



“Para resistir la crisis y progresar” Readings and Translations of Cuban Political Discourse*

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Abstract:

Political discourse is situated spatially and temporally on constantly shifting (political) terrain; it is ideologically driven and is embedded in, and a reflection of, a complex web of norms and conventions, including historical, cultural and linguistic ones. Among its strategic functions are coercion, resistance or opposition, and legitimization or delegitimization. This last function is shared by the media which, in reframing and representing statements and events, also contributes to legitimizing and delegitimizing ideas, policies, individuals and groups. And, when political statements originating in a foreign country are reported in Canadian and U.S. media, translators are called upon to participate in this reframing. Media reports of political discourse therefore provide an important source for examining interpretations and reinterpretations. This paper examines statements made by Cuban politicians, and published in English-language media in Canada and the United States. It explores the ways in which Cuba's stance toward the recent economic crisis reproduced pre-established discourse around the ongoing U.S. embargo. An analysis of translations of these statements reveals evidence of the delegitimization of Cuban discourse through editorial and translation strategies.

Keywords: political discourse, media, Cuba, Canada and U.S., economic crisis.

Resumen:

El discurso político está situado en un universo (político) espaciotemporal que cambia constantemente. Este discurso de naturaleza ideológica se entrelaza en una red compleja de normas y convenciones, de caracteres históricos, culturales y lingüísticos. Entre sus funciones estratégicas están la coacción, la resistencia o la oposición, y la legitimación o la deslegitimación. Esta última función es también propia de los medios de comunicación que, al reformular y representar declaraciones y eventos, también contribuyen a legitimar o deslegitimar ideas, políticas, individuos o grupos. Y, cuando las declaraciones políticas que se originan en un país extranjero son citadas en los medios de comunicación de Canadá y de Estados Unidos, se recurre a los traductores para esta reformulación. Por lo tanto, los informes de los medios de comunicación sobre los discursos políticos proporcionan una fuente importante para examinar las interpretaciones y reinterpretaciones. Este artículo examina las declaraciones hechas por políticos cubanos y publicadas en los medios de comunicación en Canadá y en Estados Unidos. Se exploran las formas en que la posición de Cuba sobre la reciente crisis económica repite discursos preestablecidos alrededor del embargo de Estados Unidos. Un análisis de las traducciones de estas declaraciones evidencia la deslegitimación del discurso cubano mediante estrategias editoriales y traductorías.

Palabras clave: discurso político, medios de comunicación, Cuba, Canadá y Estados Unidos, crisis económica.

* An earlier version of this paper was presented at the 2010 Conference of the Latin American Studies Association, held in Toronto, Canada. We wish to thank our fellow panel members and members of the audience for their remarks and support. This article presents a case study conducted in the early stages of a research project titled “Cuba in Translation” whose overall objective is to combine theoretical and empirical approaches to the examination of textual, social, and cultural practices of translation. This project draws on linguistic and social theory, and focuses on intersections between translation and ideology in a variety of intercultural exchanges involving Cuba.

Résumé :

Le discours politique appartient à un univers spatiotemporel en mouvance constante. En même temps, ce discours à caractère idéologique est ancré dans un réseau complexe de normes et de conventions, qu'elles soient historiques, culturelles ou linguistiques. Parmi ses fonctions stratégiques sont la coercition, la résistance ou l'opposition, et la légitimation ou la délégitimation. Cette dernière fonction est aussi le propre des médias, qui reformulent et représentent des déclarations et des événements et, ainsi, jouent un rôle déterminant dans légitimation et la délégitimation d'idées, de politiques, d'individus et de groupes. Et, lorsque les médias au Canada et aux États-Unis publient des déclarations politiques provenant de pays étrangers, les traducteurs sont appelés à participer à cette reformulation. Le reportage de discours politique est donc une ressource importante pour l'étude des interprétations et réinterprétations. Le présent article porte sur des déclarations prononcées par des politiques cubains et publiées dans les médias de langue anglaise au Canada et aux États-Unis. Les auteurs examinent les manifestations discursives de la position cubaine sur la crise économique récente et sur l'embargo de longue durée par les États-Unis. Leur analyse de la traduction de ces déclarations révèle que des stratégies rédactionnelles et traductionnelles concourent à la délégitimation du discours cubain.

