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Portrait of a Tongue

Experimental Translation as Transcultural Rewriting“

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1. Yoko Tawada – Appearance on the literary scene

I felt as though nothing could ever slip through my fingers because we live in a web
of languages.

YOKO TAWADA's *Portrait of a Tongue* (Wright 2013:138)

Yoko Tawada appeared on the literary scene as Tawada Yoko, the Japanese form for her name. Tawada is a transnational multi-award winner in the field of literary studies writing in both Japanese, her mother tongue, and German, her adopted language. She was already awarded the Gunzo-shinjin-bungaku Prize for new Japanese writers in 1991 for her debut novella *Kakato o nakushite*. The writer also received many prizes including the Akutagawa Prize, the Kleist Prize and the Goethe Medal for her pieces in Japanese and German (Brandt 2005:3). Tawada's literary oeuvre covers a wide range of genres. She has published collections of poems, short stories, radio and theater plays, novels, literary essays, and experimental performance pieces. Translations of her works appear in many languages.

Concerning her scholarly attention she received within the field of Translation Studies, *Yoko Tawada: Voices from Everywhere* by Doug Slaymaker from 2007 is the first English collection of critical essays on Tawada's writing. It serves as an introduction to Tawada's work for English readers and simultaneously portrays the acknowledgement of her writing in Japanese literature (Tierniey 277). *Yoko Tawada: Poetik der Transformation*, edited by Christine Ivanovic appeared in 2010 and is the second edited volume dedicated entirely to Tawada's work. Tawada's writing is known for transcending borders, both nationally in the sense of writing across borders like in her collection of short stories *Überseesungen*, which incorporates *Porträt einer Zunge*, and literally in testing borders of language and gender.

Exophonic and translingual discourses are of paramount importance for

my thesis' intended analysis about the in-between spaces of languages, cultures and genres in *Portrait of a Tongue*. The term exophony entered literary and cultural studies in the last decade and describes "the phenomenon where a writer entirely adopts a literary language other than his or her mother tongue, entirely replacing or complementing his or her native language as a vehicle of literary expression" (Wright 2013:2). The phenomenon of writing in an adopted literary language other than a writer's first language however, is already well researched in the field of literary studies (Wright 2013:2). Eva Karpinski, a contemporary professor at the field of women's studies in Toronto reflects on the term "borrowed tongue" in her eponymous publication which connects translation to life-writing. In her words, adopting a borrowed tongue entails "living, communication, and working in a language that is not one's mother tongue" (2). Steven Kellman, a contemporary American critic and professor of comparative literature, defines a person as translingual who writes "in more than one language or in a language other than [his or her] primary one" (qtd in Karpinski 2012:230). Hence, both Kellman's definition of translinguality and Karpinski's notion of borrowed tongues are analogous to exophony.

Unlike other exophonic writers like Vladimir Nabokov and Eva Hoffmann, who abandoned their first languages due to forced relocations, such as exile or immigration (Tachibana 2007:153), Tawada's decision to become an exophonic writer was a deliberate choice to express her creativity as a writer as an adult. Tamar Steinitz, a contemporary scholar in the field of literary translingualism, regards the writing in an adopted language even as a benefit for a writer due to a "creative distance and a new sense of perspective" (1). Her claim can be associated with Keijiro Suga's "translational poetics" he expands on in Slaymaker's anthology about Tawada's writings (21). Being a poet, translator and professor, Suga has explored the combination of translation and literary creation, which he calls "translational poetics".

The creative freedom, Tawada applies in her writing due to her translingual switches in her texts can thus, be analysed according to her own conscious choice of adopting a new language. Steinitz argues that translingualism emerges as a “self-imposed, internal exile” that mirrors a writer’s determination to become a cosmopolitan writer (13). In a wider context, Steinitz proposes that a hybrid identity can be constructed through the distance that emerges with the use of a foreign language (16). Hence, Tawada overcomes external limitations through her application of translingualism insofar as she reaches a wide, international readership. Simultaneously, she uses translingualism for internal, more private purposes like the construction and maintenance of an identity that transcends national and linguistic borders (Steinitz 184). The writer was born in Tokyo, Japan in 1960 and moved to Germany in her 20s.

People sometimes ask me where I really live because I travel so much. I think I live in the languages. Or maybe I should just say that one small, simple word sometimes can be enough of a place to reside in. [...] To me, a word might be a place where different thoughts and people can meet each other.

This quote by Tawada reveals her understanding of translinguality as well as of transculturality (Brandt 2008:19). Simultaneously, Tawada exposes her understanding of a connection between language and the self, materialized in a body that carries the word to the outside world. One of Steinitz’s proposed two models of translingualism is relevant for my analysis of Tawada’s oeuvre and especially Wright’s experimental translation *Portrait of a Tongue*. According to Steinitz, translingualism can either be perceived as a loss or as an opportunity (187). Her definition of translingualism as a writer’s choice between “two systems of representation” (Steinitz 1) entails a “psychic split” that is manifested in the writer’s perception of identity (Steinitz 8). This split renders the writer’s work either “schizophrenic” or marks it with a “productive doubling of perspective”(Steinitz 1). Hence, Steinitz is rather concerned with the “psychological effect of the translingual shifts” from writing in one language

to the other than the linguistic aspects of translingual texts (Steinitz 8). Steinitz's definition of a productive doubling of perspectives serves as a translingual framework for my thesis. Due to the writer's creative freedom to move between cultures and landscapes, the dialogic relations between the perspectives enrich each other while remaining critically distant (Steinitz 186).

Concerning Tawada's condition as a migrant, Slaymaker refers to Salmon Rushdie's need to transcend borders for inhabiting a space again: "The migrant suspects reality: having experienced several ways of being, he understands their illusory nature. To see things plainly, you have to cross a frontier" (Rushdie 124, 125 qtd in Slaymaker 9). For Tawada, there are no margins, which she expresses as "Grenzen gibt es nicht" (Mae 354). The space she occupies in her writing is Homi Bhabha's notion of a "third space" (Bhabha 1994: 53-56). Tawada labels this space a "poetic ravine" between languages in her writings (2003:32). As the writer resists essentialist notions of identity, she defies the link between language and national identity. Analyzing Tawada's work is marked by a myriad of interdisciplinary approaches. Readings informed by feminism or postcolonialism would also fit the content of Tawada's writing.

In my thesis, however, a poststructuralist approach, typically of the fluidity of concepts and the criticism of essentialism, is predominantly applied here. Among other deconstruction theorists like Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida dismantled the discourse around "source vs. target" (165-207 qtd. in Shani 2015:169) which led to the cultural turn in translation studies (Bassnett;Lefevere 11 qtd in Shani 171). The concept of cultural translation has been widely discussed in academic discourse and provides the contextual frame for my analysis of *Portrait of a Tongue*. Shani summarizes:

[T] [t]he cultural turn in Translation Studies from the 1980s shifted the

focus of inquiry from the linguistic and textual reasons for translation decisions to the cultural contexts (including political, ideological and commercial factors which influence translation policy and strategies), but the use of 'source' and 'target' as distinct locations for the identity of texts and those who produce them has continued (Bassnett; Lefevere, 11 qtd in Shani 171).

Hence, instead of focusing on either the "source" or the "target" side of the dual structure, which would imply the "fallacy of singularity" in Shani's terminology, a greater interest has been placed on the creative aspect of translation opposed to the literal transfer of words from one language to another (Shani 172). Additionally, Eva Karpinski stresses that through the cultural turn a reshaping of the term translation, which opened its scope, happened (11).

Tawada's positions on translation, are in accordance with Karpinski's notion of an "intertextual practice of transcoding and constructing meanings and selves cross-culturally" (11). As a result, in a Tawadian sense, everything is translation. She considers "language per se, even one's mother tongue, [...] [as] a translation" (Totten 1999: 96). This means that for Tawada, speaking is artificial. As thoughts must be translated into words before they can be uttered, they are the result of a conscious process of translation (Totten 1999:95). This observation presents translation in its entirety as mirroring life itself. Tawada regards the "in-between space" or "poetic ravine" between languages the ideal place for writing and translating as she questions assumptions that regard language and identity as stable and fixed concepts. She deconstructs the notion of literary translation which is defined by a directional transfer from one language to another, from original to translated text, from source to target (Shani 169). As a result, she argues that the translation of thoughts into language enables writers to perceive a formless "original" they are translating from. The dichotomy of terms like source vs. target or original vs. translation is a well debated topic in Translation Studies. The distinction between a

foreignizing vs. domestication approach to translation by the contemporary scholar of translation studies, Lawrence Venuti, is no exception (Shani 171). One of Tawada's translators Margaret Mitsutani illuminates: "As many translation theorists have pointed out in recent years, 'the original' can't really be said to exist" (2007:35). It is exactly this void, Tawada explores in her writing by disrupting essentialist notions of binary structures.

A tool for overcoming the dualist structure of language is provided by Nadja Gernalzick's concept of translanguality. In Gernalzick's definition translangual literature means the meeting of two or more languages in a work without translations (2016:1). Hence, according to Gernalzick's position on translanguality advanced here, there are no glossaries and no notes to the translations provided. The reason for this lack of translations is also sociological and has been dealt with by Suresh Canagarajah in his work "Global Englishness and Cosmopolitan Relations". Canagarajah's main argument is that "languages always influence each other" (6). They are in contact with each other and change over time. Hence, as they are fluid, in Canagarajah's words there are "dynamic interactions between languages" (7) which make their appearance in a text translangual. Multilingual, on the other hand, has an "additive" character in the scholar's sense (Canagarajah 7). It lacks the active mingling of languages but rather separates languages from each other for specific purposes. However, with a translangual and transcultural approach no privilege to one language or one culture is given (Gernalizick 2016:10). In the essay *Writing in the Web of Words* translated by Monika Totten, Tawada expands:

I'm similar to a web. The structure of a web gets denser when new traits are incorporated. In this way a new pattern is formed. There are more and more knots, tight and loose spots, irregularities, uncompleted corners, edges, holes, or superimposed layers. This web, which can catch tiny planktons, I will call a multilingual web (2003: 148).

This explanation of Tawada's conception of a multilingual web is non-hierarchical and

non-judgmental towards language. Her conception of no clear cut boundaries works on many different levels in the text. Homi Bhabha's concept of hybridity and the third space, for example, are explored in *Portrait of a Tongue*. The following example – which will also be dealt with in more depth in the following chapters – reveals: "When the narrator states that she began meeting P on a daily basis, does she mean in real life or in the pages of her manuscript? Is she looking for a real person (Deneuve?) on whom to model a fictional character (P) or is she fictionalizing a real-life P?" (Wright 2013:40). Therefore, the text explores "in-between spaces" of mobility, subjectivity, and language. As a result, Tawada's web of languages is the interface of multiple languages, cultures and intertextual references characteristic of mutual influence.¹

The concepts of hybridity, fluidity and plurivocality are both visible structurally and present content wise in *Portrait of a Tongue*. Additionally, the exploration of third spaces also serves as a contextual framework for my thesis. The similarities between translation and migrant subjectivities are threefold (Karpinski 26). Firstly, both autofiction as a genre and translation as a literal and cultural transfer of meaning are marked with hybridity. Autofiction, on the one hand revolves around autobiography and fictive literature (Wagner-Egelhaaf 2) while translation explores the space between a literal transfer of meaning and poetic creation (Suga 21). Wright's experimental translation serves as an illustration of this point:

My prose translation seeks out that space – which has always been open to translators of poetry – located between enslavement of the original and the creation of a text that is so loosely inspired by the source text that it is no longer, strictly speaking, translation (2013:29).

¹ This transgression of borders in her writing can also be observed in the inseparability of her Japanese and German oeuvre. Her bilingual poetry collection *Nur da wo du bist ist nichts* was her debut as an exophonic writer in the literary scene in 1987. Her Japanese texts were translated into German by Peter Pörtner. As the reading customs are culturally dependent and different in Japan and German, the book combines the Japanese reading style from the right to the left on certain pages and the German reading style from the left to the right on others. Thus, the bilingual edition also shows on a purely visual level that literature cannot be translated word by word in Tawada's perspective as "the translation nevertheless meets the original somewhere in the current of air that is the result of leafing through the book" (Brandt 2008: 22).

Secondly, both approaches (autofiction and translation) create “new linkages between the local, the national and the global” in Karpinski’s words (1). Hence, translation and autofiction can be held exemplary for a translingual and transcultural approach. Thirdly, both translation and autofiction are inherently contradictory genres that nevertheless involve a recognition of their ideologically charged, hierarchical oppositions between source/target and fiction/non-fiction to be fully grasped (Karpinski 10,11). Therefore, translations and migrant subjects have in common that they cherish losses and gains through the experience with undergone changes. Only recently scholarly attention has been directed at the interface of translation studies and autobiography. Autobiography studies are enriched by “borrowing” concepts of translation studies (Karpinski 3). A space for interdisciplinarity is opened as translation is linked with women’s life writing in order to “pose a challenge to binary thinking” (Karpinski 227). Karpinski defies traditional translational terminology with a dualist structure. Consequently, she asserts that female life writing challenges “the concept of speaking and writing in ‘borrowed tongues’ since no property rights can be asserted over any language” (Karpinski 227, 228). The current post-modernist times are regarded as “the beginning of a new epistemic era characterized by the emergence of different ways of thinking about language and identity in new transnational contact zones, premised upon a recognition of heterogeneity” (Karpinski 227).

Unfortunately, it has not always been like that. Autobiography as well as autofiction as genre were primarily part of a male-dominated field back in the 20th century (Karpinski 231). Serge Doubrovsky coined the term autofiction, which explores the relationship between an author and his/her writing in 1977. It appeared alongside French literary theories like deconstruction, which positions the self as fiction (Van Laer¹, Worthington 5, Wagner-Egelhaaf 1). Hence, the context for

autofictional narratives is set in the 1960s French literary circle where post-structuralism, as a school of thought, blurred the distinctions between fiction and nonfiction (Worthington 5). Doubrovsky's definition of autofiction as the narration of real events in a fictive manner is regarded as a common poststructuralist argument which I apply in my thesis, insofar as the creative freedom which is fundamental to language is applied. Majorie Worthington notes that "the acceptance of poststructuralist theories on how language works to construct perceptions of reality "is visible through the increasing popularity of autofiction in the cultural mainstream (21, 22). As in Worthington's words: "to narrativize is inherently to fictionalize, for all writing is merely a representation of reality, not reality itself" (6,7). The scholar elaborates on Doubrovsky's definition of autofiction, which shares similarities with autobiography without the free use of creative language. She complements that autofiction in her terms also encompasses fictional events to the author-character that did not happen to the extratextual author. Therefore, Worthington's definition of autofiction involves a narrative characteristic of the invention of fictional events that are added to the author's biography (5). Philippe Lejeune speaks of an "autobiographical pact", a guideline basically to read novels autobiographically as the mention of the writer's proper name is "an unquestionable world-beyond-the text, referring to a real person" (Lejeune 11 qtd in Karpinski 10). However, oppositely, his more revolutionary idea about a "novelistic pact" as a reading instruction for interpreting autofictions like novels is of paramount importance for my thesis (Lejeune 1975 qtd. in Wagner-Egelhaaf 3). Even though various designations for the concept of autofiction circulate in the field of literary and translation studies, I chose to include Doubrovsky's and Lejeune's notion due to their different approaches. Doubrovsky's definition of autofiction focuses more on the autobiographic idea, whereas Lejeune's classification rather emphasizes the fictive part of the term.

The aim of my thesis is to dissolve boundaries between various categories: languages/multi/translinguality; word/referent; language/national identity; language /cultural identity; source/target; original/ translation, fiction/nonfiction. These binaries can be overcome by focusing on “in-between spaces” of the following two hybrid genres autofiction and experimental translation. The former term autofiction is used in my thesis as a mixture of fiction and non-fiction. The latter term experimental translation is relevant as the translator reveals a multitude of translational choices to the readers. Thus, it becomes apparent that every translation is just a subjective rewriting of the “original” text, without diminishing the text’s status as secondary. As I will explore “in-between-spaces” of languages, cultures and genres, the idea of a web of languages by Yoko Tawada as the interface of multiple languages, cultures and intertextual references is the basis for my thesis. Therefore, I will rely on poststructuralist theories from scholars such as Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes and Homi Bhabha. With Chantal Wright’s experimental translation of Tawada’s autofictional prose *Portrait of a Tongue* a meta-translational autofiction is created. Wright’s translator’s persona enables reflection on Tawada’s autofiction and thus renders it a meta-autofiction. Hence, Wright’s text does not only follow Canagarajah’s claim that translations appear on a peer-to-peer level with their originals (Canagarajah 2013: 6) but I argue that his thought can even be extended by Wright’s experimental approach to translation. The experimental form of the translation is complementing the “original version” of the text with Wright’s comments on her own translation choices. I deliberately choose the outdated terms “original version” versus “translated text”, which were frequently used before the cultural turn in translation in the 1990s, as they highlight texts’ hierarchical statuses when comparing them with each other. Opposed to the thought that translations were regarded as minor opposed to original versions, which had a higher status, I do not intend to grade texts’

values as higher or lower statuses than their originals in my thesis. On the contrary, I'm solely focusing on Wright's experimental translation in English which can be held exemplary for a transgression of the dated terms "original version" versus "translated text". Therefore, I did not look at Tawada's *"Porträt einer Zunge"* – the German source text – in order not to get tempted to compare the "translated text" with the "original version". I will analyze, through a close reading of the text's narrative situation, the effects of translingualism, merely in the short story *Portrait of a Tongue*. Additionally, the mentioning of Tawada's concepts of translation, language and autofiction are relevant for the analysis of intertextual elements in my thesis in the upcoming chapters. I intend to detect how "in between spaces" of languages/cultures and genres in the experimental translation *Portrait of a Tongue* can enrich translational studies in a contemporary manner.

