

Specific Problems Posed by Drama Translation:
Translating and Adapting Samuel Beckett's
Krapp's Last Tape for the Radio. A Case Study

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Abstract

The present article aims at presenting features specific to translating dramatic texts, the peculiarities of the genre and how these can be tackled in the process of translating. The case study comprises an analysis of the translation and adaptation for radio broadcasting of Samuel Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape*. Theoreticians have constantly pointed out that drama translators should always focus on the performability, speakability, gestural and aural dimensions of the text, given that the final product has to be playable in front of an audience. The ultimate goal is to obtain a text that sounds natural and is easily understood, where the aural and gestural dimensions fit and work together. In order to make the translated text performable in another medium, certain changes are necessary. In the present case study – adapting a play for radio broadcasting –, everything visual becomes aural, and in this process stage directions are the most challenging to be handled. Adding, omitting or rephrasing are options that the translator has to constantly consider.

Keywords: drama translation, performability, speakability, gestural, aural, radio broadcasting, *Krapp's Last Tape*, stage directions

Translating dramatic texts is a challenging process, compared to translating other genres, since plays are meant to be performed in front of an audience, and the translator should take into account features such as speakability, performability, gestural and aural dimensions. These are not found in prose or poetry, because usually such texts are written for the page, they are meant only to be read, not performed. As Susan Bassnett states, a theatre text “is read as something *incomplete*, rather than as a fully rounded unit, since it is only in performance that the full potential of the text is realized” (124). The issue of performability is usually linked to that of speakability. Eva Espasa states that the term performability acts as an umbrella for various other concepts encompassed by this term, such as speakability, playability/actability (also used as synonyms for performability) and cultural adaptation (50-51). Speakability (or breathability), as universally understood, means the effortless uttering of the lines by the actors, the lack of difficult words and phrases, and Espasa gives an explanation based on Bassnett’s statement that playability comprises all the features that make a dramatic text playable: “a whole set of strategies of cultural adaptation, such as replacing dialectal features of the source language . . . or omitting passages which are considered to be too rooted in the cultural linguistic context of the original” (50).

Patrice Pavis discusses the cultural aspect of translation in his study *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*, and, in the first chapter he creates an image for the process of transferring cultural elements from a foreign culture into the target culture. He likens this process to what happens with the grains in an hourglass:

In the upper bowl is the foreign culture, the source culture, which is more or less codified and solidified in diverse anthropological, sociocultural or artistic modelizations. In order to reach us, this culture must pass through a narrow neck. If the grains of culture or their conglomerate are sufficiently fine, they will flow through without any trouble, however slowly, into the lower bowl, that of the target culture, from which point we observe this slow flow. (4)

Therefore, this process of transfer should happen naturally, that is, the elements should be retained in the final product only if they fit in the target culture. Given that the translator has to be constantly aware of the act of performance, Bassnett argues that this effort to keep things in balance is what has “led to an accumulation of criticism that either attacks the translation as too literal and unperformable or as too free and deviant from the original” (127). When performed on the radio, television or in a theatre, the dramatic text can be subject to slight or significant changes, depending on space, time, actors and directors. The translator’s mission is to obtain a final product that is both a valuable written work in its own right and one that can be performed successfully. Just as performability and speakability need to be considered when translating a dramatic text, so are the gestural and aural dimensions, present in the act of performing and in the dramatic text *per se*. Translating drama implies a great amount of imagination and ability to adapt on behalf of the translator.

Although the translator focuses mainly on the dramatic text, there are also other adjacent elements that need to be translated. All these are comprised under what we call paratext, an umbrella term that encompasses all the additional elements of a text, or, more specifically, “supplementary visual and verbal material that accompanies the main text (such as novels, poems or non-fiction)”, term coined by the well-known literary critic Gérard Genette, in 1987 (qtd. in Cuddon 513). J.A. Cuddon lists all the elements of a work that are considered part of the paratext: “covers, illustrations, titles, dedications, forewords, epigraphs, the index or table of contents, and other non-authorial material” (513). Egil Törnqvist applies the term “paratext” to dramatic texts and discusses it in terms of primary and secondary text, distinction initially made by Roman Ingarden. Törnqvist states that “by primary text Ingarden means everything in a play that is verbalised in the performance text, i.e. the dialogue; by secondary text that which is verbalised only in the drama text, i.e. the stage- and acting-directions” and notes that the amount of secondary text elements that the reader interferes with is minimal (Törnqvist 9). Needless to say that both

the primary and the secondary text are to be comprised in the translation of a play.

A significant difference between Törnqvist's and Genette's theories is that the latter does not seem to include stage directions in the category of "paratext." Neither does he dedicate a chapter to this matter. When discussing authorial notes, he states "I see no reason to credit this category [stage direction] in general to the account of the paratext" (Genette 333-334). Ortrun Zuber states that the issue of stage directions is a matter of interpretation: "in the present context they are considered as not being part of the dramatic text, but as a text communicating the author's idea about realizing the dramatic text on the stage" (34). Given the fact that they are not part of the dramatic text, as Zuber claims, they are to be automatically considered paratext. Although titles, mottos, prefaces, epigraphs, stage directions or notes are not part of the main text, their importance lies in how the main text is read or performed and how the information they provide can influence the main text. Cuddon defines stage directions as follows: "notes incorporated in or added to the script of a play to indicate the moment of a character's appearance, character and manner; the style of delivery; the actor's movements; details of location, scenery and effects" (680). Hence, stage directions perform multiple functions, though in all cases, they indicate or clarify something, thus helping the director and the actors in performing the play.

The translation of a dramatic text with the idea of the prospective stage performance in mind is different from a translation meant only for the page, in what concerns the stage directions. When the aim is to achieve a performable text, stage directions are translated so as to help the director and the actors, while when translated only for the page, the stage directions are considered a non-essential part of the written text. The tone used in stage directions is different from that in the main text – usually more rigid, plain, lacking in artistic expression – and this clearly indicates that they are not necessarily part of the main text, and their role is to indicate something.

Translating dramatic texts also requires changes in stage directions, because sometimes they have to be adapted to the target culture and audience. The analysis of stage directions takes place before the proper translation, and in this process of analysis, the translator has to be aware of “the value each direction has for the words spoken by a character at a given moment and the cultural differences that may be attached to a certain gesture, movement or prop” (Mateo 108), even though this process could result in leaving certain stage directions out. A relevant example for this matter can be found in *Translation as Intercultural Communication*, where in the case of a play originally written in English and translated into Spanish, the translator decided to insert many additional stage directions, with the clear purpose of conveying “Spanish people’s supposedly emotional expressiveness, including roars of laughter and some hugging and crying which were not present in Sheridan’s source text and which added to the acceptability of the target text” (Mateo 108). Therefore, stage directions are used to convey the message and feeling of the original and for this very reason the translator is free to leave out or insert stage directions wherever he feels they serve the right purpose.

The extent to which a dramatic text is performable, with reference to all the aspects that make its representation on stage more or less possible, is expressed by the term *performability*, a controversial term, accepted by some and rejected by others. There are theorists and critics such as Pavis and Espasa who tackle this issue and use the term *performability* in their articles, and unlike them, Bassnett states that “the problem of performability in translation is further complicated by changing concepts of performance” (126). Therefore, Bassnett does not accept this concept, mainly because of the difficulty in defining it and in expressing its exact meaning. Pavis, in his study *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*, analyses these issues and opens his second chapter entitled “From Page to Stage: A Difficult Birth” as follows: “For a text to give birth to a performance is no easy matter” (24). The dramatic text is “responsible” for developing another form of its own, that is the same message conveyed in a different semiotic

system that should be at least as good as the written text. This further makes the translator responsible for the final product, meaning that, if the original text can be successfully performed on stage, the same should stand for the text in the target language, so that it has the same effect as on the original audience.