Mots clé : discours politique, media, Cuba, Canada et États-Unis, crise économique.

For many countries, the recent economic crisis was but one in a long series of destabilizing events. Such was the case for Cuba which, over the past fifty years, has known a succession of economic upheavals – some resulting from natural disasters, others precipitated by world events, and still others caused by economic and political measures on the part of foreign powers. In 2007, on the eve of the U.S. sub-prime market collapse, Cuba was beginning to emerge from the grim *Período especial*, as evidenced by improvements in areas such as public transportation and electrical power infrastructure. Still, the feeling of continued vulnerability to shifts in international market conditions, to the availability of foreign credit, and to fluctuations in remittances, tourism and other variables (L.L. Pérez 2009: 4), was reflected in the official political discourse of the time.

It is this category or genre of texts – political discourse – that is the focus of this paper. The category includes media interviews, public debates and speeches, among others (Bhatia 2006, Blas Aroyo 2000, Leudar *et al.* 2004; Schäffner 1997). Political discourse in general is characterized by several features: it is situated spatially and temporally on constantly shifting (political) terrain, it is ideologically driven, and it is embedded in, and a reflection of, a complex web of norms and conventions, including historical, cultural and linguistic ones. It is also designed to fulfil specific functions. Uttered by government officials or their spokespersons, political statements are authoritative: they represent, maintain and transform State policy on domestic and foreign affairs and, depending on the political and economic objectives, can be directed at a domestic audience, foreign interlocutors or both at once.

Chilton and Schäffner (1997: 212-213) outline the following four strategic functions of political discourse: 1) coercion, 2) resistance, opposition and protest, 3) dissimulation, 4) legitimization and delegitimization. We will focus here on the fourth function –legitimization and delegitimization– as it is shared by the media which, in reframing and representing statements and events, also participates in legitimizing and delegitimizing ideas, policies, individuals and groups, be they domestic or foreign.

This reframing can draw on a number of devices, one of which is translation. By definition, translation participates in the movement of texts across cultures, and this is no less true of political texts. When Canadian and U.S. media reports deal with political statements originating in a foreign country and uttered in a language other than English, translators join publishers, editors and others in reframing these statements. Like the original political texts, these media re-presentations are embedded in the narratives that guide editorial policies. However, these narratives also inflect the strategies adopted by those who undertake the translation of foreign language political statements for the media. While translation is usually invisible to most readers of the Canadian and U.S. press, it makes a meaningful contribution to the process of representing the foreign other. Translation is, in a very real sense, reframing.

Our exploration of the role played by translators and others involved in English-language media reports of Cuban political discourse focuses on three reframing devices: selective appropriation, repositioning of participants, and labelling. Selective appropriation is "realized in patterns of omission and addition designed to suppress, accentuate or elaborate particular aspects of a narrative encoded in the source utterance [or statement]" (Baker 2006: 114). Numerous examples of this are provided in Jeremy Munday's (2002) analysis of the English translations of a story by Gabriel García Márquez about Elián González that was originally published in the Cuban newspaper *Juventud Rebelde*. Munday's study reveals that the translated texts published in the U.S. and in Europe omitted segments that portrayed U.S. authorities in an unfavourable light, as well as a section that presented a history of relations between the U.S. and Cuba (Baker 2006: 118).

The second type of reframing – repositioning of participants – can be accomplished for example through subtle reconfigurations of the relationships "between *here* and *there*, *now* and *then*, *them* and *us*" (Baker 2006: 132). Participants or speakers can also be repositioned in media reports when statements made about past events are presented as if they had been uttered in response to current situations. The third type of reframing we examine is labelling, which involves using "a term or phrase to identify a person, place, group, event or any other key element in a narrative" (Baker 2006: 122). In media reports, labels perform an interpretive function in that they guide reader responses to quoted, and translated, political statements.