2. TRANSLATION

Chantal Wright's translation *Portrait of a Tongue* is a hybrid text combining literary criticism, experimental translation and scholarly commentary-on translation. Her translation highlights her own subjectivity and claims visibility as a translator, which is manifested in the experimental character of the translation. Wright is known as an inaugural Cliff Becker Book Prize Winner in Translation for her translation of Tzvetia Sofronieva's poetry collection *A Hand Full of Water*. She is also famous for translating some of Germany's best-known children's authors like Cornelia Funke, Milena Baisch and Zoran Drvenkar. Her main research interests are literary translation with a focus on exophony and stylistics (Wight 2013: 23-33). Her translation *Portrait of a Tongue* can be regarded as experimental in myriad ways. Firstly, the text's twofold structure presents an unconventional approach for short story telling. On the left hand side,

there is Wright's English translation of Tawada's *Portrait einer Zunge* while on the right hand side her comments on her own translational choices are printed. The actual translation and her engagement with the translation are portrayed next to each other only separated by a thin middle line. With this contemporary approach to translation and story-telling in general, the readers can easily trace the translational choices.

Secondly, with paratextual features like a translator's note and her comments on the translation, the narrator creates a metatext that is being reflected upon. This reflection includes a mix of German phrases, explanations of idioms in the English translation and, of course, the comments on the deliberate translational choices. The text can be labelled as experimental in even a third way: The subjectivity of Wright's translator's persona becomes visible through the continuation of the speaker's train of thoughts, the addition of explanatory comments on cultural references addressed, and the position of critical questions. It can be shown that the translation's narrator mimics the narrator's foregrounding of the properties of language through metalinguistic reflection. I put the sentence under inspection in bold type in the following example from *Portrait of a Tongue* (Wright 2013:111):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
At mealtime she sometimes gives the impression that she's reading. She places a piece of bread, cheese and other small things in an aesthetic semi-circle and starts to eat as though this were a ritual. I'm lacking an adjective to describe her calm.	Composed? Collected, Absorbed?"

Through the engagement with the text, the translator character in the translator's dialogue provides answers to the dilemma portrayed in the translation proper and engages into dialogue. A closer analysis of further translational choices will follow after my discussion of "cultural translation" as a concept.

A basic insight of cultural studies with contemporary value is built on subjectivity. Sarah Maitland illuminates that human interaction always happens within a shared cultural context, where every expression mirrors one personal worldview among many possible ones (5). The contextual framework for Maitland's claim has been placed by Roland Barthes' proposition of the "death of the author" in the 1960s. Barthes argues against traditional literary criticism. Instead, he claims that a text can evoke multiple interpretations by different readers, rather than forcing one dominant idea, proposed by the author, into the readers' minds. (1977: 142, qtd. in Shani 172). Consequently, the translator's subjectivity is pivotal for the outcome of the text.² Wright also uses Barthes' view on the necessity of multiple interpretations of texts in *Portrait of a Tongue*. Her engagement with Tawada's text counters the limitations of a translator beyond word by word translations. On the contrary, the translator's comments on her translational choices in the text state her reflection about the translation process directly. I highlighted the relevant parts from the example below in bold type (Wright 2013: 119-120):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I loved the way P stood under the	

² Being a translingual writer, for Tawada translation is also an act of mobility that involves change and movement. Her collection of stories *Überseetzungen* is wordplay on the terms "translations" (Übersetzungen) and at the same time a neologism meaning "Overseas tongues", the literal meaning of a collection of different tongues being spoken across the globe (Wright 2013:18). Tawada's awareness of the term "übersetzen" which can in German also mean to "steer a boat from one shore to the other" (Brandt 2008:20) connects the two perceptions. Hence, Tawada's web of associative thinking works on many levels. The literal translation of "Überseetzungen" is "sea tongue". The German term "Seezunge" is in English called sole. It is a type of fish characteristic of its width and flatness that in Wright's words is "like a swimming tongue, [...] which suggests the ability to cross the oceans, both physically and linguistically (Wright 2013:18).

shower after swimming and stuck her curious, illuminated face through the veil of water to ask me something. She thought very carefully about how she might ask a question. I waited with interest for her voice to reach me through the noise of the water. **P's questions were methods of approach.**

I don't know if "methods of approach" is a good translation of *Zuwendungen*. The verb *zuwenden* means to physically turn towards somebody or to turn to somebody for help or comfort. The noun *Zuwendung* can be a financial donation or contribution, but also the bestowal of (loving) attention. This latter meaning fits the context here, but the noun still carries something of the verb's sense of physically turning to or approaching someone. It is this that I am trying to capture with "methods of approach." **"An attentive approach might also work. In any case, I cannot think of one word that would function as an adequate translation.**

By testing the translator's various possible translations for a German counterpart, the reader gains insights into the subjectivity of the translator within the field of Translation Studies. In the comment, the narrator further elaborates on the qualities of the German verb "zuwenden" as well as on the German noun phrase "Zuwendung", their denotations as well as connotations, and how they would or would not fit the purpose of her translation. Hence, it is shown to the readers that there is not one perfect translation for a word or concept in another culture but rather one's personal experience in and knowledge of the culture defines its adequateness (Maitland 5).

2.1. Translation strategy

Wright's strategy for dealing with translations in *Portrait of a Tongue* can be regarded as "thicker [...] contextualization" in Appiah's sense ([1993] 200:422 qtd. in Wright 2010:25) which in Wright's words "confronts the reader with the original" (2010:25). The "translation- and commentary-on translation" is highlighted by the text's receiving English-speaking target audience (Wright 2013:25). However, through the inclusion of German phrases, the language of Tawada's original, German, still perforates the text. Hence, translanguality is expressed in *Portrait of a Tongue* insofar as it is exemplary for "codemeshing". This term was coined by Suresh Canagarajah and describes a mixing of languages in a text among novel idiomatic expressions and grammatical deviations from standard written English (1). Wright's collaboration of different languages in her text is realized through her combination of English and German phrases in a sentence like "Unbehagen is still often used" (Wright 2013:56). Nadja Gernalzick's makes a differentiation of multilingual and translingual texts referring to Canagarajah's mingling of languages. According to Gernalzick texts are

multilingual if the translations of foreign terms are provided (2016:7). She regards texts as translingual, if no privilege to one language is given. Christine Ivanovic, who published the first anthology of Tawada's writings in German *Tawada, Yoko: Poetik der Transformation; Beiträge zum Gesamtwerk* in 2010, shares Gernalzick's description of translinguality with her own notion on exophony. Ivanovic regards exophony in a Bakhtinian sense as polyphony (2010:171). This means that there is no more distinction between the "mother tongue" and a speaker's second or third foreign language. Hence, in Gernalzick's definition, texts are regarded as translingual if the hierarchies between source and target language are irrelevant. This is, however, not the case with *Portrait of a Tongue* as the Germanophone readership is privileged vis-a-vis to English-speaking readers. Mostly, German expressions in the text are accompanied by English translations like "*Wir teilten uns nicht nur eine Banane, sondern auch ein Geheimnis.* [We had shared not only a banana but also a secret]" (Wright 2013:64). Nevertheless, in some instances the English translations of German words or phrases are lacking like "The word *Teilung* always made me think of poverty or the Berlin Wall (Wright 2013:62)." However, the translator uses an idiom in the commentary-on translation to elaborate on the translational choice "But there is also a German idiom: *Geteilte Freude ist doppelte Freude* [Joy shared is joy doubled]" (Wright 2013:62). Concerning the quantitative amount of the two languages, English is predominantly used even for the translation of German terms. Therefore, the text under discussion can be labeled as multilingual rather than translingual. Translinguality, in the sense here employed, reconciles the differences between the essentialist notion of binary oppositions like source vs. target and original vs. translation, at the root of structuralism (Canagarajah 7- 8).

2.2. Analysis of translator's dialogue

The following illustrations are exemplary for five categories of organizing the translator's dialogue the translator mentions in the paratext "*Introduction: Translating Portrait of a Tongue*" (Wright 2013:30-33). The selected examples from the short story are characteristic of every group. I marked the relevant parts in the forthcoming examples again in bold type to highlight the text's experimental quality through the translator's engagement with her own translation with a reader-oriented approach. In addition, I present an analysis of intertextual elements for each category, to examine the text's hybrid form which results in the experimental shape of the translation. Hence, the scholarly commentary packed with literary criticism becomes visible. I show that their inclusion supports the text's translingual and transcultural quality that is typical of Tawada's writing and in agreement with her web of associative thinking.

The source of Wright's comments related with Tawada's web of associative thinking can be found in the classic study on translation by Walter Benjamin. The quote from the translator's dialogue: "I felt as though nothing could ever slip through my fingers because we live in a web of languages" (2013:138) is a quote by Walter Benjamin in "The Task of the Translator" (trans. Hynd and Valk 2006:301):

All kinship of language that goes beyond historical derivation is based on this: that in each of them individually one thing, in fact the same thing is meant – something, however, that cannot be attained by any one language alone, but only be the totality of their mutually supplementary intentions: pure, universal language. While, in fact, all the individual elements – words, sentences, contexts – in foreign languages exclude each other, in their intentions the languages supplement each other.

An elaboration of Benjamin's thinking on language and translation is relevant as he is a frequent reference point in Tawada's writing besides *Portrait of a Tongue*. The supplementing of languages in Benjamin's view (2006:301) is what Tawada calls "the

web of languages” (Totten 2003:148). Tawada takes words out of their historical context and thus enlarges the possibility of associations. The theory of Roland Barthes’ intertexts is useful here to analyze Tawada’s associative thinking. In his essay *Theory of the Text* from 1981, Barthes explores that every text is an intertext, an outcome of the surrounding texts and cultures which are subconsciously present in the text (Barthes 1981: 39 qtd. in Shani 172). Barthes’ notion of intertextual elements is relevant for my analysis insofar as the underlying approach of this thesis is a poststructuralist perspective which entails a broad definition of translation according to Andre Lefevere’s cultural turn in translation. Lefevere’s theory of rewriting regards translation solely as one among many options for representing source texts (Lefevere 76 qtd. in Karpinski 230). The following analysis of Wright’s subjective translational choices presents such an example: “Ich hatte das Gefühl, daß mir nie etwas verlorengelassen könnte, weil wir in einem Netz der Sprachen leben“ (Wright 2013:150). This sentence, taken from *Portrait of a Tongue*’s epigraph, implies movement through the word choice “verlorengelassen”. In German, literally translated, this means “to be going lost” in English. The translation, on the contrary: “I felt as though nothing could ever slip through my fingers because we live in a web of languages” (Wright 2013:138) includes the idiom “to slip through one’s fingers” which highlights the frequent themes of corporality and language in Tawada’s writing. As Wright uses language that deliberately mentions body parts like the fingers, instead of another possible translation like “to get lost”, her translation of Tawada’s text is infiltrated by her previous reading of Tawada’s work, like a focus on body parts.³

³ The tongue takes central stage in *Portrait of a Tongue*, a text in a collection of short stories called *Überseesungen* by Yoko Tawada from 2002, where body parts like the nose in *Der Apfel und die Nase*, the ear in *Die Ohrenzeugin*, and the tongue in *Der Zungentanz* are topics under discussion. Additionally, Brandt realizes Tawada’s writing of the body in other texts like the specialization on the ear in *Ein Gast*, the focus on the finger in Tawada’s essay collection *Wo Europa anfängt* and her view on the eye in *Das nackte Auge* (2008:15). The corporeal relationship to language can also be detected in her latest two pieces of writing from 2014, her German autofictional piece *Etüden im Schnee* and her Japanese dystopian fiction *Kentoshi*. The English translation *Memoirs of a Polar Bear* by Susan Bernofsky contains a switch in words between paw and hand for highlighting either the human or animal like condition of her polar bear narrators. Margaret Mitsutani’s English translation *The Emissary* from 2018 stages crippled bodies of children that were born so weak they can barely walk in a post-Fukushima time. Apart from the

The following five subchapters present examples from *Portrait of a Tongue* deal with different intertextual references in the commentary-on translation.

2.2.1. Linguistic facilitators

This category describes the explanation of linguistic facilitators in the text like literal translations, connotations, or conjugations and declinations. The example below with the translation on the left and the comments on the right, reproduced similarly to the visual structure in *Portrait of a Tongue*, provides an example of a literal translation from the dictionary with examples in the comments in the translator's dialogue. Additionally, through the inclusion of square brackets in the comment part, the readers realize that literal translations are following. (Wright 2013: 49-50):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I looked up the word "greyhound" in my dictionary and found two translations: <i>Windhund and Windspiel.</i>	[literally, wind-dog; this is the German term for all dogs classified as sighthounds; the greyhound breed which belongs to this group is usually referred to by the English word "greyhound"] [literally, wind-play/game; an older term meaning <i>Windhund</i>, but it also designates a particular breed of

bodily aspect of the tongue, the collection *Überseetzungen* features *Portrait einer Zunge* as a part of the subsection *Nordamerikanische Zungen* among *Euroasiatische Zungen* and *Südafrikanische Zungen*. Hence, Tawada clearly plays with the word "tongue" and its derived meaning in bodily, national or cultural contexts (Sobelle:2016).

	sighthound: the Italian greyhound]
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Literal and intratextual translations from German to English like the example above do not demand further interpretation. However, a few examples from *Portrait of a Tongue* can be found, where the focus lies on the division instead of the union of the two main dominant languages in the text: English and German. The example below highlights the separation between English and German, with the relevant part in bold type (Wright 2013:52):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
P thought me a word that meant something like "grey mixed with black." But I can't remember the word any more.	Did P teach her a German or an English word? Grau meliert? Salt and pepper? Slate? Anthracite? Ash(en) ?

Without knowing in which context "grey mixed with black" is used, it is difficult to provide equivalents in the English language. Wright's translator narrator provides a large spectrum of describing colors for a range of contexts: describing hair color: salt and pepper; describing interior design: slate; describing clothes and hair: ash(en). However, the readers are still kept uncertain about the intended language of the referent. This dilemma is summed up –in bold type – on subsequent pages in the text (Wright 2013: 107):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
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She said this gently, without anger, without grief. It was a little “inconvenient”, she said.	She uses the English word “inconvenient” in the middle of a German sentence. The sense of the word in this context is not entirely clear.
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Even though, the sense of the word in the context mentioned in the example is not clear, this thesis rather reconciles the differences between English and German instead of listing them. Untranslated words should therefore not convey the sense of cultural distinctiveness in *Portrait of a Tongue*, but rather act to highlight the importance of discourse in interpreting cultural concepts, expressions or ideas. Hence, the focus shifts towards a more inclusive perspective about how the English and German language influence each other in a positive manner. The following example shows how the mingling of the two languages can even be beneficiary for them (Wright 2013:63):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
After swimming I always feel as though I'm lacking warmth and food. P had a banana in her bag. I had nothing along to eat. She broke the banana in two and gave me the top half.	Although the narrator doesn't

	use the word teilen here, one cannot help but feel that the English and German languages are mingling. “Share” is being influenced by <i>teilen</i> and its implication of division, and <i>teilen</i> is being influenced by “share” and its sense of generosity.
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The close analysis of the German verb “teilen” in the translator’s dialogue – marked in bold type – shows the inseparability of the two languages used by the exophone writer Tawada, and the awareness about the fact by the translator who deliberately comments on that decision. A smooth transition between English and German, can be held exemplary with borrowed terms from one language that are used in the other language without translations. The following example from *Portrait of a Tongue* is typical of an untranslated anglicism: “There are many Anglicisms in modern German. German footballer Andreas Möller famously and tautologically said, ‘Vom Feeling her hatte ich ein gutes Gefühl’ [I had a good feeling on a feeling level (Wright 2013:70). As translingual literature incorporates different languages in a text on a peer level, without including translations into one “primary” language – as shown in this very example – it erases cultural hierarchies between languages (Gernalzick 2016:2).

Michiko Mae, a contemporary literary scholar in the field of comparative literature in German and Japanese, explains that a translinguistic rewriting is only possible if “Sprache sich auflöst und von ihrer kulturellen Bedeutung losgelöst wird“ (381). My English translation is that a translingual rewriting is only doable: “[...]“

if language vanishes and will be washed off its cultural meaning.” Therefore, words and their sensual appearance mingle in the translingual text. However, this endeavor seems rather difficult as George Yule a contemporary linguistic scholar with a sociolinguistic approach states that “[...] the study of language originates in the work of anthropologists who have used language as a source of information in the general study of “culture” (Yule 266). Without diving too deep into the traditional study of language, linguistics or anthropology, the connection between language and culture is relevant here. Consequently, the cultural need defines the language use. An individual’s first language can, according to Yule, be defined as “socially acquired knowledge”, which happens unconsciously (Yule 267). Hence, the awareness about culture comes after the awareness about language. This gateway between learning a language and experiencing knowledge about a culture through categorization in society is called “cultural transmission” by Yule (267). Only after individuals learn a new word in a culture, they can establish a connection to the entities in the social world being present in the culture. Yule calls this connection between a culture’s specific language use and the external reality “linguistic relativity” (269). Thereby, the used conceptual systems are distinct and identifiable for their cultures. Differences among lexicalization of conceptual entities among languages result into differences in cultures. In Japan there are, for example, different pronouns used depending on the speaker’s gender. Females use “watashi” and males apply “boku” to refer to oneself as “I” (Yule 274). Hence, the socially accepted gendered language use in Japan is structurally different from the German and English one. In the Germanophone and Anglophone culture, no differentiation about a speaker’s gender is located in the inherent language use of personal pronouns. Hence, a speaker’s gender as an expression of identity is not anchored in the German or English language. Gender bias, however, will be inspected in the following example from the translation on a

linguistic level (Wright 2013:84):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
An important friend of hers, Frau G, was a woman with character, with "Pfiff". <i>Sie mag Frauen mit Pfiff, die ihr niemals "auf den Schlips treten würden".</i>	[She liked women with character, the kind of women who would never get on her nerves] A <i>Pfiff</i> is a whistle, so a person with <i>Pfiff</i> is somebody you might whistle at in admiration. <i>Pfiff</i> implies style and flair. The literal meaning of <i>auf den Schlips treten</i> is "to stand on a man's tie"; figuratively, it means to insult, give offence or annoy. How would you go about insulting a woman?

