The Globalization of Stubbornly National Media: The How and Why of Online News Translation

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ABSTRACT

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The How and Why of Online News Translation**

Anna Meshcherova

The purpose of this study is to investigate the role online news translation plays in the context of media globalization. This aim was achieved through the overlapping examination of three fields of research: journalism, translation, and the Internet. Another objective was to demonstrate how the mediator between the global and the local—online news translation—fulfills its role as knowledge disseminator. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods was used to examine Russian media outlets. A total of 310 news items and editorials were analyzed and coded revealing the linguistic, thematic, and geographical preferences of the studied media outlets. The examination of readers' feedback demonstrated how local receivers interpret foreign cultural products. The results of the research reveal that the subjects of translated news are chosen in accordance with local readers' interests, though the message of the original text is preserved. It was found that the majority of news comes from English language sources, and the translated foreign news hardly enhances Russian coverage due to the fact that they have the same or similar international sources of information. The results show that the process of knowledge dissemination through international media is challenged by preconceived nationalistic expectations of local audiences. The principal conclusion is that translated news, homogeneous at the stage of production, receives heterogeneous interpretations at the level of consumption.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The objective of this thesis is to investigate how news translation shapes processes of globalization. Viewed as a destructive, changing, or homogenizing force, globalization is the focus of a number of academic disciplines: cultural studies, sociology, economics, political theory, linguistics, and communications. The following chapters will illustrate that an understanding of the role played by globalization in media requires at least a partial understanding of the globalization of economics, politics, and culture. The clarification of these social processes is essential for anyone engaging with this topic, as concepts of "neo-liberalism," "knowledge society," "time-space compression," and "reflexivity" all represent distinct (though sometimes overlapping) explanations of what globalization means (Giddens 1991, Tomlinson 1999, Harvey 2005, Mooney and Evans 2007). Because there is no generally accepted concept of globalization, further work to develop the concept is essential for the clarification of an otherwise intricate phenomenon. My contribution in this undertaking is the examination of the practice of news translation, where I attempt to analyze the process of globalization from a journalistic point of view.

According to Esperança Bielsa and Susan Bassnett, although translation is a key mediator of global communication, it remains an invisible practice within news dissemination (2009: 23, 29). They and others have expressed concerns that news translation is a subject that has not generated enough interest among scholars and practitioners in the fields of journalism, mass communication, and translation. The examination of international mass communication scholarship indicates that "foreign

news processing, which may involve various editing functions, does not seem to fit within the scope of 'translation proper' and therefore there may be a reluctance to include it among the subjects of translation and mass communication research" (Vuorinen 1999: 63). This subject thus requires more scholarly attention so as to establish its role in the process of knowledge dissemination and the formation of local cultures. By analyzing digital journalism and translation practices, my thesis will in part fulfill this gap in the scholarship.

The Internet, and particularly Russian-language online news content, was chosen for this research to represent technologically advanced medium in which processes of globalization unfold in a multitude of ways, and thus constitute a rich milieu for exploration. The decision to study online news in Russia was not arbitrary. As opposed to news agencies that also do translation of news (commonly as a closed service for commercial subscribers), online media enjoy a higher level of transparency, diversity, and accessibility of information. Online readership is rapidly growing, and the Internet has acquired the status of an alternative public sphere. As will be seen from my literature review, this is especially important for countries such as Russia where the traditional media are, for the most part, state-owned, and the Internet is seen as the only source of uncensored information (Fossato et al. 2008). Understanding the role of translated foreign coverage is especially important for societies where both democratic initiatives and information flow have been restricted. The decision to study online news translation was also informed by the fact that this area of study has received little scholarly attention. It remains unclear what information is translated and for what audiences. It also remains unclear what sources and languages prevail in news translation, and whether translated

information is adapted for local audiences or retains its original form. In this research, I attempt to answer some of these questions.

Overall the goal of my research is twofold: I expect my findings will contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the interdisciplinary field of online news translation. I also expect my results to enhance the existing scholarship on media globalization. By studying the potential of translated online news, I will open the discussion of how this digital source of information contributes to the dissemination of knowledge among local cultures.

