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"Englishing" the Conservation of the Vjosa River[1]

Abstract

In this paper, we will look at the way in which written material produced to promote Vjosa/Aoos river conservation projects has been formulated in English, a process we refer to as "Englishing". Our focus will be both on translation into / rewriting in English (mainly from Albanian), but also on manifestations of English as a Lingua Franca in the material published. Special attention will be paid to lexis and terminology, and also to the way in which aspects of the particular cultures and traditions of the various communities living in areas that are an integral part of the Vjosa river system are rendered in English. Our aim is to identify successful strategies in such texts that emerge from a processing of Englishing, successful not just in the sense of adherence to some native speaker standard of English but also in terms of such criteria as general linguistic accuracy, communicative efficacy in a Lingua Franca context, stylistic effect, and establishment of ethos (i.e. writer's author and credibility).

Keywords: *Translation, text linguistics; English as a Lingua Franca; Linguistic Accuracy; Discourse Analysis; Stylistic Analysis*

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[1] The authors have contributed equally to the overall drafting of this paper. Christiansen is responsible for Sections 1-3, 5 and 6; Malaj for Section 4 and its subsections.

1. Introduction

In this paper, we look at the way in which written material produced to promote conservation projects relating to the Vjosa River has been "Englished", that is, formulated or reformulated from other languages into English. This watercourse rises in northwestern Greece (where it is known as the Aoos) and flows northwards through southwestern Albanian into the Adriatic. It has been called the "last wild free-flowing river in Europe"[2] and hence many groups, not only locals, are anxious to conserve it in its natural state.

Our focus will be both on the way that concepts are expressed in English (perhaps through rewriting or translation, mainly from Albanian presumably, but perhaps not exclusively), but also on manifestations of English as a Lingua Franca in the material published. Attention will be paid to specific and technical lexis and terminology relating to the Vjosa and also to the culture and traditions of the various communities living in areas that are an integral part of the river system in the wider ethno-geographical sense.

A key observation to make in a study such as this is that, like a river, a language does not exist in a vacuum; it is part of a wider system of communication, which is a complex terrain moulded by the multi-faceted processes that inhabit that same area and interact both with it and with each other. In short, as a river can only be understood as part of a wider river system, language, and the discourse through which it is manifested, only

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[2] See the official IUCN (The International Union for Conservation of Nature) website:

https://www.iucn.org/story/202209/iucn-helps-protect-vjosa-albania-last-wild-free-flowing-river-europe.

makes sense in the context of the specific culture (i.e. the social situation and social reality) in which it occurs.

2. Analysis of corpus

To conduct this study, we compiled a relatively small corpus of materials from Albanian sources related to various projects for the conservation of the Vjosa. The size of the corpus (approx. 9,000 words) was not large by the standards of corpus linguistics[3] but it relates to a highly specific discourse domain, at least from the point of view of English. Furthermore, having fewer data to work with permits a detailed qualitative study, which can produce results that are of interest to other researchers working in other areas of linguistics.

Each text in this corpus was subjected to a close reading in order to identify any features that may impede, complicate, or even facilitate communication (the conveyance of its intended message). In the two sections below, we will look in turn at linguistic accuracy (3.0) and then at stylist aspects (4.0), the latter with various subsections looking at specific aspects of the data.

3. Linguistic Accuracy

Inevitably, as these texts are mostly probably penned by non-native English Speakers (NNESs), there are various linguistic inaccuracies (but then, even texts produced by native speakers are rarely completely error-free.).

In 1a, we give a typical example. As we shall do with most (but not all) examples in this paper, in 1b, which follows

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[3] See, for example, Biber *et al*. (1998), McCarthy *et al*. (2005).

immediately, we highlight the inaccuracies that we identified, as well as providing more accurate alternatives.

1a) The upper reaches of the river in Greece often pass between mountainous areas with forests. Some of them are protected natural areas and belong to the Vikos-Aoos National Park, which lies around the Timfi Mountains (2,497 m above sea level). Brown bears still live in this park, which is also the second largest park in Greece. Vojdomati stream (Greek: Βοϊδομάτης / Voidhomatis) from the Slavic words voda = water and mati = spring, ie water-spring, a branch of the Vjosa (Aoos) creates the gorge of Vikos, a gorge that is very amazing. Given the coefficient (0.82) of depth (900 m.) With that of latitude (1100 m.), The Vikos-Aoos gorge can be considered as the deepest gorge in the world (there are areas in the world that are the most deep but also wider and vice versa). This area is called Zagoria and is known not only as an area for mountaineering, but also for the characteristic villages with stone houses. Not far from Konica, inside the national park, Vjosa also passes in a narrow gorge. In Konica there is a historic bridge with stone arches, which is built over the Vjosa. From now on the river is also used for economic-agricultural purposes. After Konica, the river crosses the Greek-Albanian border, at which point the Sarandapor stream (Greek: Σαραντάπορος / Sarantáporos) flows from the east. Sarandapori also serves as a Greek-Albanian border line for several kilometers. A pedestrian border crossing point has also been built nearby.

