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(doi: 10.57571/109378)

Testi e linguaggi (ISSN 1974-2886)

Fascicolo 1, gennaio 2024

Ente di afferenza:

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The ELFentextualized legal discourse and its accessibility to international recipients

by *Pietro Luigi Iaia**

Abstract

This paper examines the intralingual and interlingual reformulations of a selected corpus of extracts from the EU Directive on international protection and the *Decreto Flussi*, defining the number of non-European workers who can enter Italy. The retextualizations are meant to increase the original discourse's accessibility to international receivers by applying the 'ELFentextualization' model. This was devised at the University of Salento as a tool allowing students and mediators to work with text analysis and reproduction by means of English as a common language and hence improve their competence. In addition, the renderings also aim to pursue the recipients' 'legal empowerment' by expanding the addressees' comprehension of their rights and duties in a foreign country. The analysis of the retextualizations details the actualization of the three phases of 'ELFentextualization': (i) interpretation of the original versions; (ii) identification of the core of the authors' intentionality; and (iii) production of target versions.

Keywords: ELFentextualization, Reformulation of legal discourse, Translation in the language classroom, Legal empowerment, English as a Lingua Franca.

I

Introduction and rationale

This paper enquires into two written reformulations of legal discourse following the "ELFentextualization" model (Iaia & Capone, 2020), which was devised at the University of Salento as a tool helping mediators and foreign-language students. Its development responds to the search for novel "conceptualizations" of translation uses (Koskinen & Kinnunen, 2022, p. 8) in the language classroom (Pintado Gutiérrez, 2018), aiming to improve communication between source-text producers and target-text receivers (Râbăcov, 2013, p. 67), as well as to achieve pedagogic purposes. One of the research hypotheses is that the improvement of mediators' competence (Cronin, 2013; Androutsopoulos, 2014) triggers more efficient forms of interaction and assistance by means of English (Guido, 2018). The benefit of designing strategies to help mediators practice decoding, recoding and transferring meaning (Mason, 2009) is to counteract the tendency to leave these activities to volunteers who do "not have specialized preparation" (Valero-Garcés, 2014, p. 6).

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The examined ELFtextualizations are carried out by two postgraduate students of Foreign Languages and Literatures and Translating and Interpreting, who are commissioned the reformulation of legal discourse for international readers. In so doing, they work with words and text structures in order to produce target versions where the senders' intentionality is made more accessible to readers in contexts of asylum requests and immigration (Guido, 2018). In the course of the construction of their ELFtextualizations, students are guided to consider and become acquainted with the types of competence that serve to close gaps and solve conflicts between the interactants, when they are engaged in activities of re-textualization whereby different (and sometimes distant) cultural contexts and mental schemata are involved.

The renderings are meant to foster the achievement of positive citizenship and better integration in foreign countries on the part of target readers. In fact, improved knowledge of laws and legal texts has positive consequences on the acquisition of one's legal empowerment (Maru, 2010). Thanks to the latter, people have more control on how "to exercise their rights" and "the poor and excluded" can be helped "become able to use the law, the legal system [... and] to advance their rights" (Goodwin & Maru, 2017). The comprehension of legal texts, which are rather restricted to specialized users (Gotti, 2005), encourages addressees' integration by expanding their knowledge of their rights and duties in a foreign country, granting them "freedom of choice and action" (Golub, 2003). Due to the functional nature of the discussed reformulations – namely, to be available internationally and interculturally – this research is also presented as a contribution to the investigation of English uses in the analysed contexts of communication. The assumption is that by commissioning a retextualization for international receivers – from migrants, to citizens coming from a different socio-cultural backgrounds – translators select English for their renderings, eventually deploying language variations that are expected to increase the accessibility to legal discourse, improving one's quality of life and integration in foreign countries. This paper aims to investigate whether the English uses in this instance of reformulation can represent a further – albeit mostly written – form of mediation, pointing at that encounter between the areas of studies on retextualizations and research on English as a lingua franca. We think that this combination represents one of the most interesting and significant directions for investigation, with stimulating implications from the translation and education perspectives (McCarthy *et al.*, 2003; Campbell, 2005).