1.1. Context and hypothesis

The context of this thesis was derived from my personal experience as a foreigner living abroad and reading foreign media over the course of the last five years. This experience taught me that access to foreign media might potentially enrich my knowledge about the world and thus provide me with necessary tools to function as a citizen in culturally diverse societies. Moreover, the knowledge obtained from foreign sources could provide me with a necessary foundation for understanding the wide variety of ethnic and linguistic groups in my society. This type of shift in thinking is sometimes ascribed to the notion of "cosmopolitanism," where individuals adopt an open, encompassing attitude towards the world (Hannerz 1990, Roudometof 2005). The personal accumulation of knowledge led me to question the accessibility of such experience for those who spend their lifetime in one cultural setting. In this regard, the translation of news was seen as a potentially effective tool for disseminating knowledge.

David K. Perry expressed a similar opinion in 1990. He wrote that the consumption of news about foreign countries leads to greater knowledge and more favorable attitudes

toward those countries, and therefore the mass media may have an important role in reducing ethnocentrism:

> That world news consumption seems to contribute indirectly to favorable attitudes via knowledge suggests that world news might help reduce xenophobia. Increases in a society in the availability of news about foreign countries might even contribute to more-favorable attitudes among individuals exposed to it, with an individual's knowledge acting as a mediator. (1990: 357-358)

Similarly, another study of foreign news consumption showed that those who followed international news in national newspapers were found to be less negative toward the Third World (Korzenny et al. 1987: 84). Furthermore, foreign news content was found to represent a wider spectrum of perspectives than those offered by the domestic media, so that people wishing to move outside the domestic ideological spectrum could use foreign news sources to learn alternate perspectives (Best et al. 2005: 65). Drawing on this research, it can be suggested that the access to news about foreign countries enhances the process of information dissemination and in turn enriches knowledge of the world for local cultures.

When such access comes in the form of translated foreign media, the experience is even richer. Discussing the role of translation for cultural formations and knowledge circulation, Tymoczko and Gentzler write:

> Translation thus is not simply an act of faithful reproduction but, rather, a deliberate and conscious act of selection, assemblage, structuration, and fabrication – and even, in some cases, of falsification, refusal of information, counterfeiting, and the creation of secret codes. In these ways translators, as much as creative writers and politicians, participate in the powerful acts that create knowledge and shape culture. (2002: xxi)

This indicates that studying news translation, as "an act of faithful reproduction," is counterproductive. For this reason, the following chapters avoid an extensive focus on the accuracy of translation from source text to target text. My intention, on the contrary, is to

focus on translation of news as a means of knowledge dissemination that contributes to globalization processes. Based on the scholarship provided, I attempt to test a hypothesis. Namely, my research intends to determine whether foreign news that is translated on the Internet enhances Russian coverage by presenting new factual information previously unknown to the reader, therefore expanding informational boundaries, as well as easing the processes of knowledge dissemination and media globalization. The ways in which this hypothesis will be tested are described in the "Methodology" chapter below. Since the understanding of this hypothesis might require additional clarifications, I describe some of the operational definitions in the following section.

1.2. Operational definitions

To make the reading of this research clear and unambiguous, operational definitions are needed for some of the terms employed. In my thesis, globalization, for example, represents the concept of international integration and increasing interdependence of political, business, information, and cultural units. Globalization also implicates the notions of global democracy (Held 1995), multiculturalism (Alibhai-Brown 2001), global capitalism (Sassen 1996, Scholte 1997), and cultural imperialism (Tomlinson 1999, 2001). One of the other concepts utilized in my thesis is knowledge dissemination. This concept implies the transfer of knowledge within and among cultures, with the aim of enlightenment and the acquisition of new perspectives and attitudes. Knowledge dissemination also means increased awareness, the ability to make informed choices among alternatives, and the exchange of information (Hutchinson and Huberman 1994).

As the results of this research will illustrate, the concepts of nationalism and

national identity are essential in understanding the processes of globalization. The clarification of what nationalism and national identity mean in the framework of this research is therefore needed. According to Mooney and Evans, "nationalism refers to the processes involved in the emergence of large-scale collective identities and the sentiments, aspirations, discourse and imaginary such processes are connected with," where it is often the case that language, territory attribution, and shared experience are employed to define nationality (2007: 173). I therefore use the concept of nationalism to bring to the forefront sentiments and judgments based on shared ethnicity, language, and territory. Accordingly, the concept of national identity implies an individual's identity and his/her sense of belonging to one nation. The "Findings" chapter of this thesis will illustrate that, in the case of Russian-language web media, national identity is identified with chauvinism rather than patriotism.

