

CHOOSE A TEXT, TRANSLATE IT INTO YOUR LANGUAGE AND CONSIDER
THE CULTURAL IMPLICATIONS FOR TRANSLATION

by

Ada Franzoni de Moldavsky

August 2000

1. Introduction

One of the most interesting aspects of translation, requiring careful and skilful handling, is that translation is “not just a transfer of information between languages, but a transfer from one culture to another” (Hervey et al., 1995: 20). It necessarily involves the treatment of cultural issues, though their relative importance will vary depending on text genre as well as on the intended reader and functions of the translated text, amongst other considerations.

The text I have chosen to translate into Spanish and consider culture-specific issues (see **Appendix I** for ST and **Appendix II** for TT) consists of two free-standing paragraphs from the first chapter in the David Lodge novel *Nice Work* published in 1988, which I have read several times in the last few years. In the ST, Lodge describes one of his main characters, Victor Wilcox, as he proudly drives his Jaguar to work one morning. The half-hour drive is a moment of pleasure during which the character compensates for so much that is wrong in his life by feeling all-powerful at the wheel of a car which he believes most other drivers envy him. The text contains several references to cars and other “cultural” items and has therefore been considered suitable for the present analysis.

In all, there are around thirty items which may be termed as culture-bound, most of which may be roughly classified into the following sets: car makes, road traffic, business organisations and universities. One term has religious connotations and two designate gestures people make when driving. As will be seen, it is possible to relate these sets to the following cultural categories as defined by Newmark (1988: 95): “Material Culture”, “Social Culture”, “Organisations/Social Organisation” and “Gestures and Habits”.

Since the ST is a contemporary novel, the TT has been prepared with an educated generalist reader in mind as defined by Newmark (1988: 102), that is, a person who would read a translated version of *Nice Work* mainly for pleasure and who, if

he/she buys a translation of a work by a British novelist, is expected to be interested in and basically familiar with European and British culture.

Greater precision concerning the TT's intended reader may be achieved by resorting to Coulthard (1992: 9):

... when an author produces a text ... he constructs an **ideal reader** in his mind to whom he attributes knowledge of certain facts, memory of certain experiences, accurate recall of certain parts of certain other texts, plus certain opinions, preferences and prejudices and a certain level of linguistic competence.

The ideal reader of the TT speaks the variety of Spanish known as *rioplatense*, that is, the Spanish spoken in the city of Buenos Aires. Though unable to read literary works in English, this reader is aware of representations usually associated with English language culture in today's world but is not an expert in life in modern Britain. He/she is an educated middle or upper class resident of Argentina, this being the context within which the certain facts he/she knows, the certain experiences he/she remembers, the certain parts of certain texts he/she recalls, plus his/her certain opinions, preferences, prejudices and linguistic competence are to be viewed.

I shall start by identifying the cultural items in the ST and go on to discuss the suitability or unsuitability of their classification under the categories proposed by Newmark. Finally, I will discuss the strategies I have used to translate such items and the various effects of the items, as translated, on the TT reader, again drawing on Newmark as well as on Hervey et al.. In its translated version, it is my intention that the ST maintain its primary function: providing pleasure and entertainment.

2. Cultural Items Identified for Analysis

On a preliminary basis, the ST cultural items (underlined in **Appendix I**) have been identified as belonging to the following sets:

2.1 Car makes: *Jaguar/Jag; Rover 3500 Vanden Plas; British car/s; foreign car/s; Mercedes and BMWs; Rolls-Royce or Bentley; Ford Transit van.*

- 2.2 Road traffic:** *British roads; T-junction; Avondale Road, Barton Road; rush-hour traffic; hangs back respectfully; nods his thanks; traffic jams; roundabout; ring road.*
- 2.3 Business organisations:** *Midland Amalgamated; headhunted; MD; Pringle's; divisional chairmen.*
- 2.4 Universities:** *redbrick clock-tower; halls of residence; Students' Union; academic Vatican; alma mater; College of Advanced Technology; college.*

3. Categorization of Items

For the classification of cultural words Newmark (1988: 94-103) proposes the following five categories (with corresponding sub-categories): Ecology; Material Culture; Social Culture; Organisations, Customs, Activities, Procedures, Concepts; and Gestures and Habits. The items in the ST can be analysed with reference to all of these categories with the exception of Ecology, which is defined by Newmark as including geographical and ecological features (1988: 96), not referred to in the ST.

