For Christian and Peder

Contents

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Earlier versions of parts of chapter 2 appeared in the journals *Modern Language Review* ("Making Sense of the Translingual Text: Russian Wordplay, Names, and Cultural Allusions in Olga Grushin's *The Dream Life of Sukhanov*, *Modern Language Review* 107, no. 2 [2012]) and *Translation and Interpreting*

Studies ("Translating the Translingual Text: Olga Grushin's Anglophone Novel *The Dream Life of Sukhanov* in Russian," *Translation and Interpreting Studies* 11, no. 1 [2016]). An earlier version of chapter 3 was published in *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* ("Transcending the Vernacular in Fictional Portraits of Translators," *Interventions: International Journal of Postcolonial Studies* 22, no. 3 [2020]). Chapter 7 is based on an article I wrote for a special issue, edited by Steven G. Kellman, of *Polylinguality and Transcultural Practices* ("Reading *War and Peace* as a Translingual Novel," *Polylinguality and Transcultural Practices* 16, no. 4 [2019]). I am grateful to the editors and anonymous peer reviewers for their detailed suggestions, and to the journals for allowing me to adapt and incorporate this material here.

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This book is dedicated to my sons, Christian and Peder, who know what it means to live translingually.

Note on Transliteration

The modified Library of Congress system of transliteration is used in bibliographic references. This is also the case throughout the text, with the exception of Russian author names with conventional English spellings. The English translations of quoted passages are my own unless noted otherwise.

Chapter 1

Introduction: Translingual Reading

Literature in the twenty-first century looks more multilingual than perhaps ever before. Open a book and you might see different alphabets mingling on the same page, as in the following lines from a recent novel:

> Nukkeruusunkuja 8
>
> До встречи! (С бутылкой и хорошим настроением)
>
> Jag läser, bredvid mig har jag ordboken, словарь.[1]

Texts like this call attention to language, confronting readers with the medium in advance of any message and giving rise to fascinating questions about language and how we read. The example above contains two scripts (Latin and Cyrillic) and three languages (Finnish, Russian, and Swedish). Readers who know them all may experience the pleasure of recognition or the satisfaction of cracking a code, but what about other readers? What might those for whom Cyrillic script is opaque do with the second line? The English-language idiom "It's all Greek to me" employs a foreign language written in a foreign script as a metaphor for incomprehensibility. So what might readers do when faced with a passage of text that is, metaphorically speaking, all Greek to them?

As we will see in the analyses in this book, the deployment of multilingualism in a literary text engages readers in creating meaning even when they are unfamiliar with language on the page. Whenever uncertainty arises in the reading process, we are prompted as readers to apprehend language in new ways. This is reading translingually, and it is something all readers can do, no matter how many (or few) languages they know.

Of course, language play in literature is nothing new; writers have always exploited the pragmatic, expressive, and esthetic possibilities offered by linguistic

1 Malin Kivelä, *Du eller aldrig* (Helsinki: Söderström, 2006), 69.

difference.[2] Literary multilingualism was common, for example, during the European Middle Ages. Monolinugalism became the norm in Europe after the establishment of nation states, yet the literary use of multiple languages persisted.[3] It was part of the modernist esthetic project, as Juliette Taylor-Batty has shown, and the twentieth century produced a number of notable exceptions to the monolingual norm, especially among writers displaced by war and revolution.[4] In the twenty-first century, a new generation of authors—many of whom are migrants by necessity or internationally mobile by choice—are making explicit use of multiple languages in their poetry and prose. As Steven G. Kellman observed already in 2003, while "switching languages has a long antiquity, the business has been particularly brisk in recent years"[5]; more recently he notes that "[m]any of the most celebrated contemporary novelists, poets, and playwrights write in an adopted tongue."[6]

In the age of globalization, multilingual literature increasingly challenges traditional national and linguistic categories. As Rebecca L. Walkowitz points out, "Anglophone works of immigrant fiction are not always produced in an Anglophone country; some immigrant fictions produced in an Anglophone country are not originally Anglophone; and some do not exist in any one language at all. These variations test the presumed monolingualism of any nation."[7] Jan Walsh Hokenson and Marcella Munson see this development not as a novelty, but a return to medieval literary practice, "recreating today the ambient multilingual conditions of earlier periods, when writers routinely elected to write in adopted dialects and languages, ever widening the compass of the bilingual text and its audiences."[8]

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2 For an overview of literary translingualism from different periods and geographical areas, see: Steven G. Kellman and Natasha Lvovich, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Literary Translingualism* (New York: Routledge, 2022).