Furthermore, the utilization of the concept of online news translation is narrowed down to translations done by individuals on the Internet (as opposed to translations produced by digital software). The translated articles under examination below include both news items and editorials, as well as translations of multimedia journalism (e.g. audio translations of online video reports or textual translations of photo reports with comments). I focus on non-traditional media outlets that operate exclusively on the Internet as opposed to media that function on multiple platforms: paper, TV, radio, and the Web. The purpose of this focus is to fill the gap of the previously unexplored milieu—strictly digital media that devote their efforts to the translation of foreign news.

Finally, my hypothesis needs a clarification regarding what "new factual information" delivered by translated articles means. While I acknowledge that news

articles, which contain factually similar information, can frame this information very differently, the question of news framing falls outside of the scope of this study. The comparative textual analysis of Russian news items and editorials shows that news produced by Russian media already encompasses a large number of opinions, perspectives, and representations. Especially on the Internet, news events are constantly reinterpreted and reformulated by online media outlets with different political alignments and agendas. However, the question of whether foreign translated articles introduce new information to local readers remains unanswered. By "new information" I mean new descriptions of events, different geographical data or inconsistent dates, new figures or contrasting statistics, different culprits or previously unknown judgments. In my thesis, I therefore attempt to establish the role that translated online news plays in the formation of Russian coverage.

1.3. Structure of the thesis

My thesis begins by surveying the extensive literature on globalization, journalism, translation, the Internet, and Russian media. The literature review, incorporated in Chapter Two, establishes the ground for the understanding of this multidisciplinary undertaking and provides the necessary framework for further investigation into the practice of news translation. The Third Chapter focuses on the methodology of my research, justifying my decision to use quantitative data collection, textual analysis and interviews. Chapter Four breaks down the findings of my research into a detailed description of the sources and content of translated news, the reasons for translating the news on the Internet, and the audiences' role in the appropriation and interpretation of this information. Chapter Five summarizes my findings into the discussion of certain

patterns that emerged during the analysis of the results. These include the characterization of the practice of online news translation, the role of cultural imperialism and national identity in the production of translated news, and the paradoxical coexistence of homogeneity and heterogeneity in the field of media globalization. In the "Conclusions" section, I argue that from a journalistic perspective globalization is a compound practice of homogenization by the larger forces and re-adaptation and hybridization by the smaller ones. The evidence my thesis will provide suggests that, at the level of dissemination, globalization processes are highly dependent on international organizations with global reach, whereas at the level of consumption this influence is fragmented and reformulated in the interest of the receiver of the information. The thesis concludes with suggestions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: What is globalization?

Considering that my hypotheses are grounded in the complexity of the concept of globalization, it is essential to survey different interpretations of the term. In its utopian manifestation, globalization overlaps with the philosophy of cosmopolitanism: the belief in the possibility of an egalitarian society, a place where people share one common reason for existence, and where to be a citizen means to be a citizen of the whole world (Brock and Brighouse 2005). Applied cosmopolitanism is also defined as internal globalization, "globalization from *within* the national societies" (Beck 2002: 17). Victor Roudometof notes that for some researchers it means the promise of global democratization and the decentering of values identified with the nation-state (2005: 116). For others, cosmopolitanism brings about the notion of the upper classes failing to take into account the "silent majority" of those excluded from wealth (Roudometof 2005: 116, Featherstone 2002: 1). Ideally, cosmopolitanism means a deterritorialized society in which "cosmopolitan values rate more highly than national values" (Beck 2000: 100). The "global village" of Marshall McLuhan (1962) represents another interpretation of globalization, where technological progress results in the total interdependence of individuals—the global village is meant to unite a new global society where people come together and work towards mutual trust and understanding, creating a world that is more democratic and more peaceful (Dodge and Kitchin 1998: 33). This theory is now vividly associated with the Internet (Wellman 2004, Chen et al. 2008); however, in reality, while the World Wide Web did help to expand national boundaries and provide real time communication, it did not make the global village possible (Hampton and Wellman 2008, Reese 2010).

