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THE TRANSLATION OF IRONY IN DEMOSTHENES' *ON THE CROWN*¹

LA TRADUCCIÓN DE LA IRONÍA EN EL DISCURSO SOBRE LA CORONA DE DEMÓSTENES

RAQUEL FORNIELES SÁNCHEZ

raquel.fornieles@uam.es

Universidad Autónoma de Madrid

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to offer an approach to the translation of irony in Demosthenes' masterpiece – the speech *On the Crown* – into Spanish within the framework of the verbal attacks that the orator directs to his great political rival, Aeschines.

Keywords: Translation. Irony. Invective. Demosthenes. Aeschines.

Resumen

El propósito de este trabajo es ofrecer una aproximación a la traducción al español de la ironía en la obra maestra de Demóstenes – el discurso *Sobre la Corona* – en el marco de los ataques verbales que el orador dirige a su gran rival político, Esquines.

Palabras clave: Traducción. Ironía. Invectiva. Demóstenes. Esquines.

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1. Introduction

In Dionysius of Halicarnassus' treatise on literary criticism, *De Demosthene*, the author praises the Athenian orator's ability to embellish speech with all appropriate resources and nuances in declamation. According to the historian, a simple reading of Demosthenes' speeches is not possible, even as mere entertainment (D.H. *Dem.* 22.5-6):

No one can pick it up and read it at will and for diversion, since the words themselves tell what actions must accompany their readings: the reciter must feign now irony, now indignation, now rage, now fear, now solicitude, now admonition, now exhortation; everything, in fact, which the words require, he must portray in his delivery (Usher 1974).

Demosthenes was a master of irony (cf. Ronnet 1971: 143-145), and was especially fond of using it when attacking his opponents. However, grasping Demosthenes' irony and translating it correctly is an extremely complex task, since a great variety of elements must be taken into consideration by the translator.

In general terms, Barbe (1995: 11) argues that the main difficulty in defining irony lies in the fact that it always seems to include some type of subjective feeling. According to Barbe, what separates ironic comments from merely critical comments is that the intended criticism is often not obvious and not meant to be obvious to all participants in the communicative act. She explains her point of view using the following examples that share the same situational context (the addressee has again left the door open):

- (1) Shut the goddamn door!
- (2) Shut the door!
- (3) Please, shut the door!
- (4) Would you please shut the door?
- (5) You always leave the door open!
- (6) The door seems to be open.
- (7) I am so glad you remembered to shut the door.
- (8) I think people who shut doors when it's cold outside are really considerate.
- (9) I love sitting in a draft.

Examples (1), (2), (3) and (4) are direct requests that vary in the degree of politeness used by the speaker. Examples (5), (6), (7), (8) and (9) are indirect requests, and with the exception of (5), all are ironic. Criticism is evident in (5), but it is not so easy to see in the cases of (6) to (9) because irony is a tool that the speaker uses to express covert criticism. Moreover, for an ironic utterance to be effective, the participants in the communicative act must share several types of basic knowledge: linguistic, contextual, situational, and personal background knowledge (Barbe 1995: 16-18).

We should remember that, on the one hand, irony represents a form of non-literal language uttered by a speaker and the audience must infer its real meaning. As we know, irony is traditionally defined from a rhetorical point of view as the action of saying the opposite² of what someone really thinks. This definition has been widely criticised by those who consider that the concept of ‘contradiction’ is insufficient to unify all ironic phenomena (Haverkate 1985).

Other definitions are based on a more global criterion, taking as a basis not the opposite meaning, but a meaning different from what the speaker explicitly says (Haverkate 1985: 350). Burgers, Van Mulken & Schellens (2011: 190), whose proposal is the basis of the present study, have defined verbal irony (which we are concerned with here) as “an utterance with a literal evaluation that is implicitly contrary to its intended evaluation”³.

If defining irony is not an easy task, the matter becomes even more complicated when it comes to translating it. Cabanillas González (2003:

2. The concept of ‘opposite’ is central to Grice’s model. According to Grice (1975: 45), conversations are guided by the cooperative principle, which is divided into four maxims of conversation: quantity, quality, relation and manner. Irony, in Grice’s model, is explained by the violation of the maxim of quality (“Try to make your contribution one that is true”), which is further divided into two ‘submaxims’: “Do not say what you believe is false” and “Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence”). For an updated theoretical framework that gathers the perspectives of Ducrot’s Theory of Polyphony, Sperber & Wilson’s Relevance Theory, or studies on verbal (im)politeness, see the two papers by Fornieles Sánchez (2022, in press).

