

# Appearances

## Character description as a network of signification in Russian translations of *Jane Eyre*

Eugenia Kelbert

HSE University | University of East Anglia

This article re-evaluates the theoretical import of networks of signification, one of Antoine Berman's twelve deforming tendencies in translation. Taking *Jane Eyre* as a case study, the article considers character description as an example of a Bermanian network and traces the physical appearance of the novel's characters across its six Russian translations. Character description represents a network that is traceable, depends on the reader's ability to construct a visual mental image over the course of a narrative, has a tangible impact on characterisation, and remains relevant throughout a novel. It thus offers a concrete illustration of the relevance of networks of signification as a model for the systemic interpretative potential of translation variation. This analysis paves the way for further study of Bermanian networks and the ultimate integration of this concept in translation practice.

**Keywords:** character description, Antoine Berman, networks of signification, Charlotte Brontë, literary portrait, translation variation

### 1. Introduction

Character description is not a common focus in translation studies, but it is uniquely suited to studying translation variation.<sup>1</sup> In character description, very few words bear an unusually heavy semantic load and remain relevant to interpretation for as long as the character in question remains pertinent to the narrative. It is logical to assume that, should these words acquire, or lose, shades of meaning in translation, the impact will be particularly high. The visual nature of char-

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1. See Heier (1978, 77). The field has evolved, but even today studies of the literary portrait in translation, such as Fan and Miao (2000), are rare and do not tend to focus on physical appearance.

acter description makes it especially valuable as a demonstration of the power of translation variation to subtly guide interpretation in prose. The potential effect extends far beyond the literal meaning of the words, generating variation in readers' imaginative and interpretative patterns, as well as in illustrations and adaptations.

This article focuses on *Jane Eyre*, and traces the translation of its characters' physical appearance into a single language, in this case Russian. The Russian versions of Brontë's classic novel have not been studied closely, though there have been several helpful analyses (Demidova 1999; Yamalova 2001; Syskina 2001(a), 2001(b), 2001); Syskina and Kiselev 2004; Sarana 2011). The six Russian translations of *Jane Eyre* span the timeframe from 1847 to 1999. Four are pre-Revolution; two of these are full versions of the novel and two are rewritten or abridged. Irinarkh Vvedenskii, a prolific translator and early translation theorist, gave Russia vivid and highly readable versions of Dickens and Thackeray marked by his own – often very tasteful – embellishments. His reaction to Brontë's novel was enthusiastic and immediate: the first Russian translation came out in 1847, just two years after the English original. A second abridged translation by Sofia Koshlakova appeared within a series entitled *bubnuo&'( ) bn@ 6),, -.o/obob u m 'n'sn4/60.0Z (Biblioteka dlia dach, parokhodov i zheleznih dorog*<sup>2</sup> 'Library for summer retreats, steamboats and railways') in 1871. This unusual version was translated from a French adaptation, "imité par Old-Nick" ('imitated by Old-Nick'; Old-Nick was an alias of Paul-Émile Daurand-Forgues),<sup>3</sup> that recast *Jane Eyre* as an epistolary novel addressed to Jane's female friend, Elizabeth. This indirect translation presents itself to the Russian reader as another translation of Currer Bell's novel without any mention of the French version. Three further digests with excerpts from the novel were published in 1847, 1851, and 1854, and a German theatre adaptation was translated in 1854. The end of the century brought a full retranslation by V.D. Vladimirov in 1899, and the twentieth century started off with an anonymous abridged version for a youth audience in 1911.

Two more translations enter the scene after the Revolution, and remain the only ones currently in print. One, by Vera Stanevich, was published in 1921 and became a classic. This version was essentially the only one available in the USSR, with enormous print runs sponsored by the Soviet state's considerable publishing and distribution machine. In 1999, another translator, Irina Gurova, republished it, restoring several passages removed by the Soviet censor, which were mostly

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z. Transliterations throughout this article follow the simplified Library of Congress system for Russian.

9. In 1921, Old-Nick's French text had been re-published by Hachette in its *Bibliothèque des chemins de fer* ('Railway library').

religious in nature.<sup>4</sup> Gurova then went on to publish her own full translation of the novel in 1999.<sup>5</sup> In total, then, four pre-Revolution translations and two modern ones are included in this study, allowing for both a historical perspective and a range of translation philosophies and strategies to be explored.

In what follows, I propose a vision of character description as a Bermanian network of signification (Berman 1996, 78; (1), (\*)). I then argue for an approach to translation theory, practice and training informed by networks of signification, especially in literary translation. With reference to the changes in characters' physical appearance, especially Rochester's, in Russian translations of *Jane Eyre*, I show that even seemingly minor and local variation in networks of signification affects the entire network, and can have far-reaching impact on the interpretation of the novel as a whole. Consequently, the translation of the individual elements of a network of signification such as character description is inseparable from the translation of the network or networks of signification in which they participate.

## **z. Character description and networks of signification**

Character description presents a view of translation where local variation is inseparable from a larger whole. This is especially pertinent to translations of fiction. To quote Antoine Berman ((1), (\*)), "it is easy to detect how a poem by Hölderlin has been massacred. It isn't so easy to see what was done to a novel by Kafka or Faulkner." Among the twelve major "deforming tendencies" Berman identifies in translation is "the destruction of the underlying networks of signification [*réseaux signifiants sous-jacents*]" (Berman (1), (\*); 1996, 78). These belong to a hidden "subtext [*sous-texte*]" (Berman (1), (\*); 1996, 78) where "certain signifiers correspond and link up [*se répondent et enchaînent*]" (Berman (1), (\*); 1996, 78), and thus become responsible for layers of meaning that extend beyond the individual translation unit.

The network of signification is a useful concept but its application in scholarship and especially practice has been limited. Zhu ((1)\*) takes an essential step in resurrecting it in a current theoretical context with a timely call for a re-evaluation of textual accountability in translation. Boase-Beier ((1), (1))

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ç. Interestingly, some passages Gurova had to restore, notably the novel's ending, were also missing in both Vvedenskii and Vladimirov.

µ. Iuliia Iamalova ((1), ') claims that Gurova's translation was published the same year as Stanevich's version with restored passages (i.e., 1999). It seems, however, that the first edition of Gurova's translation came out in 1999, under the same cover as a novel by Barbara Ford.

similarly paves the way for systematic translation of stylistic patterns; her most recent work references Bermanian networks of signification as a basis for a pattern-oriented approach to translating poetry (1\*). Yet, networks of signification remain an abstraction when they could fruitfully stand for a methodology.

In character description, we have a network of otherwise independent signifiers that is as central to the source text as it is easy to identify. It corresponds to Berman's definition, with one caveat: Berman distinguishes between networks linked by a common characteristic (e.g., the Spanish augmentative *su/x -ón* forming a network of enormous and dream-like objects in *Los liete locos* by Roberto Arlt, which Berman co-translated with his wife Isabelle as *Les sept fous*), and ones united through the signifiers' "type de visée, leur aspect" – "their aim, their 'aspect'" (Berman 1g,µa, 7µ; ()1(, (\*).<sup>6</sup> These networks all rely on repetition and are construed 'from the bottom up', as it were, with no shared reference such as a character.

However, Berman ((()1(, (\*g-µ)) freely admits the existence of other kinds of networks, and the translator's "misreading of these networks corresponds to the treatment given to *groupings of major signifiers* in a work, such as those that organize its mode of expression [*parlance*]" (Berman ()1(, (\*g; emphasis in the original; 1g,µb, 77). While Berman's notion of such a grouping is vague, his example of Beckett's signifiers of vision relies on a shared reference (Berman 1g,µb, 77), and his understanding of "the systematic nature [*systématisme*] of the text" (Berman ()1(, (\*g; 1g,µb, 77) includes stylistics, where networks of grammatical constructions are similarly impacted in translation. Bermanian networks, then, clearly admit of a wider definition; indeed, the concept has been extended to repeated signifiers, including those found in character description (Zhu ())\*, (\*).

