# **A psycholinguistic Approach to Theatre Translation**

Ever since the publication of the first edition of Venuti’s The Translator’s Invisibility (Venuti 1995), the dichotomy between the foreignizing and the domesticating approach to translation has been an object of debate in translation studies. With this paper I argue that when translating for the stage, a higher degree of domestication might be necessary because of the different medium involved. I aim to show that the translator not only has to take into account the spoken nature of the dramatic dialogue, but also the aural nature of its reception, since language processing times differ considerably according to the medium. I will draw from studies in psycholinguistics, particularly on written and spoken language processing and processing times (Cacciari 2001, Rayner and Duffy 1986, Vitevitch and Luce 1998, among others) to show that certain translation strategies successfully applied to the translation of written language might be prove problematic when applied to stage translation (Tarantini 2016). For that purpose, I will use a single case study, an ongoing drama translation project: the translation of *Convincing Ground* (Mence 2013) into Italian. My aim is to demonstrate that a foreignizing strategy may not only hinder the audience’s lexical decision response, or prevent it altogether within the given time of utterance. It may also result in failure to convey the characterisation of the people depicted in the fictional world (Culpeper 2001), as well as the relationship they have with one another (Fiske 1992), shaped and negotiated through language.

**Keywords:** Theatre translation, psycholinguistic, written vs. spoken language processing.

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