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Grounding the Translation: Intertwining analysis and translation in cross-language grounded theory research

Svetlana Shklarov, MD, RSW, PhD Candidate

Abstract

Grounded theory research in cross-language, cross-cultural context is associated with the challenges of linguistic sensitivity of conceptualization. The author, a bilingual researcher, offers reflection on her experience of doing grounded theory research, assuming a dual role of a theorist and a translator. The reflection is based on self-observations. Grounding the translation is shown to be acheived through the strategy of intertwining the activities of translation and conceptual analysis, performed by one person. The two activities are inseparable in time and take place along with constant comparison across language boundaries. Intertwining requires that theoretical sensitivity of the researcher be enriched with the sensitivity to linguistic and cultural meanings. Intertwining, through revealing differences between linguistic meanings or language structures, facilitates the emergence of concepts and theoretical categories from the very act of translation. Combining the functions of translation and analysis and using the strategy of intertwining worked effectively for this researcher.

Introduction

Translation has been so much a part of qualitative research in multicultural settings that we rarely give heed to the depth of processes involved in cross-language data collection and analysis. Certain aspects are better understood than others. The most common, traditional concern is the accuracy and equivalency of information transferred from one language to another – the quality and ethics of translation (e.g., Houbert, 1998; Hunt & Bhopal, 2004). More recently researchers began to analyze the challenges of representation across languages, multiple interpretations, reflexivity, and the integral role of the translator (e.g., Friedrich, 1992; Mc Laughlin & Sall, 2001; Muula, 2005; Temple & Edwards, 2002).

In this article I present a reflection on my experience of conducting grounded theory research, as a sole bilingual researcher with monolingual participants. Through analyzing my self-observations in this project, which I was conducting for my PhD, I examined the aspects of translation in cross-language grounded theory study. In this study I explored life stories narrated by Russian-speaking Holocaust survivors, recent émigrés from the Former Soviet Union. My research design involved a full combination of translation and analysis, in which I assumed the position of a bilingual investigator who performed both functions. In such setting, a theory emerges from the data written (or spoken) in the language of monolingual participants that is unknown to the audience (the *source* language). Research results are presented in the language of the audience (the *target* language).

There are no specific prescribed procedures for translation in the context of grounded theory research. Therefore, I experimented in my study with some patterns of working in cross-language area, using my previous experiences in translation. I applied more systematically those patterns that worked for me, and observed how these patterns fit into the analysis. In my research, I have found that doing cross-language grounded theory involves strategies that differ from those involved in traditionally understood translation. My experimenting led me to the discovery of a strategy that emerged naturally in my work, namely, the *intertwining* of the activities of translation and conceptual analysis. Both translation and conceptual analysis were activities, or acts, which I performed as a bilingual person (in that, these were both my functions). Intertwining these activities was the strategy that I used to achieve better grounding of my translation in cross-language data, while discovering a grounded theory.

In this article I analyze some properties of the strategy of intertwining, and reflect on the relevant features of language translation in this context. In my attempts to reflect on my experiences doing this research, I intend to ground my conclusions in thorough self-observations, but also recognize the limitations of these conclusions, which are based on one person's practices. Therefore, I do not aim at developing an integrated theory on the basis of my limited reflections. The purpose of the hypotheses presented in this article is only to begin to understand

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the complex patterns that are associated with cross-language grounded theory research, and to invite further exploration of this area.

Conceptual Analysis and Translation - The Intertwining

Conventionally, any form of cross-language exchange implies the need for text translation, which is most naturally understood as conveying the full textual message verbatim from one language to anther. By *text* I understand a unit of analysis, any set of verbal qualitative materials, whether written or spoken. Traditionally, the original text is expected to be presented in the target language, before the analysis begins and before the findings can be reported (Glicksman & Van Haitsma, 2002; Temple, 2006). However, the expectation of full, verbatim translation and its separation from the analysis does not always match the grounded theory research objectives, when both functions are performed by one bilingual person. The interplay between the two activities – translation and conceptual analysis – involves the strategy of intertwining, which includes analytical efforts that take place before, in parallel to, or independent of the technical textual translation. Intertwining the two activities (which are the two functions of one researcher) can also yield additional emerging concepts that would be missed otherwise. To explore the strategy of intertwining and try to understand what it involves, we might begin with comparing some strategies involved in language translation and discovering a theory.