1b) The upper reaches of the river in Greece often tend to pass between mountainous areas with forests. Some of them are protected natural areas and belong to the Vikos-Aoos National Park, which lies around encircles the Timfi

Mountains (2,497 m above sea level). Brown bears still live in this park, which is also the second largest park in Greece. The Vojdomati stream tributary (Greek: Βοϊδομάτης / Voidhomatis) from the Slavic words voda = water and mati = spring, ie i.e. water-spring, a branch of the Vjosa (Aoos) creates the gorge of Vikos, a gorge that is very absolutely amazing. Given the coefficient (0.82) of depth (900 m.) Wwith that of latitude (1100 m.), Tthe Vikos-Aoos gorge can be considered as the deepest gorge in the world (there are areas in the world that are the most deep deeper but also wider and vice versa). This area is called Zagoria and is known not only as an area for mountaineering, but also for the its characteristic villages with stone houses. Not far from Konica, inside the national park, Vjosa also passes in through a narrow gorge. In Konica there is a historic bridge with stone arches, which is built over the Vjosa. From now on the river is also used for economic-agricultural purposes. After Konica, the river crosses the Greek-Albanian border, at which point the Sarandapor stream tributary (Greek: Σαραντάπορος / Sarantáporos) flows from the east. Sarandapori also serves as a the Greek-Albanian border line for several kilometers. A pedestrian border crossing point has also been built nearby.

Example 1a is typical of the corpus in that, while a NES reader may be made constantly aware that the author (or authors) is NNES, by the frequent marked nature of some of the grammar and lexis, the text would, to a tolerant reader, be easily comprehensible and the message, at least in terms of ideational content,[4] is effectively communicated.

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[4] I.e. Model of experience / Logical relations, see Halliday (1985).

In the context of the study here, the writer of these texts may have been more concerned about publicising their views and concerns about the Vjosa river system and the immediate and long-term threats that it faces than they are on producing texts in English that their English teacher at school might have given them top marks for.

In fact, such practicalities of communicativeness over accuracy have also been enshrined in many working environments. Even at an institutional level in the European Commission, where, regarding translation of documents, it is recognised that in different contexts, different standards may apply.[5] Drawing inspiration from this observation, Christiansen (2016) identifies three basic types of English used in international contexts: basic superficiality (Decorative English); for communication (ELF variation); and for addressor's image (Norm-oriented English, i.e. English as a Native Language or ENL).[6]

The first of these can be seen in slogans such as "Vjosa No Dams". These are typically not even complete sentences, constituting what Hasan (Halliday and Hasan 1989) terms a *minimal text*. The underlying syntactic structure of "Vjosa No Dams" is ambiguous: for example, the grammatical function of 'Vjosa' is open to different interpretations. However, in the context of a protest, written on a banner, its meaning becomes clear enough. Most importantly, its message is accessible to most who see it, even those whose grasp of English may be defined as elementary; even if the word "Dam" may be unfamiliar, they would understand that it is something that regards the river and which should be stopped (i.e. "No").

[5] See Pérez González (2003).

[6] See, for example, McArthur (1998).

Example 1a above would be an example of the second, ELF variation.[7] The text is communicative, but contains various inaccuracies. However, as we said above, the message is reasonably well communicated. An example of the third kind, norm-oriented English, might be a scientific article to be published in a double-blind peer-reviewed journal. We encountered none of these in our corpus, but it is certainly true that many want to formally further the campaign for the conservation of the Vjosa river among the academic community.[8] This would require a text that was accurate in every sense, not just linguistic, but also as regards content and the logic of its argument. Such a publication would contribute greatly to the prestige of the author, and thus even minor, in other contexts inconsequential, inaccuracies may be seen as something to avoid at all costs.

The issue of prestige relates to what Aristotle termed *ethos* (the rhetorical strategy of conveying the speaker's credibility, authority and prestige as a means of persuasion). This is a subjective area; different readers may give more or less importance to the quality of language in which a speaker expresses him or herself.

In the context of English as a Lingua Franca (ELF), it has been recognised that the native-speaker model, though often the

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[7] See Widdowson (2015: 362), variation being "the variable use of English as inter-community communication, as communication across communities."

[8] Indeed, many endeavours are being made constantly by academics in Albania, Greece and abroad. See for example the recent *Alblakes 4* - International Conference on "Building Resilience of water ecosystems through scientific knowledge", 21-22 October, 2022, hosted by the "Aleksandër Xhuvani", University of Elbasan (Albania), Faculty of Natural Sciences, Departments of Biology and Chemistry.

measure of performance in pedagogic contexts, is only intermittently followed.[9] This is because ELF users, almost by definition, are more focussed on what they want to achieve by speaking English than on the language itself and how accurate (judged from a pedagogical or NES's perspective) that it is. Mostly NNESs, ELF users generally attach less importance to linguistic inaccuracies and do not allow them to excessively affect their overall evaluation of a message. There is evidence indeed, that ELF users judge a given speaker's language by the perceived prestige of the speaker, and not vice versa (e.g. if the speaker is someone whom the subject might respect or want to emulate in some way, then they tend to evaluate this person's language higher than if they think otherwise).[10]

The degree to which a text may be inaccurate is then very much a matter of intelligibility and consequently acceptability in a given context: where precision is paramount, as in a scientific article or in a legal document, then it is unacceptable to be anything but accurate; where general communication of less precise or "fuzzier" information is in order, the bar of acceptability may be set lower. Such a thing is shown in Example 2 which, though accurate, does contain a choice of expression, 'one', highlighted in bold type, which, though questionably accurate, does consist in a marked usage, which affects intelligibility not so much in that it renders the text meaningless but that it gives the text a different meaning from

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[9] See Seidlhofer (2011), Christiansen (2018a).