3. Cf., for instance, Myers Roy (1978: 16), Groeben & Schule (1981: 20) or Alcaide (2004). There are few studies devoted to the analysis of irony in Ancient Greek. Studies of significance include Vatri (2018) for the case of oratory and Wolfsdorf (2008) for Aristophanes’ comedy.

221) summarises the difficulty inherent in this process by attributing it to two aspects: the decoding process that must be carried out within the linguistic system itself and the transfer of a proposition from one linguistic system to another.

This paper focuses on a very specific context: that of the verbal attacks that Demosthenes directs against one of his great political rivals: the orator Aeschines. Aeschines brought a *γραφὴ παρανόμων* (indictment of an illegal proposal) against Ctesiphon, who passed a decree that the city should award Demosthenes a golden crown for his services to the city. In his speech *Against Ctesiphon* in 330 BC, Aeschines tried to prove that the decree was illegal and invalid. That same year, Demosthenes defended himself with a masterful piece of Greek oratory: the speech *On the Crown*.

Our purpose is to provide an initial approach to the translation of irony in Greek oratory into Spanish, specifically in this masterpiece by Demosthenes and in the context of his invective against Aeschines. For this purpose, a comparative analysis of three translations of this discourse will be carried out: those of Julio Pallí Bonet (1968), José Luis Navarro González (1990) and Antonio López Eire (1998). Translation strategies used by the three translators will be examined. We will also try to ascertain whether Demosthenes' ironic intention in the Greek source text has been successfully reflected in the three target texts.

2. Demosthenes' irony in the invective against Aeschines

Yunis (2005: 18) emphasizes the fact that "Demosthenes' invective, sometimes cast in set pieces, ridicules Aeschines in order to render him unworthy of the audience's confidence." In this sense, we should consider the specific goal of the discursive genre we are dealing with. In courtroom speeches, the speaker builds his argumentation strategically with a clear purpose: to convince his audience, the jurors, in search of a favourable verdict. To achieve this, in terms of verbal politeness, the orator uses different mechanisms to save the *face* of those who judge him, to save his own *face* or to attack the *face* of his opponent, thereby discrediting him. It is in the latter case that Demosthenes' irony really comes into play. As Yunis (2005: 18-19)

rightly points out: “It expresses—indirectly, for such is the means of irony—Demosthenes’ Olympian self-assurance, the view that Aeschines’ attempt to impugn his illustrious record of public achievement is the transparently futile exertion of a contemptible, self-deluded charlatan.”

Irony arises, for example, when Demosthenes urges his audience to mock Aeschines for enjoying the hospitality of the Macedonians⁴ after attacking him in these terms (Dem. 18.51):

Source text (Greek) ⁵	Target text 1 (Pallí Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
οὔτε Φιλίππου ξένον οὐτ’ Ἀλεξάνδρου φίλον εἵποιμ’ ἂν ἐγώ σε, οὐχ οὕτω μαίνομαι, εἰ μὴ καὶ τοὺς θεριστὰς καὶ τοὺς ἄλλο τι μισθοῦ πράττοντας φίλους καὶ ξένους δεῖ καλεῖν τῶν μισθωσαμένων.	Nunca te podría llamar huésped de Filipo ni amigo de Alejandro, no estoy tan loco; a no ser que se deba llamar amigos y huéspedes de sus patronos a los segadores o a los que hacen algún otro trabajo a jornal.	Jamás te podría yo llamar huésped de Filipo o amigo de Alejandro – no estoy tan loco –, salvo en el caso de que cuadrara llamar amigos y huéspedes a quienes los contrataron, a los segadores y a cualesquiera otros trabajadores a sueldo.	Ni huésped de Filipo ni amigo de Alejandro te llamaría yo a ti (no estoy tan loco), a no ser que también a los segadores y a los que en alguna otra ocupación trabajan a jornal haya que llamarlos amigos y huéspedes de quienes los tomaron a sueldo.

The statement οὐχ οὕτω μαίνομαι (‘no estoy tan loco’) is obviously ironic, for Demosthenes has just accused Aeschines of having been a guest of Philip and of being a friend of Alexander. This type of construction – cf. also Dem. 18.11: οὐχ οὕτω τετύφωμαι; Dem. 18.140: οὐχ οὕτω πόλλ’ ἐρεῖς or Dem. 18.245 οὕτω σκαιὸς εἶ – is very commonly used as a resource with which the speaker finishes off his previous reasoning. On this occasion, the three translators agree to offer the same very literal translation.