Author-translators' practices testify to the importance of Bermanian networks from the writer's perspective. Beckett, for example, insisted that his German translator use the same verb to describe time and a watch stopping twenty pages apart, or stick to one of the two German synonyms for 'to do', *tun* and *machen*, throughout his translation even when the other word was more idiomatic. This made him realise "the importance to him of the echoes and repetitions of the words and phrases which work like leitmotifs" (Tophoven 1g,, '17; see also '(). He later integrated a search for such patterns into his process, checking the frequency of each word in Beckett's French and English "to know how important it was" and "find the right degree of verbal echoes and the ways of establishing them" ('1g). Similarly, Cummins (1g77) offers a convincing analysis of Nabokov's

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<sup>6</sup>. Berman (1g,µb, 7&) uses the term *mode de visée* in the book version. This is also how he translates *Art des Meinens* and *die Art, es zu meinen* in Walter Benjamin's "Task of the Translator" (Berman ())7, µµ).

Russian *Lolita*, presenting “departures from ‘literal’ equivalents” for certain clusters of “interconnected images of high metaphorical significance” as “poetic deviations which mimic the original while forming new Russian interrelationships” (‘μμ). For example, an English network woven around Lolita’s surname, Haze, is replaced in Russian by a separate but highly elaborate cluster based on the Russian 012/01234 *dym/dymka* ‘smoke/mist, haze’ and other key word-families (‘μμ–’&1).

As Berman warns translators, “if such networks are not transmitted, a signifying process [*l’un des tissus signifiants*] in the text is destroyed” (0)1(, (\*g; 1g,μa, 7&). Lotman’s (1g77) semiotic analysis accounts for the mechanisms behind such losses. Art, according to Lotman, is both a secondary modelling system built on top of language, and itself a language in the semiotic sense of “any communication system employing signs which are ordered in a particular manner” (,).<sup>7</sup> Patterns, grammatical or semantic, are a key mechanism in such systems, responsible for art’s ability to “transmit a volume of information too great to be transmitted by an elementary, strictly linguistic structure” (1). Since this information “can neither exist nor be transmitted outside this artistic structure” (ibid.), the translator must see their task as reproducing two modelling systems at once: the linguistic sequence and its structure as a literary text. Otherwise, the building of series, a vital information-encoding mechanism, consistently suffers in translation, with no model to counter or even fully assess this tendency.

Yet, how can translators preserve something they o-en cannot reliably identify? Not even the most attentive reader or critic can be expected to be aware of all the patterns within a literary text. What is more, the semantic load carried by each pattern varies, as does its importance within the system. Translation Studies still lacks a methodology that would enable translators to identify networks in the source text systematically, translate them e/ciently, and resolve contentious issues such as which modelling system takes precedence when the two come into conflict.

In this light, referential networks carry significant advantages for the researcher seeking to establish such a methodology. Whether we consider a character’s distinct traits, or compare a feature across characters, we rely on signifiers we can anticipate and locate in nearly every novel with potential for follow-up studies of large corpora. Berman (0)1(, (\*g) rightly points out how easily fragile verbal patterns, overlooked by the translator, cease to be patterns, and therefore to be meaningful, in translation. Visual networks such as appearance cannot fail to find a representation in the reader’s mind: once a character is there, we

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(. See Semenenko (0)1(, ’7–’,) for a broader problematisation of the term ‘modelling system’, selected partly as a euphemism for semiotics.

must imagine them. However distorted, this network may transform but will not disintegrate in translation. A network of augmentatives may become weaker or stronger, but its significance within a text allows little room for variation. In contrast, translation variation modifies the meaning of most referential networks and leads to tangible shifts (in the case of character description, in visual representation). This implies a valuable extension to Berman's analysis, and points to a level of complexity other networks may share: for example, if a network consists of Nabokov's colour references, changing these colours in translation may not only weaken or destroy the network but result in a different synaesthetic code (see Cummins 1977, 171-72).

Lotman (1977) proposes a further distinction between primary and secondary modelling systems. In secondary systems, equivalent elements are not identical to each other but "synonymous in relation to a common denotatum, to the semantic system as a whole and to any of its elements" (\*&). To form such equivalences, writers tend to select elements that are particularly remote in linguistic terms (ibid.). Thus, it becomes all the more necessary to extend the notion of Bermanian networks to capture referential structures that create relationships of equivalence within the source text through meaning-generating units that are structural rather than linguistic. I therefore argue that referential networks, such as character description or signifiers of vision, cohere in similar ways to repetition-based networks and are equally impacted in translation by changes to their constituent parts. Their total identity with their textual components allows the meaning they generate *as networks* to contribute to the narrative (the character's actions; the theme of vision).<sup>8</sup>

Networks of signification, then, can be varied and lend themselves to classification (see Scott and Thompson (2006), 10-11). This is an essential step towards systematic detection, leading in turn to opportunities for literary analysis and a novel perspective on priorities in translation. Unlike previous case studies that apply Berman's deforming tendencies (e.g., Kahlaoui (2006); Vamenani and Sadeghi (2006)), my goal is not to identify or quantify losses. Instead, in this case study, I focus on a manageable and controlled network based not on repetition but on the mutual complementarity and interdependence of its elements, which allows for replication and comparative studies. This opens a pathway towards a much-needed model of the general mechanisms whereby networks are formed and pris-

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8). In this, referential networks stand apart, like Zhu's repetition-based notion of a 'leitmotif', from a "motif or a theme that operates intertextually as a general concept or doctrine" (Zhu (2006), 10). Motifs or themes, though reliant on key signifiers, are never exhausted by them. However, the term 'leitmotif' appears too broad and associated with thematic patterns. I therefore see a need to clarify but not to change Berman's original terminology.

matically modified in translation (Reynolds ()), as well as new methodologies for both decision-making in translation and translator training (see Boase-Beier (2011), (2012); Zhu (2011), (2012)).

## 9. The literary portrait and the Russian *Jane Eyre*

Lev Vygotsky (1978) introduces the helpful notion that the totality of a literary work, once read, coincides with its title in the language of our thought and private meanings, our “inner speech” (1978). Thus, each reader’s private meaning (2011) of a literary work such as *Don Quixote* or *Hamlet* “is contained in one name” (ibid.). This chimes with Tolstoy’s (1978, (1978)) claim that, to explain what he meant by *Anna Karenina*, he would have to rewrite the novel word by word – an example Lotman (1977, (1977)) cites to illustrate the information-encoding role of structural patterns in literature. The same may perhaps be said of the character’s name standing for the descriptions that stimulated our interpretation of that character, including physical depiction of appearance.

Elaine Scarry (2001) speaks of “great sensory writers” (2001) who “bring about acute mimesis of perception” (2001) before the reader’s mental eyes. Most fMRI studies show physical activation of the brain regions responsible for the perception of a vividly imagined object “in the absence of any actual visual input” (Richardson (2001), (2001)). Such mechanisms may strengthen character representation, as each detail contributes to a lingering mental image that informs interpretation throughout the novel and beyond. The reliance of a character’s appearance on visual mental representation sets it apart as a potential object of empirical studies of visual descriptions, illustrations, or adaptations. For example, controlled studies of back-translations, visualisations, or reader surveys may clarify the cognitive impact of network variation on character perception (see Ferreira (2001)). In the meantime, character description offers an especially vivid illustration of Bermanian networks as they transform in translation.

The literary portrait evolved over the course of the nineteenth century from exhaustive descriptions à la Balzac to the modern strategy whereby “the reader [...] is left with his own imagination to complete the full portrait. Although this manner may initiate a highly sophisticated aesthetic process in the reader’s mind, one no longer is dealing with the portrait created by the author” (Heier 1978, (1978)). Despite being a contemporary of Dickens, Brontë anticipates this tendency, and plays a part in defining it. Her technique consists of an optional sketch supplemented by cursory references to appearance scattered throughout the novel (see Schneider (2001), (2001)); Felber (2007), (2007)). For the purposes of this study, I consider the totality of these descriptions as the ‘portrait’ and use the terms ‘literary

portrait' and 'character description' near-interchangeably. The resulting impression of these descriptions is a mosaic that the reader must carefully assemble, filling in the gaps and considering each speaker's (o-en questionable) point of view: it relies on the textual network of descriptions, but is completed by each reader's imagination. Thus, each element in the new network re-created by the translator determines, as in the original, more than the information it contains, and each translation choice must be considered in terms of its larger impact.