3.1 Allocation of items to cultural categories

3.1.1 Car makes

The sub-category Transport within the more general category of **Material Culture** is, in Newmark's words, "dominated by ... the car" (1988: 98). This is indeed so and the fact is illustrated in the text: his car is, for Vic Wilcox (as cars are, indeed, for so many people today), a fundamental part of his life. All the car makes referred to in 2.1 fall into **Material Culture –Transport**: the glorious *Jaguar*, the *Rover 3500 Vanden Plas*, the *Mercedes*, *BMW*s, *Rolls-Royces*, *Bentleys* and the *Ford Transit van*. The other two generic references to *British cars* and *foreign cars*, although not designating specific makes, can also be included within Transport by analogy.

3.1.2 Road traffic

The categorization of the items included in this set in 2.2 poses several problems. On the one hand, it is possible to draw a distinction between those items which are, in fact, of a material nature and those which refer to situations or actions taking place within a context of road traffic. Thus, we could put together under **Material Culture - Transport** (Newmark, in fact, also calls this sub-category transport system) the following: *British roads; T-junction; Avondale Road; Barton Road; roundabout; ring road*. All of these are clearly material in nature, which would confirm their inclusion within **Material Culture**. However, it could well be argued that these items could also be classified under another of Newmark's sub-categories of **Material Culture**, namely Houses and Towns, since all of these items refer to features related to urban layout or disposition.

As for the remaining items in 2.2, *rush-hour traffic* and *traffic jams* refer to situations which take place when one is driving or riding in a vehicle and could therefore also be classified under Transport. However, although there is no doubt that *rush-hour traffic* and *traffic jams* are material in that, as situations, they can be experienced and seen, their materiality is evidently different from that of a car or a roundabout. The *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* (1993: 3359) provides the following definition:

traffic jam: a condition in which the flow of road traffic is obstructed and comes to a (virtual) standstill; a build-up of traffic caused by this; the vehicles caught in such a build-up.

according to which the vehicles themselves caught in a *traffic-jam* are denoted by the term, which provides further evidence for its inclusion in **Material Culture - Transport**. A similar argument can be used for *rush-hour traffic*.

As for *hanging back* and *nodding thanks*, classifying them under **Material Culture - Transport** would clearly be forcing the issue though they also are, in this particular text, actions performed when one is driving or riding in a vehicle and therefore related to the transport system. In fact, *hanging back* and *nodding thanks* can be straightforwardly classified under another of Newmark's categories, namely **Gestures and Habits - Gestures**.

Now, it is also possible to look at these four items (*rush-hour traffic*, *traffic jams*, *hangs back respectfully*, *nods his thanks*) from another perspective. Newmark establishes a category designated **Social Culture** which is briefly described as referring to “work and leisure”. These four items are part of social culture in that they denote situations or actions taking place in a social context in which people interrelate. In fact, when one thinks of a *traffic jam* or of *rush-hour traffic* one of the connotations is of people suffering through them, being late for work or the theatre, insulting each other and so on, and not primarily of the vehicles involved. And there can be no doubt that any Gestures are also, by definition, to be understood within a social context. In the ST, in particular, both *hangs back respectfully* and *nods his thanks* are actions “performed as a courtesy, formality, or symbol to indicate an intention or evoke a response” (ibid., 1083) and it is implied that these actions are performed by people interrelating. So it could be argued that **Gesture and Habits** should be, rather than an autonomous category, a sub-category within **Social Culture**.

3.1.3 Business organisations

The items in this set enumerated in 2.3 above appear to fall clearly into Newmark’s category **Social Culture - Work**. To wit: *Pringles’s* and *Midland Amalgamated* are business names; two other items designate business job titles: *MD* (Managing Director) and *divisional chairmen*; the last item, *headhunted*, is a verb used to describe a particular form of recruitment of corporate executives.