Like the process of translation itself, critical analyses of media reports including translated components rest on an understanding of textual and non-textual features of this text genre, as well as on a knowledge of the contextual factors that condition the production of both the original discourse and its reframing for foreign consumption.

Cuban Political Discourse

As in many other countries, economic matters are among the mainstays of Cuban political discourse. In contrast to other countries, however, Cuba's economic woes are often linked, discursively, to the longstanding U.S. trade embargo, or *bloqueo*¹. Thus the shift from *resistir* or *superar el bloqueo*² to *resistir* or *superar la crisis*³ requires no great conceptual leap. Phrases such as "*resistir la crisis y progresar*"⁴, which was written in 2009, do not deviate from the discursive paradigm regarding the *bloqueo*⁵. Our first question then was: does Cuban political discourse regarding the recent economic crisis diverge significantly from the discursive paradigm established around the *bloqueo*? We proposed therefore to analyze statements published in the Cuban news media between 2003 and 2010 concerning both the economic embargo and the recent financial crisis. The focus at this initial stage would be on content, as well as on recurring structures and tropes.

Our second question related to the representation of Cuban political discourse in English-language media in Canada and the United States: what are the intersections between translation strategies, editorial policies and political exigencies? The purpose, at this second stage, was to make a critical comparison of the Spanish and English versions in order to discover shifts in the reproduction of Cuban discourse across cultural and political boundaries.

Methodology

Our plan was first to analyze political statements made by Cuban officials and published in the Cuban media, and then to examine how these statements were reframed in Canadian and U.S. media. We began with a data collection method that followed the same trajectory, i.e., first to identify significant statements published in official Cuban media sources⁶, and then to search for translations of those statements in North-American English-language media sources. However, this approach proved problematic, as most statements collected from Cuban media sources – even at significant moments such as Fidel Castro's resignation or the 50th anniversary of the Cuban Revolution – were not quoted in any Canadian or U.S. media reports.

¹ The evident contrast between the English term "embargo" and the Spanish term *bloqueo* (lit. "blockade") used in U.S. and Cuban discourse respectively to define the U.S. trade prohibition against Cuba is itself a reflection of the very different ideological agendas framing political discourse in the two languages. While the English term suggests a legitimate diplomatic measure applied to isolate a rogue state, the Spanish term delegitimizes the U.S. position, underlining its unilateral nature and linking it to Cuban discourse on the U.S. campaign of "economic warfare" against Cuba.

² To resist or overcome the blockade.

³ To resist or overcome the crisis.

⁴ To resist the crisis and advance.

⁵ This quote is from an editorial appearing in *El Economista de Cuba*, a bi-monthly publication of the Asociación Nacional de Economistas y Contadores de Cuba and is not an 'official political statement'.

⁶ The Cuban government website (www.cuba.cu) the political magazine *Cuba Socialista*, and the country's official daily, *Granma*.

This led us to invert the approach, first isolating quoted statements in English-language media, and then searching for their original versions in Cuban media sources. While this proved the most effective way of generating a corpus that included English and Spanish versions, it also reduced the size of the corpus, as we found a limited number of direct quotes in non-Cuban media reports.

The search was conducted backwards from 2010 to 2003, and was based on occurrences of keywords such as "crisis", "economy", "global", and "Cuba", either in isolation or in combination with proper nouns such as Castro, Alarcón, Obama, Bush, Clinton and others. After meeting our target of 15 articles, we searched for the original Cuban versions of these statements using two strategies:

- (1) back-translating the statements and then searching for specific phrases on the websites of the Cuban government and Cuban media outlets, or;
- (2) searching the Cuban government website and the online archives of Cuban media outlets for speeches made in the 3 or 4 days preceding the date of publication of the articles in the English-language media source.

In many cases, the first strategy failed to produce results because the English translation of the statement paraphrased or otherwise significantly diverged from the original.

To facilitate analysis and comparison, we collected quoted statements in context, that is, including as much of the surrounding text as possible. We hoped that this presentation would enable us to identify the macrostructure(s) and the macropropositions⁷ on which the different discourses (Cuban and U.S./Canadian) appear to be based.

