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COGNITIVE DISSONANCE AND PRAGMATIC INFLUENCE

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ABSTRACT

This article contains a number of theories of dissonance in translation as an alternative to "pragmatic failure". The aim is to try to prove whether the term "pragmatic failure" which is so widely used and settled in the field of intercultural studies could be appropriately substituted by the term "dissonance" which derives from the theory of "cognitive dissonance" as of the field of cognitive linguistics and social psychology.

KEYWORDS: *Cognitive Dissonance, Theory Of Cognitive Dissonance, Literary Translation, Contextual Translation, Proportionality In The Knowledge System, Proportionality Of Form And Content.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Over the last decades, relationships among language, culture and identity have become a favourite topic in social science, due to this fact, some scholars have lately begun to pay systematic attention to many areas in the field of pragmatic failure, and however, little research has been devoted to Cognitive Dissonance in Intercultural Communication. This has become an important aspect of analysis as it is in its infancy.

A key term should be kept in mind before carrying on with this introduction, that of *linguistic etiquette* defined by Kasper as "the practice in any speech community of organizing linguistic action so that it is perceived as appropriate/harmonious within the frame of ongoing communication event" [1,27].

Once having this term in mind, the problems arise when the linguistic etiquette is not respected in a conversation due to a wide range of different factors.

A pragmatic failure could be defined as "the inability to understand what is meant by what is said" , however, as it will be explained in the literature review, this term springs two other terms, such being sociopragmatic failure and pragmalinguistic failure [2,25]. Nonetheless, for the purpose of this paper we will try to prove how a dynamic term which encompasses both ideas can be used in order to narrow down the analysis of any intercultural communication process, this is: "cognitive dissonance". Dissonances can display different degrees of intensity, have rather unpredictable consequences and are strictly bound to contextual conditions and to individual judgments. When going deep into the term "dissonance" we find ourselves facing different types of the latter: intentional, unintentional, intra-cultural and intercultural. However, the scope to which this paper extends will focus on unintentional intercultural dissonance [4,2871].
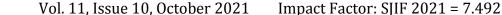
II. Main part

A dissonance occurs in any circumstance in which speakers, deliberately or not, organize the linguistic action in such a way that hearers perceive it as grammatical but conflicting with the harmonious flow of the conversation [7,110].

In order to expand the concept of Cognitive Dissonance enclosed in the frame of social psychology to intercultural encounters four articles have been selected which stand out in importance for this research paper. It must be held in mind that it is a growing field that of adding up cognitive dissonances to intercultural studies and therefore, the amount of data regarding such is limited; therefore, the reason of choosing these articles will be explained afterwards: Festinger and Carlsmith.

Going Beyond Pragmatic Failures: Dissonance in Intercultural Communication.

Regarding these four articles it is important to note down how they can be divided   into sets of two, those dealing with intercultural communication and those dealing with social psychology and science. On one hand, the articles dealing specifically with cognitive dissonance in intercultural communication are those written by Olga Leontovich and Chiara Zamborlin – both deal with the implementation of cognitive dissonance into intercultural communication. Zamborlin uses as her base of research 6 utterances produced by her during her stay in Japan and analyses the dissonances found at the time of the encounter by expanding the theory to a more intercultural approach. Leontovich on the other hand sets her study based on another perspective. While Zamborlin exemplifies her theory through a more quotidian perception, Leontovich intends to assert the need for a high level of intercultural competence for interpreters, translators and intercultural communication specialists in order for them to take cognitive dissonance into account in the intercourse of their professional activities. On the other hand, the articles written by Festinger and Carlsmith and Blackwell et al. deal specifically with Cognitive Dissonance but only at a psychological level which will be tried to be correlated with the other two in order to reach common points and outcomes. Festinger and Carlsmith (1957)'s main hypothesis is "what happens to a person´s private opinion if he is forced to do or say something contrary to their opinion?" and base their research on an experimental work based on this question. Their aim was to create dissonance in the mind of their participants and try out how they would react based on

economic enhancements, this is, if the sample they gathered of people would fight back the dissonance created in their minds based on economic remunerations [5,509]. The fourth and last article, although focusing mainly in political science, allows to this review paper to select certain important and curious factors they outline which could be implemented in intercultural studies, which are those of socialization and empathy and ethnic attitude and violence decisions. Its main focus is to prove how actions can induce changes in preference.