The term *performability* can be understood from several different points of view and applied on different levels, according to Espasa: from a textual point of view, there is the problem of speakability: it implies fluency and uttering of the text without unwanted effort (50). Subsequently, there is playability or actability, from the viewpoint of the *mise en scène*, which is achieved by applying “a whole set of strategies of cultural adaptation,” including the process of replacing and omitting (50). From a theatrical viewpoint, it “involved decisions related to cultural adaptation: a tension between foreignizing and domestication” (51). In this classification, Espasa includes the aspects that characterize a performable dramatic text: it should not be just a copy of the original, because there are culture-bound aspects that do not have the same meaning in the target culture. This is why sometimes it is acceptable for the text to be foreignized and at other times it is better to domesticate it.

When discussing performance, there is always a temptation to compare the written text with the acting and to see the two in a relation of superiority / inferiority. According to Pavis, one should not see this process as a derivative one, where the act of performance is a “consequence” of the written text, because both are equal in what concerns the ideas, the only difference being the semiotic system through which they are conveyed: the auditory signs of the written text meant to be only read are reshaped in visual signs, when performed (29).

In *Staging and Performing Translation* it is stated that in the financial-oriented systems, “‘performability’ ultimately means ‘marketability’” (Baines et al. 232). The more a translation observes all the requirements of a “performable” text, the better it will sell when put on stage, because the audience looks for theatrical performances that are consistent with their culture. This

book also dwells on the problem of “ruining” or devaluing a dramatic text by translating it. This happens when the aim to make the dramatic text sound natural and appealing to a broad audience (hence, marketable) ultimately leads the translator to produce a translation that lacks many of the aesthetic particularities of the original text, often making it sound superficial and empty (Baines et al. 235). Consequently, another type of balance is expected to be achieved by translators: keeping the language as natural as possible and appealing to a potential audience while maintaining the subtleties, the construction of characters, of the figures of speech used in the original.

Adaptation is an issue associated with performance, mainly because performance presupposes conveying the same message through another system of signs, and in the case of translations, another type of adaptation occurs: that of the source text to the target language. “Adjustments may be made in the translation process in relation to the general cultural conventions covering the language, manners, moral standards, rituals, tastes, ideologies, sense of humour, superstitions, religious beliefs etc.” (Aaltonen 93). Changes are made according to the culture, society or the dramatic medium, that is whether the performance takes place on the stage, on TV or on the radio (Aaltonen 93).

In Espasa’s article, the debate between foreignizing and domesticating is illustrated quite relevantly, with an explanation of how the process of translating songs was handled in Shelagh Delaney’s *A Taste of Honey*. The question was whether they should be foreignized or domesticated, whether the audience should have direct, unfiltered contact with the foreign songs, or not. The translator can either leave the song as such, keep the song and translate the verses or leave out the song. In the above case, the final decision was to “keep the songs ‘as foreign as possible’, but in translation” (51). The theorist contends that this process requires a set of strategies, such as “incorporating new music into the translated text; omitting the music due to dramatic tension . . . humming a song . . . creating a new song (which ‘sounded’ foreign, with the inclusion of English proper names)” (51). Once more, the

translator's obligations and rights are highlighted, implying that almost anything can and should be done for the sake of performability.

Speakability is a matter closely related to that of performability, mainly because the quality of a text to be easily spoken is what gives it the possibility to be performed without any inconveniences. Zuber discusses this aspect related to the literal uttering of the text (123) and argues that for a text to be speakable, the first rule is that the sentences should have an appropriate length and should not be too long and difficult for the audience. She compares the audience of a play with the reader of the text and underlines the difference insisting that while the reader has the possibility to stop reading and reflect upon words or reread certain passages, this is not possible with the audience that watches a play on stage. The second rule she mentions is that a play translated into another language should not be longer than the original (123). Although plays contain songs, dialogue, stage directions and gestures that have to be preserved during the translation, the final product should be of similar length with the original text, while also adapting it to the conventions of the target language.

Zuber discusses the several levels of speech and how they are to be treated in translation so that the text remains appealing to the audience, since speakability ultimately means understandability by the audience and is related to the type of speech used by the playwright or the translator. The theorist starts from the assumption that the language used by the playwright represents the "normal" way of communication (26). This leads further to the idea that the characters of a play speak the playwright's language, although they are situated in a different space and time period. This aim of using contemporary speech is debatable both in translating the text from one language into another, and in translating the text intralingually, replacing the speech in the original with contemporary speech. Nevertheless, according to the theoretician, the aim is to maintain the meaning of the original without distorting it and causing misunderstandings (27). When the text is translated in a later period, "the translator will use the language of his time, and his translation

will be an interpretation of the play to the extent that language is determined by its particular society and time” (30). This statement highlights how important it is for the play to be speakable and thus understandable, which means adapted to space and time.

Zuber’s statement summarizes what it means to translate with the purpose of performability and speakability in mind: “Likewise, the translator of a play should not merely translate words and their meanings, but produce speakable and performable translations. In the process of translating a play, it is necessary for him to mentally direct, act and see the play at the same time” (93). Thus, visualising the text being performed is of great importance not only in the process of writing a play but also when translating it.

The gestural and aural dimensions represent two more aspects present in drama performances and in dramatic texts that also need to be preserved and treated accurately in the process of translation. The gestural dimension refers to the non-verbal communication strategies used by actors on stage and as Pavis claims: “all the gestural procedures ensure exchange between word and body” (139). Gestures can alter the intended meaning if not used and acted properly. For instance, in Tennessee Williams’ play *A Streetcar Named Desire* when Blanche tells Eunice “What I meant was I’d like to be left alone,” Eunice’s answer is “Aw. I’ll make myself scarce, in that case” (Williams 15), line followed by a stage direction indicating Eunice’s reaction, that also influences the intonation and face expression of the character. Depending on whether the stage direction indicates for instance *angrily*, *politely* or *offended*, the line “Aw. I’ll make myself scarce, in that case” is acted differently on stage by the actress and read differently by the readers. This is one instance of how non-verbal elements change the intonation and meaning of what is uttered. The actors’ gestures, facial expressions, movements, gazes are supposed to be in the spirit of what is said.

In order to analyse the logic between gestures and words, *Theatrical Translation and Film Adaptation* proposes a question the translator should consider, namely: “are the translated lines of dialogue not only speakable but do they also reflect the same

rhythm as the original so that they will fit properly with the actors' gestures and movements?" (Zatlin 74). Zuber presents a situation that illustrates precisely this struggle to achieve correlation between movement, gestures and the actors' lines:

For example: a translator might have found the ideal verbal equivalent of a passage, but it turns out to be much longer in the target language. The stage directions require that this passage be spoken by a character in a raging, wild, violent, mood while moving from point A to point B on the stage. In our proposed translation he would reach point B, before having finished his speech. It would be rather awkward if he had to continue raging while standing still at point B. So the actor and producer – with the expert advice of the translator – have to decide whether it is more appropriate to slow down the motion, or to invent gestures carried out in rage at point B, or to move twice between A and B, or to shorten the text – whichever renders the dramatist's intention best. (96)