4. Cf. Dem. 18.52: “¿Qué os parece, varones atenienses? ¿Esquines es un asalariado o un huésped de Filipo?” (López Eire 1998: 191).
5. We follow the Greek text set by Butcher.

There are also no discrepancies when transferring the litotes (οὐ δι’ ἐμέ, ‘no por mi causa’, ‘no por culpa mía’ from the source text to the target text when Demosthenes suggests that even Aeschines could not blame him for the outbreak of the Phocian war, since he had not yet begun to engage in politics (Dem. 18.18):

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Palli Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
Τοῦ γὰρ Φωκικοῦ συστάντος πολέμου, οὐ δι’ ἐμέ (οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγ’ ἐπολιτευόμην πω τότε), πρῶτον μὲν ὑμεῖς οὕτω δέεκεισθε ὥστε Φωκέας μὲν βοῦλεσθαι σωθῆναι.	Habiendo empezado la guerra fócica, no por mi culpa – pues entonces todavía no intervenía en la política –, en primer lugar, era tal vuestro estado de ánimo que deseabais que los focenses venciesen.	Al estallar la guerra fociidia, no por mi culpa – que yo entonces aún no tenía responsabilidades de gobierno –, vosotros en un principio estabais en una situación tal que deseabais que a los fociidios no les pasara nada.	Cuando estalló la guerra fociidia, no por culpa mía (pues por entonces yo, al menos, no intervenía todavía en la administración pública), en primer lugar, vosotros estabais en una disposición de ánimo por la que deseabais que los fociidios resultaran incólumes.

Shortly thereafter, Demosthenes repeats the same litotes (Dem. 18.20):

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Palli Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
ἡ μὲν οὖν τότε συγγορηθεῖς εἰρήνη διὰ ταῦτ’ οὐ δι’ ἐμέ, ὥς οὗτος διέβαλλεν, ἐπράχθη·	Así pues, la paz entonces concertada se debió a las circunstancias, no a mí, como este pretende.	Por consiguiente, la paz que entonces se pactó se llevó a cabo por ese motivo y no por intervención mía, como con cierta mala idea iba diciendo ese hombre por ahí.	Por tanto, la paz entonces convenida se realizó por esas circunstancias y no por intervención mía, como maliciosamente declaraba ese.

The peace that Demosthenes is referring to here and for which Aeschines holds him responsible (cf. Aeschin. 3.57) is the Peace of Philocrates (346 BC). This label is given because it was Philocrates who took the initiative for the negotiation in an embassy formed by himself, Demosthenes and Aeschines. As López Eire (1998: 176) maintains, Athens was not particularly willing to sign off that peace. In his commentary on the speech *On the Crown*, Yunis (2001: 120) explains the repetition of the aforementioned figure of speech:

‘οὐδ’ δι’ ἐμέ’: the irony of the same phrase when it was uttered a moment ago (§18) suggests an equation of the two cases: just as it would be absurd to view Demosthenes as responsible for the Phocian War, so too it would be absurd to view him as responsible for the Peace of Philocrates.

As in the case of other languages, Ancient Greek has linguistic procedures that make possible and/or facilitate the codification of the ironic sense of a statement and its understanding by the interlocutors and that require, as we shall see, shared knowledge between the speaker and the audience. These irony markers include, among others, litotes, repetitions, puns or plays on words, lexical-semantic markers, evidentials or oxymorons, as can be observed in the following passage in which Demosthenes attacks aspects concerning the private life of Aeschines. First, he asks if he should say that his father had been a slave in the house of a certain Elpias; then he alludes to his mother (Dem. 18.129):

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Pallí Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
ἢ ὥς ἡ μήτηρ τοῖς μεθήμερινοῖς γάμοις ἐν τῷ κλεισίῳ τῷ πρὸς τῷ καλαμίτῃ ἥρῳ χρωμένη τὸν καλὸν ἀνδριάντα καὶ τριταγωνιστὴν ἄκρον ἐξέθρεψέ σε;	¿O cómo tu madre, que a la luz del día se casaba en el tugurio junto a Hero el calamita, te crio, hermosa estatua y tritagonista excelente?	¿O mejor, por el que tu madre, en bodorrio mañanero celebrado en el tugurio que está cerca del héroe cirujano Aristómaco te crio a ti, bella estatua y destacado actor de segunda fila?	¿O que tu madre, haciendo uso de las nupcias de mediodía en la cabaña situada al pie del héroe Calamita, te crio a ti, hermosa estatua y eximio actor de papeles de tercer orden?