Let us turn, for example, to Brontë's Mrs Reed to consider how the information we are given leads us to imagine her in our mind's eye. Much of this network is condensed in Jane's description as she observes her aunt, about to revolt against her, but more references are scattered elsewhere. Mrs Reed was

six or seven and thirty; she was a woman of robust frame, square-shouldered and strong-limbed, not tall, and, though stout, not obese: she had a somewhat large face, the under-jaw being much developed and very solid; her brow was low, her chin large and prominent, mouth and nose sufficiently regular; under her light eyebrows glimmered an eye devoid of ruth; her skin was dark and opaque, her hair nearly faxen; [...] she dressed well, and had a presence and port calculated to set off handsome attire. (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, (g)

This portrait undergoes significant changes in Russian. For example, in the source text the "Cairngorm" or yellowish-brown colour of her eyes is not mentioned until later, when we learn that Eliza inherited it (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, 1g\*). Two early translators clearly felt uncomfortable with the omission, and took the liberty of correcting it: Vvedenskii (1,\*g) makes her eyes grey, while Vladimirov (1,g', \*1) makes them brown (as evidence of the less-than-conscious processing of a network, he then distractedly switches to grey later on, presumably a-er Vvedenskii). Similarly, though Mrs Reed's dark skin colour is translated, all four early translations do away with a reinforcing passage where John Reed reviles his mother "for her dark skin, similar to his own" (1(; in other words, John is no longer dark-skinned), and Stanevich (1gu)) translates her skin colour as yellowish to go with John's "sallowness" (7). There are other subtle changes; for example, the solid under-jaw and prominent chin vary from slightly to disproportionately salient between translations.

Mrs Reed's stoutness poses another difficulty, as no available Russian equivalent connotes good health as well as corpulence. Elsewhere, Bessie criticises Jane for not being "so very stout," while Mrs Reed, she reports, "looks stout and well enough in the face" (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, 77), a positive use unthinkable in Russian. The translators' solutions all make Mrs Reed fat rather than attractively full-bodied, while in English her corpulence complements her stately port and dress sense; most translators also amplify the connotations of distaste in the



negation 'not obese.' Vvedenskii's (1,\*g, ()<sub>1</sub>) Mrs Reed is 'quite fat but not disgustingly so' ("08987::;8-T876T4=, ;8 ;e 08 ?e@8?A4@B=" *dovol'no-tolstaia, no ne do bezobrazīa*).<sup>9</sup> Vladimirov (1,g', \*<sub>1</sub>) has her simply as 'quite corpulent' ("08987::;8 C87;4=" *dovol'no polnaia*). The 1g)<sub>1</sub> version translates her as 'robust' ("3ADC34E8 678Fe;B=" *krepkogo slozheniia*) (Anon. 1g)<sub>1</sub>, \*(), but omits any mention of height or size, though it does call her 'quite fat' ("08987::;8 C87;4=" *dovol'no polnaia*) (11,) elsewhere. Stanevich (1g)<sub>μ</sub>, \*<sub>μ</sub>) makes her 'corpulent but not 5abby' ("C87;4=, ;8 ;e A46C719G4=6=" *polnaia, no ne rasplyvshaiasia*) and gi-s her with 'big bones' ("GHA838I 386T:J" *shirokoi kost'iu*). Finally, Gurova (1ggg, ()) uses "08A80;4=" *dorodnaia* 'stout', which does the job but evokes an archaic image of stoutness considered attractive in Russia generations before the novel is set. While Vladimirov (1,g', \*<sub>1</sub>), unaccountably, makes her 'tall' ("A8674=" *roslaia*), most versions also translate 'not tall' literally as ;e916834= *nevysokaia* 'not-tall', which is closer to 'short' in Russian and makes Mrs Reed appear shorter in Russian, as well as fatter.

Not only does Jane's aunt, then, look different in each Russian version, but many epithets are subtly skewed towards less winning alternatives. Mrs Reed's "somewhat large" (Brontë ())<sub>1</sub>, (g) face is rendered as 'broad' by all translators except Koshlakova (who omits the passage) and Stanevich; her exotic "Cairngorm" (1g\*) eyecolour becomes unpleasantly 'yellowish'; and Gurova (1ggg, ()) bestows her with 'roughish' skin ("EAK?894T4=" *grubovataia*) in lieu of 'opaque'. Vvedenskii (1,\*g, ()) places emphasis on Mrs Reed's muscles and broad shoulders in conjunction with fatness and short stature, making her appear masculine and somewhat grotesque. Stanevich (1g)<sub>μ</sub>, \*<sub>μ</sub>) makes her very solid under-jaw and large chin 'heavy' ("T=Fe78I" *tiazheloi*) and 'massive' ("2466H9;1I" *masivnyi*) respectively.

In English, qualifiers like "though stout, not obese" (Brontë ())<sub>1</sub>, (g) and "somewhat large face" (ibid.) show Jane's desire to be unbiased, and she compliments her aunt on her management skills and her "presence and port" (ibid.). Mrs Reed is an unpleasant character, but she is also an attractive healthy woman with a strong personality and some social standing. The Russian translations tend to make her more caricatured and less personable by transferring nuances of the character's inner deformation to her outward appearance.

The impact of Mrs Reed's stoutness on her attractiveness in translation is symptomatic of the larger network relating to beauty in *Jane Eyre*. Brontë makes a clear distinction between the novel's set of beautiful characters (St. John, Blanche, and Rosamond but also, to some extent, Georgiana, Mary, Diana, and little Adele) and the mere mortals whose ranks include both protagonists. Most descriptions

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g. Here and elsewhere, the (back-)translations are by me, unless stated otherwise.

rely on the basic unspoken assumption that beauty is objective. It is most definitely not in the eye of the Brontëan beholder: either one has it, or one does not. Jane looks prettier when she is happy with Rochester but that is explained by new hopes and keener enjoyments; she gained some weight and objectively improved to some extent. Jane and Rochester's union is one of two people matched, among other things, in their lack of beauty, rather as the union of either Jane and St. John or Rochester and Blanche would have been a poor match in that same regard.

What is then the objective consensus? The key to Jane's descriptions of people she presents as attractive is regularity and symmetry, a classical ideal. St. John has a "classical" nose and "Athenian" mouth and chin (Brontë (1), (g\*)), and Blanche (at least in Jane's imagination) a Grecian neck and bust (1'7). When Jane or Rochester is described as unattractive, what this really means is that their bodies or features do not conform to a certain (symmetrical) standard: Jane's features are irregular and marked, and Rochester's chest is out of proportion with his body.

Brontë's (1) choice to make her protagonists physically unattractive is significant within the novel's evolution between the early nineteenth century and the 1840s, in which the beautiful but bland romantic heroines are gradually replaced by the "heroine of irregular features" (Fahnestock 191). This "aesthetic of the imperfect" allows for a new kind of heroine, whose very imperfections make room for strength of character and personal growth (191). Brontë's own motivation behind the novel, as reported by Gaskell (1847), plays out this very drama in an argument with her sisters, who claimed that only a beautiful heroine could be interesting: "Her answer was, 'I will prove to you that you are wrong; I will show you a heroine as plain and as small as myself, who shall be as interesting as any of yours.'" (n.p.). This makes sense in physiognomic terms: insofar as character is expressed in salient features, asymmetrical by definition, striking personality must be accompanied by irregularity in appearance (with St. John the exception that proves the rule). Yet, the modern reader suspects that these imperfections refer to a different kind of attractiveness, and that Jane and Rochester are subject to the prejudices of their time, which Jane interprets as a timeless ideal.