The translator is allowed to change gestures present in the original text, in order to preserve the force of the text and not to make it look ridiculous on stage, as it would have happened if no changes had been made, in the above case. The term aural refers to all the images based on sounds, music, songs, onomatopoeia or even on the absence of sound. Such aural images, together with visual images, create the background and add the final touches to the play, turning it into a finite, complete product. Aural images are supposed to be preserved during the process of translation and presented to the audience as in the original, as it happens with all the other elements. Most difficulties are posed by songs with lyrics that have to be translated, because the translator can be expected to preserve the message, the rhyme, the rhythm and also the length. Phyllis Zatlin suggests that when faced with situations of translating songs while preserving the meaning of the lyrics, translators have two possibilities: either to keep the original song or to substitute it with another one. The substitute can be from the source culture on condition it is more popular among the target

audience, or from the target language, a song of similar value to the original, meaning that if the original song is a lullaby, so should be the substitute (Zatlin 90). Translating songs is not an easy process, especially in plays relying mainly on songs, such as musicals, for which “songs must also be coherent with their theatrical presentation” (Malmkjær and Windle 6). This aspect is linked to that of performance, because translating songs has to be in the spirit of what is happening on the stage, the characters’ expressions and movement. Translating the lyrics so as to preserve the meaning is not enough if the actors are unable to sing it or if the final product does not have the intended impact. The main purpose of handling these aspects correctly is that the final dramatic text in the target language and its performance produce the same effect on the readers and the audience as the original.

A play written to be performed on the stage contains specific traits such as the use of scenery, props, characters, costumes, visual images, sounds. Although the focus is on the visual, it is actually possible for these plays to be performed also on radio, in which case no visual elements are used, meaning that certain changes need to be made. On radio everything image related is transformed into aural elements. While translating a text from one language into another implies certain steps, adapting that translation so as to make it performable in a different medium implies another set of changes.

In discussing the difficulties of translating dramatic texts, the analysis of the translation of a play is necessary and relevant, and this should be done by taking into account all the dimensions, all the problems that could be encountered in the process of translation. Thus, *Krapp’s Last Tape* is a play written by Samuel Beckett, and it lends itself perfectly to such an analysis that focuses on how to translate the play so as to preserve not only the verbal content, but also the style, the non-verbal (gestural and aural) elements, as well as the structural and symbolic subtleties of the play, on the translation difficulties that the text poses and on the solutions found. These problems might occur in the case of translating certain stage directions, or chunks of text, in deciding how to shape the text so that in the end it is performable and the script is speakable, and in

determining how to incorporate and represent the gestural and aural dimensions in the target language text. These decisions are taken according to the medium in which the text will eventually be performed, be it television, stage or radio. *Krapp's Last Tape* was originally written for stage performances, which means that a Romanian translation for the stage would require solely the translation of the text, with special attention to the details of its elaborate stage directions, while a translation meant to be performed on radio implies a double transposition: from one language into another, and then from one medium into another.

Krapp's Last Tape was a very well received play and enjoyed many performances on stage. As mentioned in *Krapp's Last Tape and Embers* in the Faber paper covered edition, the first performance in Britain took place at the Royal Court Theatre in London, in 1958. The play was directed by Donald McWhinnie, and Patrick Magee was the performer. A review entitled "Theater Review Scratching the Surface of a Beckett masterpiece" records some of the most well-known performances of the play, in which the actors played Krapp's role remarkably: it was played "by David Kelly, a thin, wizened Irish stage veteran whose melodious voice seemed to contain, in and of itself, elements of the pain and longing Beckett had poured into the 1958 one-act play. . ." (Hurley). After this highly appreciated interpretation, the play was performed numerous times, by "Canada's Donald Davis, who introduced the play to New York, by David Warrilow, and by such actors as Patrick Magee, Nicholas Kepros, and, last season, Edward Petherbridge. . ." (Hurley). A more debatable performance of the play, according to the same article, was that performed by Jerry Finnegan and directed by Vincent O'Neil, because of its length of 50 minutes, as there is no need to prolong the play. In Romania, there have been two notable performances of the play, more recently, one directed by Bogdan Budeş and performed by Marcel Iureş at *Act Theatre*, the other directed by Toma Dănilă and performed by Constantin Cojocaru at *Unteatru*, Bucharest. Given its impact, *Krapp's Last Tape* is a play still enjoyed and performed on stages all over the world.

When it comes to translating it for the page, the process ends when the text is fully translated, revised, when the reading of it elicits the same feelings as the original and the meaning is clearly preserved. *Krapp's Last Tape* is a short, monologue-like play, centred around a 69-year-old man on his birthday, who is the only human presence on the stage. The structure is plain, as it only contains one act, and the action takes place in Krapp's den. The play mainly consists of him listening and reacting to recordings that he made when he was younger. The entire play is dominated by a melancholic atmosphere generated by the reactions of an old man interacting with his younger self. Although almost nothing happens physically on the stage, the play conveys a mix of feelings, given the somehow nostalgic narration of many events of Krapp's life. The fact that the play is more like a story-telling session means that everything has to be narrated properly, because what is not performed literally on the stage, is performed to a certain extent in the mind of the audience. The atmosphere generated by this play is similar to that of having a book read by someone else. This characteristic requires greater attention to how the stories in Krapp's recordings are further rendered in the target language, so that not only the information is preserved, but also the emotion and the atmosphere they generate. The 69-year-old Krapp's speech alternates with his younger version's speeches, thus providing a "review" of his life at certain times and ages. Although, as mentioned before, there is only one character in the script of the play, and there is only one type of exchange in what concerns the dialogue – i.e. between Krapp and the tape – when the play is performed, those people that are mentioned in Krapp's stories become characters in the mind of the audience. Apparently, it is the viewer's responsibility to complete the play on the stage using his own imagination. Taking this aspect into account, it is safe to say that in addition to 69-year-old Krapp, there are also other characters in the play, such as Krapp's younger selves, his mother, his former lover Bianca, Mrs. McGlome, Fanny, a dog and other nameless female characters that impacted his life at a certain moment. Therefore, even though the events are narrated and do not take

place physically on the stage, the play is vivid and abounds in emotion, making for a complex, meditative and profound play.

The scenery is minimalist, consisting of a table with 2 drawers with a white light above. The duality dark-light is maintained throughout the play and although the desk is the only prop on the stage, there are short “breaks” when Krapp goes to the backstage, which creates the illusion that there is more behind the curtain, while the audience never sees that. Even though one might consider it a plain play, given its length and the number of characters, there are many subtleties, motifs and contrasts that keep recurring throughout the play, lending it complexity, continuity and substance:

Before us is the fragmented presence of the 28-, 39-, and 69-year-old Krapp – and the years contiguous to these stages of his life. Krapp wears a white shirt, white boots, black waist-coat, and black trousers. As he shuffles through his tapes and broods on the many years they contain, he moves on and off the stage and between areas of light and shadow. Significant moments of his past are similarly defined in shadows and light: the “dark nurse” (a “dark young beauty” also dressed in “white”), the “black” ball (thrown to a “white” dog); Bianca (“white”), with whom he lived “on and off Kedar (“black”) Street and whom he rejected”; the woman in the boat, who sexually and emotionally “let” him “in”, “her eyes in shadow” from the blazing sun; the confident writer, Krapp at 39, with the “new light above [his] table”. Moving between past and present, between opportunities and loss, Krapp repeats certain words (“eyes,” “yelp,” “gently”) and makes associations with warmth and cold. These words and sensory perceptions, like the light and dark, function like musical motifs. (Gordon 100, 101)

The value of this play can be identified in such details, thus, when translating it, these are the aspects that have to be preserved and rendered in the target language accurately, since not the action *per se* is the element of interest in the play. *Krapp’s Last Tape* is a play built on long, explicit and also repetitive stage directions, two short songs and recordings, which create the image of a mosaic, contrasting with the actual shape of the play, which is a monologue.