The data collection process was hindered considerably by a widespread tendency in non-Cuban media sources to omit official Cuban statements in articles on the economic situation in that country, relying instead on comments by U.S. or Canadian 'experts' on Cuba or by 'ordinary Cubans' (generally anonymous). Such articles were excluded from this study, although their predominance is itself worth noting, as it points to a tendency, in Canadian and U.S. media, to silence Cuban official discourse on Cuban political affairs.

The first excerpt below is taken from an open letter to George W. Bush, in which Fidel Castro contributes to the narrative of resistance, legitimization of domestic policies, and delegitimization of U.S. policies and actions toward Cuba. It is followed by our translation.

Usted debiera experimentar vergüenza por intentar asfixiar económicamente al pueblo que, bloqueado y sometido a más de cuatro décadas de guerra económica, agresiones armadas y acciones terroristas, ha sido capaz de realizar tales proezas. En su propio país usted no podría mostrar nada

⁷ The concept of the macroproposition is taken from the work of T.A. van Dijk, and refers to that which defines the theme of the discourse. The macroproposition is derived from "the information, represented in the respective propositions expressed by the text, of the discourse as a whole" (Van Dijk 1983, p. 33-34).

parecido. Fidel Castro, Segunda Epístola [al Sr. Bush], 21 de junio, 2004, <http://www.cuba.cu/gobierno/discursos/2004/esp/f210604e.html>

You should feel ashamed for trying to economically asphyxiate a people who, embargoed and subjected to more than four decades of economic warfare, armed aggression and terrorist acts, have been able to accomplish such exploits. In your own country you could not show anything like this.

Made in 2004, this statement contains several recurring elements in Cuban political statements, where the economic embargo is characterized: 1) as economic warfare, and 2) as genocide, obliquely here through the word "asphyxiate". This excerpt indirectly positions Cubans as resistance fighters, and legitimates the Cuban social and political project through the juxtaposition of economic and other aggressions with the "exploits" (*proezas*) of the Cuban people. The deictic "you" further reinforces the accusatory nature of this statement.

Cuban Discourse Delegitimized in Translation

Research has shown that the fragmentation of translated political statements is a characteristic of media reports (Schäffner 2006: 145). And studies of translation strategies in political texts have revealed "omission of sensitive political material [which we previously defined as "selective appropriation"], an overall flattening of the rhetorical style, shifts in register and the non-translation or adulteration of some linguistic features" (Baumgarten and Gagnon 2005: 29, cited in Schäffner 2006: 144). Such strategies are evident in the first translated excerpt (Figure 1) from a speech made by Raúl Castro in 2006 at the Summit of Non-Aligned Countries, and reported in an article published in the *New York Times*.

As can be seen from the colour coding of corresponding content in both texts, there has been significant reordering and fragmenting of the material. For example, the quote highlighted in yellow, which is notable for its reiteration of Fidel Castro's statement discussed previously, has been placed first, thereby reframing both the statement and the event itself. This quote is introduced with the hyperbolic verb "to rail" in the phrase "Raúl Castro [...] railed at the United States". This has the effect of delegitimizing the speaker in the minds of readers by portraying his statement as an irrational, heated outburst, changing both the topic and function of the speech. The second highlighted quote (in purple) appears to be in the same relative position in both the original and the translation. However, the surrounding editorial content, which includes labelling, has changed the function of the statement.

The inversion of these two quotes (in yellow and purple) has further resulted in a repositioning of participants. In the original, the pretensions to world domination of the only superpower are framed in the international context, whereas in the *New York Times* version, the statement is personalized as an attack against then U.S. President

Bush. Here again, we see selective appropriation at work, as the quote is a fragment that elides the speaker's focus on international peace and security.