As for the structure of this paper, section 2 and 3 introduce the main concern of research on International English along with the ELFtextualization Model. Section 4 illustrates the method and objects of analysis, before commenting on the ELFtextualized versions of the selected corpus of extracts from the *Decreto Flussi* (the 'Flow Decree', henceforth DF) and the Directive of the European Union on International Protection.

International English uses and ELFentextualization

Research has explored the features and functional nature of the international re-appropriation and re-authorization of English in a number of scenarios, from academic exchanges (Jenkins, 2014; Christiansen, 2019) to business interactions (Facchinetti *et al.*, 2020), to migration and political discourse (Guido, 2018; Provenzano, 2021), to technological and translation matters (Iaia, 2016; 2021; Franceschi, 2017). Despite the manifold areas of enquiry, some common features emerge, denoting English as a Lingua Franca (ELF) as a communicative means that is authenticated by speakers (Widdowson, 2003), who modify or even recreate the standard traits (Mauranen, 2007; Kaur, 2009) to make “languages and cultures mutually accessible” (Archibald & Garzone, 2014, p. 14). This functional target shapes the mediators’ attitude, urging them to work as bridges between source and target backgrounds to make sense of the original messages for themselves and their addressees, ultimately pursuing mutual intelligibility (Rudby & Saraceni, 2006). As a result, senders, receivers and mediators end up giving life to groups that are sustained by communicative needs, be them completing successful transactions, disseminating knowledge, sharing interests online or – as in the examined case study – improving access to legal discourse. ELF users’ communities are characterized by the activation of specific practices of re-creation of English (Seidlhofer, 2007), revealing their commitment to protecting exchanges and the delivery of one’s intentionality by means of recurrent lexical and syntactic features.

The practices of language co- and re-creation are preserved in intercultural encounters despite their evolution into virtual, temporary and *ad hoc* meetings, whose duration and preservation depend on reaching the interactants’ common objectives (Golub, 2010), from exchanging views about shared interests (Quinton & Harridge-March, 2010), to commenting on news items (Jahan & Kim, 2020), to achieving ludic objective via online gaming (Iaia, 2021). Scholars have accounted for the “limited period of time” (Mortensen & Hazel, 2017) of interactions by proposing specific labels such as “transient international groups” (Pitzl, 2019, p. 9). We think that the instance of communication investigated here may further develop how to portray these realities. In the exchanges under discussion, senders (source-text authors) create messages that are delivered to new recipients (migrants, for example) thanks to mediators – the participants to this research. The latter attempt to move addressers and addressees closer through the use of a linguistic means that, in their view, is suitable for the envisaged receivers. It follows that all interactants involved are members of groups where communication may take place by exchanging written texts but also in different moments and places. For these reasons, the label “(A)synchronous Transient International Groups” is suggested to define the parties that are formed for pedagogic purposes, as well as for the development of specific scenarios, such as the creation of an online portal hosting the English retextualizations of legal or other texts for informative purposes – in fact, the improvement of one’s knowledge is one of the

cornerstones of legal empowerment. The adjective “(A)synchronous” is proposed since the virtual interactions at issue may be performed by interactants that are not found in the same (virtual) place at the same time. In addition, while elaborating the Model, the differences between working and didactic conditions were contemplated. It is true that mediation, in migration contexts, is mostly performed orally and synchronously. Yet, to work on a written output of mediation may also serve educational aims, insofar as that the effects of training can enhance one’s profession, guiding intercultural agents towards the acquisition of the skills that will be beneficial to their job.

The students who applied the model for the production of the examined retextualizations do work as ‘meaning makers’, who interpret the source versions, first, in order to infer the sender’s illocutionary force. The latter is converted into a semantic representation that is subject to adaption for the purpose of making the original discourse accessible to receivers. This premise informs this study’s intent to present renderings as means that mediators can exploit to improve their training and to reflect on the approaches aimed at boosting accessibility for international readers. Interactions, by means of written reformulations, occur through English, which was selected as the language of this study because of its role in facilitating the international and intercultural circulation of the examined messages. Target-text authors are committed to transferring the meaning in the most successful way (Jenkins, 2014), interpreting and reformulating the source texts (Grossman, 2010) for implied receivers (Bogucki, 2011). The subjects’ stance and language uses hence support the association between ELF and retextualization. The main goal is mutual intelligibility, which is actualized thanks to verbal strategies of simplification, reformulation, relexicalization, and even re-thematization, to keep the most informative parts (Daelemans *et al.*, 2004) and replace what “may challenge” the comprehension of the original discourse (Paetzold & Specia, 2016).