Firstly, attention should be drawn to the phrase τὸν καλὸν ἀνδριάντα ('hermosa estatua'), used in a figurative sense to refer to someone who is conceited⁶. Not one of the three translations examined here make use of Bekker's proposal ('beautiful doll'), which explains these terms as an affectionate expression used by mothers to refer to their children (cf. *Anecd. Bekk.* 394.29-30). This interpretation makes a lot of sense in this context, since Demosthenes is mocking Aeschines' relatives and his mother in particular.

On the other hand, the fact that Demosthenes refers to Aeschines as an actor is by no means accidental. This is knowledge shared by the whole audience, since it was well known that Aeschines had been an actor earlier on in his life. In this sense, the irony lies in the intentional use of the oxymoron τριταγωνιστὴν ἄκρον. The adjective ἄκρος designates, in a figurative sense, someone outstanding or excellent. Therefore, it cannot denote a τριταγωνιστής (the third of the three actors who acted in a tragedy), since, as Demosthenes himself points out in another context (Dem. 19.247), the τριταγωνιστής has an almost irrelevant category reserved for those who play the role of tyrants. In two translations – López Eire ('eximio actor de papeles de tercer orden') and Pallí Bonet (who directly transcribes the term: 'tritagonista excelente') – the first form of the compound is maintained in one way or another (τρίτος, 'tercero'). Navarro, on the other hand, departs from this fidelity ('destacado actor de segunda fila'). In any case, the three translators include the oxymoron that makes it easier for the audience to interpret the ironic statement correctly.

Aeschines' acting career provided Demosthenes with a lode. Let us look at another example (Dem. 18.242):

6. Cf. DGE: "de cosas que recuerdan las estatuas por su mutismo, insensibilidad, etc. Irón. de un presumido τὸν καλὸν ἀνδριάντα καὶ τριταγωνιστὴν ἄκρον ἐξέθρεψέ σε te crio como hermoso petimetre y excelente actor de tercera fila Dem. 18.129."

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Pallí Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
τοῦτο δὲ καὶ φύσει κίναδος τάνθρώπιόν ἐστιν, οὐδὲν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ὕγιες πεποιηκός οὐδ’ ἐλεύθερον, αὐτοτραγικός πίθηκος, ἀρουραῖος Οἰνόμαος, παράσημος ῥήτωρ.	Pero este sujeto es por naturaleza un zorro, absolutamente incapaz de ninguna acción honesta o generosa, mono farsante, rústico Enómao, orador de cuño falso.	Pero el tipejo ese, por su propia índole, es además un zorro, que en su puñetera vida ha hecho nada limpio ni propio de hombres libres, un auténtico mono de imitación, un Enómao paleta y un orador de chicha y nabo.	Pero ese hombrecillo es también un zorro por naturaleza, que desde antiguo nada sano ni liberal ha hecho, un mono de imitación en las tragedias por su propio natural, un Enómao rústico, un orador de cuño falso.

There are several aspects of this passage that should be highlighted, including the use of the diminutive (ἄνθρωπιον). Demosthenes does not intend to say that Aeschines is a small man, but that he is intensifying the contempt he wants to show for him.

As we can see, López Eire gives a literal translation of the diminutive (‘hombrecillo’). However, although the literal translation would already include this pejorative nuance, Pallí Bonet omits the diminutive and offers the noun ‘sujeto’. Navarro González, for his part, further emphasises the derogatory sense by proposing ‘tipejo’, a noun formed by ‘tipo’ – which can acquire negative connotations depending on the context in which it is used – and the derogatory suffix *-ejo*.

Demosthenes also uses two animal metaphors in this passage. He calls Aeschines a ‘mono’ (πίθηκος) to suggest he did not interpret but imitate. He also qualifies him as a ‘zorro’ (κίναδος), which is the label that interests us most and which is translated literally in the three target texts. However, none of the three translators manage to encapsulate the true irony behind Demosthenes’ choice of this noun, which the audience must have grasped, through their own linguistic knowledge. The most common term for fox in Greek is not κίναδος but ἄλωπηξ. According to lexicographers and scholiasts, κίναδος was the term used in Sicily to name the fox and it was synonymous with θηρίον (‘wild animal’). Although both terms may metaphorically allude

to the astuteness of a fox, Kamen (2014) argues that Demosthenes is in fact making a pun on the similarity between κίναδος (‘fox’) and κίναιδος (‘depraved’), and thus does not allude to the cleverness of a fox but instead implies that Aeschines was prostituting himself for Philip. In our opinion, the use of other terms such as ‘zorrón’ or even ‘zorra’ or ‘zorrita’ would help transfer this very precise nuance that Kamen rightly proposes, although it is true that the feminine ‘zorra’ may have a sexual connotation in the target language that the masculine ‘zorro’ (more related to cunning) does not have.

