swedish-English (just as it is Norwegian-English, Danish-English and Finnish-English in the other Nordic countries). Or perhaps it is surprising: why don’t Swedish readers just read the English edition of *The Inheritance of Loss*? But apparently – and this is what the empirical figures tell us – if the main regime of comprehensibility in Sweden can be described as Swedish-English, this entails also a variability of competence among readers, with Swedish as the stronger pole. Such a conceptual framing is thereby an improvement on the description of English as a vehicular language. From a regimes perspective, is it rather the case that English is an integrated part of the linguistic landscape in Sweden, which primes both lay and professional readers to look towards what is published in English (including what has been translated into English), yet there remain thresholds in reading that make translation into Swedish viable for publishers. It is worth noting, nonetheless, that Desai’s Swedish translator Rose-Marie Nielsen has dutifully retained the Hindi (and Nepali) phrases as they stand in the English version (Desai, 2007, pp. 321, 323), although their function – their lingualism! – now will arguably differ when placed in a Swedish-English regime of comprehensibility, which has less of a historical connection with India.

Thus far, the apparently simple example of the two excerpts has led us along a meandering path – and we could go much further still. A fuller discussion of how regimes of comprehensibility are enacted in and through *The Inheritance of Loss* would require that we enter the story-world of the novel, not least with a view to how the class-positions and geographical mobility of different characters provide their own commentary on regimes of comprehensibility in India, Great Britain and the USA. I will stop short of such an exercise here, however, and merely conclude by suggesting that more work needs to be done to tease out the various implications of a regimes-approach to language. I have in this essay also failed to address the matter of script, although “scriptworlds” (Park, 2018) constitute regimes of comprehensibility of their own that confound linguistic boundaries.

The fact that the Hindi phrases in *The Inheritance of Loss* are rendered in the Latin alphabet is defamiliarising from an Indian point of view and privileges the globally dominant script. Arguably, this makes the phrases less-than-opaque to non-Indian readers, approximating language as sound rather than signal, but not as sheer difference.

In sum, it seems to me that “regimes of comprehensibility” might offer one way to build a composite, multimodal analytical framework that takes on board the emphasis on fluidity and process that we find in deconstructive and translanguaging approaches, while remaining alert to the how linguistic inertia, boundedness and stability that are also a precondition for literary practice. As a composite term, regimes in this sense might make it evident how several things are going on at the same time in the literary instantiation of language. If the print artefact is an outcome of a negotiation between writer and publisher, a third and a fourth thing happens in reading and translation (which typically occurs after a first publication). In this composite linguistic phenomenon that occurs cumulatively, in time, the technique of multilingualism that we have observed above may function above all as a catalyst for writers, readers and translators to negotiate and recalibrate, in perspectival fashion, multiple regimes comprehensibility.

Disclosure statement

The author declared no conflict of interest.

References

- Anderson, B. (1983). *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. Verso.
- Bourdieu, P. (1992). *Les règles de l'art: Genèse et structure du champ littéraire*. Seuil.
- Casanova, P. (1999). *La république mondiale des lettres*. Seuil.
- Dembeck, T. (2014). Für eine Philologie der Mehrsprachigkeit: Zur Einführung. In T. Dembeck & G. Mein, *Philologie und Mehrsprachigkeit* (pp. 9–38). Universitätsverlag Winter.
- Desai, K. (2006). *The inheritance of loss*. Grove Press.
- Desai, K. (2007). *Bittert arv. Translated by Rose-Marie Nielsen*. Wahlström & Widstrand.
- Duhan, A. (2021). *Les langues du roman translingue. Une étude de Nancy Huston, Vassilis Alexakis et Andreï Makine*. Diss., Stockholm University.
- Gellner, E. (2006). *Nations and nationalism*. Second edition. Blackwell Publishing.
- Gramling, J. (2016). *The invention of monolingualism*. Bloomsbury.
- Heilbron, J. (2000). Translation as a cultural world-system. *Perspectives: Studies in Translatology*, 8(1), 9–26.
- Helgesson, S. (2018). Translation and the circuits of world literature. In B. Etherington & J. Zimble (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to world literature* (pp. 85–99). Cambridge University Press.
- Kellman, S. (2000). *The translingual imagination*. University of Nebraska Press.
- Mufti, A. (2016). *Forget English! Orientalisms and world literatures*. Harvard University Press.
- Nationalbibliografen i siffror*. (2018). Kungliga biblioteket.
- Park, S. (2018). Scriptworlds. In B. Etherington & J. Zimble (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to world literature* (pp. 100–115). Cambridge University Press.

- Pennycook, A. (2016). Mobile times, mobile terms: The trans-super-poly-metro movement. In N. Coupland (Ed.), *Sociolinguistics: Theoretical debates* (pp. 201–216). Cambridge University Press.
- Sakai, N. (2009). How do we count a language? Translation and discontinuity. *Translation Studies*, 2(1), 71–88.
- Sommer, D. (2003). *Bilingual aesthetics: A new sentimental education*. Duke University Press.
- Stockhammer, R. (2017). Converting lingualism into linguality (langagification des langues) in Goethe's Wilhelm Meister novels. Translated by Judith Menzl. *Critical Multilingualism Studies*, 5(3), 32–51.
- Tidigs, J. (2020). The tongue, the text and the tape recorder. Vernacular and the technology of writing in Ralf Andtbacka's *Wunderkammer*. *Textual Practice*, 34(5), 761–782.
- Tidigs, J. & Huss, M. (2017). The noise of multilingualism: reader diversity, linguistic borders and literary multimodality. *Critical Multilingualism Studies*, 5(1), 208–235.
- Walkowitz, R. (2009). Comparison literature. *New Literary History*, 40(3), 567–582.
- Yildiz, Y. (2012). *Beyond the mother tongue: The postmonolingual paradigm*. Fordham University Press.
- Young, R. (2016). That which is casually called a language. *PMLA*, 131(5), 1207–1221.

Received March 4, 2022
Revision received June 12, 2022
Accepted June 26, 2022