Wright deliberately keeps the original wording "auf den Schlips treten" from German in the translation to better illustrate her explanation about the translational choice in the translator's dialogue. Content wise, the example deals with gender differences. The last question in the commentary-on translation invites the readers to critically think about the utterance's cultural implication of gender bias. In the 21st century, the boundaries between genders are becoming blurry. This is, for instance, visible

through the choice of clothes. The German phrase "Auf den Schlips treten" implies that a man is wearing a suit. Nowadays, conversely, also women and queer identities are wearing suits and ties. To provide a provisional answer to the question raised by the narrator: "How would you go about insulting a woman?": A differentiation of swear words adherent to male or female genders exists in the Anglophone and Germanophone culture. While words to insult women in English range from "witch" to "chick", derogatory terms to offend men are, for example, "cavemen" or "pansy". However, the question in the commentary-on translation can be regarded as motivating for the readers to disrupt this gendered differentiation of swear words. Summarizing with Yule's words: "The most fundamental difference in social categorization is gender" (274). The gendered swear words refer to stereotypical behavior of individuals due to their assigned socially gendered group (male vs. female). This binary distinction, however, excludes a multitude of categories "in-between" these two socially constructed entities.

The process of learning how to express one's identity is described as "gendered culture" by Yule (274). The subsequent example from *Portrait of a Tonuge* deals with cultural differences that result from distinct linguistic expressions among the Japanese, English and German language (Wright 2013:123,124):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
You can soften identity-addicted words by turning nouns into adjectives. An Asian person, an academic woman, a person addicted to writing.	

	German has the ability to turn adjectives into nouns that can stand alone without the need to add “man,” “woman,” “person,” “thing” or “event.” If a person is being described, then the gender is made explicit in the ending of the noun. So a fat, person is <i>ein Dicker (m)</i> or <i>eine Dicke (f)</i>, from the adjective <i>dick</i> [fat]. Curiously enough, <i>Dicke(r)</i> can be a term of endearment as well as an insult. A conversation with J on the subject of identity in Japan was illuminating. He maintains that there is no way of conceiving the world in Japan without dividing people into groups. A person will typically tell you their employer before giving his
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	or her name. Being a lesbian in Japan, he says, means clearly embracing a butch persona. There are clear behavioral rules, even for those outside the mainstream.
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The first sentence in bold type in this example refers to the possibility of the German language to address people with gendered nouns stemming from adjectives without the need for the repletion of the word “person”. In the English language, however, this phenomena is not feasible linguistically. Hence, through Wright’s comment on linguistic possibilities for describing people’s identities in different languages – shown in the example – she provides linguistic background information tailored to the target readership interested in the playfulness of language. Continuing however, with an analysis of the second paragraph of the example from the translator’s dialogue, Wright addresses the topic of identity and thus, takes the direction of cultural theories. Smoothly, she moves from a linguistic analysis in the comments to a more culturally relevant discussion about identities in Japan which nevertheless match the content of the described linguistic expression mentioned only a few lines before⁴. As Wright mentions the topic of belonging to a group as a strong marker of people’s identities in Japan, the comment will be analyzed in accordance with relevant theoretical background. The concepts of “in-group” and “out-group” have been developed by Henri Tajfel in the 1970s. They are part of the realm of social identity

⁴ Even though the analysis of the second paragraph of this comment would also fall into the category of translator’s reading response, which will be dealt with in the subchapter 2.2.5, the analysis follows here, as there is a suitable connection point content wise.

theory. Even though Wright does not mention his concept of preferential treatment of members of the same “in-group” (Brown 177) when reading the comments, it comes to my mind immediately as it also fits the context of Tawada’s approach towards language, identity and literary expression. In Tajfel’s words: “[I]n order for the members of an ingroup to be able to hate or dislike an outgroup, or to discriminate against it, they must first have acquired a sense of belonging to a group which is distinct from the one they hate, dislike or discriminate against (Tajfel 1974: 66 qtd. In Brown 177).” Hence, the “out-group” has a more negative connotation and is connected with inferior treatment like a tendency to dislike members of a group individuals do not identify with. The reference to a butch persona in the comment – a term describing gender performance from the lesbian subculture for masculine identity – exemplifies that being a lesbian in Japan would mean belonging to the “out-group” regarded from the perspective of the majority of a heterosexual community from the mainstream. Through Wright’s comment on identity construction in Japan – like the elaboration on behavioral rules for lesbians – the readers are triggered to question the perception of identity and belonging with their own cultural backgrounds and whether they have experienced it themselves fundamentally different to Wright’s explanation in the comments on her translation in *Portrait of a Tongue*.

Exactly, this variety of possibilities will be inspected in the following example - with a focus on the words as linguistic facilitators (Wright 2013:97):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
When she met him by chance years after he had finished his PhD, on Leopoldstraße in Munich, she called out	

to him from quite far off:	
“Hallo, mein Süßer!”	[Hello, sweetie!] Did she say this in English or in German? In German <i>Süße(r)</i> is really only used with one’s romantic or sexual partner. The American “sweetie” is much more widely applicable and has no sexual implication.

Wright shows with this example that besides the linguistic quality of translated tokens, their cultural implication must not be ignored. Through the comment, the text becomes enriched with an elaboration of different cultural sets of meanings that are inherent in certain cultures.

2.2.2. Intertextual references from Tawada’s writing

This category deals with multiple references of Tawada’s other writings apart from *Portrait of a Tongue*. Content wise the mentioned intertexts inform the readers about different cultural concepts. Thus, a transcultural analysis of the intertexts in the short story is relevant here. One quality of transcultural texts is that they are equipped with the intermediality of language and aesthetics they offer. As Gernalzick explains,

translingual texts offer experience in the musicalization of fiction. By the same token, the viscosity of the unknown, printed language becomes emphasized, and the words appear like a succession of letters or signifiers without signifieds. The coded constructivity of language is foregrounded. (2016:5)

Consequently, the visual perception is highlighted as opposed to the text's content, which remains secondary. The following abstract from *Portrait of a Tongue* can be held exemplary for Gernalzick's theory (Wright 2013:112,113):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I asked her to record some of her favorite poems, She read Karoline von Günderrode's "Der Kuss im Traum" and suddenly I felt the sound acutely.	[The Kiss in the Dream] (1804) <i>Es hat ein Kuß mir Leben eingehaucht, Gestillet meines Busens tiefstes Schmachten, Komm, Dunkelheit! mich traulich zu umnachten, Daß neue Wonne meine Lippe saugt.</i> <i>In Träumen war solch Leben eingetaucht, Drum leb' ich, ewig Träume zu betrachten,</i>

	<i>Kann aller anderen Freuden Glanz verachten, Weil nur die Nacht so süßen Balsam haucht.</i> <i>Der Tag ist karg an liebessüßen Wonnen, Es schmerzt mich seines Lichtes eitles Drangen Und mich verzehren seiner Sonne Gluthen. Drum birg' dich Aug' dem Glanze irrd'scher</i> <i>Sonnen!</i> <i>Hüll dich in Nacht, sie stillt dein Verlangen Und heilt den Schmerz, wie Lethes kühle Fluthen.</i>
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The inclusion of the poem in the commentary-on translation part complements the mentioning of the piece of writing in the translation proper. Hence, it benefits Wright's reader-oriented approach to her translation. Even though the English speaking readership is not expected to have command of the German language, the inclusion of the poem fits the purpose of portraying the sound when reading it out loud and the visual representation of the German letters when looking at the poem closely.

Another example from *Portrait of a Tongue* fits this topic. The narrator states: “I always bought some of the Armenian cracker bread known as *ak-mak*: a magical name. Through the sound of this name I could see P standing in front of the store much more clearly than in the photo” (Wright 2013:41). The inclusion of the word “ak-mak” in Armenian provides an example for the readers where the sound of the word and the visual arrangement of the letters are foregrounded opposed to the literal meaning of the translated word. This love for playing with language is also expressed in the translator’s dialogue in *Portrait of a Tongue*: “Most of the time her interest focuses on the physiological aspects of speech: how it sounds or how it looks on the page” (Wright 2013:75). All of these examples reveal Tawada’s love for the aesthetic quality of language expressed by the narrator: “The people I worked with in the café in Berlin had no sense of smell when it came to languages” (Wright 2013:120,121). Additionally, the narrator in *Portrait of a Tongue* invites the readers to critically think about their perception of language besides the linguistic quality of words. The translation states: “Off” also means *aus*. There is something incurable about the way the word sounds” (Wright 2013: 104). An answer to this dilemma is being provided by Wright’s comments on Tawada’s oeuvre in the following example (Wright 2013: 131,132):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR’S DIALOGUE
“There is nothing nicer than sitting in a theatre and spending hours listening to a language I don’t understand,” I said to P later.	In an essay entitles “Europa und Mehrsprachigkeit“

	[Europe and Multilingualism], Tawada argues that "it's not important that a person learn a lot of languages, but rather that he or she keeps an open ear." She tells how, at a conference in her work organized by her French translator Bernard Banoun, participants gave papers in many different languages, and everyone listened to everyone else whether or not they understood what was being said. "They were present in body and soul, and this gave rise to a symphony of unsynchronized languages." (2010:411)
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Hence, language speakers do not always necessarily have to understand a language to receive pleasure. On the contrary, Tawada believes that languages who's words and utterances cannot be understood as sole entities of language, can present a reward to people by the mere experience of the sound of the foreign language. It becomes clearer with this example (Wright 2013:79):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
Maybe temperature in the form of numbers doesn't play much of a role when one is a child. A child is either cold or warm, but doesn't usually think about the temperature and carries on playing. As adults we always want to know whether it's warm or not, and suddenly we are unsure, so we look at the mercury.	Here Tawada explores the idea that language is not always necessary: that there are states of life in which one can and does exist without it.

This example shows that the major motif of language in *Portrait of a Tongue* becomes part of the translation. Through the translator's engagement with the text, the readers are enriched with background information about Tawada's love for language and her love for the absence of language alike.

The Japanese culture, Tawada was born into, entails certain cultural practices exemplified in the following passage from *Portrait of a Tongue* (Wright 2013:101,102)⁵:

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
After swimming, I was afraid to go outside with wet hair.	

⁵ A closer analysis of this example with reference to autofiction follows in chapter 4.3.

I didn't know where this fear came from. I rarely got colds, and when I did have a cold, then it was never because I had wet hair. The very phrase "wet hair" made me afraid, even at the height of summer.	I asked J, my colleague who teaches Japanese, if there was a taboo surrounding wet hair in Japan. He said that as far as he was aware there was none, but that there certainly was a cultural preoccupation with long, black hair and that going outside with wet hair might be read as not taking proper care of oneself. The custom in Japan is also to bathe or shower in the evening, so having wet hair during the day would be unusual.
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The familiarity with Tawada's cultural background helps to understand the narrator's

fear of having wet hair. The explanation in the commentary-on translation enables the reader to retrace Tawada's cultural concepts in her mind: inhabiting two identities as an exophone writer: a Japanese and German one. Wright is aware of Tawada's cultural background and plays with that knowledge in the commentary-on translation. As language speakers can only express cultural practices if their culture has words for naming them, cultural practices result from the way people speak. Language has a "definite role in shaping habitual thoughts" as Yule calls it (269). In other words, the way of thinking about everyday cultural practices is defined by a culture's use of language. In Yule's words "languages reflect [culture's] concerns" (271). The concern in this example is the taboo surrounding wet hair in Japan that has been mentioned by the protagonist in the story.

The following quote from the exophonic writer Eva Hoffman in the translator's dialogue deals with obstacles one faces when adopting a new language (Wright 2013: 91-92):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
P said to me that she could never reach the same level she had in English in another language. But whereas in English she had an accent, she had no accent in French. Her French friends confirmed this. In French she didn't need to speak with an accent. An accent preserves the memories of one's mother tongue. Without an accent you could be swallowed up by the present of	

the foreign language.	In <i>Lost in Translation</i>, Eva Hoffman discusses the immigrant's dilemma in the following terms: "The soul can shrivel from an excess of critical distance, and if I don't want to remain in arid internal exile for the rest of my life, I have to find a way to lose my alienation without losing myself. But how does one bend towards another culture without falling over, how does one strike an elastic balance between rigidity and self-effacement?" (1989:209)
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Wright might have put the quote from Hoffmann's memoir *Lost in Translation* in the commentary-on translation as Hoffmann is facing similar troubles as Tawada being an exophonic writer in a foreign environment. Hence, the discussed topic overlaps with Tawada's realm of writings. In the translator's note Wright explains that her comments about the text's allusions – e.g. Tawada's hinting at the difficulty a speaker experiences juggling two languages and the struggle with identification (Wright 2013:31). Unlike Tawada however, Hoffmann experienced a forced relocation, which lead to her adoption of the English language as literary expression. She escaped the Holocaust as a teenager with her parents and tells a personal story about how she immigrated from Poland to Canada in the 1950 (Hoffmann: 1995). However, Hoffmann's fear of losing one's identity as stated in *Lost in Translation* can be taken away by the quote from *Portrait of a Tongue* in bold type in the translation proper – the basis for Wright's commentary-on translation on other exophonic writers. It is a

continuation of the narrator's reflections on languages and accents in the text.

2.2.3. Quotations from other German exophonic writers

The purposeful inclusion of Wright's commentaries on other contemporary exophonic writers who adopted German as one of their chosen languages of literary expression will be examined in this chapter. Wright explains in her introduction on translating *Portrait of a Tonguet* hat the intertextual references in the text are by no means unintentional. Their aim of purposeful inclusion is to be discovered by Wright's commentary-on translation (Wright 2013:31). The following example from *Portrait of a Tongue* examines semiotic theory next to the concept of "Obrigkeitsdeutsch" by the German exophonic writer Franco Biondi (Wright 2013:42, 43):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I was happy to be free of Caenis, the faded women's café in Berlin where I had worked as a waitress five days a week. The women who came to the café were not uninteresting, but their language too often disappointed me. It sounded cold but loud at the same time; bold but without critical edge; cut off from the magical world of material objects; anxiously pompous and	

possessive.	Does she mean the magical world of objects or of signs (in a Saussurean sense) ? She both reinforced and calls into question the referentiality of words. If the women are possessive [besitzergreifend] where language is concerned, then this may be described an instance of what exophonic writer Franco Biondo refers to as Obrigkeitsdeutsch [literaly, authority-German] (cf.Biondi 1995), when native speakers of German claim their authority over the German language, enforcing the rules of German grammar and insisting on conventional usage.
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Wright's comment on the translation in the first paragraph deals with 20th century theory on semiotics. The reference to the structural linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, does not strike the readers in an unexpected manner. Wright is aware of Tawada's defamiliarization technique of the signifier (linguistic form) and signified (meaning of the form) that results from an arbitrary connection between them. Therefore, a note on the underlying linguistic theory applied by Tawada, with a critical stance towards it, appears reasonable. However, Wright's comment on the possessiveness of language

is of major importance here, as it refers to the German exophonic writer Franco Biondi. Being a first generation post-war exophonic writer in Germany – Tawada in contrast is part of the second generation German exophonic writers – Biondi is in favor of the plurality of languages. Through the socio-political collective *PoLiKunst*, he was part of, guest workers who came to Germany in the 1950s and 1960s who used German as their literary language were supported. (Wright 2013:2). Especially this possessive form of using language can actually be observed in the current example. The German style of expressing an emotion of feeling in a negative way in order not to let it appear as strong as it would sound if a positive verb + adjective combination had been used, can be detected in the translation. The word choice: “The women who came to the café were not uninteresting [...]” is an instance of this phenomena. Instead of plainly stating: “The women who came to the café were interesting [...]”, Wright uses in the translation the phrase: “The women who came to the café were not uninteresting [...]”. The wording “not uninteresting” in the translation, which sounds more mysterious, closes the circle to Saussure’s magical world of signs and objects.