A first glance at the text makes it clear that it contains detailed and explicit stage directions, and in some cases very long ones, built on many adjectives and adverbs. Needless to say that they play a great role and their importance is obvious, especially in what concerns further stage performances. When it comes to the translation of this play, no detail of the stage directions should be left out, as both in reading the text and in watching the play these repetitive stage directions, and implicitly movements of the character, give musicality, rhythm and circularity to the play. The translation of stage directions implies taking decisions in what concerns the lexical level, the cognitive level, when it comes to suggesting the same images and feelings in the readers, and preserving the meaning and the function. In her article entitled "Translation Strategies and the Reception of Drama Performances: A Mutual Influence," Marta Mateo explains that even the process that stage directions go through, when being transposed from the written text to the actual performance, represents a change in the medium:

Stage directions are usually subject to some type of transformation in the translating process, particularly if this is accompanied by a change in the medium. The written stage direction of the drama text is usually converted into props and into kinesic, proxemic or other non-verbal signs on the stage, but it may sometimes be turned into an acting direction (an indication for the actors) or even into a verbal sign to be uttered by a character. (103)

According to this statement, stage directions actually go through changes when the play is performed. There are plays that need more changes, in what concerns the stage directions, so as to make them performable, whereas there are plays for which a faithful translation is adequate, without the need of making significant changes, or no changes at all. Translating stage directions generally implies focusing on finding the best equivalents for words and phrases, since they are descriptive. This implies that there could be problems on the lexical level, due to the fact that stage directions act as instructions that influence either how the text is performed or

how it comes to life in the mind of the reader, so that preserving the exact meaning is essential. It is appropriate to mention that “equivalent” does not necessarily refer to the form of the words, but to their meaning, that the equivalent of an English word could be a phrase in Romanian, and not just a single word. Given this fact, it is useful to look at such cases of stage directions in *Krapp’s Last Tape*. Krapp is an old man whose monologue builds up the play, who is undoubtedly a lonely man and whose life is no longer full of exciting events. His first feature is found at the beginning of the play, in the first stage direction, namely “wearish” (Beckett 9). In certain English dictionaries, this word is not even included, but in the *Merriam-Webster online dictionary* the word is explained as something that is “tasteless, withered, cold” (“Wearish”). In Romanian the translation of this word would be a combination of “pălid, inexpressiv, îmbătrânit, trecut,” but while there is no word to serve as a perfect equivalent, the word “hodorogit” would be an acceptable choice since it conveys almost, if not the same idea, as “wearish.”

Not only isolated words pose problems in translation, but also short expressions or phrases, as in the case of “Finally he bites off the end, turns aside and begins pacing to and fro at edge of stage, in the light” (Beckett 10). Focusing on the lexical problems – and not on that of the accuracy of the translation, which is essential in the act of performing – the same issue is to be faced here, namely that although the idea can be conveyed in Romanian, there is no standard idiom or phrase to express that. “To and fro” could be translated as “înainte și înapoi,” which is actually the meaning of the phrase. Yet, it does not convey the exact meaning, since Krapp is standing at the edge of the stage and in English “to and fro” implies a short movement. “A se legăna,” although not similar in form with the English phrase, conveys better what the character actually does on the stage. Still, neither “înainte și înapoi,” nor “a se legăna” is sufficient for this purpose. Combining them actually leads to a meaning closer to the original in English. Therefore, the solution that is closest to “to and fro” is “a se legăna înainte și înapoi,” which also involves the idea that Krapp is facing the

audience. Although such issues are quite subtle and may seem minor, in *Krapp's Last Tape* – as in the case of any other play – such details that are usually expressed in the stage directions contribute to the whole as a valuable product.

Another word that poses some translation problems is “poking,” given the phrase where it occurs in the stage directions: “He bends over table, starts peering and poking at the boxes” (Beckett 10). The idea conveyed is that he is looking for a certain box, and while doing so he points at them – by touching – in order to find the one that he wants. In Romanian, “to poke” could be translated as “a ciupi,” “a împinge,” “a înghionti” which could serve as perfect equivalents in other contexts, but not in this case. Translating the phrase as “Se apleacă peste masă, începe să se uite cu atenție și să împingă/înghiontească cutiile” would be unfit for the intended meaning. This is an example of a situation where translating a word with another word is not suitable, asking for a phrase, with an explanation of the word. Although in English the word “poke” itself does not mean “to search,” the meaning is, actually, this: Krapp started looking at the boxes, searching for the right one. Indeed, “poke” can also mean “to search” when used in idiomatic expressions, such as “to poke one’s nose into,” “to have a poke around” or “to poke and pry.” Even though in this case the word does not occur in an idiomatic expression, the meaning is still “to search.” Considering this, in Romanian, a fit translation for “He bends over table, starts peering and poking at the boxes” would be “Se apleacă peste masă, începe să se uite și să caute printre cutii.” Although the word “poke” is not rendered *per se* in the target text, its meaning is preserved in the process of translation, and therefore the goal has been achieved.

For the same goal of preserving the meaning, the phrase “Brief burst of quavering song” (Beckett 13), which implies that the character started singing in a quavering voice, would not sound totally accurate if translated as “Un scurt început de cântare tremurândă.” Although both in Romanian and in English, in this case, the adjective accompanies the noun “song,” in Romanian the meaning is lost, since it is Krapp’s voice that is actually quavering,

and not the song. Despite the phrasing “quavering song,” it is obvious in English that the voice is actually quavering; however, this is not valid in the case of Romanian. Thus, a proper translation for “Brief burst of quavering song” would be “Începe să cânte cu o voce tremurândă,” instead of “Un scurt început de cântare tremurândă.”

Even though stage directions do not generally express lengthy actions or events, their contribution to the overall energy must be transferred properly in the target language. In this respect, choosing to preserve or to change the forms and tenses of verbs, or even to change the grammatical category, is a very important aspect. In the original English text, this is what some excerpts of the stage directions sound like: “happy smile” (Beckett 10), “Settling himself more comfortably, he knocks one of the boxes off the table. . .” (Beckett 11), “laugh” (Beckett 15). In order to preserve the dynamism of the play, such constructions should be translated as verbs in Romanian. For instance, if the stage direction is translated as “zâmbet fericit” the dynamism is not the same as in “zâmbește fericit.” The same thing is valid for “laugh”: it should be translated as “râde,” and not as “râset,” in order to create the impression of immediacy, that an action is actually taking place. A very similar rule is applicable in the case of gerunds. Although it is important to make the text sound pleasing, gerund verbs are not so frequently used in Romanian stage directions. With this in mind, “Settling himself more comfortably, he knocks one of the boxes off the table” translated as “Așezându-se mai comod, dă pe jos o cutie de pe masă” is not as dynamic as “Când se așază mai comod, dă pe jos una dintre cutiile de pe masă.” Such examples of translating events in stage directions exemplify that small changes in how a word or the tense of a verb is translated affect the impact and liveliness of the text.

It goes without saying that not only in stage directions are there words that need special attention. There are cases when the choice of one word over another is actually made on purpose, meaning that if the writer chooses to use a more uncommon variant of a word, although there are other more frequently used synonyms,

this should also happen in the target language. For instance, an interesting situation is posed by the choice of word “viduity” instead of widowhood (Beckett 14). Given that both have the same meaning, one might be tempted to translate viduity as “văduvie,” yet since Beckett chose the term “viduity” instead of “widowhood,” so should the translator do. Although they define the same thing, since there is an equivalent for “viduity” in Romanian, that one should be used. In Romanian, the equivalent would be “viduitate.” It is a more formal, and less frequently used term, but so is the English word “viduity.” Another word that implies the same kind of choice in translating is the word “wind-gauge,” used instead of “anemometer.” As in the above case, one might be tempted to translate “wind-gauge” as “anemometru,” yet it would not be in the spirit of the writer’s intention. Considering this, a better translation would be “giruetă” which, although a term rarely used, reflects usage in the target text.