However, here again it could be argued that business organisations are a cultural-legal construct and therefore intrinsically social by nature. Furthermore, they are social institutions of types clearly defined by law. Should items related to these organisations, then, be categorized under **Social Culture - Work** or, perhaps, under Newmark’s fourth category? It may be relevant to point out, at this stage, that this fourth category is designated by Newmark in three different ways: **Organizations, customs, activities, procedures, concepts** (1988: 95); **Social Organisation – political and administrative** (1988: 99); **Organisations, customs, ideas** (1988: 103).

3.1.4 Universities

The items in this set enumerated in 2.4 above again pose a problem for categorization purposes. Some denote buildings (including one city): *redbrick clock-tower, halls of residence, Students' Union, academic Vatican*. Others are different ways of referring to a university: *alma mater, College of Advanced Technology, college*.

In so far as they are related to universities and university life these items belong within the field of education, to which no specific reference is made by Newmark except for a very tangential one in **Organisations/Social Organisation**:

“‘A’ level’ for the *bac* has all the warmth of a metaphor... (1988: 100).

The question is, then, where to include education as a field? So far as it can be assimilated with work it could be understood as part of **Social Culture – Work**, since, for example, it should include the work of teachers. Besides, what is it that students do? It is not work in the usual sense of the term, but studying is as much a productive activity as work is and for British students (and their parents until their children reach the age of sixteen) it is an obligation very much like a job, from both the moral and legal standpoints.

On the other hand, since education as an organized activity supervised by the State mostly takes place in institutions it would seem that the right category is, in this case, **Organisations/Social Organisation**. First at the beginning of his discussion of this category, then when expanding on the sub-category Historical terms and to the very end of the discussion Newmark states, in fact, that the subject-matter of the category are institutional terms. It is plausible to ask, then, why the category is not called by that name. Besides, it has already been pointed out (in 3.1.3) that three different variants are used to name this category, and this is indicating not just the impossibility of finding a univocal designation but, at the same time, that the items constituting the category cannot be identified with precision. This fact is

further evidenced by the unclear and non explicit differences between the third and fourth categories.

Focusing specifically on the items denoting buildings (*redbrick clock-tower* and others), it may be argued that they could well be included in **Material Culture – Houses and Towns**. Furthermore, the metaphor in *academic Vatican* draws on the idea of the University as a temple in which the recognized religion is knowledge, “embedded” in an industrial city and protected from it, much as Vatican City is in real life an autonomous State, a set of buildings embedded in the city of Rome, in which religion reigns supreme. All of which may also lead to the inclusion of *academic Vatican* within **Material Culture – Houses and Towns** or within **Organisations/Social Organisation – Religious terms**.

3.2 On the usefulness of cultural categories

As shown above, Newmark’s cultural categories are far from being precise or unambiguous. Meant for the purpose of establishing order in the protean cultural world, differences between categories are often difficult to tell, there is much overlapping between categories and no clear or uniform criteria to define them. In fact, Newmark himself does not provide definitions consisting in descriptions of properties for his categories – adapted from Nida’s own (Newmark, 1988: 95) – but, rather, explains them by enumerating their components (Mayoral: 2000, 16), a fact which may indicate the difficulty involved in providing intensional definitions. Besides, cultural items themselves and their referents are often too heterogenous to be reduced to fixed categories.

On reviewing the analysis in 3.1 above it is possible to draw the following conclusions:

In 3.1.1 it is shown that all of the items enumerated in 2.1 clearly fall under **Material Culture – Transport/Cars**.

In 3.1.2 it is shown that certain items originally included in the set “Road traffic” (2.2) could very well be classified under either **Material Culture – Transport** or **Material Culture – Houses and Towns**.

It is also shown in 3.1.2 that there are reasons to include *rush-hour traffic* and *traffic jams* in **Material Culture – Transport** or, rather, in **Social Culture**, though neither Work nor Leisure, the two sub-categories proposed, appear to be suitable.

As for *hangs back respectfully* and *nods his thanks*, although their inclusion in **Gestures and Habits – Gestures** is self-evident, it may be more accurate, as stated in 3.1.2, to make Gestures and Habits sub-categories within **Social Culture**.