It comes as no surprise that the Russian translations, which exist within a different tradition, vary in where they place the protagonists on the elusive scale of physical attractiveness. Lpophatic statements about Jane's appearance, such as her self-admonition "you are not beautiful either" (Brontë (1), 1'), are translated as "некрасива" *nekrasiva* 'not-beautiful' in Russian. The word connotes extreme plainness rather than a lack of beauty (much as "невысокая" = *nevysokaia* 'not-tall', really means short). Elsewhere in the novel, Vvedenskii (1, \*g) and Vladimirov

(1,g') opt for "e0KA;4" *nedurna*, which means 'not-ugly', but suggests that one is, in fact, rather attractive.<sup>10</sup>

What about Rochester? Jane tells Bessie her master is "rather an ugly man, but quite a gentleman" (Brontë ()), 1g'). The two earliest translations do away with this conversation, but the other four suggest where Rochester may stand with the Russian readers: one renders "rather an ugly man" as "0KA;8HM Ne789e3O" *durnoi chelovek* 'bad/bad-looking man' (Vladimirov 1,g'), (7g), two more as "8Ne; ;e3A46H91HM" *ochen' nekrasivyi* 'very bad-looking' (Anon. 1g)1, ,g; Gurova 1gg1(), and one as "638Aee ;e3A46H9" *skoree nekrasiv* 'rather bad-looking' or 'more bad-looking than not' (Stanevich 1gμ), (()). The range, then, is from fairly unattractive to very unattractive.

Elsewhere, the earliest, Vvedenskii (1,\*g), and, curiously, the latest, Gurova (1ggg), translations render 'ugly' literally with two Russian synonyms, "?e@8?A4@;1I" *bezobraznyi* (Vvedenskii 1,\*g, ((, 1μ) and "KA80 /KA807H91I" *urod/urodlivyi* (Gurova 1ggg, 7μ, , ), respectively. Both have connotations of disfigurement; the original meaning of KA80 *urod* is 'a freak of nature.' None of the other four translations go anywhere near such unambiguous terms. Koshlakova (1,μ7) avoids descriptive terms such as 'unattractive' or 'ugly', and instead consistently emphasises that Rochester's appearance is lacking in *Jane's* eyes (until, that is, it is not). At one point, Koshlakova inserts the comment: "P8 e67H 8;O 0K2470 STH20 CA8H@9e6TH ;4 2e;= ?74E8CAB=T;8e 9CeN4T7D;Be, T8 689eAGe;;8 8GH?6= 90 A4@6NeTD: H 91A4Fe;Be 7HR4, H 24;eA1 eE8 NAe@91N4I;8 ;e

;A49H7H6: 2;D, C8NTH 8638A?7=7H 2e;=" [If he thought to impress me [...],

he was entirely mistaken: both his expression and his manners were extremely unpleasant to me, and I found them almost insulting] (1(-,1(g) – a liberty inspired by the French adaptation where Jane finds Rochester's attitude extremely offensive. Vladimirov's (1,g') translation takes a–er Vvedenskii (1,\*g) – indeed, Vladimirov (1,g') sometimes li–s entire phrases from his predecessor – and uses the term "?e@8?A4@;1I" *bezobraznyi* 'ugly' (1&') as well as "e3A46H91I" *nekrasivyi* 'plain', etymologically 'not beautiful' (17\*) and "0KA;8I" *durnoi* 'bad/bad-looking' ((7g), but the overall impression is mitigated. Even describing the gypsy, in whose appearance Jane found nothing "to trouble one's calm" (Brontë ()), 1&7), he opts for "8TT473H94JS4E8 H7H 6TA4G;4E8" *ottalkivaiushchego ili strashnogo* 'repellent or scary' (\*\*). In other words, even in the guise of an old crone, Vladimirov's Rochester is not as hideous as Vvedenskii's and Gurova's choice of terms suggests about him in his usual attire. The abridged 1g)1 translation by an anonymous translator removes all emphasis from Rochester's lack of

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10. For an in-depth discussion of Jane's appearance and the implications for her status as narrator, see Kelbert (forthcoming).

beauty as many relevant passages are missing; he is only called ‘bad-looking’ twice and the effect is far less striking. Finally, the classic version by Stanevich (1991) is by far the kindest to both protagonists. Just as her Jane is merely not beautiful enough rather than plain, her Rochester is similarly not entirely attractive. The word she prefers is “некрасивый” *nekrasivyi* ‘not-beautiful’ or ‘bad-looking’ (1991) and even that is consistently mitigated by qualifiers. Overall, Rochester evolves, under the pens of his Russian translators, from visually repellent to not exactly handsome, and back.

#### 4. Rochester’s physiognomy

Deviations from classical proportions gain a new importance in physiognomy, the pseudoscience linking appearance to character. The importance of the physiognomic (Graham 1977; Jack 1977); Fahnestock 1991; Hollington 1997; Felber (1997) and phrenological (Boshears and Whitaker (1991)) code for late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novelists in general, and Brontë in particular, is well established.<sup>11</sup> Fahnestock (1991, 1997) points to character description as a shortcut to personality conveyed via a physiognomic code shared between the writer and the reading public. Indeed, popular accounts of the importance of a certain kind of nose or chin were widespread in the mid-nineteenth century (Hartley (1991); Pearl (1991)), and Jane and Rochester are very comfortable deciphering each other’s appearance using this code.<sup>12</sup>

As the cultural and semiotic content of each physical trait varies widely, character description can become a particularly complex object of translation. Is the translator to adjust physical appearance to convey its interpretative potential, or to translate each word faithfully knowing these connotations will be lost on the reader? John Reed, for example, grows up into a handsome young man but with particularly thick lips, which the contemporary British reader was likely to read as a propensity to strong desires (Walker 1997, 1998, 1999; Fahnestock 1991, 1997). Indeed, this was a trait used to convey a character’s sexual nature in an era when not much open reference to such matters was acceptable. Bertha’s lips are “swelled and dark” (Brontë (1991), 1998), unsurprisingly, given her promiscuous conduct (see Fahnestock 1991, 1998), and indeed, even Rochester’s own “flexible-looking mouth”

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11. Phrenology “offered an explanatory structure for the experience of internal division which was crucial to [Brontë’s] work” (Shuttleworth 1998, 1999), and Brontë was once impressed by a phrenologist’s reading of her own character. See Heier (1997, 1998).

12. Jane does it from a phrenological perspective as she rebukes Rochester for his lack of charity (see Walker 1997, 1998), and Rochester, physiognomically, in his guise as a gypsy.

is “by no means narrow” (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, 1gg). In Russian, however, thick lips are just thick lips, and some of the meaning must be lost.

Rochester’s appearance is romantically stern; dark in face, eyes, and hair (which is now sable, now jetty or ebon); yet also imperfect in a rather realistic way. His “unusual breadth of chest” is mentioned several times, so that the general impression, given his middle height, is one of disproportion, although his figure is athletic. His face is dominated by the features pronounced most telling by physiognomists: forehead, nose, mouth, and chin. At one point, he demonstrates his forehead to Jane as proof of intelligence, a phrenological reference that she reads seamlessly (11). Indeed, the formidable forehead (also known as his “heavy brow,” “massive head,” “square, massive brow,” “broad and prominent forehead,” etc.) crops up again and again. Its broadness characterises its owner as not so much a person of practical intellect as a deep, noble mind (Walker 1,\*, \*1).

Rochester’s nose confirms this conclusion: it is straight, “more remarkable for character than beauty,” with “full nostrils” (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, 1). This is “the cogitative or wide-nostrilled nose” which, “always combined with some characteristic profile [...] indicated strong powers of thought” (Fahnestock 1g,1, \*\*). Walker (1,\*, (μg) also links wide nostrils to the “power for procuring emotion.” Its straight contour (which Rochester has in common with St. John) indicates “a refined character, one who preferred to act indirectly,” as indeed both male protagonists choose to do in the novel (Fahnestock 1g,1, \*\*). Brontë is slow to give away the traits thought to indicate amateness (chin) and appetite (mouth). Eventually, though, we can decode both from Jane’s sketch of Rochester at Mrs Reed’s: his “square lower outline of visage” (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, 1gg) implies a broad chin, indicative of “violent love” (Wells 1,&&, 1μ&).