Krapp’s Last Tape opens with a long stage direction that gives information concerning time, location, character’s movements and explicit setting indications, such as: “Front centre a small table, the two drawers of which open towards audience. Sitting at the table, facing front, i.e. across from the drawers, a wearish old man: Krapp” (Beckett 9). Although these might seem minor, unimportant details, it is essential that the translator render them accurately in the target language, since, as in almost all cases, such details can lead to a distorted performance of the play, compared to those in the source language. Thus, it would not be enough to translate these as “O măsură cu sertare. Un bărbat în vârstă inexpressiv, stând la masă.” Throughout the play there are stage directions indicating movements that recur until the very end of the play and one of them is the following, which occurs at the beginning and towards the end of the play:

Krapp remains a moment motionless, heaves a great sigh, looks at his watch, fumbles in his pockets, takes out an envelope, puts it back, fumbles, takes out a small bunch of keys, raises it to his eyes, chooses a key, gets up and moves to front of table. He stoops,

unlocks first drawer, peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out a reel of tape, peers at it, puts it back, locks drawer, unlocks second drawer peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out a large banana, peers at it, locks drawer, puts keys back in his pocket. He turns, advances to edge of stage, halts, strokes banana, peels it, drops skin at his feet, puts end of banana in his mouth and remains motionless, staring vacuously before him. Finally he bites off the end, turns aside and begins pacing to and fro at edge of stage, in the light, i.e. not more than four or five paces either way, meditatively eating banana. He treads on skin, slips, nearly falls, recovers himself, stoops and peers at skin and finally pushes it, still stooping, with his foot over the edge of the stage into pit. He resumes his pacing, finishes banana, returns to table, sits down, remains a moment motionless, heaves a great sigh, takes keys from his pockets, raises them to his eyes, chooses key, gets up and moves to front of table, unlocks second drawer, takes out a second large banana, peers at it, locks drawer, puts back his keys in his pocket, turns, advances to the edge of stage, halts, strokes banana, peels it, tosses skin into pit, puts an end of banana in his mouth and remains motionless, staring vacuously before him. Finally he has an idea, puts banana in his waistcoat pocket, the end emerging, and goes with all the speed he can muster backstage into darkness. Ten seconds. Loud pop of cork. Fifteen seconds. He comes back into light carrying an old ledger and sits down at table. He lays ledger on table, wipes his mouth, wipes his hands on the front of his waistcoat, brings them smartly together and rubs them. (Beckett 9)

Such detailed descriptions of the character's movements are not only important in the prospective performance on stage, but also for the readers of the play, as everything can be easily imagined with the help of such descriptive indications. This description of rhythmic movements creates a type of monotonous atmosphere which actually contributes significantly to Krapp's characterisation. It goes without saying that this is how they are to be rendered in Romanian too, without changing the word-order or breaking the sentence, especially in the case of such indications that recur throughout the play:

Krapp rămâne nemișcat pentru un moment, oftează adânc, se uită la ceas, scotocește prin buzunare, scoate un plic, îl pune la loc, scotocește, scoate o legătură de chei, o ridică în dreptul ochilor, alege o cheie, se ridică și se duce în fața mesei. Se apleacă, descuie primul sertar, se uită înăuntru, pipăie cu mâna înăuntru, scoate o bandă, se uită la ea, o pune la loc, încuie sertarul, descuie al doilea sertar, se uită înăuntru, pipăie cu mâna înăuntru, scoate o banană mare, se uită la ea, încuie sertarul, pune cheile la loc în buzunar. Se întoarce, se îndreaptă spre marginea scenei, se oprește brusc, mângâie banana, o decojește, coaja cade la picioarele lui, bagă un capăt al bananei în gură și rămâne nemișcat, privind în gol înaintea lui. În cele din urmă mușcă din banană, se întoarce și începe să se legene înainte și înapoi la marginea scenei, în lumină, și anume făcând nu mai mult de patru-cinci pași în fiecare direcție, mâncând banana și meditând. Calcă pe coajă, alunecă, aproape cade, se redresează, se apleacă și se uită la coajă și într-un final, stând aplecat, o împinge cu piciorul peste marginea scenei, în fosă. Își reia legănatul, termină banana, se întoarce la masă, se așază, rămâne nemișcat pentru un moment, oftează adânc, scoate cheile din buzunar, le ridică în dreptul ochilor, alege cheia, se ridică și merge în fața mesei, descuie al doilea sertar, scoate o altă banană, se uită la ea, încuie sertarul, pune cheile la loc în buzunar, se întoarce, se apropie de marginea scenei, se oprește, mângâie banana, o decojește, aruncă coaja în fosă, bagă un capăt al bananei în gură și rămâne nemișcat, privind în gol înaintea lui. Într-un final îi vine o idee, bagă banana în buzunarul vestei, capătul rămânând afară, și merge cât poate de repede înapoi în spatele scenei în întuneric. Zece secunde. O pocnitură puternică de dop. Cincisprezece secunde. Vine înapoi în lumină cărând un registru vechi și se așază la masă. Pune registrul pe masă, își șterge gura, își șterge mâinile pe vestă, apoi le împreună cu o mișcare bruscă și își freacă palmele. (Beckett 9; my translation)

This translation of the excerpt is as close to the English version as possible, meaning that the word-order was preserved, the words – as much as possible –, and overall the rhythm created by how short movements are briefly listed. The translation of this first long set of stage directions is also relevant for the gestural dimension, since it mainly contains explanations of the character's movements. As a

matter of fact, most of the problems in translating stage directions are also closely related to the gestural dimension since movements and gestures are the most encountered and explained in stage directions.

Taking into account that there are a few stage directions and excerpts of stories told by young Krapp that occur more than once, the translator has to make sure they are translated in the same way every time, since this is how they occur in the original text too. In the case of stage directions, the following occur twice or more throughout the play: “takes out a small bunch of keys, raises it to his eyes, chooses a key, gets up and moves to front of table. He stoops, unlocks first drawer, peers into it, feels about inside it, takes out a reel of tape, peers at it, puts it back, locks drawer, unlocks second drawer peers into it. . .” (Beckett 9); “He raises his head, stares blankly front” (Beckett 11); “Krapp switches off, broods, switches on again” (Beckett 15). Since they occur identically every time in the original text, the translator has to make sure this happens in the target language too, given that this is done on purpose, lending coherence and musicality to the text. In Romanian, possible translations of these stage direction excerpts are: “scoate o legătură de chei, o ridică în dreptul ochilor, alege o cheie, se ridică și se duce în fața mesei. Se apleacă, descuie primul sertar, se uită înăuntru, pipăie cu mâna înăuntru, scoate o bandă, se uită la ea, o pune la loc, încuie sertarul, descuie al doilea sertar, se uită înăuntru. . .”; “își ridică ochii, privește în gol în față”; “Krapp oprește înregistrarea, stă pe gânduri, o pornește din nou” (my translation). If this is how they occur for the first time, the translator has to hold on to this variant.