3 Yasemin Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue: The Postmonolingual Condition* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2012).

4 Juliette Taylor-Batty, *Multilingualism in Modernist Fiction* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013). Evelyn Nien-Ming Ch'ien argues that contemporary multilingual writers "are continuing a tradition begun by James Joyce, William Faulkner, Gertrude Stein, Louis Chu, T. S. Eliot, and others." Evelyn Nien-Ming Ch'ien, *Weird English* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004), 11–12.

5 Steven G. Kellman, preface to *Switching Languages: Translingual Writers Reflect on Their Craft*, ed. Steven G. Kellman (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003), xvii.

6 Steven G. Kellman, *Nimble Tongues: Studies in Literary Translingualism* (West Lafayette: Purdue University Press, 2020), 16.

7 Rebecca L. Walkowitz, "The Location of Literature: The Transnational Book and the Migrant Writer," *Contemporary Literature* 47, no. 4 (2006): 529.

8 Jan Walsh Hokenson and Marcella Munson, *The Bilingual Text: History and Theory of Literary Self-Translation* (London: Routledge, 2014), 211.

This literary trend has had an impact on how we study literature. "In the past two decades," Walkowitz observes, "the nation has ceased to operate as the only or necessary container for literary history." Instead, there has been "a conceptual shift from objects that fit, however heterogeneously, within a single language container to objects that span varied language and paralanguage containers."[9] Due to the new perspectives that readers bring to bear on the reading process, multilingual literature arguably looks different to readers today. As Rita Felski stresses, "Readers come to literature with very different histories, experiences, literary tastes, and forms of response that need to be reckoned with."[10] Because readers and reading are always situated in cultural, social, and economic contexts, real world conditions inevitably influence how we interpret fictional worlds. As many scholars have observed, globalization, digitalization, and increased migration all serve to highlight issues related to language, and thus literary multilingualism resonates with twenty-first-century readers in new ways, whether they speak one or many languages.[11] The resulting perspectives not only influence how we interpret contemporary fiction; they also give rise to new readings of canonical works.

This book examines how literary multilingualism in prose fiction brings language to the fore in the reading process. My choice of novels is deliberately eclectic, guided by a desire to illustrate different ways in which prose fiction engages readers in thinking about language. The selection is also necessarily influenced by my own language competencies and specializations as a literary scholar. With two exceptions (a nineteenth-century novel by Leo Tolstoy and

9 Rebecca L. Walkowitz, "Less Than One Language: Typographic Multilingualism and Post-Anglophone Fiction," *SubStance* 50, no. 1 (2021): 95, 97.

10 Rita Felski, "Postcritical Reading," *Amercian Book Review* 38, no. 5 (2017): 5.

11 Currently at least one third of the world's population is polyglot. Li Wei, "Dimensions of Bilingualism," in *The Bilingualism Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. Li Wei (London: Routledge, 2007), 4. Penelope Gardner-Chloros notes: "If you add together people who live in multilingual areas of the world (Africa, India, Singapore, Creole-speaking areas such as the Caribbean or Papua New Guinea, etc.); people who speak a regional language or dialect on top of a national language (from Basques to Chechens); and migrants and their descendants (Greeks in Australia, Punjabis in Britain, Spanish speakers in the USA, etc.), you are left with small islands of monolingualism in a multilingual sea. This is without counting people who learn a second/third language beyond a basic level at school (e.g. the Dutch or Scandinavians); those who have a different language for literacy from the one they speak (e.g. Gujerati and Punjabi speakers whose language of literacy is Hindi); those who become bilingual through changes in personal circumstances; and those whose mother tongue is not considered adequate for formal purposes [. . .] Plurilingualism is still the norm in spite of the fact that a large number of the world's languages are under imminent threat of extinction owing to economic and globalizing forces." Penelope Gardner-Chloros, *Code-Switching* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 5–7.