[10] See the experiments set up by Christiansen (2018b, 2019), who invented different profiles for the same speaker and noted how evaluations of aspects of their linguistic performance changed according to whether the subject was told different things about them.

that which the writer may have intended. It thus may lead to misunderstanding.

> 2) Vjosa serves as the border of many protected areas along its valley (3 of which are designated as a National Park according to IUCN II categorization). Yet this river itself is without **one** special protection status and has faced increasing pressure of human influence.

Example 2 shows that intelligibility and acceptability is not merely a question of accuracy, but also of such factors as *cohesion* – the way that the various connections between different parts of the text are signalled.[11] In the second sentence, 'one' is a simple numerative, but may confuse the reader because, though technically accurate, it may be mistaken as a stressed form of the indefinite article *a / an*. This would create confusion precisely because the very motive for such emphasis is not evident (i.e. why is it "*a*" rather than "*the* special status"?).[12] Rather, the numerative makes sense in the context of the information in the previous sentence about there being numerous protected areas and national parks in the vicinity of the Vjosa and of the adversative conjunction 'yet', which introduces the sentence containing it ('one'). 'Yet' shows that what is about to be said should be interpreted in contrast to what has just been said. The various cohesive devices that link these two sentences ('Vjosa' – 'this river'; 'protected' – 'protection'; 'Yet') signal that they should be interpreted together, thereby communicating the idea that the many different protected areas could be combined. In fact, the intended message would

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[11] See Halliday and Hasan (1976), Christiansen (2011).

[12] On *definiteness*, *accessibility* and *identifiability* see Lyons (1999), Christiansen (2011).

probably be better expressed by "without *one* / a *single* special protection status".

Examples 3a to 5a show other instances where issues regarding linguistic accuracy may infringe upon intelligibility, and thus acceptability. As with Example 1 above, in each case, the sentence marked 'a' is the original as found in the corpus, and that marked 'b' is the modification that we suggest.

> 3a) "But something is wrong here. I am taking the example of Gjirokastra, a World Heritage Site, but where people go on and leave their city. Not to mention the Greek part of the national park near Vjosa where there are 20 times more tourists than on the Albanian side of the Vjosa"

> 3b) "But something is wrong here. I am taking the example of Gjirokastra, a World Heritage Site, but from where people ~~go on and~~ leave ~~their city~~ to live elsewhere. Not to mention the Greek part of the national park near Vjosa where there are 20 times more tourists than ~~on~~ at the Albanian ~~side~~ end of the Vjosa"

> 4a) The Vjosa River, the flow of which crosses the south of Albania, is also the natural dividing line between the district of Fier (in the north) and the district of Vlora. It is a navigable river, as it flows mainly in plain areas.

> 4b) The Vjosa River, the ~~flow~~ course of which crosses the south of Albania, is also the natural dividing line between the district of Fier (in the north) and the district of Vlora. It is a navigable river, as it flows mainly ~~in~~ through plains ~~areas~~.

5a) Greek and Albanian experts should not remain only in the range of academic talks, but should sit at the table. "Words are not enough", said Buxhuku.

5b) Greek and Albanian experts should not ~~remain only in the range of~~ limit ~~themselves to~~ academic ~~talks~~ discussion, but should ~~sit at the table~~ take active part in the debate. "Words are not enough", said Buxhuku.

Many of the inaccuracies highlighted above relate not so much to syntax as such but to choice of lexis and expressions (a topic we will return to in §4.1 regarding style). One word in particular that seemed to be used in a marked manner was 'value'. In Examples 6 to 10a, we illustrate the different ways that 'value' is used in the corpus:

6) Moreover, Vjosa and its crystal clear water have had an impact on the hearts of Albanians and their cultural **values**.

7a) This area with exceptional natural and tourist **values** includes the springs of the thermal baths of Bënjë (8 in total), the Langarica Canyon with a length of 7km, […]

7b) This area with exceptional natural and tourist ~~values~~ importance includes the springs of the thermal baths of Bënjë (8 in total), the Langarica Canyon with a length of 7km, […]

8a) Why Vjosa? Based on the General National Plan, where the territories along the Vjosa are included in the Vjosa National Park, these areas take on a special importance as a potential with great natural **values** and not only.

8b) Why Vjosa? Based on the General National Plan, where the territories along the Vjosa are included in the Vjosa National Park, these areas take on a special importance as a<u>n</u> <u>area of</u> potential<u>ly</u> ~~with~~ great natural ~~values~~ <u>interest</u> and not only.

9a) At a distance of about 3 km from the city of Këlcyrë is "Rrepet e Grykës", which functions as a tourist point. The landscape of forest trees harmonized with abundant water resources has attractive aesthetic and ecotourism **values**.