Demosthenes also frequently makes fun of one of Aeschines’ previous professions (Dem. 18.261):

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Pallí Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
ἐπειδὴ δ' εἰς τοὺς δημότας ἐνεγράφησ ὅπωςδῆποτε (ἐὼ γὰρ τοῦτο), ἐπειδὴ γ' ἐνεγράφησ, εὐθέως τὸ κάλλιστον ἐξελέξω τῶν ἔργων, γραμματεῦειν καὶ ὑπηρετεῖν τοῖς ἀρχιδόιοις.	Una vez que fuiste inscrito en el censo de los ciudadanos, de la manera que fuera (porque dejo esto), pero fuiste inscrito, elegiste al punto la más brillante de las profesiones, la de escribano al servicio de magistrados subalternos.	Y una vez que te inscribiste en el registro de los ciudadanos, del modo que fuera – no me importa –, una vez que, en cualquier caso, te inscribiste, bien pronto escogiste el mejor de los oficios, el de escribiente y ayudante de magistrados de tres al cuarto.	Y una vez que fuiste inscrito en el censo de los ciudadanos por el procedimiento que fuera (que eso lo dejo), una vez que, de todos modos, fuiste inscrito, al punto escogiste el más hermoso de los trabajos, el de escribano o ayudante de magistradillos.

In the three translations, we can see the transposition technique, involving the change of two verbal forms – the infinitives γραμματεῦειν (‘ser secretario o escribano’) and ὑπηρετεῖν (‘servir’, ‘ayudar’) – into nouns (‘escribano’, ‘escribiente’ and ‘ayudante’) or into the adjective ‘subalterno’. The use of this technique achieves a more natural expression in the three target texts. To understand Demosthenes’ use of irony in this case it is important to consider the sociocultural context. The profession of paid private secretaries was despised in Athens, and on other occasions (cf. e.g., Dem.19.200 or Dem. 19.249), Demosthenes mocks Aeschines by saying that he was paid very

little money. Moreover, the fact that he does not refer to him as a magistrate but as an assistant is derogatory as is the use of τοῖς ἀρχιδίοις. As Goodwin (1904) rightly points out, the term ἀρχίδιον here is a diminutive of ἀρχή in the sense of ἄρχων. In fact, ἀρχίδιον is defined as ‘carguito’, with a clear ironic sense, in DGE.

The attack is evident, and the irony lies in denoting the profession mentioned by means of the superlative adjective τὸ κάλλιστον. Only López Eire offers a literal translation of the diminutive. Pallí Bonet opts for amplification and Navarro González for adaptation, the substitution of the Greek term for the expression ‘de tres al cuarto’ which is applied to someone of low status in Spanish (Martínez López & Jørgensen 2009: 127).

In the following examples, Demosthenes criticises Aeschines’ way of arguing in his speech of accusation (Dem. 18.227):

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Pallí Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
Εἴτα σοφίζεται καὶ φησὶ προσήκειν ἧς μὲν οἴκοθεν ἦκετ ἔχοντες δόξης περὶ ἡμῶν ἀμελῆσαι, ὥσπερ δ', ὅταν οἰόμενοι περιεῖναι χρήματά τῳ λογίζησθε, ἂν καθαραὶ ὥσιν αἱ ψῆφοι καὶ μηδὲν περιῆ, συγχωρεῖτε, οὕτω καὶ νῦν τοῖς ἐκ τοῦ λόγου φαινομένοις προσθέσθαι.	Luego habla como sofista y dice que conviene prescindir de la opinión que de nosotros traéis de casa; y que de la misma manera que cuando hacéis una cuenta creyendo que hay un superávit, si las cifras son exactas y no resta nada cedéis en vuestra opinión, así también ahora debéis aceptar los resultados de las pruebas.	Después, como un vulgar sofista, emplea argumentos retorcidos y dice que conviene desentenderse por completo de la opinión que sobre nosotros trae cada uno de su casa cuando viene aquí, y que al igual que cuando hacéis cuentas creyendo que a alguien le sobre dinero, si de verdad las cifras son claras y realmente no sobra nada se las aprobáis, así también ahora os rindáis a la evidencia de sus argumentos.	Luego emplea argumentos sutiles y afirma que conviene hagáis caso omiso de la opinión que sobre nosotros traéis de casa. Y que, así como, cuando hacéis cuentas en la idea de que a alguien le queda excedente de dinero, le dais el visto bueno si las cifras con claras y nada sobra, así también ahora os rindáis a la evidencia de los razonamientos.