In 3.1.3 it has been argued that the items enumerated in 2.3 may belong within **Social Culture – Work** or within **Organisations/Social Organisation**.

Finally, in 3.1.4, the items referring to the set “Universities” may generically be classified under **Social Culture – Work** or, perhaps more appropriately, under **Organisations/Social Organisation**, though a suitable sub-category for education is lacking in the latter case. As for *academic Vatican*, because of the diverse references suggested by this metaphor, it lends itself to diverse categorizations.

The balance appears to be on the side of ambiguity: only the ST items referring to cars and gestures fall unhesitatingly under a specific category while the rest may be associated with one or another depending on the criteria used for classification. Therefore, from the analysis of this particular ST it would appear, firstly, that this ambivalence as regards categorization does not preclude the actual translation of the items concerned. Secondly, it would also appear that Newmark’s cultural categories are useful as general guidelines that allow a better understanding of cultural issues and suggest possible appropriate translation procedures rather than as watertight compartments into which cultural items may be specifically classified to be then translated using a specific procedure.

4. The cultural items in the ST: from English to Spanish

The following discussion of the translation strategies employed draws on Newmark (1988: 68-103) and Hervey et al. (1995: 20-41). Back-translated versions in English are provided in round brackets when reference is made to Spanish translations.

4.1 Items related to cars and car makes

Although all of the items denoting car makes have been transferred in the TT - or “culturally borrowed”, according to Hervey et al. (1995: 23-4) - attention must be given to the fact that the effect of such items on the TT reader will not be the same as that on the ST reader. Some of the items, so far as they refer to car makes with which the TT reader is very familiar (although perhaps not with the precise models referred to in the ST), can be expected to produce an equivalent effect: *Rover 3500 Vanden Plas, Mercedes, BMW, Rolls-Royce* and *Ford Transit van*. As for Jaguars, new models are available in Argentina at amazing prices, which is probably the reason why few are actually seen in the streets, but the TT reader would be well aware of their magnificence; they are offered in the Classifieds Sections both in brand new and second-hand versions (*La Nación*: 6,10). Bentleys are altogether another matter: upper class Argentines know about them, middle class Argentines may never have heard of them (except in novels or films) and certainly will never own one. So, although all brand names have been transferred (Newmark, 1988: 81), *Jaguar* and *Bentley* undergo some translation loss (Hervey et al., 1995: 16-7) in the TT.

British car/s has been translated as “auto inglés/autos ingleses” (English car/cars) because “inglés” (English) is the adjective typically used in Argentina for anything British: “colegio inglés” (English school), “caballero inglés” (English gentleman), “té a la inglesa” (tea the English way). The adjective “británico” (British) is seldom used although, of course, it would be understood, but since it sounds awkward the more communicative adjective has been favoured. As for *foreign cars*, the literal rendering “autos extranjeros” was discarded because a native

Argentinian would never use it spontaneously. The communicative equivalent in this case is “autos importados” (imported cars); however, the first time this term is used in the TT the rendering is “auto fabricado en otro país” (car manufactured in another country) since “importado” has, in Argentina, a connotation of prestige (if a product is imported, therefore foreign, then it is good quality) which is absent in the ST. The second time the term is used it has already been made clear to the reader that Vic Wilcox deeply dislikes foreign cars and therefore “importado” is more acceptable.

It is interesting to consider the case of a term which “disclosed itself” as cultural only at the time of translation. Newmark states that most cultural items are “easy to detect” (1988: 95), but it was only when translating “quite new” in “he had got one [a Jaguar], even though it wasn’t *quite new*” that it became necessary to treat it as a cultural item. The communicative or cultural equivalent of “quite new” in this context, in Argentina, is “un [auto] cero kilómetro” (a zero kilometre [car]), that is, a car straight out of the manufacturing plant with an odometer indicating that the vehicle has not travelled any kilometres yet.