9b) At a distance of about 3 km from the city of Këlcyrë is "Rrepet e Grykës", which functions as a tourist point. The landscape of forest trees <u>standing in</u> harmony~~ized~~ with abundant water resources ~~has~~ <u>is</u> <u>important for</u> ~~attractive aesthetic and~~ ecotourism <u>and its beauty</u> ~~values~~.

10a) When you arrive in Përmet, you are immediately faced with a small town, geographically, but big with its many historical, cultural and natural **values**.

10b) When you arrive in Përmet, you are immediately faced with a small town, geographically, but big with its many historical, cultural and natural ~~values~~ <u>treasures</u>.

In fact, only in Example 6 is 'value' used in the conventional way that it would be used in Standard English. In the other cases other, more specific, words can be used. In some ELF variations, like the ones found in this corpus, the meaning of 'value' has been extended and has come to cover a wider range of senses than it would in English as a Native Language (ENL). It is possible that this is the result of simplification and/or of

transfer from the writer's first language, in this case, presumably Albanian (cf. *vlerë*).

4. Stylistic Aspects

In this section, we will look at instances of marked uses found in the corpus, which do not constitute linguistic inaccuracies as such, but are due to various stylistic choices on the part of the writer. We shall deal with each of these in the following subsections: 4.1 Inappropriate choice of expression; 4.2 Register-mixing; 4.3 Redundancy / Repetition of information; 4.4 Repetition of form / Lack of stylistic variation; 4.5 Lack of recontextualization; 4.6 Metaphors.

4.1 Inappropriate choice of expression

In this category, we include items that are not inaccurate or "incorrect" in a traditional pedagogical sense. On a morphosyntactic level, they are permissible but are merely marked in that they represent an unusual choice by the writer. In the corpus, we found four distinct types of inappropriate choice of expression, which we shall deal with separately.

4.1.1 confused terms

As the name suggests, these occur when the writer uses one term instead of another. These are likely to result in confusion, or even unintended humour (which may have a detrimental effect in terms of *ethos* – see §3.0).

> 11) The Vjosa basin contains **resting places** in which there are mountain water springs that flow into the Vjosa river in the form of streams, surrounded by a mass of trees.

In Example 11, it is probable that the writer has confused "rest area" with "resting place" (a tomb or grave).

4.1.2 Connotations

These are cases where the word or expression chosen has connotations (mental associations) which may not be appropriate for the context or the intended message that the writer wants to communicate. As with, confused terms, these may result in unintended humour, and can have a detrimental effect on *ethos*.

> 12) This landscape has irreplaceable environmental values, extremely relaxing and recreational for visitors. It is **frequented** by local and foreign visitors.

> 13) Old Permet is another **challenge** for tourists to see, as a hundreds-year-old city with stone alleys and narrow alleys characterized by gates with sofas, and two-story stone buildings.

In Example 12, the word 'frequent' has connotations of going to somewhere of ill-repute – where a "respectable" person at least would not want to be seen – for example a dog fight, or an illicit gambling den.

Similarly, in Example 13, 'challenge' makes one think of something difficult to achieve (also in a positive sense). It thus causes confusion; the writer seems to be implying that Permet is a particularly difficult town to visit (rather, presumably, than a special treat). In this light, in 13 Permet is presented as less of a destination for casual tourists (which may have been the writer's intention) than a goal for hardened travellers on an expedition.

4.1.3 Lack of consistency in place names

   Another area where we found that inappropriate choice of expression could negatively affect intelligibility was the lack of consistency in the way that Albanian place names were rendered in English, Examples 14-18.

   14) Two rivers, **Vjosa**, one of the largest in Albania, and Drinos create a magnificent landscape.

   15) The culture of Tepelena is impressive as it is part of the province of Toskerisa [sic], which includes all the territories to the right of the **Vjose** river valley and the province of Laberisa [sic].[13]

   16) TRADITIONS OF AN ALBANIAN CITY – **PERMETI**

   17) On the first floor of this Center, there is a tourist information office, where every local or foreign tourist can get information about the **Përmet** district

   18) Music is another identifying trait of the city of **Permet**

   Such cases as highlighted in Examples 14-18 may arise from the fact that in Albanian nouns are declined according to

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[13] For some reason (perhaps the writer is not Albanian), "Toskerisa" and "Laberisa" are spelt incorrectly in this example; they should be *Toskëria* and *Labëria*. In the genitive, *Toskërisë* and *Labërisë*, as in "The Province of …" are also possible, which may be where the confusion of the author comes from.

different grammatical cases.[14] The writer may inadvertently be applying the case ending to the noun, which would be necessary in Albania but of course redundant in English.

The use of the letter 'e' instead of 'ë' in "Permeti" and "Permet" in Examples 16 and 18 may be down to the more mundane fact that most PCs and laptops do not come with Albanian-language keyboards. Therefore, special characters like 'ë' can only be typed using special key combinations. People may therefore be forgiven the tendency to replace these letters with the easily accessible characters of the device being used.

That said, the fact that the same place or geographic feature may be referred to by slightly different names in English may cause confusion. That is to say, a reader, if they are attentive to such things, might conclude that the different spellings constitute different proper nouns referring to different places, albeit with very similar names (cf. the city of Granada in Spain and the Caribbean island-nation of Grenada). Alternatively, such inconsistences may be put down to sloppiness and therefore damage the writer's authority and credibility, and the *ethos* of the text will be affected.