In what concerns the performance of the play, this is influenced by how the stage directions are translated, but also by how the dialogue is translated, and it depends on speakability and on the translator’s capacity to imagine the text being performed on stage. As mentioned before, very few things actually take place on the stage, since the play is a monologue and there is no actual interaction and dialogue between characters, meaning that the performance actually takes place in the minds of the readers and the

audience. This gives the translator a greater responsibility than the original writer embraced, namely to be able to tell stories in such a way as to conjure strong images in the minds of the readers. In addition to this, Krapp's own reactions while listening to the tape constitute another performance that actually takes place on the stage and which is influenced, in the same manner, by stage directions and the text *per se*.

Patrick Magee's performance of the play represents a point of reference, given its popularity and reception. One interesting aspect is that the word "curses" occurs three times in the text, in relation to Krapp, more specifically when he gets annoyed. Still, in Magee's performance, he does not actually curse, but mutter, even if in the text the verb used in the stage directions is "curse" (Beckett 11, 16). The same thing happens in the play directed by Walter D. Asmus where Krapp is played by Rick Cluchey, where the character does not actually curse. In translating this word into Romanian, the freedom should be preserved, so that the word does not necessarily have to be translated as "înjură," which actually offers freedom anyway, since no specific curse is indicated. Whether the translator finds it fit to offer more flexibility or not, one could either translate "curse" as "înjură," or as "se enervează," which gives more flexibility when it comes to performing the play. "Se enervează" offers the director and performer the freedom to choose what exactly to do: scream, curse, frown, mumble, etc. Either way, the intended meaning is preserved: when he knocks down a box off the table or when he cannot find the passage he wants to hear, he gets annoyed.

The fact that Krapp keeps switching off and on, re-listening to certain passages and winding forward requires of the translator to be careful with how he translates these beginnings and ends of lines, so that when he resumes the recording, they make sense. Such a thing happens when Krapp listens to the passage about his vision that he does not listen to entirely, and also in the case of the passage he re-listens to on purpose. In the case of the former, either his repulsion for this very passage, or his impatience to get to the part he wants to hear, makes him skip, so the speech is disrupted. The

character's reactions evolve from "impatiently" to "curses" and in the last instance to "curses loader." The speech needs to remain as such in the translated text:

crediņa pe care am avut-o toată viața, și anume – (Krapp oprește nerăbdător înregistrarea, derulează înainte, pornește din nou) – stânci mari de granit, spuma ce zbura în sus în lumina farului și girueta ce se învârtea ca o elice, și îmi e clar că întunericul pe care m-am chinuit mereu să îl țin în frâu este în realitate cea mai – (Krapp înjură, oprește înregistrarea, derulează înainte, pornește din nou) – asociația de necontestat până la oprirea furtunii și a nopții cu lumina înțelegerii și a focului – (Krapp înjură aparatul, oprește, derulează înainte și pornește înregistrarea) – capul la pieptul ei și cu mâna pe ea. Stăm acolo nemișcați. Însă sub noi totul mișca și ne mișca și pe noi, încet, în sus și în jos și de la stânga la dreapta. (my translation)

In addition to such details in stage directions that repeatedly occur, there is also a short stanza of a song that he sings twice and a recorded event he re-listens to. Following the same rule, these need to be translated identically, since they are identical in the original text. The short song inserted in the text reads: "Now the day is over, / Night is drawing nigh-igh, / Shadows —" (Beckett 13), when it occurs for the first time, and: "Now the day is over, / Night is drawing nigh-igh, / Shadows – (*coughing, then almost inaudible*) – of the evening / Steal across the sky" (Beckett 19), when it occurs the second time. In the same spirit of anticipation, the translator has to make sure both sound identical in the end. It goes without saying that preserving the rhyme scheme and the metre of the original song would be ideal (i.e. length and number of feet, as well as rhythm), and this faces the translator with another challenge, that of reproducing the prosodic features of a short poetic fragment in the target language. While the rhyme scheme of the fragment in question is not very difficult to reproduce – the complete quatrain featuring only two rhyming lines (abcb) – the trochaic trimeter may pose some problems. The following translation could be

appropriate in this case: “Ziua-i pe sfârșite, / Noaptea vine-ndat’, / Umbre ale serii / Cerul îl străbat” (my translation).

As a conclusion to this analysis of my translation of *Krapp’s Last Tape* from English into Romanian, it is safe to say that the problems encountered in the process were not impossible to manage, since many of them were related to the lexical level and to the hefty gestural and aural content of the text that influences the performance. Despite the difficulties that the translation of the play poses, most of them, specific to drama translation in general and stemming from the very nature and aim of the dramatic text, translating *Krapp’s Last Tape* has been a most rewarding experience.

When it comes to radio performances, in order for an English staged play to be performed in Romanian, for instance, two types of processes are required, based on Törnqvist’s theory: firstly, there is the process of translating that involves “transposing from source text to target text” and secondly, the process of “transposing from one medium to another” (Törnqvist 8). In what concerns the process of translating for the radio a play initially intended for a stage performance, the process does not end when the product is translated, but when it is also shaped and adapted for the new medium. In order to see the difference in approach, a brief comparison between the characteristics of staged plays and radio plays is needed. In the case of radio performances, there are changes that need to be made, such as leaving out passages or adding new ones in order to make up for the visual elements that are lost. There are general changes made in the process of editing the translation of a play, in order for it to be adequate for another medium, the radio, in this case. Zuber explains what changes are usually required for such a shift of medium (5), stating that the first change is related to the proportions of the elements of communication, namely the verbal and the non-verbal ones. Thus, while in a script for a stage performance, the verbal and non-verbal ways of communication intermingle and occur in equal proportions, in the case of a radio performance the verbal aspect will predominate, since such a performance relies on aural elements.

Whereas for a stage performance the audience is represented by viewers, in the case of radio performance, the audience is represented by listeners. The focus changes from visual elements to aural elements or, as Zuber puts it, “if the same play is produced on radio, communication must be entirely through ear” (5).

As it has been observed, stage directions contain information concerning the movements of the characters, their reactions, gestures, facial expressions, positioning of objects on stage and so on, therefore the question is what happens with such information, which is, in fact, essential. Zuber gives the following answer to this problem:

Any visual elements of the original stage script that are essential to plot, characterization, creation of atmosphere or period, or to the presentation of the theme, must be translated into aural elements, for example by changing the dialogue to incorporate extra information, by introducing a narrator, or by devising appropriate sound effects. (5)

The same alternative is mentioned by Törnqvist, who states that the stage set has to be somehow transferred to the listeners, in order for them to be able to imagine things as clearly as possible, as intended by the original writer. The two solutions he offers are either to introduce a narrator, or to incorporate the stage directions in the dialogue, which, according to him, is a characteristic of Elizabethan drama (14). In addition to these two options, there is also the possibility to introduce sounds that help create the atmosphere. It is clear that any visual element – as a matter of fact, any type of element apart from those relying on aural images – needs adaptation, which involves either changing, adding or omitting lines, or even using a narrator. There are both advantages and disadvantages in the case of staged performances and radio performances, meaning that in the case of staged plays, the performance depends on the type of theatre, stage, and everything related to space. When it comes to radio performances, these do not depend on space or time, given that there are no visual elements. Shifts in time and space and from one act or scene to another can be

done by aural images, such as short songs or sounds, or they can be mentioned by the narrator.