Translation and GT: The Parallels

Generating conceptual theory from empirical data, as a cognitive act, has some similarities with language translation. Both activities are rooted in discovering and conveying conceptual meanings: the former from descriptive data into general patterns and a theory, and the latter – across texts written in two different languages. The direction of translation cannot be presented as a one-way vector. The constant search for a suitable word involves the reiterative comparison between words and textual contexts that flows in both directions to balance the equivalency of meanings. By analogy, in search for working concepts, the procedures of grounded theory require continuous comparison that is carried out across the data and the emerging concepts.

A given concept is often signified in two languages by words

that have similar meanings but bear different subtle nuances and cultural connotations (Hunt & Bhopal, 2004; Tsai et al., 2004; see also Schopenhauer, 1800/1992). These differences have to be captured in the translation. Often it is impossible to express a complex concept in different languages with precise equivalency, and the translator has to settle for the most effective compromise. The settling for a compromise involves elements of theorizing.

Translating is challenging when complex, contextually foreign words are under consideration. For example, in my research, it was difficult to find a Russian equivalent to the English word *resilience*. I tried to translate this word into Russian in the beginning of my data collection, because I intended to present the concept of resilience to my participants in our interview conversations.

In English-language psychology, the meaning of r*esilience* is metaphoric: "Resilience, according to the dictionary, means recoiling or springing back to the original shape after bending, stretching, or compression. Psychological resilience implies a similar springing back after having been subject to severe stressors." (Valent, 1998, p. 517). There are a number of Russian words that can express the concept, but none have this metaphoric meaning, and each of the translation options has a connotation that is somewhat different from other versions (Muller, 1990). Occasionally, authors use the metaphor of *elasticity (эластичность)* (Pearce, 1997), but this translation is an exception. Most common translation choices in the available Russian-language academic literature have a meaning close to *hardiness* or *[life-] steadiness*. (In an English presentation, I can only give the closest literal translation of the Russian words.)

The contextual connotation of the concept is also controversial: in western academic discourse, it is often associated with the psychology of trauma, vulnerability, and posttraumatic sequelae. This connection is very weak when the concept is used in the Russian cultural context, because historically the notion of psychic trauma has been suppressed in Soviet academic and public discourse until the recent decade.

The word that I used in my conversations with the Russian-speakers was not a literal reflection of the English metaphoric concept. Therefore, I often employed more than a single word. I added background explanations and frequently invited my

interview partners' input by asking about their understanding and interpretations of the phenomena.

In this example, a routine translation, through analysis and comparison, became a micro-theory development, with an outcome expressed in a set of working and fitting words, together with a context-specific interview strategy and data collection technique. According to my observations, translation is associated with constant comparing of the concepts, the words' meanings, and their properties in the contexts of different cultures.

Translation and GT - The Intertwining

An ability to conceptualize and a commitment to constant comparison are paramount for good translation, to the same extent as these qualities are important for building a grounded theory. Therefore, combining the functions of a researcher and a translator is most natural for a bilingual theorist.

Because one bilingual person carries out both translation and conceptual analysis, these two functions become intertwined. According to my self-observations, the intertwining involves the following properties. *First*, the two functions (the activities of translation and analysis) are inseparable in time and happen simultaneously. *Second*, constant comparison, which is an essential tool of analysis, takes place across language boundaries, transcending the technical stage of isolated translation. *Third,* theoretical sensitivity of the researcher needs to be enriched with the sensitivity to differences in language meanings and its implications for the emerging theoretical concepts. The analyst takes an active role engaging in the interplay, reiteration between the two activities. And *finally*, data for conceptual analysis can be collected from the very act of translation, and the differences between meanings or language structures can become a source of important concepts and theoretical categories. I will now review and illustrate these properties.

Inseparability in time.

The first property (the simultaneousness of translation and analysis) is implied by the intrinsic similarity of the two activities and interplay between them, which prevents one from separating them in time. My experience has demonstrated that when I work with texts across languages, the acts of translating and analyzing literally become intertwined in one cognitive act of

conceptualizing, regardless of cross-language textual boundaries, or any intentions of scheduling time for translation separately. It would be a simplification to expect that the two functions of translation and analysis be performed by the researcher in sequence (e.g., translation first, coding and analysis next), because by translating the text one will inevitably engage in conceptualizing the ideas that emerge from its content.