3

Phases of ELFtextualization

The aim of ELFtextualization is to activate communication between authors of legal texts and international receivers through a shared language that enables connections between the interlocutors’ cognitive, linguistic and socio-cultural dimensions (Chesterman, 2000). English, also in the context of the examined applications of the Model, represents the linguistic resource that mediators select before making sense of the authors’ illocutionary force and turning it into an equivalent rendering for target recipients (van Leeuwen, 2005; Venuti, 2009). In so doing, reformulation is the outcome of an entextualization process (Urban, 1996), according to which source versions are decontextualized and recontextualized in order to comply with the mediators’ expectations concerning the implied readers (Bogucki, 2011; Schmid, 2013). Envisaged receivers operate as a mental construct of mediators, inducing them to generate English variations that are expected to assist the audience in achieving an

appropriate interpretation of original messages. The type of equivalence that is pursued is not restricted to lexical or structural features; it aims to reproduce the communicative aim and perlocutionary effects through the mediators' interpretation, representing the necessary refiner.

The focus on mediators' understanding and re-creation of source versions is reflected by the phases of the Model. They are separated for educational sake, but the stages do interact and intertwine in the actual process of approaching, interpreting and reformulating legal texts. The three phases are: (i) ANTEXT; (ii) GIST; and (iii) RETEXT. ANTEXT's aim is to examine the original versions in order to create a cognitive-semantic representation of the illocutionary dimension, or "gist" (Seidlhofer, 1995). The latter labels the next phase, where the 'core' of the author's discourse – or, what mediators consider relevant – is set and informs the production of retextualizations. In the third phase, the source texts' most important elements and traits are retextualized by means of English. In the experimental part that is covered in the following sections, English was not presented to the authors of the retextualizations as a compulsory choice, and yet it was chosen when mediators realized that they had to reformulate texts for international receivers. So far, five texts, including the two discussed here, have been and are being retextualized thanks to the Model. The authors of the retextualizations are Italian undergraduate and postgraduate students from the University of Salento, as well as one French Erasmus student and two Polish Erasmus students visiting the same university. These participants play the role of mediators who are commissioned the reformulations of the source texts for international receivers, in order to make text's discourse suitable for target readers. The amount of data that has been collected to date seems to back up that shared characteristics of the elected the lingua franca appear to be tied to the mediators' duty to increase accessibility to texts for international recipients. The language, even when it is used by different subjects, is typified by common lexical and syntactic choices on the part of mediators, from the selection of verb tenses to the simplification of sentence structures, to the identification of alternative themes. These characteristics appear in the analyses that are discussed in the following sections.

4

Analysis

4.1. Research method and objects of analysis

The analysed applications of ELFtextualization were carried out at the University of Salento by two Italian postgraduate students of Foreign Languages and Literatures and Translating and Interpreting. The two participants were commissioned an English reformulation of the *Directive 2013/32/EU* (DEU; Subject 1) and the *Decreto Flussi 2020* (DF; Subject 2). The former is a Directive of the European Union on international protection; the latter is the 'flow decree' defining the number of Non-European workers who can enter Italy. The two postgraduates – possessing an advanced level

of English knowledge – worked on the texts by themselves and not simultaneously. Subject 1 produced her target version from April to May 2021, whereas Subject 2 translated the DF from September to October 2021. Finally, they had to record their think-aloud comments whereby they justified their rendering choices. In the following sections, the analysis of the selected corpus of extracts from DEU’s articles 4, 6, and 40, and from DF’s articles 1, 6, and 7, will serve to enquire into the linguistic actualization of the phases of the Model: source-text interpretation; identification of the core – or gist – of the author’s intentionality; and adaptation of the gist in the creation of target texts.

4.2. DEU’s selected corpus of extracts

Articles 4 and 6 respectively determine the rules (article 4, paragraph 5 – extract (1)) and temporal dimension (article 6, paragraphs 2 – (2) – and 3 – (3)) of migrants’ requests for international protection, whereas article 40, paragraph 4 (excerpt (4)) illustrates one of the applicants’ rights. The texts are selected because of their topics, as well as due to the possibility of finding some of the most common strategies of legal discourse, such as lexical and structural repetition, and intertextuality.