For both these reasons, it might be a good idea for Tourist Boards or the relevant authorities to decide upon a single English language version of a given Albania place name in English, and to encourage writers and operators to adopt it.

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[14] Given by most works as nominative, accusative, dative, ablative and vocative. There is a kind of genitive, which is formed with the addition of a linking device, technically a *clitic*, not purely by a separate declension of the noun. See Çanta (2017: 230): "The genitive case is a distinct case in Albanian nominal system because nouns in this case are usually preceded by an article as a constituent part of the case form."

4.1.4 Wrong register

The concept of register relates to the way that language changes according to: what is being talked about (*field*); the channel of communication (*mode*); and who the participants in the exchange are (*tenor*).[15] Examples 19a-21a, are instances of texts in an inappropriate register:

19a) "The City of Roses" is known for its traditional products, amongst which the famous glikos and the Permet burek that are coveted by all of Albania, apart from recently starting to gain recognition within tourist circles.

19b) "The City of Roses" is known for its traditional products, amongst which the famous glikos and the Permet burek that are coveted by all of Albania, ~~apart from~~ as well as recently starting to ~~gain recognition within tourist circles~~ become very popular with tourists.

20a) Geography. The city occupies a small area. The territory of the district has the shape of a regular hexagon with a northwest-southeast longitudinal extension.

20b) Geography. The city is ~~occupies a~~ small ~~area~~. ~~The territory of the district has~~ It is in the general shape of a ~~regular~~ hexagon running ~~with a~~ northwest-southeast ~~longitudinal extension~~.

21a) In the breadth of the geographical map of the National Park of the Përmet area, there is also the Arcova fir with rare natural and touristic beauty.

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[15] See: Halliday *et al.* (1964); Halliday (1978).

21b) ~~In the breadth of the geographical map of~~ <u>Throughout</u> the National Park ~~of~~ <u>in</u> the Përmet area, there is also the Arcova fir with <u>a </u>rare <u>and</u> natural ~~and touristic~~ beauty.

In Example 19a the text is obviously intended for general readers, prospective tourists even, but contains the rather formal and circuitous phrase "starting to gain recognition within tourist circles", which can be replaced with something more colloquial and direct such as "become more popular with tourists".

Similarly, Example 20a contains technical language which could be expressed in a simpler and more concise manner without, however, any loss of ideational content, and which would certainly be more appropriate for a general readership.

Example 21a is also expressed in an unnecessarily complicated and contorted manner. Here too, rewriting using simpler and clearer language would produce something not merely more linguistically accurate, but also more effective on a communicative level.

4.2 Register-mixing

Another area seen in the corpus where register causes problems is when a given text does not adhere to a single register but instead mixes them, something which in certain contexts (the juxtaposition of incongruent features) can also have an unintended humorous effect. Example 22 shows such mixing:

22) Brown bears still live in this park, which is also the second largest park in Greece. **Vojdomati stream (Greek: Βοϊδομάτης / Voidhomatis) from the Slavic words voda = water and mati = spring, i.e. water-spring, a branch of the Vjosa (Aoos) creates the gorge of Vikos, a gorge that is very amazing. Given the coefficient (0.82) of depth (900**

> **m.) With that of latitude (1100 m.)**, the Vikos-Aoos gorge can be considered as the deepest gorge in the world (there are areas in the world that are the most deep but also wider and vice versa).

Here, we see a blending of both technical expressions (the etymology of the place names and the scientific measurements) and the rather colloquial "very amazing" (an inaccuracy in that 'amazing' is an absolute and cannot be graded i.e. it could be, say, "absolutely amazing" but not *"more amazing"). This switch from the objective and scientific to the subjective and colloquial and then back again, in successive sentences, creates confusion in the mind of the reader, who is faced with a writer who comes across as, on the one hand, authoritative and precise but, on the other, approximate and emotional. It is as if they are being spoken to by two different people at once. Consequently, *ethos* is once more affected, and the credibility and authority of the writer suffers.

Other examples related to register mixing involve the use of technical language in otherwise general texts. This is not such a bad thing in itself. Sometimes it is justifiable to introduce specific terminology, but only in those cases where the writer is reasonably confident that the reader will be able to understand such concepts and expressions. If not, it would be best to include an explanation of any such lexis, see, for instance, Examples 23a – 34a.

> 23a) The Vjosa River is one of the last "wild" rivers in Europe. The construction of **HPPs** is the biggest current threat in this area. A large number of HPPs are planned in the Vjosa **watershed** in Albania. Dam construction is an **intervention** that can result in irreversible consequences on

the environment by ultimately damaging the natural integrity of this unique ecosystem.

23b) The Vjosa River is one of the last "wild" rivers in Europe. The construction of hydro power plants (**HPPs**) is the biggest current threat ~~in~~ to this area. A large number of HPPs are planned in the Vjosa ~~watershed~~ river system in Albania. Dam construction is a~~n intervention~~ something that can result in irreversible consequences on the environment by ultimately damaging the natural integrity of this unique ecosystem.