What happens, then, in Russian, where the physiognomic code is less legible, and not legible at all for later translations?<sup>13</sup> As may be expected, this leads to considerable variation, as most translations bestow the protagonist one with a uni-brow, another with a massive lower jaw. The shape of the forehead, the nose, and the chin also varies.

Table 1 allows us to consider each of the six Rochesters in turn. Variation includes various combinations of dark versus black hair or eyes, a large versus a peculiarly overhanging head, a straight versus a long nose, thick lips versus a well-shaped mouth, a line versus a dimple on his chin, the presence or absence

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**19.** Echoes of the physiognomic and phrenological craze did reach Russia. Pushkin owned a copy of Lavater (Heier 1g7&, '(μ); Karamzin corresponded with Lavater, visited him in 17,g and undertook to translate some of his work (although he only hoped to sell a few copies). It is reasonable to assume that, even in 1,\*g, Russian readers were less intimately acquainted with physiognomy than Brontë’s target audience.

**Table 1.** Rochester's appearance in the Russian translations\*

	<b>Vvedenskii (18./)</b>	<b>Koshlakova (18μ7)</b>	<b>Vladimirov (18/9)</b>	<b>Anon. (1/01)</b>	<b>Stanevich (1/μ0)</b>	<b>Gurova (1///)</b>
<b>Forehead</b>						
square	xxx	angular			x angular	xxx
large/massive	x	x	x		xx	x heavy
prominent	x	excessively	x	x	convex	convex
				overhanging		
broad	x	x	xx		x	x
high			x	pale	x	
white	colourless		x colourless			marble
<b>Head</b>						
massive/huge	massive	enormous	large	large	massive	massive
intellectual (protuberances / conscience – line vs bump)	x line		x		x bumps, line	x bump
<b>Nose</b>						
long	x					
symmetrical	x		xx		x	
stark contour					x	xx
character	x				x	x
straight ridge					x	x
nostrils	5aring, wide, full	open	5aring, wide		5aring, wide	large, wide
<b>Mouth</b>						
grim/firm	xxx		xx		xxx	xxx
large		x	x			
5exible	x					
well-shaped			x			
not thin	x (very much)				x (lips)	x
<b>Chin/jaw</b>						
grim	x		x		x	x
firm	x				x	x
line/dimple down	x				x	dimple
the middle						

**Table 1.** (continued)

	<b>Vvedenskii (18./)</b>	<b>Koshlakova (18μ7)</b>	<b>Vladimirov (18/9)</b>	<b>Anon. (1/01)</b>	<b>Stanevich (1/μ0)</b>	<b>Gurova (1//)</b>
lower jaw	square “lower parts of head”		stark lines		massive (gypsy)	square
<b>Chest</b>						
broad	x very	x			x	
disproportionate to limbs						
<b>Figure</b>						
square	x					x
Sexible limbs	x		x			
stately port	xx	x	x		x	x
imperfect	x		x			
athletic		x			well-built	x
waist		thin			thin	not thin
hips						narrow
not graceful	x		x but graceful movements		x	
<b>Shoulders</b>						
broad	x		x		xx	xx
disproportionate to other body/ torso parts					to height	to arms
<b>Height</b>						
medium	x		x		x	x
not tall	x				x	x
<b>Age</b>						
number	TU	TV	TV	TV	TV	TV
interpretation	no longer a youth but not yet middle-aged	no longer young but not quite middle-aged	no longer a youth but not quite middle-aged	no longer young	no longer a youth but not quite middle-aged	no longer young but not nearing old age either
<b>Face</b>						
dark-skinned	xx	xx	xxx	x cheeks	xxxx	cheeks x W, xxxx pagan
olive	xx		cheeks			x
grim etc.	xx		xxxxxx	xxx	xxxxx	xxx
granite-hewn	x		x		x	x

**Table 1.** (continued)

	<b>Vvedenskii (18./)</b>	<b>Koshlakova (18μ7)</b>	<b>Vladimirov (18/9)</b>	<b>Anon. (1/01)</b>	<b>Stanevich (1/μ0)</b>	<b>Gurova (1//)</b>
not sensitive	x				x	
sad	x					x
colourless	x	pale	x		pale	pale
features /expression	expressive x W, rough, stark, sardonic, energetic	manly, expressive, lively, stark	stark, expressive, energetic	manly, domineering, large features	decisive, stark profile, stark features, derisive angular contours	strong, rough features, derisive, stark features
<b>Eyes</b>						
black	xxxxx		xxxxx	x	x	
dark				xx	xxx	xxxx
large	xx		xxx	x	xxx	xxx
beautiful	x		x	x	xx	xx
quick	x					
Same/sparkle	xx	xx	x		xxx	x irises
eyelashes	long, thick		long, thick		long, dark	long, dark
sunken-in		x				
other	falcon, will/ character (mistranslation of “look of pith and genuine power”)	grim/terrible	will/character (mistranslation of “look of pith and genuine power”)	angry, grim/ unpleasant expression, penetrating	angry, deep, grim, large pupils	penetrating, grim, deep
<b>Eyebrows</b>						
thick	x		x	x	xxxx	xxx
wide	xx	x	xxx		x	x
black	x	xxx	xx dark		xxx	xxx
horizontal	x		x		x	straight
grim	x		x			
frowning	x	xx	x		x unibrow	x
arching			x			
<b>Hair</b>						
black	xxx	x	xxx	x	x dark	xxx



**Table 1.** (continued)

	Vvedenskii (18./)	Koshlakova (18μ7)	Vladimirov (18/9)	Anon. (1/01)	Stanevich (1/μ0)	Gurova (1//)
thick		x	x			
locks	xx		x	x		wavy
brilliant		x				
facial hair	black sideburns		dark sideburns		black moustache	dark sideburns
style	covering forehead, thick locks, scattered to both sides		thick locks, scattered to both sides	lock over eyebrows	brushed to one side as a frame, brushed down at the temples and wavy over the forehead	brushed to the side, falling on forehead, 5uffed up on the temples and curly across forehead

\* Each cross indicates one mention, while a mention that is slightly different is indicated using a keyword and is only represented by that keyword. In other words, a cross and a word indicates two mentions of the given trait, while a word alone reflects one mention that is slightly different in nuance from the characteristic given in the le-most column. Bracketed information provides additional detail about the mention referred to by the cross that precedes the brackets. This table may not be exhaustive.

of a square forehead or jaw, variations in hair styles, and so on. Koshlakova (1,μ7, 1(-1(g) and Stanevich (1gμ), 1(\*) give Rochester a thin waistline (“6TA8I; 1I 6T4;” *stroinyi stan* ‘slender waistline’). In the case of the latter, this translates ‘thin-5anked’, which Gurova (1ggg) takes issue with: she goes for ‘narrow hips’ instead, (“K@3He ?e0A4” *uzkie bedra*) while making Rochester, probably tongue-in-cheek, thick-waisted in her translation of “neither tall nor graceful” (“;H 91683, ;H 6TA8e;” *ni vysok, ni stroen* ‘neither tall nor slender’, &7) in the same passage (Brontë ( )1, 1)(. In contrast to Koshlakova’s (1,μ7, 17,-17g) ‘sunken eyes’ of indeterminate colour (“9947H9GBe6= E74@4” *vvalivshiesia glaza*, a striking transformation of Brontë’s ( )1, 1\*g) “deep eyes” via *yeux caves* ‘sunken eyes’ in Old-Nick’s French), Vladimirov (1,g’, (,7) adorns the protagonist’s large black eyes with long thick eyelashes (“07H;;1= H EK6T1= Ae6;HR1” *dlinnyia i gustyia resnitsy*). Variation affects even Rochester’s age: Vvedenskii (1,\*g), ever the author’s editor, makes him five years younger, but the other translators steer the

reader to interpret his thirty-five or so years as anything from young to not yet entirely decrepit.<sup>14</sup>