4.2 Items related to road traffic

British roads has been communicatively translated as “rutas inglesas” (English roads) for the same reason stated in 4.1 for “auto inglés”. *Avondale Road* and *Barton Road* have been transferred in full; translating just *Road* was an option but would have produced odd-sounding items in the TT. By using them as loan terms, the ST culture is given its due hopefully producing the following effect (Newmark, 1988: 82):

In regional novels ... , cultural words are often transferred to give local colour, to attract the reader, to give a sense of intimacy between the text and the reader – sometimes the sound or the evoked image appears attractive.

There is loss in using “empalme” (junction) for *T-junction* without specifying the resemblance to the letter T, but there is no concise equivalent in Argentine Spanish and the under-translation present in the functional equivalent “empalme” (Newmark, 1988: 83) produces no consequences. *Rush-hour traffic* and *traffic jams* have long lost their cultural impact since they denote situations which have

become a daily occurrence in most big cities; the standard Spanish translations, which the TT ideal reader will find only too familiar, have been used.

The gestures *hangs back respectfully* and *nods his thanks* are interesting from a cultural perspective. A great number of drivers in Argentina, especially in the major cities, are known to be over-fond of disregarding traffic regulations and treating fellow drivers and pedestrians with incredible discourtesy and unjustified aggression and, what is even worse, of seldom realizing the serious nature of their actions. There are, of course, many persons who act like Vic Wilcox and the Ford van driver, and to whom the adverb “respectfully” will seem only too right in this context (both because being respectful is the proper way to act and because they, too, would act respectfully to the driver of a Jaguar). However, many TT readers who, as a rule, do not drive the way they should will simply acknowledge these gestures as expected from people in other “civilized” countries and perhaps, incidentally, feel some scorn.

Roundabout has been literally translated as “rotonda”, a term which is clear to the TT ideal reader. The difference, however, lies with effect: there are very few roundabouts in the Argentine road system, both urban and rural, and therefore this type of road junction is nowhere near as familiar to the reader of the TT as it is to that of the ST. The situation as regards *ring road* is similar, though “caminos de circunvalación” (circumvallation roads) - or “caminos de cintura” (waist roads), as they are informally known - are a more frequent feature in Argentina than roundabouts.

4.3 Items related to business organisations

Both *Midland Amalgamated* and *Pringle's* have been transferred in the TT. However, since “Amalgamated” is not as frequently used as part of business names in English as “company” or “limited”, for example, the word “Grupo” (Group) has been added in Spanish thus combining transference with a descriptive equivalent (Newmark, 1988: 83-4). It is, however, true, that any difficulty the TT reader might encounter to interpret *Midland Amalgamated* as a business name is

soon dispelled when he or she reads about Vic Wilcox having been employed as an *MD* and so it may be argued that adding “Grupo” is unnecessary. But in these days of mergers and acquisitions “Grupo” is frequently used in Argentina and the TT reader would recognize it immediately. As for Pringle’s, it has, as stated above, been transferred, but deprived of its “ ’s”. The possessive case marker is unnecessary in the Spanish version because, as a feature of English grammar, it is not part of the business name of the company: “J. Pringle and Sons Casting and General Engineering” (Lodge, 1989: 17). Furthermore, it might give the TT reader the wrong impression since in Argentina, for many years now, shops and businesses wanting exclusive and prestigious sounding names have resorted to using the English possessive case in preposterous and grammatically incorrect ways.

Headhunted has been translated as “fue contratado” with the addition of “y, habiéndose dejado tentar por la oferta, abandonó su cargo en otra empresa” (was contracted ... and, having allowed himself to be tempted by the offer, abandoned his job in another company). Argentine publications for business executives often use the term in English, as they do so many others (again, reasons of prestige influence this choice). The TT being a novel, a translator’s note, one possible way of adequately explaining the meaning of *headhunted*, has been avoided, as has the option of using the term in English.

Now, the use of *headhunted* in the ST is of great relevance. First of all, because *headhunted* reinforces the use, on the next line, of “stuck out for the Jaguar” (Vic was able to insist on getting a Jaguar because Midland had wanted him to leave his former employer). Besides, it all becomes rather ironical at the end of the novel when he is dismissed from Pringle’s when the company is sold and no longer needs him. So the solution found in this case, by resorting to compensation, is an attempt at communicating some of the connotations in *headhunted*. According to Hervey et al. in using compensation (1995: 32):

The aim is to reduce some of the more serious and undesirable translation losses that necessarily result from the fundamental structural and cultural differences between SL and TL.