<p>Estimado amigo Dato Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Primer Ministro de Malasia: [...] Cuba, que ahora asume esa honrosa responsabilidad, está convencida de que nuestro esfuerzo mancomunado permitirá continuar la revitalización y el fortalecimiento de este foro de concertación política de los países del Sur. Representamos casi dos tercios de la membresía de Naciones Unidas, pero no somos la fuerza decisiva que pudiéramos ser en las relaciones internacionales.</p> <p>No significa que no hayamos avanzado. Afortunadamente ha sido superada aquella etapa de incertidumbre de los años noventa, en que no pocos se cuestionaron la validez de los No Alineados tras la desaparición del mundo bipolar.</p> <p>La actual coyuntura internacional caracterizada por las irracionales pretensiones de dominio mundial por parte de la única superpotencia global, con la complicidad de sus aliados, demuestra la necesidad de estar cada vez más cohesionados en la defensa de los principios y propósitos que determinaron la fundación de los No Alineados, que son los mismos que consagran el Derecho Internacional y la Carta de las Naciones Unidas.</p> <p>En años recientes, varios de nuestros países han sido víctimas de inadmisibles actos de agresión, motivados en lo esencial por el insaciable apetito de recursos estratégicos, afectándose con ello la paz y la seguridad internacionales.[...]</p> <p>Sobre el sólido cimiento de nuestras históricas victorias en la lucha por la descolonización y por la desaparición del apartheid, con la rica experiencia de nuestros denodados esfuerzos en pro de un Nuevo Orden Económico Internacional y a favor de la paz, el desarme y el verdadero ejercicio del derecho al desarrollo, el Movimiento de Países No Alineados tendrá ahora heroicas batallas que librar frente al unilateralismo, el doble rasero y la impunidad de los poderosos; por un orden internacional más justo y equitativo frente al neoliberalismo, la expoliación y el despojo; por la sobrevivencia de la especie humana frente al consumo irracional de los países ricos.</p> <p>Discurso del compañero Raúl Castro en la cumbre de Países no Alineados, 16 de sep. 2006 http://www.poderpopular.org/articulo.php?id_articulo=233</p>	<p>Raúl Castro, who is standing in as Cuba's leader while his brother, Fidel, recuperates from surgery, railed at the United States during a summit meeting in Havana of nonaligned nations on Friday, urging them to unite against "unacceptable acts of aggression essentially motivated by insatiable appetite for strategic resources."</p> <p>Mr. Castro's first public speech since taking power in July was just as stridently anti-Washington as those offered by his elder brother. He spoke of the Bush administration's "irrational pretensions for world dominance" and called "absurd" its aggressive military spending now that the cold war is over.</p> <p>"With regard to international relations, we are not the decisive force that we could be," Mr. Castro, 75, told members of the 118-member group of developing nations. "The Non-Aligned Movement now has to wage courageous battles against unilateralism, double standards and the impunity granted to those in power, for a fairer and more equal international order."</p> <p>The United States declined observer status at the summit meeting. In Miami, however, the Bush administration's top Cuban-American official, Commerce Secretary Carlos Gutierrez, delivered his own rebuke to Cuba's government.</p> <p>Raúl Castro speaks out against U.S. at Summit Talks, Marc Lacey, <i>New York Times</i>, Sep. 16, 2006. http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9501E3D1331F935A2575AC0A9609C8B63</p>
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Figure 1

The quote highlighted in red in the left column, which is part of the introductory paragraph in the original speech, is buried in the body of the translated text, thus producing incoherence. More significantly, the English translation elides the statement that the Non-Aligned States represent nearly two-thirds of the UN membership. Indeed, this omission of the main clause in the original and the use of the second clause alone turn a qualifying statement into a thematic statement, thus producing a shift in both focus and meaning.