In the following section, these four articles will be intertwined by means of the literary review afore presented in order to reach common points overlapping the knowledge they all pose in order to reach a final conclusion as to whether the term cognitive dissonance is appropriate as a more dynamic continued overall umbrella substitute for pragmatic failure in intercultural studies.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Festinger (1957) claims in his work dealing with social psychology, under certain conditions, the private opinion of a person can change as to bring it closer to the overt behaviour that person has been obliged to perform. This is, as an example, if at a debate a person is forced to improvise a speech to support a certain point of view which they do not agree with, their private opinion will move towards the position taken in the speech. Therefore, the changed opinion of that person will naturally experience a greater change than that of the people listening or reading it. Stating it in a different manner, as Blackwell et alli (2017) pose, actions may be chosen for various reasons as may be because of imitation, experimentation or habit.

In terms of social psychology, let us say a person believes in "X" but as a result of the pressure put on them, publicly claims to believe in "not X". Such person therefore now holds two cognitions which psychologically do not fit together. In other words, their cognition of private belief is dissonant with that they claim to have. Nonetheless, the claim of believing in "not X" comes with cognitive associations that that person corresponds with such belief as to cognitive elements of reasons, pressures, promises or rewards which lead that person to state that they believe in "not X". So to speak, that person is left now with consonances and dissonances about the same cognitive matter [6, 69]. The only way for that dissonance to be reduced is for that person to change their private opinion as to bring it into correspondence with what they have said. Consistently, that private opinion will fluently change in order to finally correspond one way or another with what they have stated. It should be noted that the observed opinion would change the greatest when the pressure upon were sufficient to justify such beliefs.

As Festinger and Carlsmith [16,122] claimed, the more important the subjects tended to believe their experiment was or the more money they would give the participants the less dissonance they would encounter in the results when obliging them to claim something they did not believe in.

As an overall come out of Festinger and Carlsmith [16,128] they clearly admit that cognitive dissonance does not only take place at a small cognitive intrapersonal level as they had tried to demonstrate with their experiment, but rather enlarges to many other areas in life, stating it differently, cognitive dissonance might be operating in many real- life situations, and, indistinctively and more obviously in intercultural relations. However, it could all be summed up as "the consequences of preferences" as Blackwell et alli (2017) define it, still leaving open that such preferences are affected by action choices.
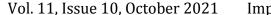
One of the factors which takes part in the whole intercultural situation pulled from the psychological field is that of consequences as has been stated before. When taking this concept to the frame of intercultural communication, stereotypes begin to play an important role. The overt public pressure of cognitive dissonance will be greater the greater the stereotype or lower, if such stereotype is that of a positive one. Preference change will always depend on the individual´s tendency to minimize costs, this is, in intercultural communication, a certain person will try to "maximize utility given costs" [9,102]. Although the aim of the paper written on "preferences from behaviour" only deals with action inducing change of preference through cognitive dissonances, it can be stated, as shown in the other three research papers under discussion, that dissonances and change in preference is not only induced and caused by a choice in actions but by many other external factors as will be explained. One of the key points implemented is that cognitive dissonance should not only be seen as a problem as it usually happens since it is associated with pragmatic failure or pragmatic errors in intercultural studies. The simple word "failure" or "error" induces the student to straight ahead ponder it as a mistake, but it is rather a "shaper" to my account [9,103]. All these remarks dealing with social psychology can certainly be expanded to intercultural studies and magnify the scope of understanding many situations which occur in interculturality as Leontovich, O. and Zamborlin [19,68] attempt to and develop in their respective papers.

Dissonances can happen interculturally, according to Zamborlin across three pragmatic domains, being Illocution when the utterance is perceived as a face threating act being to direct or indirect, Style when the utterance is perceive s inappropriate due to the choice of lexis, syntax or formulae and in Discourse when utterances are noticed when an unexpected topic is chosen. As well, related to these, come into play the factors which can trigger a dissonance, being linguistic (due to language transfer), sociolinguistic (when speakers do not conform to the sociolinguistic norms) or pragmatic when speakers only act on the limited encyclopaedic pragmatic knowledge they hold. A lot of work people invest in "relational work" goes unnoticed in the conversation and many other factors apply such as rudeness and politeness. Based on this, Leontovich [18,139] clarifies these are the reasons through which the discrepancy between the ways of categorizing and conceptualizing reality through the prism of different cultures and languages causes cognitive dissonance, still, adding up dissonances in such exchanges cannot only be limited to pragmatic levels but also to the cognitive and semantic strata [7,108].