As for *MD*, a communicative translation has been used: “Gerente General”, in itself a literal translation of the “General Manager” used in the United States. And *divisional chairmen* has also been rendered by means of a communicative translation as “presidentes de división” (presidents of division). In a “Board of Directors” or “Directorio”, the person presiding at meetings is called “Presidente” in Argentina.

4.4 Items related to universities

The first of these items to appear in the ST is the richest in connotations and also the most difficult to translate faithfully: *redbrick clock-tower*. It has been rendered in the TT as “torre de ladrillos rojos, con el gran reloj” (tower of red bricks, with the big clock), aiming at a translation as literal as possible. The two adjectives which qualify “tower” so straightforwardly in English have been turned into prepositional phrases in Spanish; the adjective “gran” (big) has been added to provide adequate rhythm to the phrase and also because clocks in these settings are usually of big dimensions. So much for denotation.

As for connotations, here again, as above with *headhunted*, communicating to the TT reader exactly what *redbrick* connotes to a British reader would require at the least a translator’s note. This has been avoided for the same reasons as above. The novel does allude to the contrast between the “new universities” and “Oxford and Cambridge” (Lodge, 1989: 42, 45) but to provide background information on two of the characters rather than as relevant elements for the plot itself. So the decision has been to provide a stylistically suitable translation for a literary text, in the belief that the translation loss involved has limited consequences.

Argentine universities have no *halls of residence* since students never reside on campus. The term has been rendered by means of the functional equivalent “dormitorios universitarios” (university dormitories). As for the *Students’ Union*, where the pretty girls go in the evenings to socialise, it has been translated by means of a cultural equivalent, “Centro de Estudiantes” (Students’ Centre). The whole notion of students living on campus and going for a drink in the evening

somewhere on the campus itself is extraneous to the TT reader, except that he or she may know about these practices from novels or films.

The analogies implied in the metaphor *academic Vatican* have been discussed in 3.1.4 above. The term has been translated literally since both components carry the same meaning in Spanish as they do in English. However, to some TT readers the religious connotations of *Vatican* may be more forceful than to ST readers, considering that Roman Catholicism is the prevalent religion in Argentina.

Alma mater has been rendered by means of a functional equivalent: “la universidad en la que Vic se recibió” (the university in which Vic graduated), unfortunately losing all reference to the culturally rich – but perhaps by now forgotten – “bounteous mother”. Transferring the item in Latin would confront the TT reader with an obscure and puzzling term which, if anything, would suggest a religious connotation. *College of Advanced Technology* has been translated using the communicative equivalent “Instituto” (Institute) for “College”, with the remainder of the name being translated literally. The term “colegio” in Argentina denotes either a primary school or a professional association (such as of lawyers, engineers, translators) and must therefore be avoided; it is never used for university or tertiary educational institutions. “Instituto de Tecnología Avanzada” (Institute of Advanced Technology) is a sensible and likely name and, since the reference is not to a real institution, adapting the name is permissible. Finally, *college* in “If you make *college* too comfortable...” has been rendered as “la vida de estudiante” (student life), again by means of a functional equivalent.

5. In conclusion

On the basis of the experience of translating this particular ST and without taking into account other variables, such as text type or translator ideology, it is possible to say that there does not appear to be a relationship such that cultural items classified under a specific category are all translated by means of the same procedure or strategy. As stated above in 3.2, however, cultural categories have proved in this case to be useful for actual translation. Underlying this is the fact

that the translator must be very well-informed about both the source and target cultures since every piece of information may be relevant and useful. This, however, is not enough. The translation of culture-bound items requires the translator to carefully reflect on and be aware of the implications of dealing with cultural categories. Going a step further, it is possible to say that all translation requires that attention be paid to cultural issues to the extent that, as stated in the introduction, translation always involves a cultural transfer.