Andreï Makine's *Le testament français* from 1995), all of the novels analyzed have been published after the turn of the millennium. They deploy literary multilingualism in various ways: through plot, characterization, and thematicization, as well as the depiction of language practices such as writing, translation, and reading. Several contain a metafictional level that calls on the reader to reflect on language itself. My approaches to these case studies also vary, drawing on insights from the growing field of multilingual literary studies, as well as reader-response criticism, Formalism, New Formalism, translation studies, transfiction studies, cognitive literary studies, and postcritique. Most of the concepts I apply are defined in the chapter in which they first appear, but a few key terms are explained below.

Key Terms

When speaking of *language*, I follow Dirk Delabastita in using the word in an open way that "accommodates not only the 'official' taxonomy of languages but also the whole range of subtypes and varieties existing within the various officially recognized languages (e.g. dialect, sociolect, slang) and indeed sometimes challenging our neat linguistic typologies."[12] When speaking of the presence of more than one language in a literary text, I use two different terms in an overlapping, though not always interchangeable, way: *literary multilingualism* and *literary translingualism*.[13] While the term *multilingualism* indicates the presence of several languages without specifying relations between them, the prefix "trans," meaning "across, to or on the farther side of, beyond, over,"[14] captures a dimension I view as central for an understanding of the phenomenon. I thus apply the

12 Dirk Delabastita, "Fictional Representations," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, 2nd ed. ed. Mona Baker and Gabriela Saldanha, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 110.

13 The latter term was coined by Kellman in *The Translingual Imagination* (2000). A number of other terms have been used, for example: bilingualism, heterolingualism, plurilingualism, polylingualism, polyglossia, and exophone literature. There are also subcategories; for example, Rainier Grutman draws a distinction between exogenous and endogenous bilingualism, and Kellman distinguishes between monolingual translingual writers and ambilingual translingual writers. Rainier Grutman, "L'écrivain bilingue et ses publics: une perspective comparatiste," in *Écrivains multilingues et écritures métisses: l'hospitalité des langues*, ed. Axel Gasquet and Modesta Suárez (Clermont-Ferrand: Presses Universitaires Blaise Pascal, 2007), 31–50. Steven G. Kellman, *The Translingual Imagination* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2000), 19.

14 The prefix "multi" means "more than one, several, many." *Oxford English Dictionary*, s.v. "multi- *(comb. form)*," accessed September 4, 2023, https://www.oed.com/dictionary/multi_combform.

distinction drawn by Rainer Guldin, who holds that "[c]ontrary to the notion of multilingualism, translingualism emphasizes process and literary interaction between different languages. The prefix 'trans' suggests movement, expansion, and a crossing of borders. The prefix 'multi', on the other hand, often implies a series of languages existing next to each other without actually engaging in any exchanges."[15] Some translingual works seem to want to go beyond language, "to transcend language in general," as Kellman writes, "to be pandictic, to utter everything. Impatient with the imperfections of finite verbal systems, they yearn to pass beyond words, to silence and truth."[16] However not all multilingual works express this idea of "writing beyond the *concept* of the mother tongue," to borrow the words of Yasemin Yildiz, and so I reserve the term "translingual" for those that contain the idea of transcending language.[17] Kellman defines literary translingualism as "the phenomenon of authors who write in more than one language or at least in a language other than their primary one."[18] In this book, I shift the focus from authors to texts and readers, at the same time broadening the concept of literary translingualism to include various types of language interaction.

Transmesis

It can be difficult to catch sight of how language operates in a literary text because it is the very stuff of which texts are made. Language can convey a message in a manner that seems transparent, like a clear windowpane, through which we as readers peer at something on the other side of the glass.[19] If the windowpane becomes blurry, however, we may notice qualities of the glass before we register

15 Rainer Guldin, "Metaphors of Literary Translingualism," in *The Routledge Handbook of Literary Translingualism*, ed. Steven G. Kellman and Natasha Lvovich (New York: Routledge, 2022), 382.