I have noticed that analysis, coding, and memoing cannot be delayed until the full translation is completed. Most grounded theory researchers are familiar with the emergence of ideas during the interviews or shortly after, before the formal, technical and written implementation of coding or other procedures. In a similar way, my cross-language mindset became tuned into the subtleties of cultural meanings early in the data collection stage. I could not separate translation from analysis.

When I first attempted translating my transcribed interviews in the early days of my research, concepts began to emerge as soon as I started translation, even prior to creating the written target-language text. I decided to change the tactics. I transcribed the interviews fully in Russian, and then proceeded with open coding and writing my memos in English, without prior full translation of the source texts. I skipped the stage of translating my transcripts verbatim. This strategy proved useful, and allowed me to avoid the distortion of the original source-language words before their conceptual meaning became evident through the analysis. I realized that premature language translation could have influenced the consequent coding, and decided to preserve all my raw data in Russian.

Constant comparison across language boundaries.

In my research, the simultaneous undertaking of translation and analysis led to the simultaneous work with texts in both languages. The second property of intertwining, which is the constant comparison across the languages, helps ensure the link between data and emerging concepts. For example, during selective and theoretical coding, I continued working with concepts signified by English words, constantly comparing the meaning of English words with the meanings embedded in source language data. Thus, the comparison between concepts, data incidents, and emerging theoretical hypotheses, expressed in theoretical codes and memos, occurred and was constantly

reiterated across languages, transcending cross-language boundaries.

I translated selected excerpts of the interviews into English. This verbatim translation usually occurred at the time of writing memos that were grounded in the particular data excerpts – the indicators of the conceptual categories that were central in these memos. Writing such memos, accompanied with translating related data excerpts, enriches the memos with concepts emerging as a result of deeper focusing on source data through translation.

Working across languages is reiterative, and is not limited to one separate procedure, such as open, selective, or theoretical coding. Constant comparison requires returning to the source language, if the need for it emerges, at any time of the analysis, for example, when writing a theoretical memo or at the stage of writing up the theory. Consistent with general grounded theory procedures, in the early stages of research comparative working across languages happens at the level of data incidents, or between data incidents and emerging concepts. In later stages of theoretical coding and writing, language comparison is applied to ideas expressed in the two languages, rather than only data.

I found that, with the intertwining of translation and analysis, reiterative returning to the source language does not always mean referring to source data texts, but often also pertains to working with concepts and theoretical ideas, through fitting them in both languages. For example, the researcher can create source-language memos in parallel with the ones in English, or check emerging concepts for their fit in both languages upon their emergence. The purpose of such activities is not verification by back translation, but rather deepening the analysis through cross-language enrichment of the emerging categories.

Association between language ability and theoretical sensitivity.

While intertwined in time and in constant comparison across the texts in both languages, the activities of translation and analysis remain the functions of one person: the bilingual theorist. The qualities of this person, such as her ability to conceptualize and her theoretical sensitivity, are essential in research. According to Glaser (2002b), the researcher's position,

in general, is "a vital variable to weave into the constant comparative analysis" (para. 11). The researcher's language knowledge is, thus, an important part of such a variable in cross-language setting. This leads us to the third property of intertwining, which I observed in my study: the significance of the researcher's sensitivity to differences in language meanings for her overall theoretical sensitivity, and the use of these associated qualities in performing both functions.

In grounded theory research, the discovered theory is expected to carry features of the individual researcher's theoretical sensitivity and creative ability to conceptualize. As a researcher, I was constantly aware that my theoretical sensitivity was partially dependent on my ability to conceptualize the subtle linguistic and cultural differences. Having been involved in multiple projects that required both translation and analysis, I was not new to language translation. In more than ten years of my work with multicultural projects prior to initiating this study, I had extensive experience of oral and written translation in different settings and disciplines, ranging from client information in services to seniors, to international teaching situations, and to professional publications in mental health and psychiatry. These experiences have sharpened both my sensitivity to language differences and my skills necessary for achieving cultural relevancy in translation. I discovered that these skills significantly enriched my theoretical sensitivity and ability to conceptualize. In addition, remembering Glaser's (1978) recommendation of "reliance on the social psychology of the analyst" (p. 2), I could rely on my intimate connection with Russian as my first language, using this connection and my knowledge of the culture within the constant comparison mode.

Emergence of concepts from the act of translation.