The “imagined communities” of Benedict Anderson (1983) represent another way to look at globalization, where people finally accept pluralism, allowing each other to co-exist in their own nation. In this world, people become interconnected by the sense of national identity and belonging. Anderson believes that such communities are “imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (1983: 15). He adds that this type of inclusive community, expanding beyond geographical boundaries, is a creation of capitalism, print language (122), and human linguistic diversity (46). According to Manuel Castells (2001), the informational economy today operates through a space of flows, making networking the cornerstone to all processes. “A network society,” he explains, “is a society where the key social structures and activities are organized around electronically processed information networks” (2001); but at the same time, networks are shaped by cultural, economic, and political factors. All of the different interpretations of globalization thus illustrate a similar attempt to understand the interconnectedness and functioning among otherwise different societies in which cultural, economic, and political factors interminably shape and redefine what globalization means.

In the wake of the aforementioned theories, scholars have introduced dozens of other concepts such as networking, social spheres, the Internet as a global village, imagined nations or geographies, and timeless time (Radcliffe 1996, Jessop 2002, Reed 2005). All these concepts, introduced at different times by communications scholars, political scientists and sociologists, have one thing in common. All describe processes integral to globalization; processes that, when thoroughly examined, illustrate why

defining globalization is a challenge. Modern interpretations of this term make the quest even more complicated. For Giddens, Globalization is "the intensification of worldwide social relations," where distant localities are linked in a way that local events are shaped by global events and vice versa (1990: 64). Held et al. (1999) define globalization as "spatio-temporal processes of change" that expand human activities across countries and continents (15). Papastephanou calls it an "empirical phenomenon" that has been studied as a transformation of the world economic system, one that operates in a complex atmosphere of compressed time and space, effected by advances in technology and communication (2005: 534).

The belief in the transformation of the world economic system is indeed indispensable for understanding globalization and what the notions of citizenship, sovereignty and other aspects of political and economic life mean in a globalized society. For Saskia Sassen, economic globalization could potentially make the role of the nation-state less significant (1995: 5). To understand this transition, Sassen attempts to define globalization in geographic terms in two ways. First, the "geographic dispersal of factories, offices and service outlets in an integrated corporate system, particularly one with centralized top-level control" means growth in central functions (1995: 9). Therefore, the biggest international companies have become more powerful due to the control they exert over factories, offices, and service outlets in different countries. Second, this power to control is "disproportionately concentrated in the national territories of the highly developed countries," meaning that interpreting economic globalization as extending beyond a single state is only half of the story (10). Economic globalization, as a consequence, includes geographic expansion concurrent with the

expansion of control; the central offices exert control over the international web of producers. This could partially explain why the role of the nation-state becomes less significant; however, Sassen argues that defining the nation-state and the global economy as mutually exclusive operations is problematic:

> The strategic spaces where many global processes take place are often national; the mechanisms through which the new legal forms necessary for globalization are implemented are often part of state institutions; the infrastructure that makes possible the hypermobility of financial capital at the global scale is situated in various national territories. … The state itself has been a key agent in the implementation of global processes, and it has emerged quite altered by this participation. (1995: 27)

Sassen thus suggests that while the role of the nation-state has decreased, especially in the countries negatively affected by economic globalization, the understanding of globalization as a whole should still be considered from a national point of view.

Yet the relationship between globalization and the nation-state is more complex due to different attempts to define nationalism in relation to globalization. Johann P. Arnason, for example, argues that nationalism can be related to the global context in a few different ways (1990: 225). Nationalistic perspectives, he writes, can be "the starting point for different interpretations of the global situation; together with different civilizational traditions and conflicting currents in modern culture, they thus lend to the tendential singularity of the globalizing process a plurality of meanings" (225). On the other hand, Arnason suggests that nationalism and its institutional embodiment can become the reason for withdrawal from the global context. In both cases, understanding how the nationalistic imaginary operates under the processes of globalization is essential for clarifying the concept of globality. Similarly, Alev Cinar argues that globalization is the direct product of nationalism or, in other words, the product "of the discourse of

nationalism that emerges around nation-building efforts, which framed the social and political transformations in the late 19th and early 20th centuries" (2010: 91). Cinar understands the process of globalization as a locally produced view of the world that is a product of nationalist discourse.