These features are already evident in the source text of example (1):

Article 4, paragraph 5 – Source version

(1) Applications for international protection made in a Member State to the authorities of another Member State carrying out border or immigration controls there shall be dealt with by the Member State in whose territory the application is made.

The most recognizable trait – which subject 1 highlighted when commenting on her ELFtextualization – is the repetition of “Member State” in a limited space. Repetition is, in fact, one of the features that, in Gotti’s (2005) view, help to avoid ambiguity and imprecision, even though it slows down the reading pace and can undermine the text’s accessibility to non-native receivers. Other relevant characteristics are the insertion of the modal auxiliary “shall”, conveying a sense of obligation and determination, and the passive voice that contributes to the thematization of “Member State”. The ANTEXT phase led to the identification of the traits that have just been pinpointed, as well as to the recognition of the GIST as the “definition of the procedure for application of international protection”. The latter was elected by Subject 1 as the basic illocutionary force to deliver to the potential readers – which she prevalently identified in migrants – by means of her ELFtextualization.

The result is reproduced below:

Article 4, paragraph 5 – ELFtextualization

Migrants must submit their application for international protection to the authorities of the EU Country responsible for the territory, even if another EU Country is carrying out border or immigration controls.

The length is reduced in the reformulation, entailing that simplification and deletion represent the strategies that Subject 1 preferred. Simplification emerges from rendering “Member State” as “EU Country”, leading to a different tenor revealing a closer relationship between mediators and receivers. This is one of the distinctive traits of mediation, whose agents work as a bridge allowing senders and receivers to communicate more profitably. In (1)’s RETEXT, another evident feature is the transformation of passive voice, turning “shall be dealt with” into “is carrying out”. The objective is to present to implied readers syntactic structures that may need less reading times to be processed and interpreted. Finally, an interesting strategy is the shift between the theme and rheme from the original version. In the source text, the focus remains on “Member States”, foregrounding the area of application of requests for protection and the main subject of interest from the bureaucratic perspective. In the ELFentextualization, instead, it is “Migrants” that symbolizes the thematized notion, spotlighting the main participants that are affected by the content of the examined article. This is expected to attract the receivers’ attention, who can feel themselves being called into question, trying to close the distance between “EU countries” and people in search of hospitality and protection. The logic behind the reformulation of (1) – as is also evidenced by the inclusion of more common modal auxiliaries, such as “must” – informs the renderings of the other parts, as excerpts (2) and (3) below.

Article 6, paragraph 2

	<i>Source version</i>	<i>ELFentextualization</i>
(2)	<p><u>Member States shall ensure that a person who has made an application for international protection has an effective opportunity to lodge it as soon as possible.</u> Where the applicant does not lodge his or her application, Member States may apply Article 28 accordingly.</p>	<p><u>EU Countries must ensure that applicants can apply for international protection in the shortest time possible.</u> [It is omitted in the mediator’s reformulation.]</p>

Article 6, paragraph 3

(3) Without prejudice to paragraph 2, Member States may require that applications for international protection be lodged in person and/or at a designated place.

(2) and (3) share the original features of (1): the use of modal auxiliaries; the complex syntactic structure; the preference for passive voices. As can be inferred from Subject 1’s comments on the reformulation strategies, other features that may confuse the implied readers approaching the source versions is the use of present perfect, which could take more time to be interpreted. Addressees are in the thematic position in both

texts, but the ELFtextualized one simplifies the words and structures illustrating the situation. “Applicants” replaces the long winded “a person who has made an application for international protection”, but length is reduced in general, to “cope with potential and different reading times”, as the mediator explains when justifying her choices. Simplification is also in rendering “an effective opportunity to lodge” as “can”, resorting to one of the most common modal auxiliaries again, and shortening the original article effectively.