There is no irony in this passage, for the orator accuses his opponent of behaving like a subtle sophist (σοφίζεται) and mocks his dialectical clumsiness for having introduced an analogy as a way of criticising the role played by Demosthenes in the peace of Philocrates (346 BC). Demosthenes himself now reminds the audience of this analogy and uses it against Aeschines in order to defend his leadership and his behaviour in matters of state. There is irony, however, in the orator’s later statement (Dem. 18.228):

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Pallí Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
ἐκ γὰρ αὐτοῦ τοῦ σοφοῦ τούτου παραδείγματος ὡμολόγηκε νῦν γ’ ἡμᾶς ὑπάρχειν ἐγνωσμένους ἐμὲ μὲν λέγειν ὑπὲρ τῆς πατρίδος, αὐτὸν δ’ ὑπὲρ Φιλίππου·	Porque por este hábil ejemplo ha reconocido que la opinión que se tiene de nosotros es que yo hablo en defensa de la patria y él en favor de Filipo.	Efectivamente, a partir de ese ejemplo ingenioso ha reconocido que hoy en día, al menos, es del dominio público que yo hablo a favor de la patria y él a favor de Filipo.	Porque a partir de ese sutil ejemplo ha reconocido que ahora, al menos, es cosa establecida por la opinión pública respecto de nosotros, que yo hablo en favor de la patria y él en favor de Filipo.

Demosthenes derides one of his rival’s arguments and tries to render it invalid using the adjective σοφός (‘wise’, ‘clever’). According to Yunis (2001: 237), the perfect ὡμολόγηκε is also ironic: “what Aeschines ‘admitted’ is what Aeschines’ use of the analogy amounts to.”

Examples like these cannot be understood if the audience do not share the speaker’s knowledge of the situation or are unaware that Demosthenes is directly referring to Aeschines’ words in his speech *Against Ctesiphon*.

Traditionally, irony tends to be linked to ridicule, criticism or contempt and, for this reason, it is most often associated with negativity. This is certainly the case in the passages we have examined so far. However, there are some (admittedly rare) instances when the speaker’s words can conceal a positive purpose. In these cases, the use of irony by the orator is explained as an (im)politeness strategy within the framework of his own discursive strategies. The main goals of the speaker are usually to attack the opponent, to defend himself or, as in the cases we will see below, to show modesty (or false modesty) when he is arguing before the jurors. The orator seeks to protect his *face* and obtain the juror’s approval, to win their favour.

In the following passage, for instance, Demosthenes reproaches Aeschines for being Philip’s accomplice and for lying. Perhaps the most interesting point, however, is that the speaker refers ironically to his rival’s behaviour, but also to his own (Dem. 18.41):

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Pallí Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
ὁ δὲ ταύτης τῆς πίστεως αὐτῷ συνεργὸς καὶ συναγωνιστῆς καὶ ὁ δεῦρ’ ἀπαγγείλας τὰ ψευδῆ καὶ φενακίσας ὑμᾶς, οὗτός ἐσθ’ ὁ τὰ Θηβαίων ὀδυρόμενος νῦν πάθῃ καὶ διεξιῶν ὥς οἰκτρά, καὶ τούτων καὶ τῶν ἐν Φωκεῦσι κακῶν καὶ ὅσ’ ἄλλα πεπόνθασιν οἱ Ἕλληνες ἀπάντων αὐτὸς ὢν αἴτιος. δῆλον γὰρ ὅτι σὺ μὲν ἀλγεῖς ἐπὶ τοῖς συμβεβηκόσιν, Αἰσχίνῃ, καὶ τοὺς Θηβαίους ἐλεεῖς, κτῆματ’ ἔχων ἐν τῇ Βοιωτίᾳ καὶ γεωργῶν τὰ ἐκεῖνον, ἐγὼ δὲ χαίρω, ὃς εὐθὺς ἐξητούμην ὑπὸ τοῦ ταῦτα πράξαντος.	Mas el cómplice de Filipo, el que le ayudó a ganar esta confianza hacia su persona, y el que trajo aquí las falsas noticias y os engañó, este es el que ahora se lamenta de las desgracias de los tebanos, y se extiende en relatos lastimeros, cuando en realidad es el responsable de los males de los focenses y de todo cuanto padecen los helenos. Sí, Esquines, es evidente que tú sufres por lo sucedido y te compadeces de los tebanos, puesto que tienes tus propiedades en Beocia y explotas las fincas de aquellos, y en cambio yo me alegro, yo que al punto fui reclamado por el que llevó a cabo estos desmanes.	Y quien fue colaborador y cómplice de esa confianza, y quien trajo aquí el anuncio de falsas noticias, quien os engañó vilmente, fue ese, sí, ese, el que ahora va lamentando los sufrimientos de los tebanos y anda por ahí explicando cuán dignos de compasión son, cuando resulta que es él precisamente el culpable, absolutamente, de todos los males que han acaecido a los focidios y de todas las desgracias que han sufrido los griegos. Está bien claro, Esquines, que a ti te duele lo que ha pasado y que compadeces a los tebanos; como que tienes propiedades en Beocia y cultivas sus tierras; y en cambio me alegro yo, que inmediatamente fue reclamado por el autor de esos hechos.	Y el que fue su cómplice y colaborador en el logro de esa confianza y el que transmitió aquí las falsas noticias y os en-gañó, ese es el que ahora se lamenta de los tebanos, y el que refiere lo lamentables que estos son, cuando él mismo es el culpable de estos males, de los de los focidios y de todos los demás que sufren los griegos. Pues es evidente que tú, Esquines, te dueles de lo sucedido y compadeces a los tebanos, teniendo como tienes propiedades en Beocia y cultivando sus campos, mientras que yo me alegro, yo que era de inmediato reclamado por el que llevó a cabo esas acciones.