References

Coulthard, M. (1992) "Linguistic Constraints on Translation". In *Studies in Translation/Estudos de Tradução, Ilha do Desterro* 28. Florianópolis, Brazil: Editora da Universidade Federal de Santa Catarina, 9-23.

Hervey, S., Higgins, I. and Haywood, L.M. (1995) *Thinking Spanish Translation*. London and New York: Routledge.

La Nación, 23 June 2000, sec. 6.

Lodge, D. (1989) *Nice Work*. London: Penguin Books.

Mayoral, R. (nd) "La traducción de referencias culturales" (e-mail). Personal e-mails to Franzoni de Moldavsky, A. (9,13 June 2000). To be published in *Sendebarr*, Revista de la Facultad de Traducción e Interpretación, Universidad de Granada.

Newmark, P. (1988) *A Textbook of Translation*. Hemel Hempstead, U.K.: Prentice Hall.

New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1993) (ed. L. Brown). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Dictionary References

(Reference Works Employed for Translation of ST)

Adam, J.H. (1982) *Longman Dictionary of Business English*. Burnt Mill, U.K.: Longman.

Moliner, M. (1990) *Diccionario de uso del español*. Madrid: Gredos.

New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1993) (ed. L. Brown). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Serrano, M., Zorrilla, A. (1996) *Diccionario de los usos correctos del español*. Buenos Aires: Estrada.

Simon and Schuster's International Dictionary - English/Spanish Spanish/English (1973) (ed. Tana de Gámez). New York: Simon and Schuster.

Webster's Third New International Dictionary (1971) (ed. P. Gove). Springfield, MA, U.S.A.: Merriam.

Now begins the best half-an-hour of the day, the drive to work. In fact it is not quite half-an-hour – the journey usually takes twenty-four minutes, but Vic wishes it were longer. It is an interval of peace between the irritations of home and the anxieties of work, a time of pure sensation, total control, effortless superiority. For the Jaguar is superior to every other car on the road, Vic is convinced of that. When Midland Amalgamated headhunted him for the MD's job at Pringle's they offered him a Rover 3500 Vanden Plas, but Vic stuck out for the Jaguar, a car normally reserved for divisional chairmen, and to his great satisfaction he had got one, even though it wasn't quite new. It had to be a British car, of course, since Pringle's did so much business with the local automotive industry – not that Vic has ever driven a foreign car: foreign cars are anathema to him, their sudden invasion of British roads in the 1970s marked the beginning of the region's economic ruin in his view – but he has to admit that you don't have a lot of choice in British cars when it comes to matching the top-of-the-range Mercedes and BMWs. In fact the Jag is just about the only one that can really wipe the smiles off their drivers' faces, unless you're talking Rolls-Royce or Bentley.

He pauses at the T-junction where Avondale Road meets Barton Road, on which the rush-hour traffic is already beginning to thicken. The driver of a Ford Transit van, though he has priority, hangs back respectfully to let Vic filter left. Vic nods his thanks, turns left, then right again, picking his way through the broad, tree-lined residential streets with practised ease. He is skirting the University, whose tall redbrick clock-tower is occasionally visible above trees and rooftops. Though he lives on its doorstep, so to speak, Vic has never been inside the place. He knows it chiefly as a source of seasonal traffic jams about which Marjorie complains (the University day begins too late and finishes too early to inconvenience Vic himself) and of distractingly pretty girls about whose safety he worries, seeing them walking to and fro between their halls of residence and the Students' Union in the evenings. With its massive architecture and landscaped grounds, guarded at every entrance by watchful security staff, the University seems to Vic rather like a small city-state, an academic Vatican, from which he keeps his distance, both intimidated by and disapproving of its air of privileged detachment from the vulgar, bustling industrial city in which it is embedded. His own alma mater, situated a few miles away, was a very different kind of institution, a dingy tower block, crammed with machinery and lab benches, overlooking a railway marshalling yard and

a roundabout on the inner ring road. In his day a College of Advanced Technology, it has since grown in size and been raised to the status of a university, but without putting on any airs and graces. And quite right too. If you make college too comfortable nobody will ever want to leave it to do proper work.

Lodge, David (1989) *Nice Work*. London: Penguin Books. (Excerpt from pp. 28-9.)