The next example from *Portrait of a Tongue* is a reference to the German exophonic writer Emine Sevgi Özdamar who breaks down cultural hierarchies and transcultural intertextuality in her writings (Wright 2013: 83):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR’S DIALOGUE
Sometimes, in the middle of a sentence, P begins to speak more slowly and hesitatingly, as though she has noticed the treachery of language	

and doesn't want to continue speaking. Then she makes a spirited leap; it is spontaneous and without purpose. And thus she hits the nail on the head.	This reminds me of a passage from Emine Sevgi Özdamar's short story "Mutterzunge" [Mother Tongue]. Like Tawada, Özdamar is a German exophonic writer; her mother tongue is Turkish. "My mother said to me: 'You know, you talk, you think you're saying everything, but then suddenly you leap over unsaid words, then you talk calmly again, I leap along with you, then I breathe calmly'" (1998a:9) Is the treachery of language multiplied or lessened when a person has more than one mother tongue?
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Mutterzunge is a postcolonial text in the best sense, which allows Turkish and

German to appear side by side equally. It reproduces Turkish proverbs in their literal translation, and often wraps the text written in German in a Turkish sentence structure. Özdamar's text quoted in the commentary-on translation is subversive prose. Resistance is inscribed in each of her lines (Özdamar 1998). Wright tries to highlight her stance of questioning already-established notions in literary tradition in an experimental manner with the inclusion of this quote by Özdamar. She motivates the readers to engage with their own perspectives about language usage, portrayal and preference of languages. She even closes her commentary-on translation with a question for the readers. Has language power of the people who speak it? Or is it the other way around? Wright does not answer these questions but rather stimulates the readers to reflect and open up a critical space to think about languages - in different contexts and for varying purposes.

2.2.4. Translator's personal anecdotes

The fourth class is concerned with the translator's personal anecdotes referring outside the text under discussion. The experimental form of the translation is especially due to the inclusion of the translator's personal anecdotes successfully established. Through the register of cooking, Wright explains her approach towards experienced cultural practices to the readers in the example below (Wright 2013: 89-90):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
When P gave me the recipe for panna cotta, she used pounds as her unit of measurement.	I began to bake when I wanted to eat things from home that weren't

	available where I was living (first in Germany, then in Canada and the United States). Christmas cake was the first necessity, then Eccles cakes, a Lancashire treat. With M, a post-war German immigrant to Canada, I discussed the difficulties of purchasing weighing scales. North American recipes call for cups of things, thereby doing away with the need to put things on a scale. This seemed baffling – how much, exactly, was a cup of carrots? – as well as contrary to Delia Smith’s insistence that baking is a precise art.
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Being English herself, like the celebrity chef in British popular culture mentioned in the translator’s dialogue, Wright elaborates on her feelings about national dishes in a foreign country. When adapting to another culture, one is confronted with different cultural practices – even different daily life performances like baking. Through the inclusion of personal anecdotes, Wright minimizes the distance to the readers. Plus, she also mimics Tawada’s style of writing – such as only mentioning people with one capitalized letter instead of the whole name – to show her appreciation for Tawada’s writing. Consequently, Wright enriches the text with her subjective translational choices.⁶

⁶ A more thorough analysis of the translator’s personal anecdotes in the commentary-on translation will follow in chapter 4 on autofiction.

2.2.5. Translator's reading responses

Finally, the fifth class is concerned with the translator's own reading responses to the text. The example from the commentary-on translation below sums up the content of *Portrait of a Tongue* in one sentence. As it is put in the middle of the two paragraphs on the left, I suggest it should be valid for reference to both paragraphs in the translation proper (Wright 2013:94):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I tried to keep a diary in the style of P's notes. With no narrative thread, no climax, meandering, unpragmatic, definitely not esoteric. I should write down things whose importance isn't yet obvious. The most important things often occur in isolation; they are peculiar and very small.	This is the perfect description of "Portrait of a Tongue."

I agree with Wright that *Portrait of a Tongue* is an unconventional short story without a climax or traditional story telling features. The piece of writing mirrors the idea of Tawada's web of languages, meaning that words can stand on their own as powerful as they are. However, they are still undeniably connected. To get the meaning of the text, a plot summary of *Portrait of a Tongue* is not necessarily useful. On the contrary, the text's importance lies within the small and fractured anecdotes of the characters involved, and of course, about their love towards language.

The example below shows that the translator uses an inclusive perspective about the addition of transcultural information in *Portrait of a Tongue* (Wright 2013:70). Wright's cultural knowledge about the Canadian and U.S. American measurement units expressed in the commentary-on translation, enriches the translation and opens a discussion about national identities:

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
Sometimes she spoke haltingly, with periods of silence, as though she was thinking in gallons but speaking in litres.	Some gas stations on the American side of the US- Canadian border list their prices per gallon and per "Canadian litre."

The inclusion of this comment, enlightens the readers about a positive example where the measurement unit of the U.S. namely gallon and litre used in Canada is combined to preserve cultural heritage from Canada and the US. As mentioned in *Portrait of a Tongue* – the extratextual writer Chantal Wright experienced migration herself. She was born in the U.K and moved to Canada and the US as an adult for her career (Wright 2013:89). Therefore, her reading response is relevant as it mirrors her own experience with migration. Her comment on the translation reveals an inclusive stance towards immigration. By labeling the measurement at gas stations at the American side of the US – Canadian border both in gallons and Canadian litre,

immigrations are encouraged to develop a sense of belonging to their host country.

With exactly this example already mentioned, Wright touches upon the discourse of national identities in *Portrait of a Tongue*. The analysis of the following example deals with the continuation of the discussion of the topic about national identities on forthcoming pages in the translation (Wright 2013:139, 140):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
We talked about dual nationality, which was still not permitted in many countries. “At this point I would really like to become an American after all,” P said with an ambiguous smile.	German nationals may be dual citizens of Germany and another EU country (and of other countries in certain restricted circumstances, usually connected with political exile and/or asylum) but dual citizenship of, say, Germany and the United States is not permitted once a German national has reached adulthood. This state of affairs has been particularly

	problematic for Germany's Turkish population, which forms the largest ethnic community in Germany after Germans themselves.
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Wright's reading response on the translation in the commentary-on translation on dual nationality reminds me of the post-colonial crisis of identity, which expresses "concern with the development or recovery of an effective identifying relationship between self and place" (Ashcroft et. al 2002: 8). The short story's protagonist P is affected by this crisis. She desires to become fully immersed in the US American culture with all its cultural practices, believes and benefits. However, for successfully reaching her goal she has to surmount bureaucratic difficulties. The question arises here whether the actual document that affirms the dual nationality is necessary for P to feel a connection to her chosen place of residence or rather motivates her to engage critically with her own conceptions about nationality and belonging. Hence, Wright's commentary-on translation is not only justified by the personal connection to the extratextual writer but also relevant for the translation as it offers additional information about cultural concepts – like national identity – with an invitation to the readers to rethink established structures in different cultural contexts. The fact that dual citizenship is not possible anymore once the state of adulthood has been reached can be put in analogy with the practice of exophony. The adoption of a language other than a speaker's mother tongue is usually applied when coming of age. Consequently, while the selection of nationality is not possible anymore once a speaker has become an adult, the choice of adopting a non-native language is, however. Having read through Tawada's pieces of writing, it becomes clear that for

her the link between a speaker's choice of language and national identity becomes irrelevant as she questions entrenched structures in various forms – especially with regard to language and cultural theories.

The perception about national identities and theory about “the other” as opposed to members of the “in-group” is the subject of discussion in this example from *Portrait of a Tongue* (Wright 2013:140, 141):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
“Do you know how the Americans make salad?” P asked me in a tone of mock disdain. I repeated what she had said and put heavy emphasis on the article that come before the noun: “How do <i>the</i> Americans make salad?” Her husband grinned and repeated: “Oh yes, the Americans. When they make salad...”	At first I wondered if this anecdote was a pun on the German word <i>Salat</i>, which can mean both “lettuce” and “mess” or “chaos”, but my understanding is that the dialogue is taking place in

	English rather than German. The fact that it follows on from P's thoughts on dual nationality suggests that the narrator's interest lies with P's conception of Americans as "other", that is, not herself and not her family – this despite P's expressed desire to become "American."
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I solely want to analyze the parts highlighted in bold type in the example as they deal with the continuation of the discussion about dual nationality in the translator's dialogue. The dilemma of the "us" versus "them" ideology becomes apparent here. The story's protagonist P aspires to become a US citizen, though she does not identify herself with the "in-group" – the other Americans. Referring back to Tajfel's social identity theory⁷, P has developed an aversion towards "the Americans" which she considers as a separate group distinct to herself belonging to a group of migrants which reside in the US. Despite the fact that she has been living the US for many years, she still does not identify herself with the "in-group" - with the "Americans". They are viewed as fundamentally different to P. Therefore, Wright uses the definite article "the" in front of the noun "Americans" in *Portrait of a Tongue* to establish a distinction between the protagonist P and the rest of the group in the translation proper.

Regarding the same matter from a post-colonial perspective, Salman

⁷ See 2.2.1. linguistic facilitators

Rushdie's critical essay *Imaginary Homelands* – already touched upon in this thesis's introduction – fits the discussion about migration and belonging in *Portrait of a Tongue*. A migrant is in his words: “perhaps, the central or defining figure of the twentieth century” (Rushdie 1991: 227). The story's protagonist P – a German woman, who moved to the US– experiences the condition of being a migrant herself. Hence, she can be put in analogy with Rushdie's concept of migration as a transition - either from one country to another, from one language or culture to another or even from the traditional countryside to cosmopolitan cities (Rushdie 1991: 227). As Tawada, Wright and the story's protagonist all have experienced migration and different stages of transitions concerning their places of residence, the topic of migration, belonging and feeling of being an outsider in a new surrounding is only too well known. With Tawada's background of a Japanese culture, P's desire to become “American” – the main protagonist's ambition in the short story – can be put in analogy with the Japanese mimicking the European culture in the following commentary-on translation passage from *Portrait of a Tongue* (Wright 2013: 126,127)⁸:

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
P and I went to a concert at which students from several universities were playing together. There were four groups in total, three small orchestras and	

⁸ Even though this example would also fit the category of subchapter 2.2.2. intertextual references from Tawada's writing due to the citation of one of her pieces of writing, I intentionally positioned it here, as it benefits my analysis about the translator's reading responses on the topic of discussing nationalism. Only the commentary-on translation of the translation will be part of the following analysis.

a piano quartet. In the first two groups, who were playing Mozart and Beethoven, all the students were Asian Americans. The enthusiasm for German classical music has a long history in East Asia. But we didn't just see East Asian names in the program, there were Southeast Asian and South Asian names as well.	“Tawada’s prose text ‘Eigentlich darf man es niemandem sagen, aber Europa gibt es nicht‘ [You’re not supposed to tell anybody, but Europe doesn’t actually exist] contains the following lines: “Many Japanese are not embarrassed to view culture eurocentrically. In their eyes European culture is not the property of the Europeans because it is easy for others to imitate. They say that the
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	culture that is best able to imitate European culture is the best culture, and that is definitely not Europe but Japan. This topsy-turvy nationalism has become part of everyday Japanese life" (1996d:49).
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This example from *Portrait of a Tongue* about Japanese nationalism can be analyzed according to Benedict Anderson's concept of nations as "imagined communities". He constates that nations are socially constructed by individuals which share the same mindset of regarding themselves as a part of a particular group (Anderson 2006: 6). In his words "[...] a nation is imagined as a community [...] as it is conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship" (Anderson 2006:7). Unfortunately, belonging to one group leads to the exclusion of other individuals which belong to a different community. This limitation exists due to the mental boundaries individuals have by dividing people due to their culture, ethnicity, or language use into different groups, instead of imagining everyone in one society with the collective idea of one nationalism (Anderson 2006:7). The inclusion of Wright's comment opens up a critical space for discussion about different approaches towards nationalism – especially comparing Europe with Japan through Tawada's eyes. The additional information about Tawada's piece of writing highlights her perspectives on nationalism and her borderless approach to language and perception of a mentally and culturally constructed concept like nationalism. Her tongue-in cheek comment shows the readers not to take themselves or any given cultural theories too seriously. She light-

heartedly manages to shift the focus away from the expected outcome (eurocentric view on culture as the one and only correct way to regard culture) towards a surprising remark about the Japanese culture being not ashamed about mimicking another culture, but rather regarding the matter from the opposite perspective.

Referring back to the subtitle of this thesis *Experimental Translation as Transcultural Rewriting* the act of “rewriting” stems from the postcolonial perspective of writing back from the periphery to the center. Here the focus is placed on a switch in perspectives. Wright’s experimental translation can be labelled as a contemporary form of rewriting in the context of traditional translation studies. However, *Portrait of a Tongue* is no rewriting in the classic sense like rewriting canonical stories. The reference to rewriting can be placed through the borrowed method of rewriting by Wright. With her experimental approach to translation in *Portrait of a Tongue*, she opens up an innovative and contemporary space within traditional translation studies which can indeed be interpreted as “writing back” to the classical, canonized translation tradition that dismantles assumptions about language and prevailing ideological constructions in an interactive manner.

Summarizing, a variety of reading responses, literary and cultural translations, intertextual elements and personal anecdotes are provided in the translator’s dialogue (Wright 2013:30-33). As a result, Wright’s experimental translation can be regarded as multi-perspectival and relational. Eventually, it can also be labelled as mutable through the readers’ active engagement with the translation and their different resulting interpretations of the text.

3. NARRATION

The narration in *Portrait of a Tongue* is carried out, in Wright’s words, by “the same narrator who populates Yoko Tawada’s other autofictions, namely, a Japanese

woman who allows her foreign and foreignizing gaze to wander over Western culture and the German language” (2013:36). Tawada’s early German writings are told by this nameless first person narrator “who speculates on why something is seen as foreign, or fremd” (Brandt 2005:3). Consequently, narrators in Tawada’s texts explore forms in which foreignness occurs due to Tawada’s questioning of naturalized links between subjects and language (Yildiz 78). The reason for the foreignizing effect in Tawada’s writing is the arbitrariness of the relationship between signifier and signified (Wright 2013:11). Her style of writing can be held analogous to the perspective of someone who experiences cultural habits for the first time. Novel expressions, curious perspectives on language and inspirational word combinations are part of her writing jargon. Thus, Tawada’s writing style that is manifested in a defamiliarization of the common is established through an anthropological perspective on the European culture and especially the German context. Her other autofictions like *Ein Gast* and *Das nackte Auge* also leave the reader with a feeling of being outside a culture, an immigrant or even a tourist (Pereira 1). *Porträt einer Zunge* is one among many short stories by Tawada written in German about adapting to a new culture, both physically and linguistically. Her protagonist - only referred to as “P” - is a German woman who has lived in the United States for many years and whose German has been transformed by English due to the new culture and language. Consequently, the narrator serves as the embodiment of translingualism and transculturalism in the text. The topics of foreignness and defamiliarization are not only present content wise, but also visible through conscious narratological techniques, whose analysis will follow.

3.1. Visual representation of the translation’s structure

Contemporary scholars such as Lawrence Venuti aim at ending translators’ invisibility

in the field of translation studies (1995:30). I am in favor of Venuti's approach to highlight a translator's visibility in a text, as it appears reasonable to me to pay tribute to the person who fabricated a specific piece of art – which Wright's experimental translation *Portrait of a Tongue* can respectfully be labelled. Additionally, I support considering translations as pieces of creative writing that can stand on their own, regardless of their hierarchical dependency on their allegedly higher ranked original versions by the text's receiving audience. The structure of *Portrait of a Tongue* which rewards the text its experimental quality through the presence of the translator's voice, reveals that the translation is not dependable on the source text. With the translation on the left and the commentary-on translation on the right, the reader is supposed to construct a narrative pattern in the "in-between space" of the two columns. Therefore, hybridity in the text is created through the narrative pattern that rather focuses on a peer- to peer relationship than on a hierarchical distinction based on the level of the text (translation) and the meta-text (comments).

According to the use of typography in the text, the translation and commentary-on translation are regarded equally on a peer-to peer level. Italics are used as linguistic facilitators to mark German phrases that are deliberately kept in the English translation: "*Schön, daß du wieder da bist?*" (Wright 2013:118). Oppositely, brackets symbolize English translations of the German phrases: "[It's nice that you're back]" (Wright 2013:118). Hence, brackets are used to mark the mere literal translations. The translation and commentary-on translation are written in the same font and size. Therefore, the translation and reflection on the text are placed on a peer-level which can also be detected through the visual representation of her text in a two-fold manner.

Instead of a vertical alignment of the translation on top of the page and the comments at the bottom of the page, which would, according to the reading flow

of western cultures (from top to bottom, from left to right), apply hierarchical structures and preference to the text first presented on the top left part of the page, the horizontal structure of the translational autofiction implies plurivocality and hybridity of texts on an equal level. The pages of the translation (35-144) are split into two columns: the "translation proper" is in the left-hand column and the "translator's dialogue" is placed in the right-hand column (Vezzaro 2). The wording of "translation proper" is borrowed from Roman Jakobson's threefold classical paradigm to classify translations from 1959.⁹ As the experimental character of *Portrait of a Tongue* is only gained through the translator's interaction with the translation on a meta-level; the translation on the left hand side will solely be called "translation proper" in this thesis. The deliberate choice of the dual visualization reveals that the translator's dialogue is an intrinsic quality of the translation. The readers are expected to switch between the two columns during their reading process like in the example below (Wright 2013: 55):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I have certainly come across the word <i>hegen</i> in novels or in fairy tales, but I have hardly ever heard it in everyday life.	I have used the word "fairytale" to translate the compound noun <i>Rittermärchen</i> , but a <i>Rittermärchen</i> is not really a fairytale. There is no

⁹ He distinguishes between *interlingual*- or translation proper, between the signs of two languages; *intra lingual*, between the signs of the same language; and *intersemiotic*, between linguistic and non-linguistic signs (Jakobson 139).

	good single word in English, however, for a tale involving knights, in the manner that English has a word for tales about cowboys.
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The word *hegen* in the translation is put in italics just like the words *Rittermärchen* in the commentary-on translation. Hence, the readers know that these words are deliberately kept in the text in the German language. The quotation marks for “fairytale” in the translator’s dialogue are used to demonstrate to the readers that the translator specifically has made changes or has had difficulties in translating the word as explained in the commentary-on translation. What is striking here, however, is the different form of spelling for the word “fairytale”. In the translation the plural form of fairy tales written with two separate words has been chosen. I assume that the translator aimed at highlighting the context of a fantasy story. In the translator’s dialogue, on the other hand, fairytale is spelled with one word. This deliberate choice is not explained in the commentary-on translation. The reason, however, for the different forms of spelling could be that in the translator’s dialogue, the focus should be on the genre of a fairytale – which is regarded to be a children’s story – opposed to the mentioning of a tale about cowboys. The experimental form of the translation enables the reader to perceive the translator as consciously self-reflecting about the translation choices in a first person narration on a meta-level in the commentary-on translation – unusual for traditional translations where the readers are not informed about the motivation behind the translator’s choices.