Systematic analysis also demonstrates the power of emphasis and omission. Rochester's dark skin is mentioned in the earlier translations, but Gurova (1999) refers to it at least seven times, creating a firm association with the protagonist (see Zhu (2008)\*, (2009)). Similarly, omission affects not only the abridged versions, where Rochester predictably becomes an altogether more abstract figure, but the full versions as well. For example, Rochester's squareness of face and figure is mentioned no less than five times in the novel, three of which occur in a single description: "I knew my traveller [...] his square forehead, made squarer by the horizontal sweep of his black hair. [...] His shape, now divested of cloak, I perceived harmonised in squareness with his physiognomy" (Brontë (1847)1, 110). All but two translations downplay this detail or remove it, one is forced to conclude, as unsightly and dispensable. Some translators, convicted but committed to faithfulness, go for an 'angular' look with unfortunate consequences: in Russian, angularity usually points to someone seen as awkward, socially inept, and/or shy.

The fate of Rochester's "unusual breadth of chest" (Brontë (1847)1, 111) is equally striking. It complements Rochester's squareness to create an overall sense of disproportion, yet only Vvedenskii (1998)\* makes as much of it as Brontë; Vladimirov (1998)\* depicts him with a "GH838J EAK0:J" *shirokoiu grud'iu* 'broad chest' in passing. Russian uses the same word for the male chest and the female breast, which may explain why most translators replaced it with 'broad shoulders', perhaps following a general strategy of translating the code rather than the signifier (i.e., the implication of manliness rather than the physical characteristic). In English, Rochester's shoulders are never mentioned at all; indeed, Brontë ((1847)1) never refers to a man's shoulders in *Jane Eyre*, though she tends to notice them in women. While a broad chest is likely to accompany broad shoulders, broad shoulders are conventionally manly, whereas an unusually broad chest is a much more salient characteristic and tells us something about Rochester's peculiar sex appeal.

## μ. Character and characterisation

Novels rely on the reader's ability to empathise and grow attached to a set of believable characters (Schneider (2004)1; Zunshine (2006)&). Had appearance not been crucial to their creation, the plot of, say, *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* could not have existed, built as it is around the tension between the purity of the protagonist's love and the vivid image of his deformity. Insofar as we evaluate people's

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14. Two early summaries of the novel also put Rochester at age forty and thirty, respectively.

personalities by their appearance (Joseph 1g,(; Laustsen ()1\*), or have done so historically (Porter ()))μ), appearance remains crucial to literary characterisation both of individual characters and those around them (see Jirsa and Rosenberg ()1g).

Further still, Brontë's signature "art of surveillance" (Shuttleworth 1gg&, g) is an integral aspect of the relationships she constructs. John Reed considers Jane carefully before attacking her; Jane scrutinises Mrs Reed before her outburst; Brocklehurst examines Jane, and "Jane's courtships with both Rochester and St. John [...] are competitive exercises in interpretative penetration" (1\*g). This adds additional weight to appearances, especially since, lacking an omniscient narrator, the narrative relies entirely on the results of such observation for characterisation. Physiognomy makes this link explicit but does not exhaust it. If Jane was really an excessively ugly child – "a little toad" (Brontë ())1, (1) – perhaps one may be a little more understanding of Mrs Reed's limitations in welcoming this intruder into her picture-perfect family. But assuming she was merely different, the dislike becomes, in the reader's mind, an expression of sheer small-mindedness and fear of the other.

Brontë's descriptions of appearance are thus especially closely linked to characterisation. Most detail serves a purpose, be it a caricaturist's play (as with Mr Brocklehurst's large teeth and feet, making him a big bad wolf as well as a pillar) or something deeper. It is no wonder many of Brontë's acquaintances were easily recognisable in her characters: there is not a single instance in *Jane Eyre* where appearance does not match character. Grace Poole is an interesting case in point: Jane mistakes her for someone else but when she finally meets the real owner of the crazy laugh, it all makes sense. Another possible exception is childhood: the imprint of character on appearance develops gradually. Thus, Georgiana is adorable as a little girl but her adult appearance – still adorable to some – betrays the cruel nature she inherited from her mother.

So, what does Rochester's squareness of face and figure imply, and what happens when this squareness is lacking? It is part of Rochester's overall grimness: indeed, when St. John looks downcast in Rosamond's presence, she teases him that "the lower part of his face" is "unusually stern and square" (Brontë ())1, '1(). There is, however, more to it. Rochester's squareness makes him intensely physical, and therefore imposingly real. While in other ways (darkness, fine eyes, his sheer role in the narrative) he is liable to be classed as a romantic hero – and indeed many Russian translators skew this network of signification towards this classification – such traits as his squareness resist it. His alleged ugliness serves the same purpose to an extent, but even that brushes up against a cliché, Sirting with

the demonic.<sup>15</sup> Squareness, however, is too specific and immediate. It is the stuff of life, not literature. And life is exactly what Rochester's character is about. Omitting it, like other omissions that make Rochester less corporeal, affects how we read Jane's passion for him, making this feeling also more abstract. Harriet Martineau, whose friendship with Brontë suffered a rift when she said of Brontë's *Villette* that she did not like the love in the novel, "either the kind or the degree of it" (MacDonald 191\*, n.p.), may have found certain Russian translations more to her taste.

Not only an omission, but also an addition may affect characterisation. Two Russian translations mistranslate an English phrase: Rochester's face was distinctive to Jane "because it was masculine" (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, gg) but both Koshlakova (1,μ7, ( ))<sub>1</sub> (despite the unambiguous *mâle* in French) and the anonymous 191<sub>1</sub> ((\*) translator mistakenly read this not as 'the face of a man' but as 'manly' or 'courageous' ("2KFε6T9e;;8ε" *muzhestvennoe*). Of course, Rochester is manly, and his actions on the top of burning Thornfield Hall make his courage manifest, but the mistake makes it apparent from Jane's very first encounters with him.

The translator's seemingly minor choices can also significantly interpret Brontë's Rochester is swarthy, though his forehead is once referred to as "hueless" ( )<sub>1</sub>, (\*). Two Russian translations exaggerate this paleness into whiteness. Vladimirov (1,g', 1\*&) replaces Rochester's square brow with a high forehead ("?D7H@;K 38T8A4E8 eSe ?87De 8TTD;=7H NeA;1e 987861" *bieliznu kotorogo esche boliee ottieniali chernye volosy* 'the whiteness of which was set off further still by black hair'); Gurova bestows Rochester with "2A428A;1I 78?" *mramornyi lob* 'a marble forehead' (Gurova 1ggg, 1&\*), which is especially memorable in contrast with his dark skin. The implications go beyond potential casting decisions; just as Rochester's forehead is broad and his skin swarthy, so is St. John's "high" and "lo-y" forehead "still and pale as white stone" and "colourless as ivory" (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, (g\*, ''\*). They are opposites, in temperament and mental faculties as in the colour of their eyes and hair, and this sub-network is largely lost in these translations.