Törnqvist states that one characteristic of radio drama is the short playing-time, compared to staged plays, and therefore adapting the translation of a staged play for a radio performance requires shortening, if the play is too long, whereas plays which are considered too long are not even adapted for radio (14). While there are plays whose performance takes many hours, in the case of radio this is unlikely to happen. One of the reasons might be the lack of visual stimulants, or actually, the lack of any other stimulants except the aural ones. It would be much more difficult for a listener to focus on listening to a play for hours, compared to the case when one goes to the theatre and watches the play being performed in front of their eyes. Still, this does not imply that a radio performance is less entertaining than a staged one. It implies that the duration changes in keeping with the means used to perform the play. Since the time for a radio play is preferably shorter, so is the number of characters. Törnqvist acknowledges that due to the same lack of visual code, “the listener will often find it difficult to keep track of the various characters and to distinguish their voices from one another. To meet these problems, radio favours plays with few roles, such as duologues. In plays with a long list of *dramatis personae*, minor characters may be left out” (14). Taking these two traits into account – that short plays are more suitable compared to long plays and that plays with fewer characters are better for radio performances – it goes without saying that *Krapp’s Last Tape* is an ideal play for radio performances. Although the play is not one of Beckett’s plays written specifically for radio, it was actually performed on radio in English, and one of the most popular radio performances was the one in which Krapp was played by Corin Redgrave in 2006. In Romania, the play has not been broadcast on radio yet.

In order to analyse and observe the changes that need to be made, a closer look at the translated text is necessary. Every line has to be considered, so that the translator sees and imagines how it would sound on radio with no visual elements and how it would be

perceived by the listeners. In this process, the translator has to decide whether to introduce a narrator, to leave the stage directions as such or to incorporate extra information in the dialogue in order to make up for the visual elements that are lost in the process of translation and adaptation. The translator does not have to choose one single option for the entire play, in the sense that at certain times it is better to incorporate the information in the character's speech, or to use aural elements, and at other times a narrator is needed, when the information cannot be conveyed in any other way.

Krapp's Last Tape opens with a long set of stage directions that describe Krapp and his first movements on the stage. The information contained by this elaborate descriptive passage is almost impossible to be rendered in the character's monologue or solely by aural elements. Therefore, in what concerns the beginning of the play, a good choice would be to make use of a narrator who tells the listeners scenery-related information. This would be the best choice, since important aspects – such as the contrast between black and white – that are relevant for the rest of the play, are mentioned here. Taking into account all the details presented in this long set of stage directions in the beginning, everything must be entirely preserved. As noted, information from this first set of stage directions recurs throughout the play, so another decision has to be made: whether to use the narrator every time this description recurs, or to combine the use of a narrator with the use of sounds for the first time. By using this combination, the following times these exact descriptions reoccur, they could be rendered solely through aural images, since the listeners will associate them with the first time they heard them and realize what they mean, although this could be considered too elliptical. Moreover, one might opt for the introduction of some new lines, in order to limit the narrator's speech-time and obtain a play more similar to a staged play than to a piece of prose. For instance, "oftează adânc" poses no problem since it actually is an aural image; "se uită la ceas" could be replaced with a line such as "oare cât e ceasul?" accompanied by a sound of metal bracelets touching each other. "Scoate un plic" could be rendered through a line uttered by Krapp: "Hmmm, un plic!".

Although some directions have to be uttered by a narrator, given the impossibility of rendering them solely through aural images and Krapp's lines, it would be better to alternate the means of conveying information, while still preserving the logical flow of events.

If the aim is to obtain a variant closer to the non-adapted script, it would be better to make use of a narrator or to introduce new lines, because the decision to only use sounds would lead to the loss of much information, since there are things that cannot be conveyed only by means of sounds. For instance, it would be very difficult, or almost impossible to transform into aural images the following translated excerpt of the first set of stage directions: "Se apleacă, descrie primul sertar, se uită înăuntru, pipăie cu mâna înăuntru, scoate o bandă, se uită la ea, o pune la loc, încuie sertarul, descrie al doilea sertar, se uită înăuntru, pipăie cu mâna înăuntru, scoate o banană, se uită la ea, încuie sertarul, pune cheile la loc în buzunar." Although, as already mentioned, it is acceptable to use sounds in order to support what is said by the narrator and then leave out the narrator and only use the sounds, it is important to utter such information when it occurs for the first time. There are certain indications that cannot be rendered solely through aural images: "uitându-se în gol în față," "mușcă din banană, se întoarce și începe să se legene înainte și înapoi la marginea scenei." This is the reason why it is not necessary to choose a single way of incorporating the stage directions: sometimes they are best said by a narrator, some other times the information can be incorporated in the character's speech and there are times when sounds are enough in order to convey the message.

Într-un final îi vine o idee, bagă banana în buzunarul vestei, capătul rămânând afară, și merge cât poate de repede înapoi în spatele scenei în întuneric. Zece secunde. O pocnitură puternică de dop. Cincisprezece secunde. Vine înapoi în lumină cărând un registru vechi și se așază la masă. Pune registrul pe masă, își șterge gura, își șterge mâinile pe vestă, apoi le împreună brusc și își freacă palmele. (Beckett 9, my translation)

Thus, in respect to the same first set of stage directions, for such a passage as the above, more options are suitable. The easiest one is to introduce a narrator to utter the information, with the exception of time-related information – “zece secunde,” “cincisprezece secunde” – but there is also the option of combining the introduction of new lines with aural images. It could be considered unsuitable to say that the character goes backstage in a radio performance. Therefore, such a passage could be left out and suggested through sounds. This process would involve the following steps: “Într-un final îi vine o idee” could be rendered by Krapp saying “Aha!” “Bagă banana în buzunarul vestei, capătul rămânând afară” could be also replaced by a sound resembling licking fingers and by Krapp saying, “păstrez banana pentru mai târziu” and another rustling sound in order to indicate that he actually puts the banana inside the pocket. “Merge cât poate de repede înapoi în spatele scenei în întuneric” can be rendered through fading sounds suggesting the distancing effect. The only issue is that in order to make the sound elicit the image of Krapp going backstage, one has to introduce new lines. Given the fact that, later in the play, he sings a short stanza, in this case he could hum that song, or another one, so that he would be heard less and less clearly, in order to suggest that he is moving away from “the audience.” In addition, the sound of footsteps could highlight this distancing idea. Therefore, Krapp could start humming right after putting the banana in his pocket and be heard less and less clearly. “After ten seconds a pop of cork is heard” is one of the images that poses no problem in this case. After fifteen seconds when he comes back, he could start humming again and be heard louder and louder to convey the idea that he gets nearer and nearer to the audience. “Se așază la masă. Pune registrul pe masă, își șterge gura, își șterge mâinile pe vestă” – the first two elements of this series of movements can also be turned into aural elements, as follows: in order to suggest that he sits down at the table, the proper sound that could be used is that of a pulled chair; the fact that he puts the ledger on the table can be suggested by the sound of him slightly slamming the ledger on the table. The last two movements are more

challenging when it comes to rendering them solely by means of sounds. In what regards the first one – Krapp wiping his mouth – this could be suggested by Krapp’s sighing in delight as if after drinking. The rubbing hand sound poses no difficulty, and the act of wiping hands on the waistcoat after wiping his mouth is an element that could be left out. Therefore, in this passage, almost everything could be expressed solely by the use of sound and without important losses.

The aspect that needs special attention is how the black-white, darkness-light contrasts are maintained without any visual aid. Such a process could be challenging, since darkness and light are clearly visual elements. This duality is a matter of symbolic subtlety and is by no means supposed to be left out, because it is one of those details that provide a key to understanding the deeper meaning of the text. In what concerns the above-analysed paragraph, the only problem would be that this duality is lost, since Krapp goes backstage into darkness from the light on the stage. In this case, the solution would be to add a few more lines, such as “E atât de întuneric!” when he supposedly goes backstage and “Înapoi la lumină” when he gets back front stage. This aspect is to be closely looked at further in the play too, since there are other instances when this contrast is present. In what concerns this aspect, the rest of the images related to black and white pose no problem, because they are verbalised by younger Krapp. Only the dark backstage and the lighted table have to be preserved by being described by a narrator or introduced in the speech of the character, since they are part of the setting and there is no other way of reproducing them.