The irony marker in this case is the evidential *δηλον* ('it is manifest') which, as Yunis (2001: 132) points out, expresses outrage at Aeschines' hypocrisy. The speaker is suggesting that his adversary obtained his property in Boeotia from the Macedonians in exchange for services rendered. Likewise, Demosthenes' words allude to another fact, which is also knowledge shared by the speaker and his audience and fundamental for the correct interpretation of the irony. After the destruction of Thebes (335 BC) Alexander, from Athens, demanded that the main leaders of the revolt be handed over to him. Among them was Demosthenes, but not Aeschines.

Δηλον, like many other terms and expressions, belongs to the evidential language characteristic of the legal field in which we find ourselves. In legal contexts, it is common for speakers to use evidential markers as a mechanism of language manipulation (Moussa Sassi, 2020) and this is precisely what Demosthenes is doing here. *Δηλον* is an epistemic modality marker used to validate the evidence. By making use of this term, Demosthenes expresses absolute certainty, he indicates that the member of the discourse to which he refers is beyond any doubt. However, Demosthenes' intention is not to protect Aeschines' *face* by claiming that he is hurt by what has happened. Nor does he intend to attack his own *face* by confirming that he himself is happy, but quite the opposite. As in the source Greek text, the three Spanish translations omit the repetition of the evidential in the contraposition between 'you' (σύ, Aeschines) and 'I' (ἐγώ, Demosthenes). Navarro González's translation also includes an additional element (the adverb 'bien') to further intensify the ironic sense of the statement.

It is also important here to highlight the fact that, in addition to attacking his opponent, Demosthenes attacks himself with a self-critical use of irony (Hutcheon, 1995: 47; Nox, 1973). As we have already mentioned, this is a way of expressing modesty, of intentionally presenting oneself in a position of marginalisation or inferiority. As Vatri (2018: 1054) rightly points out, when a speaker resorts to irony to express some disapproval regarding himself, his aim is to provoke a specific reaction from his interlocutors, in this case the jurors. In this sense, it is worth remembering that *On the Crown* is a defense speech and the orator is trying to win the jurors over. In the following example (Dem. 18.212), Demosthenes defends himself against an attack from Aeschines (*cf.* Aeschin. 3.157):