(3) also shows the value of intertextuality in legal discourse: “Without prejudice to paragraph 2” contributes to the creation of that construction known as “textual mapping” (Bhatia, 1998). The latter is fundamental to pursue precision by referring to articles from the same law or citing other texts. Actually, from the perspective of emphasizing the most relevant and informative parts of the source versions, intertextuality may be avoided, preferring simplified and condensed structures that convey the core of the message faster. This happens in the ELFtextualizations of (2) and (3) – partially reproduced as (2a) and (3a) below – demonstrating the predisposition to make source texts closer to the envisaged addressees by means of simplified structure and even deletion:

Article 6, paragraph 2

	<i>Source version</i>	<i>ELFtextualization</i>
(2a)	Where the applicant does not lodge his or her application, Member States may apply Article 28 accordingly.	[It is omitted in the mediator’s reformulation.]

Article 6, paragraph 3

	<i>Source version</i>	<i>ELFtextualization</i>
(3a)	<u>Without prejudice to paragraph 2, Member States</u> may require that applications for international protection <u>be lodged</u> in person and/or at a designated place.	[<u>Omission of the intratextual reference</u>] <u>EU Countries</u> may require that the migrant <u>lodges</u> the application for international protection in person and/or at a specific place.

In (3a), the allusion to the previous paragraph is omitted, since the GIST – in Subject 1’s words – is in recounting the potential requests on the part of “EU Countries”. This is interesting not only from the perspective of the examined extract. Its implications are worth considering when the whole ELFtextualization process is investigated. The decisions about the reformulation of source versions depend on the identification of their core, in the course of phase one of the Model. In the examined extract,

interpretation led to concentrating on the Member State's behaviour, also due to the fact that the paragraph to which the source version refers is available immediately above the one under scrutiny. Rather, intertextuality is left when its function is judged as fundamental for the recipients' appropriate comprehension of the message. This is evident from the analysis of extract (4) and its ELFentextualization:

Article 40, paragraph 4

<i>Source version</i>	<i>ELFentextualization</i>
<p>(4) <u>Member States</u> may provide that the application <u>will only be further examined</u> if the applicant concerned was, <u>through no fault of his or her own</u>, incapable of asserting the situations <u>set forth in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article</u> in the previous procedure, in particular by exercising his or her right to an effective remedy <u>pursuant to Article 46</u>.</p>	<p>Only if the applicant is incapable of exercising his or her rights <u>according to paragraphs 2 and 3 of this Article and/or Article 46</u>, EU Countries may provide a further examination of the application.</p>

At the end of ANTEXT, the mediator evaluated the source version as “a very long sentence with a number of difficult lexical choices, nominalized expressions, and verb tenses”. Its RETEXTing consists in simplifying, reducing or deleting what may prevent implied readers from accessing the GIST. As concerns intertextuality, (4) reveals that ELFentextualizations are not structured by means of fixed sets of procedures or rules; instead, they are the outcome of proper mediation originating from competent and careful examination of the original texts. This is one of the reasons behind the inclusion of the Model within the equipment that can contribute to the improvement of the mediators' training and acquisition of competence. In the analysed excerpt, the mention of other articles remains, entailing that the mediator's examination and consideration of what is relevant informs the features of her retextualizations.

Similar strategies are elaborated by Subject 2, who worked on a different text and at different times. Her renderings are examined in the following section.

4.3. DF's selected corpus of extracts

The rendering of the European Directive involved only one language, whereas the ELFentextualization of the 'flow decree' required the mediator to examine source versions in Italian, first; then, she inferred what represented, to her, the gist of the message; finally, she produced retextualizations in English that were meant to achieve the largest audience possible, hence including non-native English speakers as well.

Extract (5), from article 1, clarifies the amount of non-European workers who were allowed to enter Italy in 2020:

Article 1

	<i>Source version</i>	<i>ELFentextualization</i>
(5)	<p><u>A titolo di programmazione transitoria dei flussi d'ingresso dei lavoratori non comunitari per l'anno 2020, sono ammessi in Italia, per motivi di lavoro subordinato stagionale e non stagionale e di lavoro autonomo, i cittadini non comunitari entro una quota complessiva massima di 30.850 unità.</u></p>	<p><u>In order to schedule the entries of non-EU workers for the year 2020, a maximum number of 30,850 people can enter Italy, for seasonal and non-seasonal subordinate work and self-employment.</u></p>

ANTEXT evidenced the main features of the original extract, reflecting those that were highlighted when examining the examples from DEU (section 4.2): use of passive voice; complex syntactic structures; complex lexical choices. They were charged of the decrease in accessibility to non-expert or non-native readers. Hence, the reformulation tried to mitigate those traits, thus enabling recipients to get to know “the number of people who can enter Italy, and the reason behind that choice”, or what is the GIST of the message, according to the author of (5).