24a) On the Greek side of the **catchment**, a hydropower plant has been built (in Pigai) and 6 new dams are planned. The Pigai **HPP** was built between 1990-1991 and has an **installed capacity** of **210MW**.

24b) At ~~On~~ the Greek end ~~side~~ of the river **catchment** area (the different places where the river gets its water from), a hydropower plant **(HPP)** has been built (in Pigai) and 6 new dams are planned. The Pigai HPP was built between 1990-1991 and ~~has an installed capacity of 210MW~~ can produce as much as 210 megawatts of energy.

In both, 23a and 24a, the writer includes expressions that a general reader may not be familiar with. It is not necessary to simplify the text and remove such items, rather suffice it, in the spirit of popularisation,[16] to introduce brief explanatory phrases that will guide the reader around the unfamiliar concepts as in 23b and 24b.

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[16] See Gotti (2013).

Here, in deciding which terms a reader can be relied upon to know, concerns of what in Relevance Theory[17] (a concept on which – so its proponents claim – all communication is based) is called *mutual manifestness*: the ability of participants in a discourse (in this case the writer) to predict what information the reader does and does not know, and to construct their discourse accordingly.

4.3 Redundancy / Repetition of information

Another stylistic feature found in the corpus was the unnecessary repetition of information within texts. Such redundancy can lead to prolixity or verbosity, something usually frowned upon in English at least.[18] Such a thing is seen in Examples 25a and 26a.

25a) **Përmet** is a city in the southeast of Albania and the center of **the administrative unit** with the same name **Përmet District**.

25b) **Përmet** is a city in the southeast of Albania and the center of the ~~administrative unit~~ district of ~~with~~ the same name ~~Përmet District~~.

26a) - Hotova's fir tree is a **national park**, located in the south of Albania, a few kilometers from the city of Përmet, and **can be described as the natural lung of Southern Albania**. With an extension of 1200 hectares and a

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[17] See Sperber and Wilson (1986).

[18] As Shakespeare famously writes in Hamlet: "Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit / And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes / I will be brief."

magnificent massif composed mainly of Macedonian fir, this **national park** is one of the tourist pearls of Albania, offering pleasant surprises in every season of the year, like in winter, where it is covered by snow but also in summer where you can enjoy its freshness. [….] The fauna is rich in several types of wild animals and birds, such as: bear, porcupine, wild cat, wild boar, squirrel, quail, woodpecker, etc. Due to its ecological and ecotourism values, this park has **been described as the "Lungs** of the Balkans".

26b) - ~~Hotova's fir tree~~ The Fir of Hotovë-Dangëlli National Park ~~is a national park,~~ is located in the south of Albania, a few kilometers from the city of Përmet~~, and can be described as the natural lung of Southern Albania~~. With an ~~extension area~~ of 1200 hectares and a magnificent massif composed mainly of Macedonian fir, this ~~national~~ park is one of the tourist pearls of Albania, offering pleasant surprises in every season of the year, like in winter, where it is covered by snow but also in summer where you can enjoy its ~~freshness~~ cool temperatures. […] The fauna is rich in ~~several~~ many types of wild animals and birds, such as: bear, porcupine, wild cat, wild boar, squirrel, quail, woodpecker, etc. Due to its ecological and ecotourism ~~values~~ importance, this park has been described as the "Lungs of the Balkans".

Rewriting so that information is not repeated unless absolutely necessary, as in Examples 22b and 23b, produces texts that are by definition better organised and therefore easier to read and process, even if some linguistic inaccuracies do remain.

Redundancy of content is often a mark of a hurried or careless writer, or of multiple writers working on the same text with insufficient coordination. Failure to remove it can thus also have

a negative effect on the text's *ethos* i.e. the author's credibility and authority.

4.4 Repetition of form / Lack of stylistic variation

Repetition of form[19] is similar to repetition of information (see §4.2), but relates specifically to the stylistic convention of, in writing, trying to use as rich and varied lexis as possible: a convention, in its extreme forms, famously dismissed by Fowler (1926) as *elegant variation*.[20]

The point is, as Examples 27a to 30a show, the repetition of the same morphological form or element, especially in close productivity within the text, like redundancy (see §4.2), gives the impression of carelessly produced written texts:

27a) The Vjosa Valley occupies almost 16% of the territory of Albania. This part of the country is considered to carry high **biodiversity** values. The natural habitats in this ecosystem create the possibility of an ecological continuity by harboring a rich **biodiversity**.

27b) The Vjosa Valley occupies almost 16% of the territory of Albania. This part of the country is considered to ~~carry~~ be high<u>ly</u> biodivers~~e~~<u>y</u> ~~values~~. The natural habitats in this ecosystem create the possibility of ~~an~~ ecological continuity by harboring a rich ~~biodiversity~~ <u>range of natural fauna</u>.

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[19] See Christiansen (2011).

[20] Other languages are not as strict about verbosity in general and in particular, elegant variation as Fowler (1926) recommended for English – see Pattison (2006: 88).

28a) The history of the construction of dams on the Vjosa River dates back to 1984 when a **decision** of the Greek government at the time **decided** to start work on the construction of the Pigai HPP, very close to the main source of the Aoos River.