In my research, the intertwining allowed capturing the differences between linguistic meanings, which facilitated discovering patterns implied by these differences. In doing so, I discovered the fourth and final property of intertwining: the emergence of concepts from data collected as a result of the very act of translation. Important ideas can originate from capturing the differences between meanings or language structures.

A single word and its context in a participant's utterance can provide data for discovering a significant category or a number of

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interconnected categories. An analysis of the following interview episode illustrates my statement. One of my interview partners referred to herself in our conversation as a "victim of the Holocaust." My first reaction was to ask a probing question, "Do you consider yourself a victim?" The interviewee's answer was, "Yes, I am a victim." No further explanations followed, and she continued her story as if uninterrupted, without giving much notice to the issue. I understood that for her, this was not a question worth discussion (L.Y. transcript, 2006).

I knew the difference between the cultural connotations of the word *victim* in the two languages, and sensed the potential discrepancy. In English, and in particular in the context of traditional conversations with the Holocaust survivors, the word *victim* bears a somewhat negative, inferior connotation that makes it relatively uncommon in the contemporary vocabulary of western-educated survivors. The connotation relates to the western discourse, in which this word is paired with the word *survivor*. The common victim-survivor dichotomy implies the victorious nature of survivorship, and the triumph of the human spirit over life adversities. Within this binary opposition, *victim* would be the negative polarity, and *survivor* – the positive one (for reference on binary opposition in social contraction and language, see Gergen, 1999). It is possible that a Holocaust survivor who is used to western listeners would have recognized the prompt in my question ("Do you consider yourself a victim?") and responded to it differently. Conversely, for my research participant, in her language context of a former Soviet citizen and a Riussian-speaker, there was no conflict between the two categories. My probing question and the conceptual connection I was trying to imply appeared irrelevant.

The Russian word *victim*, although a precise equivalent of the English word, does not always bear the same contextual nuances. In many contexts it has a somewhat heroic connotation (it also has a meaning of *sacrifice* that is stronger than in English). Conversely, a precise structural and grammatical equivalent of the word *survivor* does not exist in the Russian language. This makes it difficult to find a literal and grammatically accurate translation of the common word combination *Holocaust survivor*. In Russian, one would use such words as *victim*, or *[former] inmate*, or a combination of several words in an awkward grammatical form.

It is worth noting that historically, Soviet social and political attitudes towards the Holocaust have been ambiguous, rooted in denial, almost taboo associated with the Holocaust memory (Altman, 2005). One can draw comparative parallels between historical and social processes in Russia, the conventional language related to the Holocaust, and the meanings that people attribute to their experiences. Formulating and integrating my hypothesis required additional data and further analysis, but the categories that emerged from this episode sensitized me and concurred with my other data. Analyzing the nuances of this word's meaning had direct relevance to my emerging theory.

Having discussed the properties of intertwining, it is important to explore the features of the act of translation, when, together with conceptual analysis, it becomes an integral part of discovering a grounded theory.

Transforming Translation Paths: Interferences and Adjustments

When research is performed by a single bilingual theorist, translation as a pure, isolated process is not relevant. In turn, conceptual analysis does not exist in isolation from language translation. Therefore, although the title of this article includes the word *translation*, I believe that this term, in its classical meaning, does not ideally describe the activity that is so closely intertwined with conceptual analysis in cross-language grounded theory work. When translation becomes such an inseparable part of research, the act of translation loses some of its traditional properties and acquires other features. Pure, isolated traditional translation can potentially become a source of interferences, lead to a clashing of strategies, and create a misfit between analytical goals and language relevance.

What are the interferences between pure translation and conceptual analysis that require such change? What are the adjustments that can enhance cross-language analytical strategies? In this section, I review the properties of translation that do not fit into the context of discovering a grounded theory, and therefore have to be adjusted. These adjustments have to be made to the act of translation, to balance the interferences between its traditional properties and the demands of grounded theory research.

Conceptualization versus Description

Text analysis in grounded theory is based on conceptualizing, as opposed to full and exhaustive portrayal of the area under study. Grounded theory ascends to the abstract level of concepts, which are grounded in the empirical descriptions – the text.