16 Kellman, *The Translingual Imagination*, 22.

17 Yildiz, *Beyond the Mother Tongue*, 14.

18 Kellman, *The Translingual Imagination*, 8.

19 I borrow the metaphor of a windowpane from translator Elizabeth Bryer, who uses it in the following way in the afterword to her translation of the Spanish novel *The Palimpsests* by translingual writer Aleksandra Lun. "Spanish is the windowpane readers peer through to see into the lives of [the characters], and the transparency of that pane is in many ways the metafictional point: look at the linguistic and literary heights that a non-native writer [. . .] can achieve. We viewers of these people's lives forget we're looking through a windowpane at all [. . .]" Elizabeth Bryer, "Translator's Note," in *The Palimpsests* by Aleksandra Lun (Boston: David R. Godine, 2019), 101–2.

what lies beyond it. In such cases, we may need to suspend our disbelief not only with regard to the content of the story, but also with regard to the language that conveys it. The idea of suspension of disbelief, first discussed by Samuel T. Coleridge in 1817, entails a willingness on the part of the reader to overlook inconsistencies in a narrative in order to sustain readerly pleasure in the story.[20] "Literary scholars," as Saskia Böcking notes, tend to "assume that this abdication of reality-testing is a stance of basic trust users adopt directly before they start reading."[21] For example, in consuming an English detective novel that happens to be set in France, readers typically have no difficulty imagining that the characters speak French, even if their conversations are narrated in English. As readers we may focus more on twists of plot than on the language. But if the suspension of our disbelief is disrupted by the way in which language is depicted, we may begin to think more about the medium than the message. The representation of language can thus serve to thematicize language itself, opening up a metalinguistic and metafictional level in the text. This, too, can be a source of readerly pleasure.

"Works of fiction are wonderful at creating imaginary universes in which we immerse ourselves," writes Joshua Landy, "[b]ut not all novels and plays and films are content with leaving us comfortably ensconced in the illusions

20 Coleridge writes of suspension of disbelief in relating a discussion he had with Wordsworth on two effects of poetry: "the power of exciting the sympathy of the reader by a faithful adherence to the truth of nature, and the power of giving the interest of novelty by the modifying colors of imagination." In order to achieve the first effect, it is necessary, according to Coleridge, "to transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith." Interestingly, the second effect discussed by Coleridge bears similarities to that of the Formalist concept of *ostranenie* (defined later in this introduction): "to give the charm of novelty to things of every day, and to excite a feeling analogous to the supernatural, by awakening the mind's attention from the lethargy of custom [. . . that] which, in consequence of the film of familiarity and selfish solicitude we have eyes, yet see not, ears that hear not." Samuel T. Coleridge, *Biographia Literaria*, ed. J. Shawcross (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1907 [1817]), 5–6.

21 Saskia Böcking, "Suspension of Disbelief," in *The International Encyclopedia of Communication*, ed. Wolfgang Donsbach (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2008), 1. Böcking lays out a "tripartite model of narrative processing consisting of the components belief, disbelief, and suspension of belief," according to which "[b]elief is understood as a form of uncritical processing of a narrative's content regarding its reality adequacy and plot consistency." Disbelief "is the individual's critical thinking about both aspects. It arises if the user notices flaws or inconsistencies in the narrative and considers them to be disturbing. Suspension of disbelief, finally, is the user's not focusing on violations of realism aspects and plot consistency, although he or she has noticed them." Böcking, "Suspension of Disbelief," 2.

they create. Some of them like to wake us up from time to time, bringing to the forefront our dim residual awareness that what we are imagining is not real."[22] Engaging with Landy's idea of lucid self-delusion, Merja Polvinen emphasizes the active role of readers in the reading process, which entails "a cognitive state of lucid self-delusion in readers, which would not exist without having been performed through active complicity in a fiction as fiction, and with full knowledge of the meaning-making actions required in that performance."[23]

Meir Sternberg was the first to coin a term for the depiction of multilingualism in literary texts, which he called "translational mimesis." In the article "Polylingualism as Reality and Translation as Mimesis" (1981), Sternberg argues that literary representation of multilingualism and translation necessarily comprises a particular "mimetic challenge" because of the dual role of language in literary texts: "as represented object (within the original or reported speech-event) and [. . .] as representational means (within the reporting speech-event)."[24] Authors must find a way "to represent the reality of polylingual discourse through a communicative medium which is normally unilingual."[25] This results in an unresolvable tension:

> Since this tension between object and medium or inset and frame arises in principle regardless of the polyglot qualifications of the audience, it obviously could not be resolved even if the author were to communicate in a lingua franca, like Greek in ancient times, Latin in the Middle Ages, or the more recent Esperanto. For the *raison d'être* of these is not to bridge the gaps of representation but to remove the barriers to communication, often with a view to ultimately turning back the wheel of time to a pre-Babel state of universal unilingualism.[26]

22 Joshua Landy, "Mental Calisthenics and Self-Reflexive Fiction," in *The Oxford Handbook of Cognitive Literary Studies*, ed. Lisa Zunshine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 559.

23 Merja Polvinen, "Cognitive Science and the Double Vision of Fiction," in *Cognitive Literary Science: Dialogues between Literature and Cognition*, ed. Michael Burke and Emily T. Troscianko (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 147–48.

24 Meir Sternberg, "Polylingualism as Reality and Translation as Mimesis," *Poetics Today* 2, no. 4 (1981): 222.

25 Sternberg, "Polylingualism as Reality," 222.

26 Sternberg, "Polylingualism as Reality," 222.

Yet literature "is the art of the possible," argues Sternberg and offers a typology of four ways in which literature can represent multilingual situations (termed selective reproduction, verbal transposition, conceptual reflection, and explicit attribution).[27] Although later theory calls into question the idea of a unilingual norm in literature, as well as that of an extra-textual reality, Sternberg's structuralist typology was an important first step toward conceptualizing the phenomenon.[28]

Building on Sternberg's model, Thomas O. Beebee coined the term *transmesis* ("a metaphorical conjunction of *translation* and *mimesis*") as a tool for pinpointing and analyzing "what happens when one language is used as the *sign* of another."[29] In *Transmesis: Inside Translation's Black Box* (2012), Beebee observes that "[d]espite the plethora of theory and criticism on the translation *of* literary texts, there is very little to help us deal with the appearance of translation or code switching *within* literary texts."[30] He posits that "language resists representation" not only because of the dual roles noted by Sternberg, but because we are so immersed in language that it is difficult to get a view of how it operates.[31]

Transmesis is an umbrella term for fictional representations of multilingual environments, as well as of linguistic processes such as code-switching and translation.[32] Like Sternberg, Beebee breaks down the phenomenon into four types:

> [1] Texts whose mimetic object is the act of translation, the translator, and his or her social and historical contexts.
>
> [2] Texts that overtly claim to be translations, though no "original" exists. [. . .]

27 Sternberg, "Polylingualism as Reality," 225. For a concise summary of Sternberg's model, see Delabastita, "Fictional Representations," 109.

28 For example, Julia Tidigs and Markus Huss object to Sternberg's "highly reductive conception of literature as the representation of a fixed, extra-textual object. For Sternberg, it is the correspondence with this object that assigns value to, or detracts value from, multilingual phenomena, and in accordance with this he neglects any possible aesthetic and political effects of textual linguistic phenomena that do not correspond to those of the supposed 'object.'" Julia Tidigs and Markus Huss, "The Noise of Multilingualism: Reader Diversity, Linguistic Borders and Literary Multimodality," *Critical Multilingualism Studies* 5, no. 1 (2017): 216.

29 Thomas O. Beebee, *Transmesis: Inside Translation's Black Box* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 3, 16.

30 Beebee, *Transmesis*, 14.

31 Beebee, *Transmesis*, 5.

32 Beebee, *Transmesis*, 3.

> [3] Texts that mime a language reality such that the medium does not match the object depicted (e.g., when conversations taking place in Cuba between Cubans are given in English.)
>
> [4] Texts that make standard language strange to itself [. . .], inasmuch as such departures are seen as the result of transcoding from another, more "original" language; code-switching; interference from another language; and so forth.[33]