28b) The history of the construction of dams on the Vjosa River dates back to 1984 when ~~a decision of~~ the Greek government ~~at the time~~ decided to start work on the construction of the Pigai HPP, very close to the main source of the Aoos (Vjosa) River.

29a) - The thermal waters of Bênja, which are located 14 km away from the city of Përmet, is another natural monument dominated by five sulfur-based underground water sources, which have been described as sources with curative values for various **diseases** (heart, kidney **diseases**, stomachs, rheumatisms, dermatplogic **diseases**).

29b) - The thermal waters of Bênja, which are located 14 km away from the city of Përmet, is another natural monument dominated by five sul~~f~~phur-based underground water sources, which have been described as sources with curative values for various ~~diseases~~ medical conditions (e.g. rheumatism, heart, kidney~~diseases~~, stomach~~s~~, ~~rheumatisms~~, and dermat~~po~~ological diseases).

30a) **Distinguished** musicians of the national level such as Mentor Xhemali and Laver Bariu made sure that **traditional** music is **distinguished** by its characteristics of a long cultural **tradition**.

30b) Distinguished <u>local</u> musicians ~~of the national level~~ <u>famous in all Albania</u> such as Mentor Xhemali and Laver Bariu made sure that Përmet's music ~~is distinguished by its characteristics of a~~ <u>remained true to its</u> long cultural tradition<u>s</u>.

As can be seen in Examples 27b to 30b, time and effort spent rewriting, even if this is not always a simple task, to introduce some variation in the forms used can greatly improve a text from a stylistic point of view. This will also have a positive effect on *ethos*, thereby raising the credibility and authority of the writer, and strengthening their arguments.

4.5 Lack of recontextualization

Another area where relevance and mutual manifestness (see §4.2) becomes important is when writers assume local knowledge which international readers may not have. This may often be because texts have been originally written in Albanian with local Albanians in mind, and then translated into, or rewritten in English. Sometimes the failure to recontextualise for an international readership may be the product of a simple failure to even consider what is mutually manifest at all. In Examples 31a to 34a, we see some representative cases from the corpus:

31a) On the other hand, Mr. Andrei Sovinc, from the IUCN institute for the promotion of national parks, said that it is unfortunate when he sees the potential of such a nature that Albania has in the face of a low level of development, compared to **the neighboring country**.

31b) On the other hand, Mr. Andrei Sovinc, from the IUCN institute for the promotion of national parks, said that it is

unfortunate when he sees the potential of such a nature that Albania has in the face of a low level of development, compared to ~~the neighboring country~~ its neighbor, Greece.

32a) The Vjosa River was considered sacred in antiquity and as such is also personified by statues. One such statue is found in the **National Historical Museum**, in the pavilion of antiquity.

32b) The Vjosa River was considered sacred in antiquity and as such is also personified by statues. One such statue is found in the **National Historical Museum** in Tirana (Albania), in the pavilion of antiquity.

33a) The folk costumes, mainly from Tepelene, are special as the men use **pots** and **dresses**, **jamadans**, while the women wear long shirts without **vest collars**, **hair**, **etc**.

33b) The folk costumes, mainly from Tepelene, are special as the men use ~~pots~~ fez-style hats and ~~dresses~~ tunics, **jamadans** (waistcoats), while the women wear long ~~shirts~~ collarless blouses ~~without vest collars~~, and cover their **hair** ~~etc~~.

34a) This landscape has irreplaceable environmental values, extremely relaxing and recreational for visitors. It is frequented by local and **foreign** visitors.

34b) This landscape has irreplaceable environmental ~~values~~ importance, extremely relaxing and recreational for visitors. It is ~~frequented~~ visited by people from the local area and all over the world ~~and foreign visitors~~.

The failure to make allowances to what a reader may or may not know about the local context regards also the area of inclusiveness, as a text containing references to phenomena which only a local can be expected to understand risks alienating an international reader, once more negatively affecting the text's *ethos* and the authority and credibility of the writer, who may be perceived as arrogant and unwelcoming. On the contrary, a writer who makes an effort to be inclusive, as illustrated in Examples 31b – 34b, will likely be seen as welcoming and helpful. Their prestige will thus grow, making the rest of their arguments more credible and convincing.

Inclusiveness is linked to what in translation studies have been called foreignisation and domestication:[21] the decision of whether or not conceal the foreignness of a text and render it more familiar to the reader (i.e. domesticating it), thereby inevitably also removing much of the distinctness of the culture underlying the language in which the text is encoded. Inclusivity then has its limits, especially if it leads to a dulling of the exotic and new aspects of the topics being discussed, which might be the very things most interesting or relevant to the reader.

In Example 35a, we see how it is sometimes difficult to strike the right balance between foriegnisation and domestication. In 35b, we suggest a remedy, which preserves the concepts and terminology linked to Albania which may be unfamiliar to the reader (foreignization), but which provides glosses and explanations that may make them more accessible (domestication). This is a similar strategy to that regarding unfamiliar technical terms as we suggest above (§4.2) regarding register mixing. The objective of such a balancing act is to provide information in a manner where the reader is not merely

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[21] See for example, Benjamin (1923), Berman (1984) Venuti (1995).

a passive recipient but are encouraged to make a more active effort in their processing and comprehension of the text. It is through this extra effort that the readers become engaged participants in the discourse, thereby better accessing the relevant target culture (in this case, the southern Albanian) by adapting and expanding their own native lingua-cultural schemata.