Conversely, conventional translation aims at complete, full, and accurate equivalence between the source and the target texts, so that they convey the same details of the message. As opposed to a traditional devoted translator, a grounded theorist is not concerned about the exact and accurate presentation of the source text, and therefore can transcend an accurate verbatim translation. The descriptive fixation on textual details can become interference to conceptualization, if translation is used in a traditional way. Therefore, in grounded theory research, the adjustment is made to the conventional act of translation: Translation loses its worrisome fixation on literal details or concrete words, but rather aims at conveying the conceptual, abstract meaning.

Technically, this means that while coding, the analyst can draw conceptual categories from the source text and formulate them in the target language, providing that the discovered concepts and theoretical patterns emerge directly from the data and fit the area under study. The researcher can also refer to partial full translation for illustration or other purposes defined by the objectives of the analysis.

To ensure that the findings are grounded in data, the researcher needs to remain faithful to conveying conceptual meanings emerging from the text, the meanings expressed by participants. One of the major properties of grounded theory, constant comparison, is paramount for such grounding, and takes the form of continuous cross-language comparison, as it happens with the intertwining of translation and analysis. The relevancy of translation, therefore, requires the abandonment of the quest for descriptive accuracy, but remains rooted in the principles of constant comparison and conceptual equivalency.

Emergence versus Verification

Traditional translation is widely used in multicultural settings of conventional quantitative research. Most of the

commonly accepted standards and criteria of the quality of translation were developed in traditional, verificational research (Hunt & Bhopal, 2004; Roberts, Kent, Prys, & Lewis, 2003; Yu, Lee, & Woo, 2004). In such research, the initial hypothesis needs to be verified through developing operational indicators and measuring them (i.e., using deductive logic). Accordingly, in cross-language setting of traditional quantitative research, the initial hypothesis (conceptualized in English) is routinely operationalized, and then translated into the source-language indicators, or measures, which are applied to monolingual research subjects (e. g., verified translations of questionnaires, assessment scales, or surveys into the language of participants). In traditional research, translation commonly requires verification. Verification can be accomplished through a number of technical means, such as comparing translations by two or more independent translators, committees, or analyzing back translation (a "round-trip" translation technique).

Conversely, in grounded theory, the logical process of research is reverse, mostly inductive, and so are the translation processes. Grounded theory is based on emergence and induction, and is explorative rather than focused on verification (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Glaser, 2002a; Stebbins, 2001). The researcher-translator uses conceptualization and constant comparison method. My observations led me to believe that when translation is intertwined with conceptual analysis, and the translated message emerges from the source data, no verification is needed. The rigorous procedures of the grounded theory method ensure that the translated findings are already grounded in the source text.

When translation is undertaken by a bilingual grounded theorist, cumbersome verification of such translation can become interference in research. Target language meanings as a result of translation, which is intertwined with the conceptual analysis, are inherently emergent. Trusting the emergence of conceptual meanings expressed across the languages is an important adjustment to the act of translation, when it is performed within the grounded theory method.

Fidelity and Transparency: Shifting the Balance of Translation Criteria in GT

The properties of translation function become transformed,

when the researcher is using the strategy of its intertwining with conceptual analysis. Translation loses its fixation on verification and its descriptive properties. Instead, it becomes focused on conceptualization and emergence. However, the principles of conceptual equivalency and constant comparison remain indispensable. To explore the criteria of good translation, when its properties are adjusted in such way, I refer to the classic criteria of translation quality that have naturally "earned its way" (Glaser, 1978) into my reflection: *fidelity* and *transparency* (Tianmin, 2006). *Fidelity* is defined as the extent to which the translation accurately renders the meaning of the source text, without adding to it or subtracting from it, and without intensifying or weakening any part of the meaning. *Transparency* is the criterion of the extent to which the translation conforms to the target language's grammatical, syntactic, and idiomatic conventions. The text is expected to appear fluent and natural to the native speakers of the target language.

According to my self-observations, the criteria of fidelity and transparency in translation used in grounded theory remain relevant, but the adherence to these criteria is balanced in a way that is different from conventional translation. As we shall see, in grounded theory it is necessary to adjust translation criteria, so the balance is tilted towards the favouring of fidelity over transparency.

The criteria of fidelity and transparency can be conflicting, because the meaning can be expressed not only through words, but also through language structures, style, grammatical form, underlying context, and culturally rooted metaphors (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Al-Hasnawi, 2007; Whorf, 1956). Maintaining fidelity is practically impossible in a transparent translation that conforms to the target language structural elements. Ideal transparency can be achieved only at the expense of changing subtle nuances embedded in the natural structures of the source, which means that "infidelity is built in translation" (Tianmin, 2006). Therefore, the translator traditionally is required to find a working compromise between fidelity and transparency.