The segment highlighted in blue contains clear examples of specific translation shifts, that is, meaningful changes accomplished through grammar and lexis. The first of these is the translation of "heroicas batallas" as "courageous battles". In the earlier text by Castro, heroism is linked discursively to the concept of "deeds" (proezas), and evokes the Cuban narrative of resistance to U.S. aggressions. In the translation, the

more neutral "courageous" silences this narrative and eliminates the positive evaluation – and legitimization – of the "battles" implied in the original. The second shift is the translation of "los poderosos". Here the speaker is referring to powerful nations such as the U.S., and contrasting these to the less powerful members of the Non-Aligned Countries. Translated not as "powerful countries", but as "those in power", the statement now may be interpreted as referring to any individual, party or country. As a result of this shift, the target of the accusation of "impunity" becomes ambiguous. The *Times* quote also omits the second part of the sentence in the original, with its references to "neoliberalism, pillaging and plundering", and the suggestion that the irrational consumption of the rich nations threatens the survival of the human species. This silences the macroproposition within which the original statement is set. It is also worth noting that the *Times* repositions the speaker by eliding the fact that speech was made on the occasion of Cuba's assuming the position of Secretary-General of the Non-Aligned States.

<p>Algunos hablan de que la crisis económica es el fin del imperialismo; quizás habría que plantearse si no significa algo peor para nuestra especie. A mi juicio, lo mejor siempre será tener una causa justa que defender y la esperanza de seguir adelante.</p> <p>Reflexiones del compañero Fidel: Una causa justa que defender y la esperanza de seguir adelante. <i>Granma</i>, Ago. 12, 2009 http://www.granma.cubaweb.cu/secciones/ref-fidel/art02.html</p>	<p>"Some say that the economic crisis is the end of imperialism ... Maybe it must be wondered if it does not mean something worse for our species," he said in the commentary. Closing his column on a more upbeat note, he said, "In my judgment, it will always be best to have a just cause to defend and the hope to carry on."</p> <p>Fidel Castro turns 83 with economy on his mind, Esteban Israel, <i>REUTERS NEWS</i>, Aug. 13, 2009 http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE57C48H20090813</p>
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Figure 2

The excerpt shown in Figure 2 is taken from an article published in the Cuban daily *Granma*, in August 2009. In addition to presenting several elements discussed previously, this short segment contains a series of shifts resulting from a peculiar combination of literal translation, fanciful punctuation, and a commentary that further fragments the original text.

The original segment referred to in the Reuters article is in fact a continuous text. So the ellipsis signalled by the three suspension points is in fact a meaningful addition, as it points to content that never existed. The ambiguity of the quote is further compounded by the literal translation of the second half of the sentence. It is worth underscoring here that during this period of Fidel's illness, his commentaries published in *Granma* were often series of remarks on a single topic and this produced texts that were at times stylistically disjointed, but nonetheless coherent. Their meaning was clear to Cubans in the Cuban context. However, in failing to insert a subordinating conjunction ("but") or a coordinating one ("also"), the translator here has added a semantic incoherence that is absent from the original text. As for the phrase "maybe it must be wondered", it is simply bad English. Wilfully or not, the translator has delegitimized the statement.

Finally, the insertion of the commentary also produces the same type of shift as that created by the suspension points in that it implies ellipsis. In sum, the fragmentation produced in this article is partly a result of additions rather than omissions.

<p>No olvidar que estamos en medio de una verdadera crisis mundial que no es sólo económica, se asocia también al cambio climático, el empleo irracional de la energía y a crecientes problemas de todo tipo.</p> <p>Raúl Castro, Discurso por el aniversario 55 del asalto a los cuarteles Moncada y Carlos Manuel de Céspedes (26 de Julio de 2008), http://www.cubasocialista.cubaweb.cu/texto/0098770raul.html</p>	<p>Cuban President Raul Castro has warned his country that rising fuel and food prices will take their toll on the nation. In a speech on Saturday to mark the 55th anniversary of the communist uprising, he said: "We must bear in mind that we are living in the midst of a true world crisis that is not only economic but also related to climate change, the irrational use of energy and a great number of other problems."</p> <p>Fuel Costs Taking Toll on Cuba: Castro, <i>National Post</i>, Jul. 28, 2008</p>
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Figure 3

Figure 3 presents an excerpt from a speech by Raúl Castro that is shown alongside the article published by the Canadian daily *National Post*. We have included the introductory paragraph containing the translated quote.