The addition of a white forehead also affects Rochester's classification vis-à-vis the genre's Romantic legacy. Nineteenth-century Russian literature, in particular, was formed by texts in which Romantic stereotypes were blended with incipient realism. This minor detail is liable to push the original network's

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15. See Anon. (1,\*g, 1μ0): "Xτ94F;1I A824;H6τ0 68@0470 698HYO EeA8e90 ADGHτe7;:8 ?e@8?A4@;12H, ;43H0194= ;4 ;HYO H@AD034, C86Ae06τ9820 0KGe9;1YO 987;e;BI, τK 67KN4I;KJ 3A468τK, 38τ8AKJ ZA4;RK@1 ;4@194Jτ0 beauté du diable." [The courageous novelist has created his heroes decidedly ugly, bestowing on them seldomly, through spiritual anguish, that fortuitous beauty that the French call *beauté du diable*.]

carefully-wrought balance (especially when his squareness is downplayed) to make Rochester conform to the general mould of the romantic hero. Brontë painstakingly avoids this cliché, but her translators seem to find this uncomfortable. Even Stanevich (1990, 1991) uncharacteristically bestows Rochester with perhaps not a white but a “91683HI, K2;1I 78?” *vysokii, umnyi lob* ‘high, clever brow’, in place of “his brow” in the original (Brontë (1847), 11), adding a pinch of extra nobility to her network in a gesture that seems automatic. Brontë herself is not averse to white foreheads or idealistic haloes. Miss Temple is one case in point, with a face “naturally pale as marble” (1847, 11). This noble paleness complements the superintendent’s cratylic surname, and her hair, curling “on each of her temples,” emphasises the connection (\*). Her purple dress and gold watch continue the regal association with a nod to the purple and gold togas of the Roman emperors (who, incidentally, also had the temples). Within this mini-network, it does appear organic that Miss Temple, in the original as in most translations, has the large white forehead that some translators are so intent on giving Rochester.

## 9. Discussion

In calling for a systematic approach to translating Bermanian networks, this analysis contributes a concrete way of thinking about translation as a new system in its own right. This entails reviving certain aspects of structural approaches to translation in a context that is primarily critical rather than linguistic. A thought in a novel, removed from “the connection [6ReC7e;H=] in which it occurs,” explains Tolstoy (1970, 1971), “loses its meaning and is terribly impoverished.” What is needed is critics (and, we may add here, translators) who “can guide readers through that endless labyrinth of connections which is the essence of art, and towards those laws that serve as the basis of those connections” (1970, 1971). It seems appropriate to extend this maxim to networks of signification.

The present analysis traces network variation down to local shi-s, some of them potentially deliberate (e.g., the insertion of Mrs Reed’s eye colour or the removal of Rochester’s squareness), others unintentional (e.g., Rochester’s manliness or sunken eyes), and others still most likely unavoidable (e.g., Mrs Reed’s stoutness). In all these cases, removing an element from its labyrinth of connections affects the character network and sometimes related networks, such as our interpretation of entire themes (e.g., physical beauty and the way it relates to inner qualities), key relationships within the novel (e.g., the nature of Jane’s love for Rochester), or the reading of a character (e.g., placing Rochester within or in opposition to the Romantic tradition).

Until we rethink formal correspondence in systemic, non-linear terms, translation will entail variation that can be neither accounted for nor controlled. We may be tempted to assume that if the right equivalent is found for each component of a network, the sum of its parts will remain the same. Yet an equivalent may satisfy the translator in several divergent ways. When, for example, Bessie says to Jane “you were no beauty as a child” (Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, 7.), Gurova (1ggg, μ<sub>1</sub>) translates “no beauty” as “@42KYA1G34” *zamukhryshka*. This Russian word, which denotes someone both drab or mousy and shabbily dressed, is figurative, colloquial, and fits seamlessly with a servant’s manner of speech. Gurova had plenty of reasons to be pleased with her solution. Yet, it also distorts the overarching network of Jane’s appearance; now the reader filling in the gaps in their imagination must picture her as not only bad- but also insignificant-looking, perhaps poorly dressed as well.

What is more, Gurova creates a mini-network of signification of her own: later, she describes Jane as “YK01G34” *khudyshka* ‘scrawny’ (1ggg, &&) (for Rochester’s “assez mince,” Brontë ( ))<sub>1</sub>, 1)<sub>1</sub>, and these two distinctive uses of the su/x -1G3 -yshk, connoting negligibility and contempt, form a pattern telling us something about the feeling Jane’s appearance must inspire. Given the Cinderella-like connotations of the Russian network, a new subtext starts to emerge with Rochester, to blend two fairy-tale storylines, as the Beast to Jane’s questionable Beauty. It follows, first, that a translator can not only deform but also create networks (given Gurova’s reputation for meticulous faithfulness, probably unintentionally). Secondly, treating each component of a network as discrete in the hope of preserving the whole is a utopian aspiration (e.g., Zhu ( ))\*, (’7-(’): the full meaning of each component is only identifiable, and therefore translatable, when considered in relation to the entire network or networks involved.

This affects, first and foremost, the unit of translation. Variation in networks of signification cannot be regulated as long as translation practice focuses on discrete units (whether defined traditionally in terms of the source text as in Vinay and Darbelnet [1g7(, ’7], within the target text as in Huang and Wu [( )]g], or as a source–target pair as in Rabadán [( ),]). The unit of translation, then, must be redefined along the lines of Nord’s vertical translation unit (VTU) to include its place in potential or known networks of signification (see Nord 1gg7, &g; Zhu ( ))\*). This implies working not with the entire text at once, but with units that are still limited but complex (see Bennett 1gg\*, 1’). Consequently, a translator considering, say, the adjective ‘hueless’ for Rochester’s forehead would be conscious of working simultaneously on all the networks in which that unit participates – in our case, his swarthy skin colour and the way his disproportional appearance contrasts him with Romantic stereotypes. This attitude would result

in a ‘forming’ rather than a ‘deforming’ tendency in translation, the deliberate shaping of equivalent networks in the target text.

Notably, some literary translators, such as André Markowicz, side with Samuel Beckett and Vladimir Nabokov in deliberately incorporating networks into their process. For example, translating things coming in twos and of the train motif in Dostoevsky’s *The Idiot* as networks allows him to preserve such patterns on a minute linguistic level (Markowicz 1998, (μ7–(μg)). However, critical awareness of the work as a whole may counter the translator’s habitual process as many translators see reading and translating not as distinct stages but “as concomitant and not temporally sequenced” (Rossi 2011, μ1; see Hoeksema 1977, g–1); Descaves n.d.). Further, this approach poses uncomfortable choices to the translator whenever the best solution for an element of a network comes in direct conflict, as in Gurova’s example above, with that for a discrete unit of the primary modelling system. Translation already involves “many cases where formal correspondence itself implies some kind of shift” (Pym 2001, &.). Here, however, such shifts impact the larger system, making the difference between a character, for example, looking unconventional or ugly.

Rethinking the unit of translation may facilitate the conceptualisation of such choices, yet some networks must presumably be sacrificed. As translation variation emerges as both inevitable and systemic rather than as a cumulative effect of local shifts in translation, this adds to current debates, sparked largely by Lefevere, on the role of the literary translator as rewriter. To quote Bassnett (2001, (\*), “all too often the focus is on individual units of meaning [...]. But if we think in terms of the text being the unit of significance, then we are better placed to accept the idea of translation as rewriting.” Increasingly, translation variation is seen as inherent to translation, and potentially valuable (Reynolds 2000), with the sum of differences produced between translations seen as a “complexly ramified translanguagual macrotext” (O’Neill 2001, 119).

Indeed, every word in a novel unfolds associations and evokes a series of agnates (Matthiessen 2001). Through translation variation, these alternatives gain a material existence; in character descriptions, they become literally apparent. When Jane describes Rochester as having “whiskers” (Brontë 1847, 199), even the most conscientious translator must place their money on either a moustache or sideburns, resulting in a Rochester with sideburns in two Russian translations (Vvedenskii 1987, μ1); Gurova 1999, g7), a moustache in Stanevich (1971, 171) (by far the most widely read), and some with no reference to facial hair at all and who may as well be clean-shaven (Anon. 1991, μg).<sup>16</sup> A Bermanian analysis

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16. Curiously, none opt for ‘beard’, another viable translation Vladimirov (1987, (1)) uses to render “whiskers” in the description of one of Rochester’s guests, Mr Eshton.

makes us see beyond the ‘whiskers’ to the strikingly different romantic heroes entering cultural spaces worldwide, some modern-looking and others grounded in nineteenth-century fashions.