APPENDIX II

Y entonces comienza la mejor media hora del día, el rato en que va manejando al trabajo. En realidad, no llega a ser realmente media hora: el trayecto toma en general veinticuatro minutos, aunque a Vic le gustaría que fuera más largo. Es un intervalo de paz entre las irritaciones de su hogar y las angustias del trabajo, un momento de pura sensación, de control absoluto, de superioridad sin esfuerzo. Porque el Jaguar es superior a todos los otros autos que hay en la ruta, Vic está convencido de ello. Cuando fue contratado por el Grupo Midland Amalgamated como Gerente General de Pringle y, habiéndose dejado tentar por la oferta, abandonó su cargo en otra empresa, le ofrecieron un Rover 3500 Vanden Plas, pero Vic insistió y exigió un Jaguar, marca normalmente reservada para los presidentes de división, y, para su gran satisfacción, lo consiguió, aun cuando no le dieron un cero kilómetro. Tenía que ser un auto inglés, por supuesto, ya que Pringle hacía muchos negocios con la industria automotriz local. Además, Vic nunca en su vida ha manejado un auto fabricado en otro país: siente una gran aversión por ellos y piensa que la ruina económica de la región se inició a principios de la década del setenta cuando los autos importados invadieron de repente las rutas inglesas. No obstante, debe admitir que no hay mucho para elegir entre los autos ingleses cuando se trata de igualar a los Mercedes y BMW, líderes en su categoría. En realidad, el Jaguar es casi el único auto que realmente puede borrarles la sonrisa de un plumazo a los conductores de Mercedes y BMW, salvo que hablemos de un Rolls-Royce o un Bentley.

Se detiene en el empalme de Avondale Road y Barton Road, donde el tráfico de la hora pico ya está empezando a ponerse pesado. El conductor de una camioneta Ford Transit, si bien tiene prioridad para avanzar, aguarda respetuosamente para permitir que Vic gire

a la izquierda. Vic agradece inclinando la cabeza, dobla primero a la izquierda y luego a la derecha, y avanza cuidadosamente por las anchas calles arboladas de un barrio residencial con su acostumbrada destreza. Está bordeando la universidad, cuya alta torre de ladrillos rojos, con el gran reloj, se vislumbra de tanto en tanto entre los árboles y los tejados. Si bien vive, por así decirlo, a la entrada de la universidad, Vic nunca ha estado en el recinto propiamente dicho. La conoce más que nada como una causa de embotellamientos de tráfico de los que en ciertas épocas del año suele quejarse Marjorie, ya que la jornada en la universidad empieza demasiado tarde y termina demasiado temprano como para causarle inconvenientes a él mismo. Pero además, la universidad es también para Vic un lugar lleno de chicas perturbadoramente lindas cuya seguridad, cuando las ve caminando al anochecer entre los dormitorios universitarios y el Centro de Estudiantes, se convierte para él en motivo de preocupación. Con su arquitectura sólida y sus jardines cuidados, protegida en todas las puertas de acceso por vigilante personal de seguridad, la universidad se le aparece a Vic casi como una pequeña ciudad-estado, un Vaticano académico, de la cual mantiene distancia. Lo que lo intimida de la institución y, al mismo tiempo, lo que Vic censura, es el aire de privilegio que la separa de la agitada y vulgar ciudad industrial que la contiene. Por el contrario, la universidad en la que Vic se recibió, situada no muy lejos de allí, era muy diferente: un edificio en torre de aspecto sucio y descuidado, atestado de maquinarias y mesas de laboratorio, que daba a una playa de maniobras ferroviaria y a una rotonda del camino de circunvalación interno. Cuando Vic estudiaba era un Instituto de Tecnología Avanzada, pero desde entonces ha crecido y ha sido elevado al rango de universidad, aunque sin por ello adoptar aires de grandeza. Como debe ser. Si la vida de estudiante les resulta demasiado agradable los alumnos nunca querrán recibirse para trabajar como Dios manda.

Lodge, David (1989) *Nice Work*. London: Penguin Books. Excerpt translated into Spanish, pp. 28-9.