Source text (Greek)	Target text 1 (Pallí Bonet)	Target text 2 (Navarro González)	Target text 3 (López Eire)
καίτοι τοσαύτη γ' ὑπερβολῇ συκοφαντίας οὗτος κέχρηται ᾧστε, εἰ μὲν τι τῶν δεόντων ἐπράχθη, τὸν καιρὸν, οὐκ ἐμέ φησιν αἴτιον γεγενῆσθαι, τῶν δ' ὥς ἐτέρως συμβάντων ἀπάντων ἐμὲ καὶ τὴν ἐμὴν τύχην αἰτίαν εἶναι· καί, ὥς ἔοικεν, ὁ σύμβουλος καὶ ρήτωρ ἐγὼ τῶν μὲν ἐκ λόγου καὶ τοῦ βουλευσασθαι πραχθέντων οὐδὲν αὐτῷ συναίτιος εἶναι δοκῶ, τῶν δ' ἐν τοῖς ὅπλοις καὶ κατὰ τὴν στρατηγίαν ἀτυχηθέντων μόνος αἴτιος εἶναι.	Y en verdad este va tan lejos en su calumnia que si se hizo algo de lo necesario atribuye la causa no a mí, sino a las circunstancias, pero en cambio nos hace responsables a mí y a mi suerte de todos los acontecimientos adversos. Así, por lo visto, como consejero y político no tengo derecho a participar de la discusión y la deliberación, pero si soy el único causante de los fracasos en las armas y en la estrategia.	Y mira que el granuja ese le está echando al asunto más cara que espalda, que va y dice que cuando se hizo lo que se tenía que hacer fueron las circunstancias y no yo las responsables de ese proceder y, en cambio, cuando las cosas salieron al revés de lo planeado, dice que yo y mi propio destino somos los responsables. O sea que yo, el consejero, el orador, no tengo arte ni parte en las acciones que se derivan de mis discursos y de mis dictámenes y, en cambio, soy el responsable único de los reveses sufridos en las armas y en las operaciones militares.	Ese individuo pone en práctica con tanto exceso su índole de sicofanta, que si algo se hizo de lo que había que hacer, declara que la causa no fui yo, sino las circunstancias; en cambio, de todos los acontecimientos que resultaron de forma contraria, afirma que yo y mi destino somos culpables; y, a lo que parece, yo, el consejero y orador, en su opinión no soy para nada copartícipe de los éxitos logrados por los discursos y deliberaciones, y, en cambio, soy el único responsable de los infortunios habidos en las armas y en lo que se refiere a la dirección de las operaciones militares.

Demosthenes does not express absolute certainty this time in the face of the information he offers but prefers to put some distance between himself and the situation. By introducing the evidential marker ὥς ἔοικε (‘as it seems’), he avoids committing himself to his own words. This distancing

(ironic distance) on the part of the speaker is also interpreted ironically by those who explain irony as a mark of insensitivity, indifference, or the indirect expression of superiority (cf. Muecke 1969: 216 or Hutcheon 1994: 115). The translation of ὡς ἔοικεν (and, in general, that of the whole passage) provided by Navarro González is the least literal, since it does not reflect the intentional distance that the translations given by López Eire and Pallí Bonet do. Instead, Navarro González introduces a reformulation marker ('o sea que') that presents the discourse member which is introduced as a reformulation that explains or clarifies what was meant by a previous member that may not have been fully comprehensible (Portolés, 1998: 142). In any case, the irony that Demosthenes instills in his words is not blurred but quite the opposite.

3. Conclusions

Demosthenes handles irony masterfully and uses this resource against Aeschines in the speech *On the Crown*. Translating irony is no easy task and translators must take a wide variety of elements into consideration. In addition to linguistic devices (litotes, oxymoron, evidentials, and so on) which behave as irony markers and can facilitate the translator's task, it is imperative to consider the contextual, situational, personal and socio-cultural knowledge that Demosthenes shared with his audience. All of this must be effectively translated. As we have found, translators sometimes provide very literal target texts. However, in most cases they use various strategies (amplification, omission, transposition, or adaptation) to achieve the equivalence of the ironic effect of the source text in the target text.

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BIONOTE / NOTA BIOGRÁFICA

RAQUEL FORNIELES SÁNCHEZ studied Journalism at Universidad Complutense de Madrid (BA 2003) and Classics at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid (BA 2009, MA 2010, PhD 2015). She has been a Lecturer of Greek Philology at Universidad Autónoma de Madrid since 2016. Her research interests cover a range of topics associated with Greek linguistics. Currently, her research focuses on (im)politeness phenomena in Greek Oratory, specifically in speeches by Lysias, Aeschines and Demosthenes. She is head researcher for the project "EIRONEIA. La ironía como recurso retórico en el lenguaje judicial ateniense" (SI3/PJI/2021-00208).

RAQUEL FORNIELES SÁNCHEZ es licenciada en Periodismo (Universidad Complutense de Madrid) y en Filología Clásica (Universidad Autónoma de Madrid). Se doctoró en 2015 y se incorporó a la UAM en 2016, donde Profesora Contratada Doctora en el Departamento de Clásicas. Su interés por la investigación abarca una amplia gama de temas relacionados con la lingüística griega. Actualmente, sus investigaciones están centradas en la cortesía y la descortesía verbal en la oratoria griega, en particular en los discursos de Lisias, Esquines y Demóstenes. Es Investigadora Principal del proyecto "EIRONEIA. La ironía como recurso retórico en el lenguaje judicial ateniense" (SI3-PJI-2021-00208).