More generally, the necessity to navigate two modelling systems casts new light on translation as a creative-critical literary activity. The translator is likely to create new networks, sometimes through coincidence or translator style (as in Gurova’s use of the su/x -1G3 -yshk), sometimes by choice or compensation (as in Nabokov’s skilful Russian re-creation of the networks of his own English *Lolita*; Cummins 1977). Working on the level of Bermanian networks gives translators new agency, making them responsible for the work’s interpretative potential. This contributes to our appreciation both of translator accountability and of the potential of translation to generate literary value.

Several methodological questions remain, notably concerning the extent to which this analysis is applicable to networks other than character description. Berman’s examples and the present study suggest that networks can rely on repetition as well as shared references and may cover individual words or morphemes as well as larger units such as idioms, sentences, or imagery. Consider a telling example from Leo Tolstoy’s *Anna Karenina*: the images of Vronsky standing over Anna a-er their first night together and over his dead horse, both times “pale, his lower jaw trembling” (Alexandrov ( ))\*, 1)(-1)’. This network relies on two components: a visual image (Vronsky’s posture) and the repetition of a phrase, both of which must be translated for the interpretative possibilities to be transferred intact.

Another area for future research concerns methodologies for network identification. A focus on referential networks inherent to a given genre helps identify certain networks as a matter of routine (see Klinger ( ))\*). Corpus analysis methods may aid in flagging other patterns of varying degree of significance, such as repetitions of strings (e.g., Vronsky’s trembling jaw; see Munday 1999; Scott and Thompson ( ))1). Casting a wide net for networks, however, raises additional questions. Where does meaningful consideration of Bermanian networks stop, and how should we treat textual patterns that the author, the translator, and/or the reader are not – or cannot be (see Khmelev and Tweedie ( ))1) – aware of? A reader may feel they know a character intimately, yet be unable to describe their features precisely, suggesting that networks may be processed subliminally. In addition, “systems may [...] organize the fortuitous elements of a text and give them meaning” as the reader’s mind interacts with the text (Lotman 1977, (μ), making most patterns, in theory, candidates for translation. Yet, translating networks implies compromise and boundaries must be drawn somewhere.

It thus remains to be determined, in practice and training alike, how best to translate networks, but some adjustments to translator training are clearly



required.<sup>17</sup> These will affect the role accorded to critical awareness of the text in its entirety and, potentially, to the translation process. A focus on networks involves, further, reviewing the existing norm of avoiding repetition in translation (Ben-Ari 1999). Certain strategies developed in other areas of translation theory seem pertinent to networks of signification, particularly compensation. Strategies applicable to culture-specific elements become relevant in conveying, say, the physiognomic significance of thick lips or a broad forehead. On the other hand, making decisions as to the relative significance of different networks entails assumptions about reception analogous to ones involved in reproducing the effect on the reader within a dynamic equivalence framework, and which are similarly problematic. In future research, it would be productive to analyse the strategies of translators trained to be aware of network variation, for example, by working through a replicable case study such as this one. A longitudinal study may then examine character description or other networks in their subsequent translations, compared to a control group. This and similar studies may help evaluate the options for integrating Bermanian networks in translator training, and the potential practical response within the profession.

## **Conclusion**

Networks of signification are, and will remain, a central aspect of literary translation. Perhaps one day characters will be able to teleport into a different language without shedding a few traits or acquiring a unibrow or sideburns; perhaps one day so will the more elusive verbal and interpretative patterns within a novel. In the meantime, a pressing need exists for further study of the processes involved in translating networks of signification and for situating them firmly within the theory and practice of translation. Tracing character description across the translations of a single novel into a single language can only take us so far towards such a systematic approach, but it is a beginning, and perhaps a prototype.

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## *Jane Eyre* in Russian (chronological order)

April 1849, summary with translated excerpts:

Анон. 1849. “Литературные новости в Англии: Дженни Иръ: Автобиография [Literary news in England: Jane Eyre: Autobiography].” Библиотека для чтения [Library for reading] 94 (2), Seg. 7: 151–172.

May 1849, first translation by Irinarkh Vvedenskii (5 parts):

Vvedenskii, Irinarkh. 1849. Дженни Иръ: Романъ [Jane Eyre: A novel]. By Charlotte Brontë. Отечественные записки [Annals of the fatherland] 64 (6), Seg. 1: 175–250; 65 (7), Seg. 1: 67–158; 65 (8): 179–262; 66 (9), Seg. 1: 65–132, 66 (10), Seg. 1: 193–330.

1850, second summary:

Анон. 1850. “Джен Эйръ, роман Коррер Белля [Jane Eyre: Currer Bell’s novel].”

Sovremennik 21/6, Seg. 4: 31–38.

1852, third summary with translated excerpts:

Druzhinin, Aleksandr. 1852. “Корреръ Белль и его два романа: ‘Шэрли’ и ‘Джень-Иръ’. [Currer Bell and his two novels: ‘Shirley’ and ‘Jane Eyre’].” Библиотека для чтения [Library for reading] 116: 23–54.

1857, translation by Sof’ia Ivanovna Koshlakova, from “Jane Eyre. Mémoires d’une gouvernante, Imité par Old-Nick [Jane Eyre: Memoirs of a governess, imitated by Old-Nick],” pseudonym of Paul-Émile Daurand-Forgues. Brussels: Meline, Cans et compagnie, 1849:

Koshlakova, Sof’ia Ivanovna. 1857. Дженни Эйръ, или записки гувернантки [Jane Eyre, or notes of a governess]. By Charlotte Brontë. Библиотека для дач, пароходов и железных дорог [Library for summer retreats, steamboats and railways]. St. Petersburg: Типография императорской академии наук.

- 1893, translation by V. D. Vladimirov (pseudonym of Vladimir Dmitrievich Vol'fson):  
 Vladimirov, V.D. 1893. Дженни Эйр (Ловудская сирота). Роман-автобиография в 2х частях [Jane Eyre (The orphan of Lowood): Novel-autobiography in 2 parts]. By Charlotte Brontë. St. Petersburg: M.M. Lederle & Ко.
- 1889, translation of the German play *Die Waise aus Lowood* by Charlotte Birch-Pfeiffer (1853):  
 Мансфельд, Дмитрий Августович. 1889. Ловудская сирота: Жан Эйр [The orphan of Lowood: Jane Eyre]. By Sh. Birkh-Pfeifer. Moscow: Литография Московской театральной библиотеки Е.Н. Рассохинной.
- 1901, abridged for a youth audience:  
 Анон. 1901. Джени Эйр, история моей жизни [Jane Eyre, the story of my life]. By Charlotte Brontë. Abridged translation from English. Юный читатель, журнал для детей старшего возраста [Young reader, magazine for older children] 3, 5.
- 1950, canonical Soviet translation by Vera Stanevich:  
 Stanevich, Vera. 1950. Джен Эйр [Jane Eyre]. By Charlotte Brontë. Moscow: Гослитиздат (Leningrad: 2ia fabrika det. Knigi Detgiza).
- 1990, Vera Stanevich's translation with censored passages restored:  
 Stanevich, Vera. 1990. Джен Эйр [Jane Eyre]. By Charlotte Brontë. Omissions in the text reconstructed by Irina Gurova. Moscow: Художественная литература.
- 1999, translation by Irina Gurova. The 1999 edition includes two novels under one cover (also *Рождество в Индии* by Barbara Ford, translated by V. Semenov. The 2005 edition used for page references in this article is a reprint of the 1999 edition:
- Gurova, Irina. 1999. Джейн Эйр [Jane Eyre]. By Charlotte Brontë. Moscow: AST. Gurova, Irina. 2005. Джейн Эйр [Jane Eyre]. By Charlotte Brontë. Moscow: AST.

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## **Address for correspondence**

Eugenia Kelbert  
School of Literature, Drama and Creative Writing  
University of East Anglia  
Norwich Research Park  
NORWICH NR\* 7TJ  
United Kingdom  
ekelbert@hse.ru  
e.kelbert-rudan@uea.ac.uk  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6585-7588>

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