However, in the grounded theory analysis the working compromise is not acceptable. Fidelity cannot be compromised, because the theory needs to be grounded in the unchanged source language data. Transparency cannot be stressed at the expense of the full equivalency of meanings.

In case of a bilingual speaker conducting both translation and research, the conflict is almost irrelevant. When I skip the stage of creating a fluent target language text, I can avoid the necessity of presenting wordings that are transparent (smoothly flowing and natural) for a potential reader. By doing so, I have the advantage of remaining faithful to the source while analysing my data and bringing it to the higher, abstract level of theoretical conceptualization. Other bilingual researchers suggested similar strategies. For example, Temple (2006) recommended allowing "foreignization of the text" (p. 10; this concept was first used by Venuti, 1995). The "foreignized" text of translation is not necessarily fluid in style (which assumes a compromised transparency), but effectively preserves the meaning of the original (the maximized fidelity). The strategy of adhering to a relevant (minimum intelligible) level of transparency and the maximal level of fidelity can be used effectively in the context of intertwining translation and conceptual analysis.

In grounded theory procedures, the process of foreignization has an analogue: the "freedom afforded in memo writing" (Glaser, 1978, p. 85). When we write memos, grammar and correctness of the text are irrelevant, because the priority is given to recording ideas, "getting them out." In a similar way, when a bilingual theorist works to convey the meaning of the source text in translation, she does not have to follow the criteria of full transparency, but rather should focus on the conceptual meaning of the message.

The bilingual theorist can achieve the transparency goal on the conceptual level, rather than on the descriptive level of creating a full, accurately transparent data text in the target language. The intertwining of translation and conceptual analysis is a naturally occurring and instrumental strategy for balancing the opposite trends of achieving fidelity and relevant transparency in the cross-language generation of a theory.

A Theory Back-Translated: Linguistic Fit, Relevance, Workability, and Modifiability

In the final stages of a grounded theory project, when the cross-language researcher engages in theoretical writing, the work concentrates within the target language (English). The focus on writing in English is natural, because the intended audience of theory presentation, in most academic cases, is the

English-language audience. How can the researcher make sure that linguistically, in relation to the source language, the resulting theory still has sufficient fit, relevance, workability, and modifiability? For a cross-language theory, how can the general judging criteria apply to its cross-language nature and linguistic quality?

In my research, I experimented with some patterns of the application of grounded theory method to cross-language setting. One of such experiments was back-translating my theory. The following conclusions emerged from my experience of theoretical writing, and in particular, from the incident of back-translation.

At the later stages of my work, I found myself impelled, by the emerging need of cross-language comparison, to translate a summary of my theory back into Russian. I intended my Russian text to be highly transparent, to enable me to present it to Russian-speakers (partially because the participants in my study were curious and kept asking me about the results). Fidelity to my written theoretical text was also very important, to convey the meaning of the theory. My criteria of transparency ascended to the level of conceptual constructs, rather than to the data details. A few questions emerged. Would my theory read as smoothly in Russian as in English, would the theoretical concepts fit and work in both languages? Would my theory naturally fit into the source language structure, lexicon, and grammar, or would Russian become a foreign language for the concepts initially born in it?

According to my observations, the reverse translation of a written English text into the source language can help the researcher evaluate how easy it is to achieve the fidelity and transparency in the source-language version of the presented ideas. I considered this ease as an indication of the first classical requisite property of grounded theory, the *fit,* as it appeared relevant in its linguistic aspect. If the linguistic fit is achieved, the categories, expressed in back translation, smoothly fit the source-language conceptual meanings. Such fit is a direct outcome of the systematic application of the strategy of intertwining, from the early stages of the research. Because throughout the investigation, translation was intertwined with conceptual analysis, the resulting categories fit the natural structure of the source language and cultural context, smoothly and automatically flowing into the back translation.

The linguistic *workability* and *relevance*, in my experience, mean that in both languages, the theory should read smoothly and sound right. It should be understood by monolingual research participants, as well as by the English-speaking audience. The theoretical concepts should sound relevant, have the "grab," and work in both languages equally. Source-language words have to "make sense" to monolingual native speakers, without lengthy explanations or footnotes explaining English-born wordings.