The content of the original segment, and of the speech as a whole, echo established Cuban narratives on the interconnectedness of various global factors, namely the economy, the environment, and energy consumption. This statement is remarkable for its subtle reiteration of accusations of irresponsible energy consumption by wealthy countries. However this narrative is opaque for most Canadian and U.S. readers, and neither the translation nor the editorial content contribute to making it transparent. The translation contains one minor semantic shift (*crecientes problemas de todo tipo*: a great number of other problems) that does not significantly subvert the message. However, reframing is accomplished from the outset, in the first paragraph, through labelling and historical inaccuracy. The attack on the Moncada barracks in 1953 was not a communist uprising, and the socialist nature of the current Cuban Republic was not declared until 1961. However, the label "communist" indexes a specific narrative for most Canadian and U.S. readers and casts doubt on the credibility of the speaker.

The last excerpt, shown in Figure 4, is a particularly eloquent example of how labelling, used in conjunction with translation strategies, can reframe political statements in a narrative that delegitimizes them. Although this text is also remarkable for its fragmentation, we limit our analysis here to a few editorial reframing devices (in yellow), and translation strategies (in blue).

The most obvious reframing devices in this article are the labels "communist leadership", "ideologue" and "patriarch of Cuban communists". Reminding readers at the outset that Cuba is problematic because of its "communist leadership" implicitly identifies the enemy as the source of the statements reported in the article, thus establishing a discourse of "us" versus "them". The second and third labels, both

derogatory, transform the President of the Cuban National Assembly into a caricature that is at once menacing and of questionable moral and political authority.

<p>Barak Obama, candidato por el Partido Demócrata a las próximas elecciones en Estados Unidos, ha declarado que si triunfa derogará las disposiciones vigentes en ese país que impiden operaciones económicas de viajes a nuestro suelo dictadas por la administración Bush. Si cumple su promesa, nacerá una nueva etapa en el combate ideológico entre la Revolución cubana y el imperialismo. En ella, para alcanzar la invulnerabilidad ideológica a que aspiramos, será necesario el diseño de una nueva concepción teórica y propagandística acerca de nuestras ideas y su origen. Una amplia migración con distintos objetivos puede venirnos encima y para ello debemos prepararnos culturalmente. La supresión de las limitaciones económicas impuestas a los viajes a Cuba significará que alrededor de un millón de nacidos en esta tierra o sus descendientes puedan venir como turistas o por el interés de entrar nuevamente en contacto con el terruño y sus familiares. En esa categoría se incluyen "cubanos" contrarios a la revolución o quienes simplemente se marcharon por otras razones y no podemos caracterizar como tal. A esto únense los muchos ciudadanos de otras nacionalidades que se encuentran en diversos países a quienes se les imposibilita viajar a Cuba por las razones expuestas, incluso norteamericanos que aspiran a desarrollar relaciones de algún modo con nuestro país. Es decir, tenemos ante nosotros el reto inmenso de cómo enfrentar un tiempo nuevo en la lucha cultural contra el enemigo. Como nosotros aspiramos a seguir manteniendo en alto la bandera del socialismo es necesario investigar, estudiar y promover la tradición nacional cubana y en especial cómo, por qué y sobre qué aspiraciones se enlazó en el siglo XX el pensamiento de Marx, Engels y Lenin. "Hacia un nuevo saber", Armando Hart Dávalos, 27 de Junio 2008. http://www.granma.cubasi.cu/2008/06/27/nacional/articulo1.html</p>	<p>HAVANA - Cuba's communist leadership has long cast itself as David standing up to the U.S. Goliath and the crippling force of America's punitive trade and travel embargo. Now they have a problem: If Barack Obama follows through on campaign promises to ease restrictions on the island, he could chip away at the Castro brothers' best case for staying in power. And if a new Democrat-dominated Congress takes Obama's moves even further, Cuban leaders may have a hard time maintaining their tight control over Cuban society. "They'd have to throw out the whole script about American imperialism," said Phil Peters of the Lexington Institute, a Washington-area think tank. Top Cuban ideologues are already worried. "We have before us the immense challenge of how to face a new chapter in the cultural struggle against the enemy," Armando Hart, 78-year-old patriarch of Cuban communists, warned last week in Granma, the party newspaper. If Cuban-Americans are allowed to visit more frequently and send more money to the island, it could spark "a new chapter in the ideological war between the Cuban revolution and imperialism," Hart wrote. The U.S. government's Cuba policy has been frozen in time since 1962, when it imposed the embargo with the aim of bringing down Fidel Castro's government at a time when U.S.-backed exiles mounted the failed Bay of Pigs invasion and Soviet missiles in Cuba pushed the world close to nuclear war. Obama changes worry Cuban ideologues ANALYSIS Anita Snow, The Associated Press, 9 November 2008, <i>Charleston Gazette</i></p>
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Figure 4