It is necessary, thus, for people, if they are to have a high level of intercultural competence, to have the ability to find the reasons, types, and effects for cognitive dissonance and the tools to bridge such intercultural dissimilarities when interacting with representatives of an alien culture. The background, encyclopaedic knowledge of a person expands when confronting dissonances while being open to its consequences. The old beliefs clash with the new beliefs contradicting someone´s values, morals or convictions and, if responded *appropriately the personal encyclopaedia is to expand and advance and progress are accumulated and reached. Zamborlin [19, 97], as has been explained before, defines the possible ways in which cognitive dissonance can take place in intercultural encounters. However*, *Leontovich [19,145] 5 extends the theory by defining how harmonization can be achieved through four different means: "attempting to explain the inexplicable, […] minimizing the regret connected with irrevocable choices, […] justifying their own behaviour which goes against their own principles" and "aligning their perception of other individuals with their own*

actions towards them". A point which should be noted as an overall summary of causes is the following gathering of factors which can cause breakdown and cognitive dissonances in intercultural instances: divergence of background knowledge, implicit meanings, violation in the order of speech interaction, extralinguistic factors (gender, age, status, level of intellect, profession, ethnicity), equivocation and uncertainty, use of euphemisms, political correctness, pseudonomination, shift of emphasis, silence, avoidance of response as well as non-verbal (gestures), some provisions of diplomatic protocol and etiquette, the sphere of interpersonal relations, of a person and their environment and the sphere of regulation of people´s activity related to the cultural values they are creating.
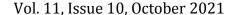
The search for retrieving consistency as a way out of cognitive dissonance can serve as a proof of an individual´s communicative competence. Leontovic *[18,123]*

To my belief, a proper third-culture person should be able to adapt instantly, if not, naturally and intrinsically to all these situations and have the potential to avoid cognitive dissonance as an innate capacity. Every theory here presented in this review paper poses the solution of one individual changing their actions, their way of acting and responding to certain situations, to change your own beliefs, meaning, to rationalize your action, to change the way you view, perceive and remember your deeds, liquefying the dissonance if you might. However, I do not believe in change, but in expansion adding a more intercultural view on the matter, adapting or expanding your beliefs, taking in your stride the other person´s axiology, this is, rather than changing them, actually expanding and acquiring all beliefs, values, morals and standards possible in order to extend the scope and cognitive continuum, becoming dynamic and allowing oneself the option of choosing among a vast field of intercultural encyclopaedic background knowledge.

IV. CONCLUSION

This paper has only dealt with intercultural un-intentional dissonances. However it might be safe to state that cognitive dissonance is appropriate as a more dynamic continued overall umbrella substitute for pragmatic failure in intercultural matters. One of the underlying outcomes is that insufficient knowledge of a foreign language (misunderstanding of polysemy, homonymy, puns and so on) can lead to cognitive dissonance among cultures and languages.

It can also lead, not only to positive outcomes or manipulation intercultural encounters, but also to negative ones, cognitive dissonance could lead to people rationalizing the choice of immoral actions to their own mental benefit and well-being. Pragmalinguistic failure is fairly easy to overcome. It is simply a question of highly conventionalized usage, which can be taught quite straightforwardly as "part of the grammar". Sociopragmatic failure is much more difficult to deal with, since it involves the Student's system of beliefs as much as his/her knowledge of the language. I presume to sum them up under the umbrella term cognitive dissonance. The world view depends on the way reality is conceptualized and categorized in a certain culture where many factors which play a certain role are to be kept in mind: gender asymmetry, local standards of beauty, feelings of offence, perplexity, vexation, norms of behaviour, political, religious, ecological, other types of discourse, embarrassment, identity crisis, amazement, indignation, and frustration. It is not only a nice dynamic continuum to substitute pragmatic failure but it also leaves a wide seam of new research on the open.
　To conclude, self-persuasion is to be mentioned, the self plays a major role in the control of

what happens around oneself, the intention to change yourself, manner of filtering information, simplifying information, combining and restr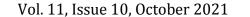ucturing it, being prone to filling in blanks, inclination for self-analysis, everything leads to one conclusion regarding intercultural cognitive dissonance: the pursue of an overall achievement of consonance.

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