3.2. Narratological analysis

In order to provide a complete analysis of the different narrative techniques in *Portrait of a Tongue*, the explanation of the term autofiction¹⁰ is necessary beforehand. The term autofiction can be split into its two parts auto and fiction. Therefore, a differentiation concerning the narrator has to be made. With a focus on the former, the narrator's "I" is synonymous with the author." Highlighting, conversely, the latter, the narrator shares similarities with the author, but is not the same as the author. (Van Laer 2). Hence, in autofictions such as *Portrait of a Tongue* "the author-character and the extratextual author become divergent yet metaleptically interconnected entities" in Worthington's terminology (5). Metalepsis, the central characteristic of autofiction, is a term defined by Jeff Thoss as: "a paradoxical transgression of the line that separates the inside from the outside of a story world" (2015:4 qtd in Worthington 187). The narrator in the commentary-on translation in *Portrait of a Tongue* summarizes the dilemma:

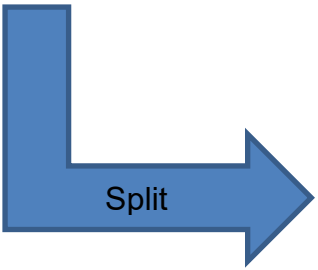
When the narrator states that she began meeting P on a daily basis, does she mean in real life or in the pages of her manuscript? Is she looking for a real person (Deneuve?) on whom to model a fictional character (P), or is she fictionalizing a real-life P? (Wright: 2013:40).

An autofictional approach to translations requires a distinction between different forms of narrative patterns that are applied. The outcome of my analysis of the narration in *Portrait of a Tongue* reveals a split: Wright separates her narrative agents into two modes: a **translation** and a **commentary-on translation** or **translator's dialogue** referring back to Vezzaro's terminology (2). Hence, she also divides her agents into two voices: predominantly an unnamed first-person narrator in the translation part on the left, which occasionally applies also second-and third-person

¹⁰ The topic of autofiction will be dealt with more closely in chapter four

narration and an unnamed translator that generally shifts between first-, second- and third-person narration in the commentary-on translation part on the right. The table below serves the purpose of visualizing six main features of the different narrative techniques in *Portrait of a Tongue* with key information about narrative theory and suitable pieces of writing that exemplify my points. The translation proper is inherently connected to the commentary-on translation. The following table portrays both the translation proper and the translator's dialogue opposite each other in the same manner as in *Portrait of a Tongue*. Therefore, even the line breaks in the chosen examples mirror the visual representation in the text under discussion. The examples of part five for the category "function" are chosen as best-practice cases for each instance. The relevant page numbers from *Portrait of a Tongue* are given at the end of the examples. The counterparts for the examples – the commentary-on translation for a paragraph in the translation and vice versa – however, are not provided in the same manner in my table below as they are shown in the printed version of *Portrait of a Tongue*. This choice is justified, as a more detailed analysis of the examples concerning the narrative voices – divided into first-person, second-person and third-person narration – will be provided in the next chapters:

Analysis of narrative techniques in <i>Portrait of a Tongue</i>	
1. NARRATIVE MODES	
TRANSLATION PROPER	COMMENTARY-ON TRANSLATION or TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
2. NARRATIVE VOICES	

UNNAMED FIRST PERSON NARRATOR FIRST-PERSON NARRATIVE SITUATION (homodiegetic) Character within fictional world 1st-person narrator 	UNNAMED TRANSLATOR FIGURAL NARRATIVE SITUATION (heterodiegetic) Character outside fictional world 3rd-person narrator via a reflector character 1st person narration: - CHARACTER WITHIN FICTIONAL WORLD - narrator as mediator between reader and realm of characters in the story, translator persona is metaleptically connected to storyworld as well as to Wright's extratextual self
3. PERSPECTIVATION	
INTERNAL FOCALISATION "I" narrator as reflector character or focal character	EXTERNAL FOCALISATION Focuses on the narrated character's point of view
4. POINT OF VIEW	

FIRST-PERSON NARRATION	
SECOND-PERSON NARRATION	
THIRD-PERSON NARRATION	
5. FUNCTION	
FIRST-PERSON NARRATION	
PROVIDING INSIGHTS INTO THE NARRATOR'S INNER LIFE I feel as though I have spent more time waiting for delayed trains in my life than other people have. Nor only in Warsaw or New Delhi, but also at <i>Bahnhof Zoo</i>. Several times I have managed to write difficult parts of a book in the waiting room at a station. I especially like to wait in a soulless room (Wright 2013:99).	EXPLAINING TRANSLATIONAL CHOICES SUBJECTIVELY [We were efficient] "This is actually an inadequate translation for reasons that I am about to explain" (Wright 2013:67). ADDING AUTOFICTIONAL BACKGROUND "I saw a Sesame Street DVD in the library the other day" [...](Wright 2013:60).
SECOND-PERSON NARRATION	
REQUESTING THE READERS' CRITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE TEXT	

LINGUISTICALLY AND CONTEXTUALLY	
How long does it take until you can feel a number directly on your skin without re-calculating it? [...] (Wright 2013:78).	“[...] [i]n this context, it means the space in which you shut yourself up for a period of time and dedicate yourself to one purpose” (Wright 2013:110).
THIRD-PERSON NARRATION	
PROVIDING BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR THE STORYLINE P was in her early twenties when she left the Rhineland and emigrated to America. In the first year she worked as an au pair in a New York suburb, then she travelled through America before starting work at Harvard University where she later completed her doctorate (Wright 2013:47).	DESCRIBING TRANSLATIONAL CHOICES LINGUISTICALLY “[My professional situation depresses me]. The phrase sounds normal, if ever so slightly awkward, when translated into English. In German, however, <i>beruflich</i> would be the correct term. <i>Professionell</i> is typically employed to suggest that a job has been done well expertly, that is, professionally (Wright 2013:70).
6. ROLE	
FIRST-PERSON NARRATION	

Personal	Metalevel
SECOND-PERSON NARRATION	
Addressing the readers directly	Peer- to peer level Reducing the distance to the readers
THIRD-PERSON NARRATION	
Omniscient narrator	

The first distinction between the narrative techniques in the text under discussion has to be made between the narrative voices. In the translation proper a first-person narrative situation can be detected opposed to the translator's dialogue where a figural narrative situation is applied. The term "first person narrative situation" is borrowed from Franz Karl Stanzel (5) and describes the narrator's active involvement and experienced participation represented as a character within the fictional world (48). For her translation proper of Tawada's *Portrait of a Tongue* Wright uses a "first-person narrator" which Gerard Genette, a 1980s French structuralist, calls a "homodiegetic narrator" (244) that inhabits the space inside the story world: "I remember an essay I wrote as a seven-year-old schoolgirl" (Wright 2013: 35); "I told P that I intended to paint a "portrait of a lady" (Wright 2013:45). Wright mainly applies what Stanzel calls a "figural narrative situation" (5) – a narrator that does not belong to the world of the characters – in her commentary-on translation. According to traditional terminology, it is known as a "third-person narrator" (Stanzel 48). In Genette's definition this is a "heterodiegetic narrator" (244), as he is "telling the plot through a reflector character" (Stanzel 57). As reflector characters are, according to Stanzel, leaning towards thought and do not narrate themselves, the reader rather

experiences the story through their eyes and becomes aware of their feelings and emotions (55). Stanzel's definition does not fully apply for the translator's persona in the commentary-on translation. The narrative mode consists of a mixture of first-person, second-person and third-person narration for different purposes. The first-person narrator from the example in the table (5. Function) in the commentary-on translation is not part of the characters in the fictional world. The function of the first-person narrator in this case is to merely describe translational choices linguistically. However, I argue that the first-person narrator in the commentary-on translation is indeed one of the fictional characters within the story world of *Portrait of a Tongue* in instances where the first-person narrator holds the function of adding autobiographical background: "When I originally wrote the previous paragraph [...]"(Wright 2013: 61), "I began to bake when I wanted to eat things from home that weren't available where I was living (first in Germany, then in Canada and the United States). In Stanzel's definition applied here, it would describe a narrator that functions as a mediator between the readers and the world of the characters (5). Hence, Wright's translator's persona in the commentary-on translation is metaleptically connected to the story world as well as to her extratextual self. The following example from the text benefits my claim. The relevant part is highlighted in bold type in the translator's dialogue (Wright 2013: 144):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
"<i>Ja, mein Herz,</i>" she said to me sometimes. I was embarrassed when I heard the word <i>Herz</i>. It was too warm and fragile. The word	[Yes, my heart]

<i>Artischockenherz,</i>	on	the	[artichoke	heart]
other	hand,	always	gave	Artichokes are the one food to
me	pleasure.			which I am allergic.

This example proves the inconsistency in the text's narration. Consequently, I am posing the following questions: Who is allergic to artichokes? Is it Chantal Wright as the extratextual author? Or is it Wright's translator persona? This example sentence gives the impression that Wright herself is one of the characters in the text; hence, a character within the story world. Regardless of the answerless questions, the first-person narrator in the example mediates between the readers and the world of the characters.

Concerning the "perspectivization" of narration in the translation, both an internal and external focalization can be detected (Stanzel 21). The external perspective is situated outside the story's center of action (Stanzel 49), which is the case for the commentary-on translation. The "I" narrator is a "reflector character" in Stanzel's words (9) and is called a "focal character" by Genette due to the fact that he/she is focusing on the narrated character's point of view (190). According to Genette changes in the point of view of the narration are changes in the focalization (194). He calls the turn taking of various "focal characters" within a novel's plotline "variable focalization" (Genette 189). In other words, if the focalization changes from one character to another within a story, variable focalization occurs. This is the case with the text under analysis. The narration, which is split into a translation proper and a commentary-on translation, is characterized by two focalizers. The narrator in the translation proper has an internal focalizer while the narrator in the commentary-on translation is equipped with an external focalizer. Consequently, two types of narration are combined in the text, namely predominately first-person narration for

the translation and figural narration with a reflector character for the commentary-on translation.

First-person narration is used in the translation proper for providing insights into the character's inner life: "I feel as though I have spent more time waiting for delayed trains in my life than other people have. [...]" (Wright 2013:99). Hence, the personal tone should engage the readers to also think about similar experiences mentioned in *Portrait of a Tongue* in the extra-textual world they belong to. The translator character in the commentary-on translation symbolized as "I" in the text uses a homodiegetic narrator for firstly, explaining translational choices subjectively on a metalevel: "[...] This is actually an inadequate translation for reasons that I am about to explain." (Wright: 2013:67) and secondly for adding autofictional background: "I saw a Sesame Street DVD in the library the other day" (Wright: 2013:60).

Second-person narrative technique for both the translation proper and the commentary-on translation is used to fulfill the purpose of requesting the reader's critical engagement with the text linguistically and contextually. The example from the translation proper: "How long does it take until you can feel a number directly on your skin without re-calculating it? [...]" (Wright 2013:78) addresses the text's audience directly with the personal pronoun "you" to let their answer be part of the text's relevance on the same level as the proposed question. The choice of "you" in the translator's dialogue fits the same purpose of inviting the readers to take part in the conversations mentioned in *Portrait of a Tongue* also extra-textually. The analysis of the following example reveals the explanation of the German term *Schriftraum* in the commentary-on translation for the readers in a personal manner: "[...] [i]n this context, it means that space in which you shut yourself up for a period of time and dedicate yourself to one purpose" (Wright 2013:110).

Third-person narrative situation in the translation proper is applied for providing background information for the storyline of *Portrait of a Tongue*:

P was in her early twenties when she left the Rhineland and emigrated to America. In the first year she worked as an au pair in a New York suburb, then she travelled through America before starting work at Harvard University where she later completed her doctorate (Wright 2013: 47).

The translator figure is expressed through a third-person heterodiegetic narrator in the commentary-on translation for describing translational choices linguistically: “[My professional situation depresses me]. The phrase sounds normal, if ever so slightly awkward, when translated into English” (Wright 2013: 70). This objective manner of expression is suitable for a third-person narrative situation and reveals to the readers the translator’s concerns about the translational choices apart from personal concerns. In both modes of narration – the translation proper and the commentary-on translation – a third-person narrative situation is employed to serve the role of an omniscient narrator of the events portrayed in the text.

The outcome of the analysis of the narrative voices in the translation proper and in the commentary-on translation states that the translator basically embodies three voices: first-person narration, second-person narration and third-person narration. A closer inspection of these three different forms of narration in the translation proper and in the translator’s dialogue and comments on the various roles of the narrators follows here. It will be concluded with a text analysis from *Portrait of a Tongue* where all three different modes of narration combined in the translation proper and the translator’s dialogue alike can be found in one example each for the translation proper and the translator’s dialogue.

3.2.1. First-person narration

The function of the first-person narration in the translation proper is opposed to the one in the translator's dialogue singular. The use of homodiegetic narration with the first person pronoun "I" should inform the readers about personal information the narrator aims at sharing with them in a welcoming manner just as friends would do. The role of the first-person narrator, however, in the translator's dialogue is different. The narrator is both part of the realm of the characters and simultaneously outside of it. This inconsistency is made possible through the homodiegetic narrator's different functions in the translator's dialogue. It is apparent that a first-person narrative situation is used to establish a meta level in the text when providing reading responses. The example below focuses on a first-person narrative situation with the first-person plural pronoun "we" (Wright 2013: 39,40):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
But maybe I hadn't heard the name properly because I couldn't find it in my dictionary of names.	How many words do we fail to find in the dictionary (or the spell checker?)

The choice of the first-person plural form "we" instead of, for example, first-person singular "I", reveals a more inclusive stance towards the readers: It invites them to enter into dialogue with the translator narrator to reflect and discuss. The topic that is mentioned in the translation proper of failing to find words in the dictionary, is relatable to many. Nevertheless, the mysterious quality of the topic leaves the

audience with a dissatisfied feeling. Hence, the narrator in the translator's dialogue is not alone with this observation, which justifies the choice of the first-person plural pronoun in the commentary-on translation.

The first-person plural pronoun can also be detected in the translation proper with the same intention as in the commentary-on translation. The following example reveals how the narrator feels part of a society that is also inclusive towards the text's readers: "The word *haben* comforts us with a capitalist, enlightened gesture, as though you can have feelings in the same way you can have a house and furniture" (Wright 2013: 54). Instead of choosing the pronoun "you" in combination with the verb "comforts", which would suggest a rather hierarchical relationship between narrator and reader with the feeling of denouncing the latter, the choice of the combination "comforts us" shows an inclusive perspective towards narrator and readers. Hence, the narrator identifies herself as belonging to the same society as the readers which can relate to the stated feelings of the narrator in the text.

Instead of providing a metatext that reflects on the translation, the translator narrator is undeniably woven into the realm of the characters in *Portrait of a Tongue* when applying the function of presenting autofictional information. The following example (Wright 2013: 50) shows that through the use of first-person narration, and through the addition of personal anecdotes, the translator narrator is one of the characters in the story: "J tells me that Japanese has incorporated the English 'greyhound' as a loan word, which means that the sound is represented using the *katakana* syllabary." The narrator functions as a character inside the story. The readers do not know whether that information is autobiographical or not. However, through the use of the first-person singular narrative situation the readers get the feeling of immediacy that is used here.

3.2.2. Second-person narration

Through the direct address of the audience with “you” in the translation proper, second-person narration is carried out successfully in *Portrait of a Tongue*. Referring to the discussed topic in the following example with second-person narration relatability with the readers is guaranteed: “In America you don’t have to think up a secret language. German is secretive enough” (Wright 2013: 65). Readers of this passage from the text’s translation proper who have been to a foreign country and spoke a language that is not known in the chosen destination are invited to share the joyful experience with the narrator. The choice of the pronoun “you” rather than “one” – which would imply third-person narration with a more distanced and neutral tone – fits the text’s content.

The last example for second-person narration in the text’s translation proper reveals repeatedly a close relationship between the narrator and the audience. “How long does it take until you can feel a number directly on your skin without recalculating it?” (Wright 2013:78). Here the readers are asked about their perception about the difficulty between the ability to feel and to name this exact feeling. Through the posing of this questions in second-person narration the readers are actively involved in the reading process instead of being passive receivers of the text. The audience is encouraged to contemplate about how they can express the sensation of feeling hot without being able to label the precise number on a measurement scale – which is applicable to many readers.