> 35a) It is a city with many names, the city of roses, the city of culinary, the city of **saze music**. It is surrounded by green forests and mountains. Vjosa river, the last wild river in Europe that flows across the city and villages creates breathtaking views.
>
> "The City of Roses" is known for its traditional products, amongst which the famous **glikos** and the Permet **burek** that are coveted by all of Albania, apart from recently starting to gain recognition within tourist circles. Music is another identifying trait of the city of Permet. '**Sazet e Permetit**' is a local band that continues to keep the local folk music and songs alive and relevant.
>
> 35b) It is a city with many names, the city of roses, the city of culinary, the city of <u>traditional Albanian iso-polyphonic</u> "**saze**" **music**. It is surrounded by green forests and mountains. Vjosa river, the last wild river in Europe that flows across the city and villages creates breathtaking views.
>
> "The City of Roses" is known for its traditional products, amongst which the famous **glikos** <u>(sweet preserves)</u> and the Permet **burek** <u>(flaky pastries with savory filings)</u> that are coveted by all of Albania, apart from recently starting to gain recognition within tourist circles. Music is another identifying trait of the city of Permet. '**Sazet e Permetit'**

(Përmet Saze) is a local band that continues to keep the local folk music and songs alive and relevant.

4.6 Metaphors

A metaphor consists in describing one complex or unfamiliar concept (typically abstract) in terms of another simpler and more familiar one (typically concrete) thereby facilitating one's understanding and conceptualisation of it. Traditionally, metaphors are seen as stylistic devices typical of highly complex and figurative language of the kind associated mainly with literature. Against this view, Lakoff and Johnson (1980) show that metaphors are central to language at all levels, and are indicative of the fundamental way in which the human mind itself works.

In the corpus, there are various instances where the writers attempt the use of metaphors, but these are not always successful, and intelligibility may be affected – see Example 36a:

36a) "Greek and Albanian experts should not remain only in the range of academic talks, but **should sit at the table**. "Words are not enough", said Buxhuku.

36b) "Greek and Albanian experts should not ~~remain only in the range of~~ limit themselves to academic ~~talks~~ discussion, but should **sit at the** big **table** where policy is made. "Words are not enough", said Buxhuku.

Some readers, especially NNESs with lower linguistic competence, might find Example 36a confusing and perhaps take it literally. Indeed, even a NES or a more proficient NNES, might not immediately recognise the metaphor, as the key word 'big' has been left out. Bearing in mind the mixed levels of the

readers in an ELF context, some clarifications, much like those we recommend in §4.2 and §4.5, will no doubt render the metaphor less perplexing.

By contrast in Example 37, the writer has taken the trouble to provide elucidation of the extended metaphor that they use (in bold). This certainly makes the text more accessible, in our opinion, without diminishing the sophisticated stylistic effect that they are aiming for.

> 37) According to an old Albanian legend, the Vjosa area was terrorised a long time ago by a many-headed dragon named Kuçedra, This monster, which blocked water sources, causing flooding, drought, storms and famine, could only be pacified by human sacrifice. The legend says that when Kuçedra was finally killed, its tears formed some of the most beautiful natural pools in Albania. Several decades later, this natural area in southern Albania may be suffering drought, flooding and other issues again, **but this time the problems are caused not by a mythical dragon, but by humans themselves**.

5. Conclusions

Translation and re-writing in another language, as traditionally seen, are never just a case of recoding linguistic signs and structures from one language into another. What we here have called "Englishing", the rendering of material into English, is no doubt vital now for any international campaign, yet it entails many factors that have little relation to what has been described as English as a Native Language, and which require careful consideration of the central message that one wants to convey, as well as, equally importantly, whom and what kind of speaker, NES or NNES, one is addressing.

When one considers international campaigns, different levels of English (as outlined in §3.0) come into play. There is an obvious need for a type of English that is intelligible and meaningful in the context of ELF (mainly NNES-NNES discourse), and not only one that adheres to some idealised NS standard without regard for how effective it will be in the specific context of its use. There is thus a fundamental need to decide upon a target audience for each text in order to identify not only the right level of English, but also the right kind of register and information to include.

In an informative text, adherence to a NS standard may not be necessary, especially among experts, who will be influenced most by the *logos* of any discourse (although this does not include scientific publications where professional prestige is involved – see §3.0). For a more general audience, one with a weaker grasp of the technical aspects of the themes discussed, then appeals to *ethos* and *pathos* may be more in order (see §3.0). In such a case, use of a prestigious level of English (some NS standard) will afford the speaker greater credibility and make the audience more likely to accept their arguments.

When it comes to recontextualization of a campaign such as that to conserve the Vjosa River (i.e. translating, drafting or redrafting texts for an international readership), considerations of relevance and mutual manifestness (see §4.2) come into play with all their accompanying issues. Above all, "Englishing" a campaign must not be treated as an afterthought. It must be properly integrated into the campaign strategy, at every level of its implementation, from – using terms that may also apply to rivers – "source" (conception) to "mouth" (delivery).

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