The second reframing appears in the quoted statement by Phil Peters, whose characterization of Cuban political discourse as a "script" later reflected in the translation of Hart's "etapa" (stage or phase) by "chapter". Combined, these two editorial and translation elements frame Cuban political discourse in general, and Hart's comments in particular, as fiction.

A more subtle reframing is also produced by the introduction to the second quote from Armando Hart. The concerns he expresses are not limited to increased travel to Cuba by Cuban-Americans, but apply as well to "*ciudadanos de otras nacionalidades*" (citizens of other nationalities). More importantly, the possibility of Cuban-Americans being "allowed [...] to send more money" does not figure in Hart's argument for careful reflection on the consequences of unrestricted travel and increased commercial exchanges of all types. In narrowing the focus of his remarks to Cuban-Americans and inserting the topic of remittances, the journalist and/or editor have reframed and

reduced Hart's statements to fit in the long-standing climate of enmity between Cubans living in the United States and those on the island.

Finally, inclusion of the phrase "Castro brothers" in the second paragraph further reframes Armando Hart's speech. In the absence of any mention of his title and position, the commentary referring to the desire of the Castro brothers to "stay in power" simultaneously delegitimizes the complex structure of the Cuban political system and its Head of State.

Conclusion

Our initial question was: does Cuban political discourse regarding the recent economic crisis diverge significantly from the discursive paradigm established around the *bloqueo*? The short answer is no. Although we focused primarily on the combined effects of translation and editorial strategies, the previously discussed features in the excerpt from Fidel Castro's letter to G.W. Bush are common to Cuban political discourse. Our research has revealed no indication of any shift in the way in which the *bloqueo* and the economic crisis were presented discursively in Cuba. At the same time, we found no significant shifts in the representation of Cuban discourse in Canadian and U.S. media. The limited coverage of Cuba in general, the scarcity of direct quotes in particular appear to be a constant over the period covered by our study.

The analysis prompted by our second question – what are the intersections between translation strategies, editorial policies and political exigencies? – led to the discovery that the few quotes translated and presented in these media reports are recontextualized by means of selective appropriation, repositioning of participants, and labelling. Our study also reveals that media reports on political discourse most often contain more than one of these reframing strategies. Together these strategies contribute to silencing and delegitimizing Cuban official discourse on Cuban affairs in Canadian and U.S. media. Silence is of course one means by which delegitimization is accomplished.

This paper presented a brief examination of editorial and translation strategies that are politically and ideologically conditioned. Be they deliberate or accidental, such strategies, we argue, contribute to misunderstandings, which in turn feed antagonisms and can be invoked to justify the escalation of conflicts. The purpose of our analysis was not to chart the minor gains and losses in meaning that characterize most translations, regardless of the type of texts involved. Our continued interest lies rather in examining the ways in which translation strategies and editorial decisions contribute to the reconfiguration of the original text and, more importantly, to the delegitimization of the context in which it was produced, and the concurrent legitimization of the context in which the translation is received. The problem here is not merely single, discrete occurrences of lost meaning. Political discourse trades in ideology and, for it to be intelligible, hearers and readers must have access to the

historical and cultural referents in which this ideology is constructed. When political discourse is translated and published, in a reductive form, for an audience that either has no knowledge of the original national narratives being instantiated, or for an audience whose own historical and political knowledge stands in opposition to that of the originator of the discourse, the risks of misinterpretation, and misunderstanding, are great.

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