Through instances of second-person narration in the translator’s dialogue the implied reader is addressed directly and consequently put on a peer-level with the translator narrator. This immediate form of narration is used to reduce the distance to the reader and request them to critically engage with the text, both linguistically and contextually. The demand for the reader to linguistically encounter the text is carried

out by a second-person narrator that makes suggestions about the English language usage including context, idioms and collocations of specific phrases that arouse in the course of the translation process on different pages in the text: “Below on the left, you will find the German words the narrator uses to render her sister’s word play” (Wright 2013:36): “[t]here are, however, two expressions were you could use the verb ‘be’ in English” (Wright: 2013:52); “to get your knickers in a twist” (Wright 2013: 86).

Another reason for the use of second-person narration in the text under discussion is a request for the reader’s critical engagement with the text. The following examples deal with - apart from topics concerning the nature of language - contextually related topics and the demand for reflection in the translator’s dialogue: “A *Pfiff* is a whistle, so a person with *Pfiff* is somebody you might whistle at in admiration. [...] How would you go about insulting a woman?” (Wright: 2013:84); “[h]ow do you learn language and whose language do you learn if you have no parents?” (Wright: 2013:89). The choice of second-person narration is appropriate as it infers immediacy through direct address and consequently places the implied reader on a peer-level with the translator narrator in the commentary-on translation.

Additionally, second-person narration is effectively used for the narrator’s declaration of personal anecdotes in the text’s commentary-on translation: “[i]n North America people excuse themselves in supermarkets if they get too close to you as they walk down an aisle” (Wright: 2013:104). The deliberate choice of “you” reduces concerns about other cultures but rather enhances positive, tolerant and self-conscious behavior in the readers like passing on advice about life among friends. Hence, the translator takes on the role of a close friend who gives the readers linguistic advice in an informal tone, encourages them to critically engage with relevant topics addressed in the text, and finally shares personal information about

other cultures in an unbiased and non-judgmental way. The fact that the translator uses second-person narration to form an alliance with the reader, can be viewed in analogy to the translator's familiarity and level of engagement with the translated text that functions as an ally.

3.2.3. Third-person narration

A third-person narrative situation is applied in the translation proper in *Portrait of a Tongue* when the narrator takes on an omniscient perspective (Wright 2013:59):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
The word "share" sounded like a well-intended gesture, whereas the word <i>teilen</i> sounded official, even cold. <i>Man teilt mit den Geschwistern ein Stück Kuchen, man macht das nicht freiwillig, man teilt es mit einem scharfen Messer. Wenn es nicht gerecht geteilt wird, gibt es Streit.</i>	[You divide up a piece of cake between you and your siblings, you don't do it voluntarily, you divide it up with a sharp knife. If it isn't divided equally, there'll be an argument] Would this sound different if I used the word "share" to translate <i>teilen</i>, instead of "divide" ? [You share a piece of cake with your siblings, you don't do

	it voluntarily, you cut it up with a sharp knife. If it isn't shared out fairly, there'll be an argument]
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The first sentence in the translation proper written in third-person narration suggests a neutral perspective on a commonly known fact. The part in italics in the translation proper is written in third-person narrative voice in German. The translation of that same part, however, in English, in the commentary-on translation is expressed with a second-person narrative technique. Instead of using “one shares a piece of cake”, Wright uses the more personal form of second-person narration and translates the German phrase into English with “you share a piece of cake” in the commentary-on translation.

The heterodiegetic narrator in the translator's dialogue of *Portrait of a Tongue* is outside the story world. The function of the third-person narrator is to translate linguistic and cultural concepts. The following example provides a linguistic elaboration on the choice of word from the translator's dialogue: “*Tüchtig* and ‘competitive’ are not equivalents in any sense. *Tüchtig* implies laudable efficiency or hard work” (Wright 2013:69). Here, the narrator is omnisciently commenting on the translation. Without personal involvement which would justify first-person or second-person narration, the choice of third-person narration fits here, as it is held objectively and distanced in the third-person narrative situation of commenting on translational choices linguistically in the translator's dialogue.

The subsequent example from *Portrait of a Tongue* shows how all three forms of narration (first-person, second-person, and third-person) are combined in the translation proper (Wright 2013:68,69). The analysis of these forms of narration

follows this example in chronological order and in different colors:

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
When I asked her for an English equivalent she said the word “competitive” came to mind. There is probably an ocean between the two words. To be considered tüchtig, it’s enough for your achievements to be recognized by your grandmother and your uncle. People who are competitive, on the other hand, have to give the impression that they could beat the entire international competition.	Tüchtig and “competitive” are not equivalents in any sense. Tüchtig implies laudable efficiency or hard work.

The first sentence in the translation proper in violet is written in a first-person narrative technique. It is this form of narration that is predominantly used to proceed the story line. The unnamed female narrator revokes memories from her time in the U.S where she shared the love for language with her friend P – the story’s main protagonist like in this example where the two are discussing about words’ connotations, synonyms, and associations. Hence, the first-person narrative voice is

not an unusual choice for this occasion.

The orange color refers to the sentences in the example where a third-person narrative technique is applied. The narrator in the translation proper uses third-person narration to state linguistic facts with objective relevance outside the story world. Consequently, the readers are aware of the validity of general statements about the etymology of referenced words in the text. The last sentence in this example is written in third-person narration with the plural pronoun “they”. Hence inclusivity is expressed in the explanation of the word “competitive” for various contexts the readers can relate to apart from the text. Additionally, also in a third-person narrative voice a hint for the readers is provided in the translator’s dialogue about the word’s denotational meanings to free them from any bias that might come up extra-textually surrounding the discussion of these two adjectives in the text.

Second-person narration, in this example in green, is used to establish a close relationship with the readers. The word choices “your grandmother” and “your uncle” are terms that are loaded with personal attachment, varying on the audiences’ relationship with the extra-textual persons. The relation to these kinship terms varies according to the reader’s cultural background and perception of these terms of references for close relatives. The scope of reference for the word “tüchtig” is held narrowly in this sentence. Hence, in opposition to the reference to the “entire international competition” that is mentioned in the following sentence in a third-person narrative voice, the choice of second-person narration for rather personal concerns is used effectively.

The following example from *Portrait of a Tongue* will be analyzed according to all three forms of narration (first-person, second-person, and third-person) combined in in the translator’s dialogue (Wright 2013:52,53). For the elaboration on the example the same method that has been used for the analysis of

the translation proper will be applied: a chronological examination of the different narrators marked with different colors:

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
We say: "We have grey hairs." How strange. We say we have long legs, have a fat stomach, have lines on our face, have an ache, have a nice life.	Why is this strange? I asked D, who speaks Japanese, and she told me that in Japanese one would express some of these things as "being" rather than "having", depending on who or what was the subject of the sentence. The German expression I have translated into English here all use <i>haben</i> [to have], and I encountered no problems translating them into English with the verb "have". There are, however, two expressions where you could use the verb "be" in English. You can have lines on your face in English, but you

	can also be wrinkled. Although you can have an ache, you generally specify what type of ache it was (headache, earache). The more natural, non-specific equivalent of <i>Schmerzen haben</i> [to have pains] would be “to be in pain”. The word play and the linguistic contrasts in this text derive from the relationships that exist between three different languages – the narrator’s “invisible” Japanese, the German spoken by both the narrator and P, and the English used by P, by the Americans that surround her and by this translation.
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The first few sentences in the translator’s dialogue in violet are written in a first-person narrative situation. An elaboration on why something is strange in the translation continues in the translator’s dialogue on a metalevel. The translator reflects on her own translational choices subjectively. She does not have problems with translating the verbs “being” and “having”. However, the readers are unknowable

about the narrator's role in *Portrait of a Tongue*. The narrator could be both inside and outside the story world. Through the mimicking of Tawada's style of narration like the mentioning of people's name only by their first letter in capitals, the text receives its autofictional character. The translator narrator adds autofictional background. Hence the readers cannot tell whether her friend - she mentions in the commentary-on translation – is inside or outside the realm of the characters.

Second-person narration, in this example in green, is used to establish a peer- to peer level with the text's audience. The detected aim for the use of second-person narration in this instance is to motivate readers to engage with the text; speaking to the readers and pointing out exceptions of this specific language usage “to be” instead of “to have” in a friendly tone. Instead of a more teacher-like atmosphere, which is created when using third-person narration with a stricter tone like: “one must use”, the choice of second-person narration reduces the distance to the readers. Hence, their engagement with the text should arise intrinsically rather than with hierarchical force.

The orange color refers to the final sentences in the example with third-person narration. The translator narrator explains translational choices linguistically without personal connection to the extratextual translator. The word choice in the example “more natural, non-specific” reveals detachment from personal involvement. Solely the translation is in focus. Emotional distance is also symbolized with a physical line break between the objective analysis of the translational choice “to be in pain” and an omniscient summary in third-person narration of the whole commentary-on translation in first-person, second-person and third-person narration. After the line break, the translator repeatedly elaborates on the translational choices – this time only linguistically, and impersonally. The word choice “this translation” instead of “my translation” reveals distance to the piece of writing. Hence, the aim for giving a

professional and unbiased commentary on the translation is highlighted.

4. AUTOFICTION

Wright's subjectivity as a translator which is visible through the inclusion of her personal reading responses of Tawada's text and the justification of her translational choices and the applied narrative techniques in the translation have been dealt with in the previous chapters. The topic under inspection here is the autofictional relevance in *Portrait of a Tongue*: both in the translation proper and in the commentary-on translation.

Karpinski's (38) division of the autobiographical "I" "that is always already divided, caught up in a complex web of linkages connecting the writing subject - or the narrating 'I'; the subject of writing - or the narrative 'I', and the historical subject - or the biological 'I' is relevant for my analysis of the translation's autofictional character. Worthington's differentiation between author-character and author-figure (4) is a simplification of Karpinski's terminology and is applied in my analysis of the translation's narrative pattern. Concerning the translation part, the author-character in the narration is the unnamed "I" symbolizing Tawada's autofictional persona in the story and the author-figure representing the extratextual Tawada. Regarding the commentary-on translation part, the translator-character in the narration is also an unnamed "I" representing Wright's autofictional persona and the translator-figure symbolizes Wright who is metatextually present. This metatextual quality is a key factor for regarding texts oppositely to a "novelistic pact", which is given if author, narrator or protagonists have different names or their names are unknown (Lejeune 1975 qtd. in Wagner-Egelhaaf 3). This incongruity of names is prevailing in Wright's experimental translation. Tawada's name as an author-figure is already

visible in the first comment by Wright's translator-character on the opening page of *Portrait of a Tongue*:

Who is the painter of this portrait of a tongue? She tells the reader very little about herself, but I assume that she is the same narrator who populates Yoko Tawada's other autofictions, namely, a Japanese woman who allows her foreign and foreignizing gaze to wander over Western culture and the German language (Wright 2013: 35, 36)

The first question of this quote: "Who is the painter of this portrait of a tongue?" stimulates the paper's thesis on translation and autofiction referring to the actor to be determined. Wright's metatextual commentary-on translation on Tawada's story renders her experimental translation autofictional.

4.1. Analysis of paratext

Due to the paratextual features *Portrait of a Tongue* can be regarded as autofictional. The text offers an *Introduction to Yoko Tawada's Exophonic Text*, a translator's note and enclosed personal anecdotes in the commentary-on translation of *Portrait of a Tongue* which are addressed in the translation. Hence, the readers are biased by the paratextual features and thus perceive the text not independently from the implied author. This fact, however, does not necessarily have to create a negative impact on the readership. Quite on the contrary, the information provided in the paratext reveals the translator's self-reflectivity to the text's audience. Wright thanks Tawada in the text's acknowledgements for letting her experiment on her short story *Porträt einer Zunge* via the English translation *Portrait of a Tongue* in an innovative manner. Therefore, she shows the readers that she has asked for consent before she started her creative translation project respectfully. Wight additionally informs the readers about her being conscious about the existence of another English translation of *Portrait of a Tongue* in the footnotes of her *Introduction: Yoko Tawada's Exophonic*

Texts. She is aware of solely one other English translation of Tawada's *Portrait of a Tongue* from 2004. It is an undergraduate thesis by Sarah Andrea Rubin from the University of Oregon. Thereby, she establishes rapport with the other parties involved in the translation process: Tawada – as the extratextual writer – and the implied audience of the text who receive the piece of creative writing.

The materiality of the book, like its cover, already reveals information about the translator. Wright's name on the cover, however, disappears in the translation. It is Tawada's name that is mentioned on top of the prose text of *Portrait of a Tongue* which arouses the presupposition that Tawada has created a meta-fiction (Wright 2013:35). However, every time Tawada's name is mentioned in the commentary-on translation (Wright 2013:35,36,38,39,42,56,79,83, 99,126,131,133,136,142) the narrative voice is third-person, which suggests that *Portrait of a Tongue* is rather a meta-translational autofiction by Wright who refers to Tawada in a neutral narrative technique in the commentary-on translation. If *Portrait of a Tongue* were a meta-fiction by Tawada, I assume that she would not refer to her extratextual self in the commentary-on translation in third-person narrative voice. The omission of her name would supposedly be replaced with comments in a first-person narrative technique which echo the familiarity with Tawada's tropes of writing.

However, the mimicking of Tawada's style of writing by addressing the protagonists in her commentary-on translation also only with the capitalization of the first letter of their names supposedly gives away the feeling that the text is a meta-fiction by Tawada (Wright 2013): "My friend L, a Muscovite"(64) "J an Australian friend"(128), "J an American colleague"(36) "I and M, Prague '68ers"(46), "M and L, two Czechs living in Germany"(48), "I asked D, who speaks Japanese"(52), and "B, a German professor" (59). This observation reveals the metatextual quality of Wright's comments that are inherent to her experimental translation. She plays with the

awareness of Tawada's style of writing and the invisibility stigma that is associated with translators.

As Wright's experimental translation is influenced by Tawada's prospects on translation she illuminates in her translator's notes that: „[M] my translation-with-commentary-on translation is an attempt at answering the question of what Yoko Tawada sounds like in my voice, and what my voice sounds like in Yoko Tawada“ (Wright 2013:30). Nevertheless, the inclusion of personal anecdotes of Wright's translator-figure awards the text its autofictional character. Wright summarizes in an interview about her translation experience on *Portrait of a Tongue*: “I was able to put a lot of myself into the ‘experiment’” (Vezzaro 2). Consequently, in support of my claim that there are no clear cut boundaries regarding to whose autofiction – Tawada's or Wright's – the text *Portrait of a Tongue* should be considered, both options are possible. Wright states in her translator's notes: “My translation retains the essential characteristic of translation: it is derivative. The target is dependent on, inspired by, connected to the source; it could not exist without it” (Wright 2013:29). Consequently, the question concerning ownership becomes irrelevant due to Wright's nonjudgmental approach to translation in an experimental manner.

4.2. Analysis of autobiographical identity

Following Doubrovsky's definition of autofiction, the autobiographical connections to the extratextual writer Yoko Tawada are being analyzed. Wright summarizes in the paratext (Wright 2013: 25):

[T] [t]he text's publication date (2002), the location of the story (Boston) and traceable events and identifiable people invite the assumption that Yoko Tawada is drawing on experiences gleaned during her time as a Max Kade Distinguished Visitor at MIT in 1999. The portrait is, variously, a

declaration of love by the narrator to P and to P's language(s), a think-aloud protocol about language in general and about the differences between German and English in particular, and a complex web of associative thinking and intertextual references.

Facts about Tawada's extratextual author-figure that deal with her stay at Boston are also revealed by Wright's translator-character in the actual part of the translation (Wright 2013: 42):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
At the time I was spending four months as an artist-in-residence in Massachusetts.	Tawada spent four months as a Max Kade Distinguished Visitor at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in 1999.

Wright frankly mentions her revelation about the autobiographical connection with the extratextual author-figure Tawada in the translation's comments.

The following examples share the common topics of foreign languages and evoked feelings that come along with the language use. The quotes from *Portrait of a Tongue* either deal with language uttered actively as spoken words - P's speaking French (Wright 2013:90) - or simply received as a listener - narrator's hardship with understanding Irish at the theater during her time in Boston (Wright 2013:131). Additionally, a further autofictional match between the extratextual author-figure Tawada and the unnamed first person narrator can be detected through the elaboration on the love for expression of different languages (Wright 2013:90):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
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I remember my first day in Massachusetts quite clearly. It was already dark when my plane landed at the airport. P phoned my landlord from the car. My landlord was from France. It was the first time I heard P speaking French. I later heard her speaking French on several other occasions. The language came out of her mouth as though this was a normal state of being. Much more natural than German or English.	
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The side of the translator's dialogue in this example remains empty. However, due to the autobiographical information shared in the first sentence of the translation, and the reminiscing about the sound of foreign languages to the narrator in this example, it is part of my analysis.

The incomprehensibility of languages, a common topic in Tawada's writing, will be examined in the following part of *Portrait of a Tongue* the writing is infused with references of Martin McDonagh's theater play *The Cripple of Inishmaan* in 1999 (Wright 2013:131):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
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On another occasion, P and I were at the theatre together. It was an Irish play and I barely understood a word. A limping man, a boat, night, escape from the place of birth and return: those are the images that have stuck with me, but I'm not sure if they have anything to do with the content of the play.	<i>The Cripple of Inishmaan</i> (1997) by Martin McDonagh. This was performed by the American Repertory Theater in Cambridge, Massachusetts, between May 13 and June 13, 1999, when Tawada was in Boston.
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Starting with the analysis of the translation, readers who are familiar with Tawada's writing style are invited to smile when reading the lines of this example. Tawada throws fragmented associations on the page. They are, of course, an apt description of McDonagh's dark comedy. How else would these images come into the narrator's mind? Through the commentary-on translation the option that these associations are evoked by the author-figure Tawada from outside the text will be excluded. Wright gets Tawada's hints that refer to McDonagh and presents her detailed result of

research of the exact dates the theater play was performed in Boston to the readers in the commentary-on translation of *Portrait of a Tongue*.