In the course of RETEXT, the passive voice was deleted and simplified. The sentences “[i lavoratori] sono ammessi in Italia” (“[workers] are admitted to Italy”) is turned into “[workers] can enter Italy”; simplification also affects the sentences that were originally produced by means of the active voice, opting for clauses and nouns that are considered more common or more likely to be known by the envisaged interlocutors. The result is “Non-EU workers”, serving as a more comprehensible indication of the targets of the decree, along with “In order to schedule the entries”, or “for seasonal and non-seasonal subordinate work and self-employment”. The first solution reduces the original sentence – which opens the Italian text and takes up to almost three lines – to approximately one line. The other rendering is an example of generalization of the possible jobs for non-European people. Although one may object that generalization could prevent receivers from accessing the whole meaning of the text, the basis of ELFentextualization and its communicative value should be called to mind. This specific form of mediation aims at moving the gist, the core of the authors’ intentionality, closer to receivers. What is more, the type of interaction may take place asynchronously (wherefrom the novel connotation of the “(a)synchronous groups” in section 2). In fact, the translations do not replace the role of lawyers, judges, court mediators, or the other figures involved in those processes. They work as a further means that can improve communication between people geographically, socially, or

temporally distant, urging receivers to search further information or more help once the basic pieces of information are learned. Additionally, ELFentextualization also serves to train future mediators to reflect upon the importance of their interpretation and relevance at the time of deciding the amount of knowledge to deliver, depending on the communicative scenario, the interactants, the text types to reformulate.

Extract (6) keeps on regulating facts and aspects associated with the number of people who can enter Italy. It is included in this paper to keep commenting on the rendering strategies associated with intertextuality:

Article 6

	<i>Source version</i>	<i>ELFentextualization</i>
(6)	<p><u>Nell'ambito della quota indicata al comma 1 del presente articolo, è riservata una quota di 1.000 unità per i lavoratori non comunitari, cittadini dei Paesi indicati all'articolo 3, comma 1, lettera a), [...] e per i quali il datore di lavoro presenti richiesta di nulla osta pluriennale per lavoro subordinato stagionale.</u></p>	<p><u>For the agricultural and tourism-hotel sectors, 1,000 places are reserved for non-EU workers who have already entered Italy for seasonal subordinate work at least once in the previous five years. For these workers, employers have to request multi-year authorization for seasonal subordinate work.</u></p>

The appraisal of the level of relevance detects the information items that are worth maintaining in the ELFentextualized version, after simplifying or omitting what is deemed more challenging for non-native speakers. Interestingly enough, what was noticed in Section 4.2 when commenting on the removal or treatment of intertextuality can be applied to the above excerpt as well. The Italian version mentions “article 3, paragraph 1, letter a)”, validating the tendency to create textual maps showing the connections between other laws, other texts, or other parts of the same decree. Subject 2’s solution underlines the significance of the mediators’ interpretation and expectation about the implied readers. In the examined case, the postgraduate student acknowledged the importance of citing another part of the text that she was scrutinizing, and she thought that it was necessary to adapt the intratextual link. So, rather than indicating the other article, she added a new sentence which is meant to explain the main function of the reference to “article 3, paragraph 1, letter a)”. Hence, readers can find out that article 6 is talking about those who “have already entered Italy [...] at least once in the previous five years” – in fact, what that section of article 3 deals with. Another observation can be made when reading “in the previous five years”, where the preposition “over” or lack of the definite article would sound more natural. The reason behind the non-standard sentence may have to do with the fact that Subject 2 performed a literal rendering of the Italian interpretation of the GIST, “[i lavoratori] che sono entrati nei [‘in’ + ‘the’] cinque

anni precedenti”. This aspect does support the definition of the discussed English uses as instances of lingua-franca variation, which can be characterized by the influence of the mediators’ native languages (Albl-Mikasa, 2013; Guido, 2012), like the use of the preposition and article at issue. Actually, it would be interesting to collect similar cases from the examined texts or from others that were – and will be – produced in similar contexts. If they do not affect the recipients’ access to the core of the message, that would represent another characteristic in support of the ‘ELF’ connotation, entailing that communication prevails over non-standard constructions or little misspellings or mistakes. In our opinion, this signals an interesting evolution of this research.