Transmetic works "remind their readers that the universe is multilingual," by highlighting the presence of other languages in the fictional worlds depicted and/or in the linguistic conditions underlying the creation of a text.[34] The focus, in Beebee's typology, on mimesis of "a language reality" can be productively supplemented by equal attention to the reality effect that arises in the process of reading fiction. New Formalist Fredric V. Bogel argues that "any literary text can display either a referential relation to an anterior reality or a rhetorical relation to the reality-effect it creates," and emphasizes "the need to look *at* the language we are tempted to look *through*."[35] In several of the chapters in this book, I use Beebee's concept of transmesis as an analytical tool for pinpointing translingual elements in the selected case studies, after which I go on to consider their implications for the reading process.[36]

Code-switching and heterographics

Within the field of sociolinguistics, code-switching is defined as "the use of two or more linguistic varieties in the same conversation, without prominent phonological assimilation of one variety to the other."[37] Code-switching also occurs as a literary phenomenon, defined as "the juxtaposition of two languages within

33 Beebee, *Transmesis*, 6.

34 Beebee, *Transmesis*, 3.

35 Fredric V. Bogel, *New Formalist Criticism: Theory and Practice* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 10, 185.

36 For other studies that apply Beebee's concept, see Roman Ivashkiv, "Transmesis in Viktor Pelevin's *Generation 'P'* and Andrew Bromfield's English Translation," *Translation Studies* 11, no. 2 (2018): 201–16; and Roman Ivashkiv, "(Un)translatability Revisited: Transmetic and Intertextual Puns in Viktor Pelevin's *Generation 'P'* and Its Translations," *European Journal of Humour Research* 7, no. 1 (2019): 109–25.

37 Carol Myers-Scotton, "Code-Switching as Indexical of Social Negotiations," in *The Bilingualism Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. Li Wei (London: Routledge, 2007), 101.

the same text."[38] In literary prose fiction, code-switching may be present on multiple levels: fictional characters or the narrator may codeswitch; the author may codeswitch in paratexts[39]; and the reader may also do so in the reading process. Carol Myers-Scotton argues that code-switching is "simultaneously a tool and an index. For the speaker, switching is a tool, a means of doing something [. . .]. For the listener, switching is an index, a symbol of the speaker's intentions. Switching, therefore, is both a means and a message."[40] As we will see, code-switching operates in this way—as both a means and a message—in some of the novels examined here. Another term of relevance for the analysis is *code-mixing*, in which two or more languages are blended to a greater extent, making it difficult to separate them.[41] I will return to both code-switching and code-mixing in the analysis of Leo Tolstoy's novel *War and Peace* in Chapter 7.

Heterographics can be described as visual code-switching between different scripts.[42] Twenty-first-century readers are surrounded by various scripts, which, as Simon Franklin argues, are more accessible than languages: "script is accessible to all who look, language only to those who can decipher or who can have others decipher for them."[43] The list below provides a sampling of the diversity of scripts available to us:

> algebras, alphabets, animations, architectural drawings, choreographic notations, computer interfaces, computer programming languages, computer models and simulations, diagrams, flow-charts, graphs, ideograms, knitting patterns, knowledge-representation formalisms, logical formalisms, maps, mathematical formalisms, mechanical

38 Daniel Weston and Penelope Gardner-Chloros, "Mind the Gap: What Code-Switching in Literature Can Teach Us about Code-Switching," *Language and Literature* 24, no. 3 (2015): 196.

39 I apply here Gérard Genette's term for material external to but associated with a literary text, such as a preface or interview with the author. *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. Jane E. Lewin, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

40 Myers-Scotton "Code-Switching as Indexical of Social Negotiations," 101.

41 D. R. Mabule, "What Is This? Is It Code Switching, Code Mixing or Language Alternating?," *Journal of Educational and Social Research* 5, no. 1 (2015): 341.

42 Charles Lock, "Heterographics: Towards a History and Theory of Other Lettering," in *Literary Translation: World Literature or 'Worlding' Literature?*, ed. Ida Klitgård (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2006), 97–112.