However, the following selection of intertextual elements in the translation is only to certain extents related to Yoko Tawada's life. Probably, the extratextual Tawada has read Ingeborg Bachmann's poem *Erklär mir Liebe* (Wright 2013:75):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
<i>Erklären</i> was a word that hadn't really spoken to me up until then. I had noticed it only once, when reading Ingeborg Bachmann's poem "Erklär mir, Liebe."	[Tell Me, Love, or, Explain to Me, Love] (1956) In this, one of the Austrian writer's most famous poems, the speaker asks Love – and perhaps also her beloved – to explain what she cannot: [...] Tell me, love! Water knows how to speak, a wave takes a wave by the hand,

	the grape swells in the vineyard, bursts and falls. The guileless snail creeps out of this house. One stone knows how to soften another! Tell me, love, what I cannot explain: should I spent this brief, dreadful time only with thoughts circulating and alone, knowing no love and giving no love? Must one think? Will he be missed? [...] Translation by Peter Filkins (2006: 161, 163)
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The narrator in the translation proper mentions having read Bachmann's poem in a first person narrative situation which fulfills the purpose of providing autofictional

information. Wright's inclusion of the poem in the English translation by Peter Filkins however, reveals her established connection between Tawada's realm of writing and Bachmann's motif of regarding love as a means of communication. Additionally, it serves the purpose of providing details about one of Austrians most famous lyricist for the receiving English speaking audience of *Portrait of a Tongue*. Wright sets the context about the poem in the commentary-on translation by giving the readers hints about its content. The translator includes the part of the poem that deals with the struggle between regarding love platonically as opposed to regarding it in a bodily sense. The speaker reflects on how to explain what love is. With the poem's references to nature – e.g. the way waves speak - love can be interpreted to function as a language, a way of expressing thoughts and feelings, which are in accordance with Tawada's mindset about lyric expression.

The analysis of the following example about a reference to Eva Hoffman's memoir *Lost in Translation* also reveals Tawada's connection to the exophone writer¹¹ (Wright 2013: 7):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
Her older sister had always been their parents favorite, but P didn't have a problem with that because her sister was going to take over their father's business, P told me in a bookshop as we were looking for Eva Hoffman's	

¹¹ See chapter 2.2.2. Intertextual references from Tawada's writings

book <i>Lost in Translation</i> .	At the age of fourteen, Eva Hoffman emigrated from post-war Poland with her family, living first in Canada and then in the United States. <i>Lost in Translation</i> (1989) is her memoir of her childhood years and early adulthood, and an account of her relationship with the English language. It is no coincidence that P and the narrator are looking for this book.
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Wright's elaboration on Hofman's childhood and migrating past helps the readers to being able to identify the purposeful relation between Tawada and other writers which share similar experiences and interests that are referred to in *Portrait of a Tongue*. As this paper's relevance is not to prove whether the described incidents in the autofictional prose are in fact autobiographical for Yoko Tawada, but rather to demonstrate the inseparability of fictional and nonfictional events portrayed, an analysis of the autofictional identity with regard to transculturality follows.

4.3. Analysis of autofictional identity

Due to the transcultural background of both Tawada as a writer and Wright as a translator *Portrait of a Tongue* can be considered as a piece of writing that is marked with plurivocal exchanges in cross-cultural contexts in the translation proper and

commentary-on translation alike. Through their different perspectives on cultural approaches and personal involvement with the English, German and Japanese language, which are applied in the experimental translation under discussion, the two topics that are discussed frequently in the text namely translanguality and autofiction are united. As autofictions cannot clearly separate autobiography from fiction, I will inspect the former in order to gain new insights into the topic. Steinitz argues that a certain psychic distance, which autobiographies require, can be overcome by writing them in a foreign language (13). A creation of a new self in a foreign language may lead to an “erosion of identity” to borrow Steinitz’s words (182). Tawada as an author figure uses German, her adopted language, to express a new form of her identity in her autofictional writing. However, she does not abandon her native language Japanese entirely. The text’s translator character revokes the Japanese literary and cultural background of the author figure in the commentary-on translation: “There is actually no mention of Japan or of the Japanese language in ‘Porträt einer Zunge’”, and the narrator never identifies herself as Japanese (Wright 2013:37). Though, on subsequent pages the translator-character reveals in the translator’s dialogue that the “narrator’s ‘invisible’ Japanese, the German spoken by both the narrator and P, and the English used by P, by the Americans that surround her and by this translation” are nevertheless present in the text (Wright 2013:53). The following abstract of the translator-character about an elaboration on a taboo surrounding wet hair in Japan provides insight for the reader into the Japanese culture. The author-character states in the translation proper: “The very phrase ‘wet hair’ made me afraid, even at the height of summer” (Wright 2013:101,102). Through the narrator’s explanation in the commentary-on translation that:

[...] there certainly was a cultural preoccupation with long, black hair and that going outside with wet hair might be read as not taking proper care of oneself. The custom in Japan is also to bathe or shower in the evening, so

having wet hair during the day would be unusual (Wright 2013:102), the narrator's invisible Japanese has been aroused and made visible. As a result, instead of a loss of identity through the interrelation of translation and autofiction, new forms of identity can also be gained. Karpinski's assertion summarizes: "[...] [T] [t]ranslation must be acknowledged not only as a linguistic but also as a social process, tied to every attempt to bring meaning to the 'I'. "Processes of identification, effected through multi-practices of translation on many levels of discourse" like autobiographical and autofictional writings illustrate the movement to "plural modes of identity and belonging" (Karpinski 226). Hence, Tawada's translations can be regarded as an exile from both, the mother tongue and, to use Karpinski's terminology, the borrowed tongue. Hence, "the migrant as a subject unsettles the priority of either language" (Karpinski 21). Therefore, the author-character creates neologisms instead in the translation proper that are analyzed in the translator's dialogue (Wright 2013: 137):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
P sat across from me in the airport café. The day before I had been preoccupied with dust and tears. She had invited me over, but I couldn't leave the house because I had <i>Kreislaufstörungen</i>. Maybe I was just afraid of a display of emotion.	"Dust and tears" is not a German idiom, and J tells

	me that he has never heard of such an idiom in Japanese. I wonder if the narrator is expressing the fact that her impending departure from Boston means that she has to deal with practical matters (cleaning, packing) and emotional matters (saying goodbye to P).
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Wright tries to provide an explanation of the neologism mentioned in the translation by separating it into two categories – a practical and an emotional one. Another example from the text under analysis states in the commentary-on translation:

[T] [t]his is another translation conundrum. The narrator literally says, ‘If you speak hotly, you quickly get dry lips/your lips soon dry out.’ Heiß sprechen [to speak hotly] is not an idiomatic expression in German. J says there is an idiomatic expression like this in Japanese, and it means ‘to speak passionately’(Wright 2013:123).

Hence, neither the German nor the Japanese properties of language are used to express this phrase. On the contrary, it is the narrator’s creative freedom that inspires the creation of such novel idiomatic expressions. Yule states that individuals have the “[A] ability to manipulate and be creative with [...] language in order to express [...] perceptions (271). Consequently, if no words exists new creations in the culture are necessary to express individuals’ thoughts and ideas, which is exactly what Tawada does with inventing new words or arranging phrases creatively in *Portrait of a Tongue*.

The following example from *Portrait of a Tongue* is also concerned with

Tawada's identity that is expressed in the translation proper through a kaleidoscopic view providing a myriad of possibilities for self-expression (Wright 2013: 37):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I had always been more of a writer than a painter, even though I wanted to be an artist. I once tried to paint a picture of a woman; it bore the working title "<i>Portrait of a Lady</i>."	I assume this is a reference to Henry James' novel, although in German James' novel is entitled <i>Portrait of a Young Lady</i>. In Japanese the title is apparently equivalent to James' original. The lady portrayed in this prose text is P, a German who has been living in the United States for many years. Her situation is an inversion of that of Isabel Archer, an American in Europe.

The readers do not know whether the information presented in the translation proper is autobiographical or autofictional. However, through the engagement with the text of

the narrator in the commentary-on translation a connection between the two stories *Portrait of a Tongue* and Henry James' *Portrait of a Lady* are established. Apart from the similarity with the title, the storyline of *Portrait of a Tongue* also shares parallels with James's novel from the late 19th century. Even though the content is reversed, the same topics of personal freedom and responsibility when being a stranger in a foreign destination are being employed in the two pieces of writing. Thus, the elaboration in the translator's dialogue on the hinted reference in the translation proper reveals Wright's awareness about Tawada's allusions in the translation and simultaneously enriches the audiences' reading experience by referring to other pieces of fiction.

4.4. Narration and Autofiction

Considering that autofictional texts are supposed to be read as novels through a "novelistic pact", a countermovement to Lejeune's "autobiographical pact" their autofictional quality is expressed through the plot and recurring themes rather than the accurateness of the writer's biography (Worthington 3, Van Laaer 2). Hence, common topics as reference for Wright's translator-character in *Portrait of a Tongue* are being analyzed.¹²

Tawada's previous works, for example, are also common reference points in the short story, as Wright puts *Portrait of a Tongue* in context with Tawada's wider oeuvre. The arbitrariness of language is addressed in *Ein Gast* (Wright 2013: 136), the slipperiness of language visible through editing mistakes is mentioned in *Schrift einer Schildkröte* (Wright 2013: 142), and the actor Catherine Deneuve is as frequent reference point in Tawada's writing in *Das nackte Auge* (Wright 2013: 38). Topics of

¹² See chapter 2.2.2. Intertextual references from Tawada's writings

transnationalism and transculturality are explored in *Europa gibt es nicht* (Wright 2013:126,127), and translanguality in *Europa und Mehrsprachigkeit* (Wright 2013:131). Additionally, themes that are typical of Tawada's writing style without reference to previous publications are transformation (132,133), a speaker's body (99, 100) and the narrative of travelling (Wright 2013:117).

The theory concerning the "heimlich/unheimlich" debate by Sigmund Freud is another recurring theme in the text – being both mentioned as a reference by the author-figure Tawada in the translation proper or the translator-figure Wright in the commentary-on translation. An example from the commentary-on translation states the following: "The German word that I have translated as 'uncanny' is *unheimlich* – the same word used by Freud to describe that which frightens us but which also seems strangely familiar" (2013:54,55). As Freud is a frequent reference point in the text, Wright's translator character questions: "Are these references to Freud deliberate?" (Wright 2013:57). By reading between the lines, the narrator also informs the readers about Tawada's style of writing which is characterized by a foreignizing effect. This observation means that through the alienation of familiar concepts Tawada receives her "uncanny" style, which Wright mimics in her writing.

Additionally, Tawada's way of dealing with associations in *Portrait of a Tongue* can be analyzed in analogy to Sigmund Freud's free association theory (Wright 2013:71,72):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I dreamed of four dogs performing a circus trick in my room. I had a bad feeling. Another dog came into the	

room; he was much bigger than the other dogs. He bit all the other dogs to death.	It seems appropriate that dreams enter the narrative, since the narrator's web of surface associations has similarities with the free association technique of Freudian therapy, and with the associative logic of dreams.
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Freud's free association technique and dreams as intertextual elements fit the topics of Tawada's writing and are consequently characteristic of her "uncanny" style of writing. Through the medium of a dream, the narrator in *Portrait of a Tongue* manages to dissolve the boundaries between reality and a magical word. In the translation proper P asks the narrator: "Weißt du, was dog-eat-dog society heißt?" (Wright 2023:72). A few paragraphs later in the text the narrator states: "She forgot to explain what 'dog-eat-dog-society' means (Wright 2013:73). However, through using dreams as means of storytelling the narrator in both - the translation proper and the commentary-on translation - provides an answer to the readers (Wright 2013:73):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
It has always been the nightmare from which I wake up bathed in sweat or	

screaming several animals are playing nearby, and suddenly one attacks another. A game begins. Each animal tries to find a smaller one to kill. I try to separate them, close all the doors I can find, lock the smallest animal in the cage and hold on to the biggest one. But they always manage to come together to continue their murderous game.	It seems the narrator <i>does</i> know what “dog-eat-dog society” means.
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With the comment in the translator’s dialogue – *does* printed in italics – Wright emphasizes the answer to the question what a “dog-eat-dog society” means, and simultaneously appreciates Tawada’s use of associations that come to the narrator’s or protagonist’s mind in *Portrait of a Tongue* through dreams.

The explanation of Tawada’s associations used in the text in the commentary-on translation by Wright’s translator-character present again a reader-oriented approach (Wright: 2013:55,56):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR’S DIALOGUE
In my inner dictionary, <i>hegen</i> and <i>behagen</i> are right next to	

each other.	[n. (when capitalized) satisfaction, pleasure, enjoyment, a feeling of well-being or v. to please, to find favor with] This is one of the levels on which association works in Tawada's texts: in terms of the personal significance of words. This personal significance is, of course, problematic for the reader because of the difficulties involved in accessing it. How can I know that two words are bound together in a writer's head?
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Wright's comment is essential for the readers to understand Tawada's association technique applied in her writings. The formulation of the question at the end of the comment tries to bring clarity into a troubled topic. It is, of course, impossible to know which associations or word combinations are meaningful to a writer, without explaining them to the readers. Hence, with Wright's comment her visibility as a translator becomes repeatedly increased.

Furthermore, uncertainty is a feature in Tawada's text that serves as

intertextual reference in the translation. It is connected to the name Piroshka, and the eponymous German novel *Ich denke oft an Piroshka* by Hugo Harting (Wright 2013:39).

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
Her name is Piroshka because, later on, when I asked her what she would like to be called in a novel, she gave me this name.	Piroshka is a Hungarian woman's name and part of the title of a German novel by Hugo Harting entitled <i>Ich denke oft an Piroshka</i> [I Often Think of Piroshka] (1954) that was also adapted for film. Piroshka is the seventeen-year-old girl with whom the narrator of the novel falls in love during a trip to Hungary. The novel concludes with the narrator looking back on this romance in later life and stating: 'Sometimes I think it was nothing – the thing with Piroshka. But in fact it

	was everything. Everything' (1954:190) Uncertainty like this is a feature of Tawada's text.
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The translator-character's elaboration on the plot of Harting's summer love story *Ich denke oft an Piroschka* in the commentary-on translation is reminiscent of the narrator's and P's love to language – powerful but fleeting. This example reveals recurrently how the boundaries between the inside of the story world and the outside are blurred. The narrator in the translation proper asks P about her preferred name in a novel. The readers, however, do not know whether this conversation took place with the extratextual author-figure Tawada or solely with the author-character that narrates the autofiction. Hence, another autofictional layer within the story about the character's awareness of their state of existence is created.

Due to the autofictional approach to *Portrait of a Tongue* and the experimental quality of the translation in a twofold manner the authenticity of the narration in the text will be questioned. The following example reveals how the narrator in the translation proper sees the story's main protagonist named P (Wright 2013:40):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
What am I supposed to do? Maybe I should just say P; P for permanent and provisional, poetic and practical.	These adjectives all begin

	with the letter “p” in German, as they do in English. They happen to fall within the same “chapter” of the dictionary, but they are, of course, binary opposites.
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With the commentary-on translation – a mixed elaboration about the text’s linguist facility and the translator’s reading response, the readers realize that the translator-character is skeptical about the author-character’s narration in the translation proper. The audience cannot be sure about the authentic representation of the stated utterances in the text. The used adjectives in the example are divided by their denotational meaning. They share, however, the space in the same chapter of a dictionary as they all begin with the consonant P. As a result, Wright’s comment in the translator’s dialogue reveals a connection to the readers that might not be visible at first glance – which nevertheless is there on a subconscious level in Tawada’s text.

The inseparability of intratextual or extratextual spaces in *Portrait of a Tongue* - an inherent quality of autofictional texts - is being analyzed with one example from the text (Wright 2013: 122):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR’S DIALOGUE
Now I realize: I was never in Chinatown with P. Where could we have had that conversation?	This question creates doubt in the reader – are the events and people portrayed

	authentic?
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The first-person narrator in the translation proper reveals to the readers that she is unsure about the space a conversation between the “I” – narrator and P took place. The fact that this insecurity about the alleged happening is expressed in the translation proper in *Portrait of a Tongue* reveals Tawada’s playfulness with intratextual and extratextual spaces. The comment in the translator’s dialogue exposes Tawada’s method and pins it down. The readers do not know whether Tawada as an author-figure has never met P in Chinatown or whether Tawada’s author-character – the unnamed narrator – has not had that experience.

Apart from the readers, characters inside *Portrait of a Tongue*, also question the narrator’s authenticity in the text (Wright 2013:100,101):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR’S DIALOGUE
“I like waiting, the same way I like getting lost,” I said. “I’m gradually coming to feel that you mean things just the way you say them,” P answered.	Does she? The narrator certainly does not make this assumption about others.

As this example from *Portrait of a Tongue* deals with unreliable narration, the topic about authentic narration of the author character concerning the preference of writing

in waiting rooms appears. With the commentary-on translation, Wright shows her questioning of stated assumptions. However, the dilemma of distinction between the author-figure and the author-character becomes visible. Does Wright refer to the unnamed female narrator in the text or is her questioning to be regarded in a rhetoric manner addressing the real-life person Yoko Tawada? Nevertheless, with the inclusion of this question in the commentary-on translation, the readers are stimulated to reflect about authenticity within and outside the autofictional text alike.