Linguistic workability and relevance are also emergent properties, in that they are ensured throughout the analysis, from its initial stages, in which the linguistic expressions of concepts have initially emerged. Workability and relevance are guaranteed by the systematic intertwining of translation with conceptual analysis. For example, the researcher should abstain from choosing English codes that use too specific, language-based imagery, or peculiar idiomatic forms that would sound awkward in the source language. Such issues have to be built into the analysis, through using the strategy of intertwining and its properties. It might be too late or too difficult to adjust the possible linguistic flaws, if the researcher only discovers them in the final stages of theoretical writing, with an isolated attempt of back translation. Fit, work, and relevance have to be ensured through the systematic procedures specific to the cross-language setting.

If the linguistic indication of *modifiability* is to be found in cross-language research, I would interpret it as a property that pertains to making the texts transparent in both languages, with its conceptual nature remaining equivalent, while the writer is able to modify and adjust some grammatical structures and language peculiarities. For example, there is no such grammatical form as gerund in the Russian language. Therefore, some of my one-word English signifiers of categories had to be creatively transformed into corresponding Russian grammatical constructs, at the time of their emergence. At times, these modifications involved creative translation into Russian, and in other cases, it required changing English constructs, to achieve better equivalency. It often happened that sociological constructs born in English needed modification for their expression in the source language. Conversely, source-language *in vivo* categories needed to be evaluated or modified for their fit in translation.

I believe that all experienced translators are familiar with

these or similar challenges. However, in the context of grounded theory, these challenges apply not only to the pure act of translation, but also to the emergent analytical ideas. Once again, the strategy of intertwining continues to be relevant. It is through the systematic use of intertwining that the bilingual grounded theorist can achieve both linguistic and conceptual fit, workability, relevance, and modifiability of the discovered theory.

Discussion

The hypothetical patterns presented in this article are based on my self-observations in conducting cross-language grounded theory research. Therefore, presented hypotheses are limited to one person's experiences and relate to one particular research situation.

In practice, the reflections presented in this article most closely relate to the work of bilingual researchers. The dual position of a bilingual researcher in cross-language grounded theory is unique because of the binocular conceptual vision, the intimate knowledge of both languages and cultural discourses, and the general familiarity with cross-language experiences.

However, employing a bilingual analyst is not the only possible strategy of undertaking cross-language research. For example, effective research is often carried out by a team of people who are not necessarily fluent in two (or more) languages relevant to the area of study (Glicksman & Van Haitsma, 2002; Nguyen et al., 2008). In such cases, complete and seamless intertwining is not possible, because the analysts receive second hand, translated data, and the translator mediates all communications.

The concept of intertwining and its properties might be relevant to research situations other than the work of a sole bilingual theorist, but further data collection and research are needed to understand whether my conclusions can be extended or generalized to the work of other researchers in other settings. My concepts might have to be modified and further integrated to fit a broad range of research situations. Such analysis is beyond the scope of this article.

Conclusion

Cross-language grounded theory research involves processes that spread beyond the traditionally understood translation, and

can also include altering the conventional analytical techniques of the theorist. In my sole work as a bilingual theorist, the strategy of intertwining translation and analysis proved to be effective and natural. I performed myself all the functions associated with my project, without involving a translator, interpreter, or transcriber, and found it most appropriate. Using the advantage of intimate sensitivity to the languages that I know well, I could work across languages on my own, following Glaser's (1978) notion that "grounded theory is a do-it-yourself methodology" (p. 116). The functions of translation and conceptual analysis, thus, became intertwined in my research, technically and strategically.

According to Glaser & Holton (2004), "Classic GT is simply a set of integrated conceptual hypotheses systematically generated to produce an inductive theory about a substantive area." (para. 7). All the classical principles of grounded theory apply to the cross-language strategies involved in theory development. Translation adds complexity to data analysis, but does not change any essential properties of the method. In fact, in my reflections I have not discovered anything that has not been conceptualized as part of the fundamental principles of the grounded theory method. Rather, I made an attempt to explain, primarily for the purposes of my own or similar research, some aspects of what is going on in the substantial situation of cross-language data analysis with the purpose of discovering a theory. I conclude that the essential elements of grounded theory, such as emergence, conceptualization, and constant comparison, naturally fit into the cross-language setting, in which translation and analysis are intertwined.

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