In contrast to those stage directions that have to be spoken by a narrator, there are also stage directions such as “pauză,” which do not pose any problem, since both sound and the absence of sound are aural images. Also, in the case of stage directions referring to intonation and the character’s voice – such as “viori” and “surprins” – the best way of expressing them is through character’s speech and not verbalised by a narrator. Such other stage directions are: “uimit,” “vehement,” “voce puternică, mai degrabă îngâmfată,” “un râs scurt,” “cântă,” “oprește înregistrarea” / “pornește

înregistrarea.” Not only do these descriptions pose no problem, but they are actually suitable and ideal for radio performances.

Right after the first stage direction, Krapp’s first line begins. He starts reading from the ledges he just brought in order to find the entry he wants. Obviously, this would be very easily represented on stage, but, actually, the stage directions expressing his search can be replaced with new lines and sounds. Although “Se apleacă peste registru, dă paginile, găsește rubrica dorită, citește” is a visual representation, it could be transferred on the radio as follows: the fact that he bends over the ledger is an information that could be left out and the listeners can imagine their own version. Krapp turning the pages can be suggested by a sound resembling this gesture and in order to show that he looks for something specific, Krapp could say something like “să vedem” accompanied by a murmur resembling the sound someone makes when thinking. “Caută printre cutii” represents one of those cases that needs a line to be replaced: “oare care e cutia” and following the same idea, “ridică cutia” and “o așază pe masă” can be replaced by aural elements: the former by a grunting sound and the latter by a sound of box being slammed on the table. When it comes to image-based stage directions such as “Își ridică capul, se uită în gol în față. Uimit,” these can be omitted and replaced by pauses and then Krapp saying his line, puzzled. Still, one aspect that needs to be taken into account is that such series of sounds require special attention, because if they are too long and convey too much information, they could be perceived as uninteresting by the listeners. Therefore, such solutions are suitable for short descriptions, in order to avoid too long series of sounds that could have an opposite effect to the intended one.

“Își ridică capul, stă pe gânduri, se apleacă peste aparat, îi dă drumul și ia o poziție de ascultător, adică aplecat în față, cu coatele pe masă, făcându-și mâna căuș pentru a auzi mai bine, privind înainte”: in the case of this stage direction, the only gesture that represents an aural element is Krapp switching on the device. The others are almost or entirely impossible to be regarded as aural images, therefore the intervention of a narrator is needed in this

case. A similar thing happens in the case of the following stage direction: "Când se așază mai comod dă pe jos una dintre cutiile de pe masă, înjură, oprește înregistrarea, împinge cutiile nervos pe jos, derulează înregistrarea de la început, o pornește, își reia poziția." Apart from Krapp cursing – which could be replaced with an expression of anger – everything should be told by a narrator, since there would be too many sounds needed in order to cover all the actions and it would be practically impossible to do so.

In the translation for the stage, Krapp looks up the word "viduity" in the dictionary – "viduitate" in Romanian – and then his lips move as if he is uttering the word. In order to avoid using a narrator again, in a radio performance, Krapp could actually utter the word "viduitate" by whispering it several times. After this moment when Krapp is lost in thoughts and fascinated by this word, he goes backstage in darkness. Since this action has already taken place once, the narrator could be left out and the listeners will actually guess what the sound of footsteps and Krapp saying "E atât de întuneric," mean. The fact that he brings a dictionary from backstage could be suggested as in the case of the ledger, or him saying "Să vedem ce scrie în dicționar" would also work.

In order to be able to differentiate between sixty nine-year-old Krapp and young Krapp, since there are moments when their voices alternate quickly or even overlap, it would be a good choice to use two clearly different voices, while still preserving the writer's wish: that Krapp – both the old and the young version – has a cracked voice. Since this analysis is applied to a radio version, one has to take into account that voices and sounds are all that the listener is given in order to imagine the play as vividly as if it were taking place on a stage. Despite the fact that changes are made, lines are added and others are omitted, the main ideas, the atmosphere and the subtle elements have to be conveyed to the listeners in order for them to experience the feelings and thoughts that an audience of a staged version would experience. Towards the end of the play, there is a stage direction similar to the first one:

Krapp oprește înregistrarea, meditează. Într-un final cotrobăie prin buzunare, găsește banana, o scoate din buzunar, se uită atent la ea, o pune înapoi, cotrobăie, scoate plicul, cotrobăie, pune plicul la loc, se uită la ceas, se ridică și merge în spatele scenei în întuneric. Zece secunde. Sunetul unei sticle care atinge sticla, apoi un sunet scurt de sifon. Zece secunde. Doar sunet de sticlă pe sticlă. Zece secunde. Se întoarce puțin amețit în lumină, merge în fața mesei, scoate cheile, le ridică în dreptul ochilor, alege cheia, descuie primul sertar, se chiorăște, pipăie înăuntru, scoate banda, se uită la ea, încuie sertarul, pune cheile înapoi în buzunar, merge și se așază, scoate banda din aparat, o pune pe dicționar, pune banda goală în aparat, scoate plicul din buzunar, se uită pe spatele acestuia, îl pune pe masă, pornește înregistrarea, își drege vocea și începe să înregistreze. (Beckett 10, my translation)

The solution used for the first set of stage directions – which are very similar to those quoted above – is to be used in this case too, in order to preserve the continuity and fluidity of the text. If the first time the best solution was a narrator, so should happen now. If a replacement with sounds was considered a better solution, this should apply to this stage direction too. Since they are very similar and, somehow, they open and almost end the play, they are to be rendered in the same way. After all, it is the translator and adapter's decision whether to limit the use of a narrator or not.

All things considered, *Krapp's Last Tape* is a short play which poses several problems in what concerns its translation, although most of these issues could be described as manageable, since they do not threaten the transfer of meaning or any other essential aspect of the text. The majority of issues encountered in the process of translating the play are situated on the lexical level and are related to the information conveyed by the stage directions, since these are movement and gesture oriented, and indirectly affect the way it is further performed on stage. *Krapp's Last Tape* is a text suitable for translation and even though it is a rather complex play both form- and content-wise, it is open to changes and adaptations. As already argued, omissions, changes and additions of new lines are all acceptable, as long as the meaning and atmosphere of the

original are preserved. This statement is valid both for the process of translation and that of adaptation – for radio performance, in this case. Although the play abounds in visual representations, and Krapp's movements and gestures actually make up a large part of the play, adapting it for the radio is not impossible. The process of adaptation implies shifts from visual to aural, that further imply omissions and additions, but given the length of the play and the fact that there is just one character – and two voices – needed, the play is suitable for a radio performance.

This study has been an attempt to assess the implications of translating dramatic texts, the problems that can be encountered in this process. The questions that my analysis has endeavoured to answer are: what makes translating drama different from translating other genres, what are the features of the genre in general and how do they influence the process of translation? The analysis has also involved a practical evaluation of the problems encountered in the process of translating Beckett's *Krapp's Last Tape* and in adapting the play for the radio.

The process of translating a play for the stage and of adapting it for radio broadcasting faces the translator with challenges related to word choice, correctly decoding and accurately re-encoding the visual, aural and gestural content of the dramatic text, properly approaching stage directions, preserving the prosodic features of poetic inserts, finding viable solutions for the radio adaptation so as to compensate for the absence of visual elements – all of which the translator must strive to meet without ever losing sight of the principle governing all translations, i.e. semantic equivalence.

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