The last extract is from article 7, about the deadline for submission of requests on the part of non-European people, which incorporates another case of intertextuality:

Article 7

<i>Source version</i>	<i>ELFentextualization</i>
(7) I termini per la presentazione delle domande <u>ai sensi del presente decreto decorrono:</u> [...] <p>b) per <u>i lavoratori non comunitari stagionali previsti all’articolo 6</u>, dalle ore 9,00 del quindicesimo giorno successivo alla data di pubblicazione del presente decreto nella Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana.</p>	According to this decree, <u>the terms for submitting applications expire:</u> [...] <p>b) for seasonal <u>non-EU workers</u> who want to work in the agricultural and tourism-hotel sector (<u>Article 6</u>), at 9.00 am on the fifteenth day from the publication of this decree in the Gazzetta Ufficiale della Repubblica Italiana.</p>

Intertextuality is processed in (7) by means of recurring strategies. Article 6 is indicated within brackets, but also in the above excerpt a novel sentence is added and provides a short summary of its content. This is further proof of the principal communicative aim of the ELFentextualized versions, namely, to improve accessibility to legal texts on the part of international receivers by means of shared linguistic resources. Furthermore, the reformulation of the intratextual link in (7) confirms that renderings are produced after a careful examination of the original versions, in the course of the ANTEXT phase, in order to identify the most relevant pieces of information – the GIST of the messages – informing the RETEXT activity.

5

Discussion and conclusions

The main aim of mediation, in migration and intercultural contexts in particular, is to improve communication between senders and recipients coming from different –

sometimes perhaps too distant – backgrounds by means of common shared linguistic and semiotic resources. The mediators' responsibility is, first, to make sense for themselves of the source message. Then, their interpretation evolves into the pivot around which the target version is constructed.

This paper has reported on two applications of the ELFentextualization model. They were authored by two postgraduate students from the University of Salento, where the model was devised to find alternative tools for mediators' training. This study has examined a selected corpus of renderings of six articles from two legal texts – the European Directive on migration and the Italian 'flow decree' – for international receivers. From the analyses of the subjects' renderings common features emerge, even though the two target versions were produced by their authors independently and at completely different months and years. The simplification of lexical choices and sentence structure are accompanied by a preference for less complex verb tenses – in particular, present simple and past simple – which subjects judged as alternatives that are tailored to varied reading paces. Another common trait is the thematization of the objects of the reformulated articles – which is, migrants who are looking for work or who aim to enter Europe. This is considered an interesting quality, validating that mediators foreground what they consider relevant to deliver the core of the authors' intentionality. The salience of mediators' interpretation is reflected by how the intertextual and intratextual references were handled. Subjects did not follow a unique path, and the inclusion (and consequent adaptation) or omission of the links to other articles of the same law or to different legal texts were due to the relevance that was attributed to those textual parts. If, in the subjects' views, the association potentially threatened the access to the focus of the text, that reference was eliminated; if knowing the content of other decrees or articles was evaluated as a support to one's comprehension, that reference was left and subject to the conventional ELFentextualization strategies, from simplification to explanation by means of original sentences. In the course of the whole rendering process, it is the mediators' perception of relevance that matters at the time of choosing the amount of information items to delete or to re-textualize, by means of English as the shared language.

The evolution of this research is in the production and examination of more ELFentextualizations on the part of subjects from different nations, from different universities, and even with different professional and personal backgrounds – actually, part of those other versions are being implemented. Another interesting concern is the assessment of reception of the ELFentextualized texts by means of people representing the implied readers, even by comparing their acquisition of knowledge from the original and alternative versions of the same messages. Finally, another future direction is suggesting more case studies and tools aiming to improve or at least intensify the mediators' training. The latter is, rather, an imperative requisite to assist mediators in becoming expert and intercultural 'textual engineers' connecting people.

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