43 Simon Franklin, *The Russian Graphosphere, 1450–1850* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 102.

> models, musical notations, numeral systems, phonetic scripts, punctuation systems, tables, and so on.[44]

It is often first when scripts are mixed that we become aware of these different systems (as in the mixing of Cyrillic with Roman letters in the heterographical passage quoted at the beginning of this chapter). Regardless of whether we are aware of the presence of different scripts, however, readerly perspectives are always decisive in the decoding process. As Bogel points out, it is readers who, "however habitually, instantaneously, and therefore invisibly—construe a capital T as that letter rather than as one of two supports holding up a clothesline, a capital O as that letter rather than as a cross-section of a garden hose, a capital L as that letter rather than a right angle or an uncompleted triangle."[45] Helena Bodin argues that "heterographic devices emphasise the heteromediality of literary texts, thereby heightening readers' awareness of the visual-spatial features of literary texts, as well as of the materiality of scripts."[46] As some of the novels analyzed in this book show, heterographical devices draw attention not only to language, but also to the script-based practices of writing, reading, and translation.

Ostranenie

All of the literary devices discussed above—transmesis, code-switching, code-mixing, and heterographics—potentially heighten the reader's awareness of language by impeding the reading process, perhaps even turning language into an irritant that interferes with comprehension. When this happens, language becomes strange to the reader. The Russian Formalist concept of *ostranenie* (variously translated into English as making strange, defamiliarization, or estrangement) is thus a useful concept for examining literary translingualism. Shklovsky explains *ostranenie* in the following way:

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44 Donald Peterson qtd. in Richard Menary, "Writing as Thinking," *Language Sciences* 29, no. 5 (2007): 624.

45 Bogel, *New Formalist Criticism*, 87. Bogel uses this example of letters to illustrate the following argument by Stanley Fish: "the text as an entity independent of interpretation and (ideally) responsible for its career drops out and is replaced by the texts that emerge as the consequence of our interpretive activities. There are still formal patterns, but they do not lie innocently in the world; rather, they are themselves constituted by an interpretive act." Stanley Fish, *Is There a Text in This Class? The Authority of Interpretive Communities* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1980), 13.

46 Helena Bodin, "Heterographics as a Literary Device: Auditory, Visual, and Cultural Features," *Journal of World Literature* 3 (2018): 196.

> what we call art exists in order to give back the sensation of life, in order to make us feel things, in order to make the stone stony. The goal of art is to create the sensation of seeing, and not merely recognizing, things; the device of art is the "*ostranenie*" of things and the complication of the form, which increases the duration and complexity of perception, as the process of perception is its own end in art and must be prolonged. Art is the means to live through the making of a thing; what has been made does not matter in art.[47]

Shklovsky viewed *ostranenie* as a phenomenon intrinsic to all literature (and art), and not specifically translingual works, but nearly a century before the term literary translingualism was coined by Kellman, the Russian Formalists offered interesting observations on the functions of multiple languages in literature, as we will see in Chapter 7.

In *Bilingual Aesthetics: A New Sentimental Education* (2004), Doris Sommer invokes Shklovsky and includes foreign language in a list of defamiliarizing devices: "Wordplay, distractions, detours, *foreign words* are among the devices of deliberate roughness that make up literary technique for Shklovsky."[48] Sommer draws an explicit connection between the transgressive qualities of code-switching, which "plays naughty games between languages, poaching and borrowing, and crossing lines,"[49] and *ostranenie* as "a surprise effect accomplished by roughening conventional material in unconventional ways."[50] Like Shklovsky, cognitive literary theorist Terence Cave describes defamiliarization as one of the primary functions of literature when he posits that "[c]ommunicative language of all kinds has the function of changing the cognitive environment of the listener; literature extends that function with a power that is in inverse relation to its immediate use-value in the everyday world. It makes things happen, gives a local habitation and a name to unfamiliar feelings and events, or makes familiar ones strange."[51] Kellman presents translingual writing as a limit case in this regard: "It is hard to take words for granted when writing in a foreign language.

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47 Viktor Shklovsky, "Art as Device, (1917/1919)" in *Viktor Shklovsky: A Reader*, ed. and trans. Alexandra Berlina (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 80.

48 Doris Sommer, *Bilingual Aesthetics: A New Sentimental Education* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 30.

49 Sommer, *Bilingual Aesthetics*, 34.

50 Sommer, *Bilingual Aesthetics*, 29.

51 Terence Cave, *Thinking with Literature: Towards a Cognitive Criticism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 1.