Additionally, intertextual elements of other exophonic writers next to Tawada are mentioned frequently in *Portrait of a Tongue*.¹³ Franco Biondi is referred to for his *Obrigkeitsdeutsch* which describes women's possessiveness concerning the use of language (Wright 2013:42,43). Eva Hoffman's memoir *Lost in Translation* is referred to due to the similarity of topics. The protagonist of Tawada's text is also investigating her relationship with the English language after a relocation just like Hoffman (1995:45,87,92). Emine Sevgi Özdamar's short story *Mutterzunge* is an intertext that evokes the translator figure's reflection about plurivocality: "Is the treachery of language multiplied or lessened when a person has more than one mother tongue?" (Wright 2013:83). The second reference to the exophonic writer Emine Sevgi Özdamar is concerned with the mention of the term "Schriftzimmer" in her short story *Großvaterzunge* which is part of the collection *Mutterzunge*. It serves as a point of reference for the translator figure's comments on Tawada's neologism "Schriftraum" (Wright 2013:109,110):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
P reads a lot and with great pleasure. She settles down	

¹³ See chapter 2.2.3. Quotations from other German exophonic writers

in her room of letters and reads	[<i>Schriftraum</i>] Schrift can mean handwriting, a text or an alphabet. The German word for a “study” would be <i>Arbeitszimmer</i>; a reading room in a library would be a <i>Lesesaal</i>: <i>Schriftraum</i> is an invented compound noun. My colleague J thinks that <i>Schriftraum</i> is a literal translation of the Japanese ideogram 書齋[shosai]. The first of the two characters [sho] loosely means “writing” and can also refer to objects on which writing has been left, such as books. The second character [sai] is usually used in conjunction with other characters. In this context, it means the space in which you shut yourself up for a period of time and dedicate yourself to one
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	purpose. J explained that because space is limited and hence precious in Japan, a study would be considered a luxury. In the short story “Großvaterzunge” [Grandfather Tongue] by Turkish-German writer Emine Sevgi Özdamar, the narrator uses the word <i>Schriftzimmer</i> to describe the room where she is shut up from the outside world as she learns Arabic (1998b: 17). (<i>Zimmer</i> and <i>Raum</i> are synonyms.) My colleague H and I discussed whether this might be a literal translation of the Arabic word كُتَّابُ [kuttāb], a school where students receive religious instruction and also learn reading and writing.
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The analysis of this comment in the translator’s dialogue reveals that the example from the text is: “a mix of [...] German and Japanese sign systems, thereby allowing

the linguistic surface to dictate the narrative, rather than the other way around” (Wright 2013:16). Adding to Wright’s verbatim from the translator’s note, especially this example from *Portrait of a Tongue* also includes the Arabic sign system. Hence there is “no clear dividing line between stylistic analysis and the process of translation” (Wright 2013:27). Özdamar’s text *Großvaterzunge* is mentioned in the commentary- on translation as it deals with the similarity of topics to Tawada’s writing. The translator narrator tests the word “Schriftraum” in various contexts – both linguistically and culturally. Putting *Portrait of a Tongue* in wider literary context presents a way for Wright to show to the text’s readers that a multitude of interpretations may result from analyzing one word or cocept.

Apart from references of Tawada’s writing or other exophonic writers, the inclusion of personal anecdotes in the translation enables the creation of an autofiction of Wright’s translator’s persona. Yet again, the reader does not know whether the narrated events are fictive or real. What they definitely do know, is that autobiographical grains were spread by Wright in her translator’s note of *Portrait of a Tongue*:

In the interval between completing the translation and returning to edit it for publication, I had moved from Europe to Canada and then- more significantly in terms of the alienation I experienced – to the United States. Tawada’s studied ethnographic gaze – the simulated alienation after the fact – spoke to me as I experienced my own first-contact situation, keenly aware on a daily basis of my otherness as a Brit in Midwest of the United States. This very personal identification with Tawada’s text also found its way into the translation (Wright 2023:26).

However, the mimicry of Tawada’s style of writing becomes visible through the following examples of the narrator in the metatextual commentary-on translation: “[...] because I am now living in the United States [...] I would never have used the adjective ‘public’ to qualify the noun ‘library’ in a British context (Wright 2013:61). The narrator also mentions the city Milwaukee as personal reference point which is in the

Midwest of the USA as declared in the paratext (Wright 2013:64). Another example elaborates on the differences of the concept of personal space among cultures and reveals her personal interaction with others in a North American supermarket. The narrator explains that she was reaching to get something off a shelf could be regarded as rude, even though it was not intended. The personal anecdote about supermarkets in the commentary-on translation forges a bridge to the translated text where the protagonist misses Berlin, by means of referencing Berlin and Vienna. The narrator explains another difference between North American and Western cities like Berlin and Vienna in the context of shopping. The translator figure mentions that her skill of packing bags quickly, which she had learned in Vienna, is now superfluous in North America. There, shopping in supermarkets is not a stressful experience due to employers that help packing customer's bags (Wright 2013:104,105). As a result, this personal anecdote can be labeled as autobiographical for the translator-figure. The line between fiction and nonfiction is blurred concerning the next two examples from the translator's commentary-on translation: "I began to bake when I wanted to eat things from home that weren't available where I was living (first in Germany, then in Canada and the United States)" (Wright 2013:89). The information in brackets is verifiable, whether the extratextual translator-figure Wright actually started to bake is beyond the reader's realm to judge. The last commentary-on translation in the prose follows the same scheme of indistinguishability between fact and fiction; it is the translator character's claim that "[A] [a]rtichokes are the one food to which I am allergic" (Wright 2013:144).

The main differentiation concerning the narrators in *Portrait of a Tongue* is that in the translation proper a homodiegetic narrator with the role of a minor character in the story is applied opposed to the commentary-on translation where Wright's translator-character functions as an autodiegetic narrator. The following

example deals with the role of the narrator in the translation proper in the text (Wright 2013:117):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
I didn't visit the musician Y.M. in Boston. In the whole four months of my stay I didn't think of him. I didn't go to the women's bookshop. I also forgot why I had wanted to cross the Atlantic and what had troubled me in Berlin.	The narrative that brought the narrator to Boston is no longer important.

This example from *Portrait of a Tongue* states that the unnamed narrator in the translation proper is only a minor character in the story. Even through the provided context in the translator's dialogue, the readers realize that the narrator is not the main protagonist in the story but rather witness to experiences of her friend P.

In the commentary-on translation, on the contrary, the narrator can be labelled autodiegetic. This means that Wright's translator-character is the protagonist of the story in a first-person narrative voice (Wright 2013:61):

TRANSLATION PROPER	TRANSLATOR'S DIALOGUE
	When I originally wrote the previous paragraph, I noticed

	that I had written “public library,” because I am now living in the United States and this is how one refers to public lending libraries in the States. Then it occurred to me that I would never have used the adjective “public” to qualify the noun “library” in a British context. The terms “public” and “private” carry an ideological weight in the States that imbues the appearance of the word “public” with significance. The public library is a place where books are shared.
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Hence, through the inclusion of autobiographic information about the translator-figure from the extra-textual person Wright in a first-person narrative mode and in an autodiegetic manner the text’s autofictional quality is emphasized. As a result, the role of the translator-character is present in the comments. Conclusively, the visual representation of the text in a twofold manner and the dialogic of an autofictional discussion of the translation reveal that a doubling of perspectives in Steinitz’s words is “used to reinforce the uncertain sense of self and reality” (2013:183). By means of the discontinuous structure of the narration, the extratextual translator follows the

extratextual author's deconstructive approach concerning the abandonment of realist narrative structures.

5. Conclusion

I felt as though nothing could slip through my fingers because we live in a web of languages.

YOKO TAWADA, "Portrait of a Tongue"

The quote from the paper's epigraph serves as a framework for my thesis on language (translation) and cultural identity (autofiction). It explores "in-between spaces" of multiple languages (English, German, Japanese) cultures (German, British English, American English, Japanese), genres (translation and autofiction), intertextual references and narrative voices (first-person, second-person, third-person) in the experimental translation *Portrait of a Tongue* by Chantal Wright from the perspective of the "poetic ravine" as Yoko Tawada calls it.

Through the creation of a metafiction/metatranslation a new, creative and positive approach to translation is provided, opposed to dividing the term into outdated binaries such as original/translation or source/target. Wright's experimental approach to translation – which is marked with plurivocality and hybridity – creates more than two possibilities: interaction with the readers, insights into her mind as a translator in general and overall, asserting visibility for her role as a translator. Her visibility as a translator is increasingly enhanced through her personal dedication in the commentary-on translation. The central concept for this thesis, cultural translation, has been widely discussed in academic discourse and hence provides the theoretical frame for this analysis. As the reader's own understanding and interpretation of the text is of paramount importance, a poststructuralist approach is applied; relying on concepts of Jacques Derrida, such as the death of the author, and Homi Bhabha's theory of the 3rd space. Through the creation of a metatranslation – translators

reflecting on their own translational choices in the text - a new, creative and contemporary approach to translation is provided which opposes the traditional and rather rigid thought of regarding translations as secondary to their originals. The translation proper and commentary-on translation reveal the presence of a translator to the readers through the inclusion of personal anecdotes and intertextual elements. With her experimental approach to translation, Wright claims visibility for the role of the translator, which is a current topic in the field of contemporary Translation Studies. Hence, *Portrait of a Tongue* can be labelled as “translational poetics” as it is a combination of translation and novel literary creation (Suga 2007: 21). Wright’s translation is a hybrid text combining literary criticism, experimental translation and scholarly commentary-on translation. German phrases, expressions or idioms in the English translation and comments on the deliberate translational choices are included. The subjectivity of Wright’s translator persona becomes visible through the continuation of the speaker’s train of thoughts, the addition of explanatory comments on cultural references addressed, and the posing and answering of critical questions in her translation. With paratextual features like a translator’s note and her comments on the translation the translator creates a metatext, which has been analyzed with a focus on autofictional instances in the text.

This hybridity of terms is a frequent point of reference in my thesis. Autofiction as a genre – just as translation – is also marked with hybridity. Concerning the genre autofiction, a contradiction in the text arises from the analysis of the different narrative techniques applied in *Portrait of a Tongue*. At first glance, the readers might suspect that the text is an autofiction by Tawada as her name appears on the text’s cover. However, a critical reflection on the translation through the inclusion of personal anecdotes by the translator reveals that it can be assumed that the short story also bares autofictional traces of Wright’s translator persona. An

answer to this dilemma can be provided through making use of the term hybridity: the ownership of this autofictional piece of writing is irrelevant. Crucial is, however, that it is a new and creative approach to contemporary translation and literary studies. This paper's relevance was not to prove whether the described incidents in *Portrait of a Tongue* are in fact autobiographical for Yoko Tawada, but rather to demonstrate the inseparability of fictional and nonfictional events portrayed in the autofictional prose.

My answer to Wright's first comment on in *Portrait of a Tongue* "Who is the painter of this portrait of a tongue?(Wright 2013:35) is that the tongue is the painter of this experimental piece of writing. Opposed to Wright's answer provided in the introduction of her translation that "the readers paint their own portrait of the anonymous portrait painter" (Wright 2013:19), I argue that the tongue metaphorically symbolizes the voice, regardless of the occupation of being a writer or a reader. The tongue expresses itself in a web of languages independent of the subject's identity, cultural heritage or command of languages. The tongue can contain many different voices (first-person narration, second-person narration, third-person narration), is able of disclosing autobiographical information or inventing fictive content. The short story *Portrait of a Tongue* is regarded as a self-portrait where the tongue functions as the brush - digging into different colors which symbolically stand for different languages representing different shades a subject acquires throughout life - creating a colorful ensemble of one's identity incorporated in a painting. The metaphorical tongue, I imply, is subjective, independent of a subject's mother tongue and marked with plurality. It can be regarded as a "borrowed tongue", to borrow the term from Eva Karpinski. Hence, with this approach in mind, the short story *Portrait of a Tongue* can also be regarded as poetic ekphrasis. I had a class on this topic in my bachelor's degree and enjoyed describing pieces of art – most of the time pictures – in written form lyrically. As I consider *Portrait of a Tongue* as a piece of art, the experimental

translation can be regarded as poetic ekphrasis. The description of the text's content happens from one medium to another – just like pictures are described and hence are translated into the medium of a poem. The title of the text under discussion is even called portrait – which hints at the text's visual representation of the tongue – symbolically standing for any language a speaker chooses to express oneself creatively.

Limitations to my research are that *Portrait of a Tongue* could have also been explored through the lens of feminism, or a postcolonial reading, which this thesis only touches briefly in order not to exceed the scope. Additionally, as I carry out a close reading of the text's narrative techniques as a method of approach in this thesis, no quantitative analysis of all the comments in the translation is provided. On the contrary, relevant examples from the text are being analyzed – some of them even repeatedly due to their suitability to strengthen my claims - categorized according to the five parameters from chapter 2. 2. in the translation proper and the translator's dialogue: linguistic facilitators, intertextual references from Tawada's writings, quotations from other German exophone writers, translator's personal anecdotes and finally translator's reading responses.

Through the analysis of Wright's experimental translation *Portrait of a Tongue* in this thesis, a positive future perspective in the field of translation studies can be outlaid. Agreeing with contemporary translation scholars such as Lawrence Venuti and Sarah Maitland who claim that the translator's visibility should be encouraged and that plurivocal exchanges within the field of literary studies are relevant not only for trying to keep the scope open but also to broaden it forward-looking. Gladly, translations in an experimental manner – not only within the same genre but also between different mediums - from texts to spoken word poetry, from classical paintings to graffiti - begin to appear on the scene. In conclusion, *Portrait of*

a Tongue provides an example towards broadening the scope of cultural translation studies through the experimental form Chantal Wright approaches the translation process in an innovative manner.

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7. Appendix

7.1. Abstract English

This thesis explores “in-between-spaces” of languages, cultures and genres through a close reading of the meta-autofictional translation of Yoko Tawada’s *Portrait of a Tongue* by Chantal Wright. The effects of translingualism in the experimental translation’s narrative situation will be analyzed. The central concept for this thesis, cultural translation, has been widely discussed in academic discourse and provides the theoretical frame for this analysis. As the reader’s own understanding and interpretation of the text is of paramount importance, a poststructuralist approach is applied; relying on concepts of Jacques Derrida, such as the death of the author, and Homi Bhabha’s theory of the 3rd space. Through the creation of a metatranslation – translators reflecting on their own translational choices in the text - a new, creative and contemporary approach to translation is provided which opposes the traditional and rather rigid thought of regarding translations as secondary to their originals. The translation-and-commentary-on translation reveals the presence of a translator to the readers through the inclusion of personal anecdotes and intertextual elements. Wright claims visibility for the role of the translator, which is a current topic in the field of contemporary Translation Studies. *Portrait of a Tongue*, thus dissolves boundaries between binary oppositions rooted in essentialism like original/translation, source/target, sign/signified. As it will be shown, the experimental translation can also be regarded exemplary for what Suga calls “translational poetics”, as it is a combination of translation and novel literary creation (21).

Keywords: Yoko Tawada, Chantal Wright, Portrait of a Tongue, Experimental Translation, Exophony, Cultural Translation, Contemporary Translation Studies,

7.2. Zusammenfassung Deutsch

Diese Arbeit untersucht "Zwischenräume" von Sprachen, Kulturen und Genres durch eine Analyse der meta-autofiktionalen Übersetzung von Yoko Tawadas *Portrait of a Tongue* von Chantal Wright. Die Auswirkungen des Translingualismus in der narrativen Situation der experimentellen Übersetzung werden analysiert. Das zentrale Konzept für diese Arbeit, die kulturelle Übersetzung, wurde im akademischen Diskurs breit diskutiert und bildet den theoretischen Rahmen für diese Analyse. Da das eigene Verständnis und die Interpretation des Textes durch den Leser von größter Bedeutung sind, wird ein poststrukturalistischer Ansatz angewandt, der sich auf Konzepte von Jacques Derrida, wie den Tod des Autors, und Homi K. Bhabhas Theorie des dritten Raums stützt. Durch die Schaffung einer Metatranslation - Übersetzende, die über ihre eigenen übersetzungstechnischen Entscheidungen im Text reflektieren - wird ein neuer, kreativer und zeitgemäßer Ansatz für die Übersetzung geboten, der sich dem traditionellen und eher starren Denken entgegenstellt, das Übersetzungen als sekundär gegenüber ihren Originalen betrachtet. Durch die Einbeziehung persönlicher Anekdoten und intertextueller Elemente offenbart die Übersetzung und der Kommentar den Lesenden die Präsenz der Übersetzerin. Wright fordert Sichtbarkeit für die Rolle der Übersetzerin, die ein aktuelles Thema in der zeitgenössischen Übersetzungswissenschaft ist. *Portrait of a Tongue* löst somit die Grenzen zwischen binären Oppositionen auf, die im Essentialismus verwurzelt sind, wie Original/Übersetzung und Zeichen/Bezeichnetes. Es wird gezeigt, dass die experimentelle Übersetzung auch als exemplarisch für das gelten kann, was Suga "translationale Poetik" nennt, da sie

eine Kombination aus Übersetzung und literarischer Neuschöpfung darstellt (21).

Stichworte: Yoko Tawada, Chantal Wright, Portrait of a Tongue, Experimentelle Übersetzung, Exophonie, Kulturelle Übersetzung, zeitgenössische Übersetzungsstudien, Erzähltechniken, Autofiktion,