My research will illustrate a similar strategy for examining globalization. The notion of globalization will be analyzed from the national point of view. In other words, it will be explained through the theory of "glocalization" (Robertson 1995, Brenner 1998, Beck 2000, Wellman 2004, Roudometof 2005, Banda 2010). The theory of the coexistence of globalization and the nation state—glocalization—suggests that on a daily basis and through a variety of media, citizens of different cultures are exposed to foreign products and foreign ideas; this exposure happens without the crossing of borders (Roudometof 121). Essentially, glocalization implies the process of the local adopting the global, where the global product is modified in accordance with local needs and demands. Another way to describe glocalization is to use Joseph Straubhaar's (2007) concept of hybridization. Hybridization implies that global forces bringing change are adapted "via historical process in which existing local forces mix with new global ones, producing neither global homogenization nor authentic local culture, but a complex new hybrid with multiple layers of culture" (6). For Ulrich Beck (2000) glocalization is internal globalization per se. It provides material and non-material infrastructure resulting in the emerging spaces of human interactions. So far, the creation of such spaces has been confined to specific locations and subjected to the legal regulations of these locations—a notion discussed above (Sassen 1995: 27). Due to the processes of glocalization being

present in the everyday life of an individual, they are better understood at the micro-level (Beck 2002, Roudometof 2005).

Glocalization, or micro-level globalization, can be illustrated by the example of how global and local mind-sets can coexist within one nation. It is often the case that citizens within the same nation have different worldviews: some have open and encompassing attitudes while others maintain a closed, defensive posture. Roudometof labels such individuals "cosmopolitans" and "local citizens," respectively (2005: 121). This dichotomy of worldviews will be revealed in the discussion of translated news readership in the following chapters. Closed versus open attitudes can be "extremely influential in a whole array of topics, ranging from terms of trade to support for fundamentalist organizations to attitudes about religion or culture to expressions of tolerance or hostility towards immigrants" (121). However, the question that raises even greater concern is whether the two polarizing attitudes can be blended together and therefore utilized to define glocalization. Tomlinson (1999) and Roudometof (2005) believe it is possible. While closed versus open attitudes indeed coexist within this framework, there is also the theoretical and empirical feasibility that individuals are not always consistent in their advocacy of local and global, but rather might be displaying different degrees of these attitudes, "and that the structure of their attitudes might be influenced by a variety of other factors" (Roudometof 123). For Roudometof, "the specification of a continuum that consists of different degrees of attachment allows the researcher to view cosmopolitan and local predispositions as relationships of degree, and not as absolutes" (Ibid.). Following Roudometof's line of thinking, glocalization can be better understood from within, through the eyes of a polarized community. This

approach, presenting another multidimensional nature of the term, explains my attempt to study globalization in a local setting.

Overall, what does become clear when sifting through the globalization debate is that the conversation reflects an evolution towards a more critical discussion of the phenomenon. Where economists explain the term as a process enabling financial organizations to operate internationally and expand continuously, political scientists perceive it as the process that results in national governments going under the influence of powerful international corporations. Among some media scholars, globalization contributes to the development of communication technologies, while others interpret globalization as the idea of cultural imperialism—the process of certain cultures exerting their power over others (e.g. Americanization or Westernization). Moreover, some scholars unhappy with the connotations of "globalization" have proposed alternative terms. Reese (2010: 347) and Hjarvard (2010: 34) both agree that globalization is not a single entity, nor an autonomous public sphere. It is a "multilayered structure of publicity" where public communications are being restructured. Above all, it is an unconfined process of cultures expanding far beyond their origins, where geographical boundaries no longer matter. This type of expansion does not necessarily indicate that the global culture is accepted by a country-receiver in its original form. Neither does it indicate a standardization or homogenization of different cultures. Nederveen Pieterse (1994) proposes the term hybridization to describe the outcome of the global entering the local, and the local influencing the global. According to Pieterse (1994), the mixing of cultures contributes to the emergence of new ones, not necessarily American or English prototypes as claimed by the theorists of cultural imperialism (Beck et al. 2004, Owolabi

2004). Each culture contributes their most distinctive and powerful patterns to the construction of the global. Nonetheless, if globalization can be regarded as contributing to cultural modernization, its contribution to economic development is more tenuous. Eric Hobsbawm (1995) and Paul Smith (1997) caution that globalization is a form of economic imperialism that within the sphere of capitalism can only be advanced by the development of new technologies. There are others who argue that globalization will lay the economic basis for what follows capitalism, and therefore will lead to the creation of a new globalized society (Davis 2003). Since the understanding of this process depends on the area of research, scholars have not been able to reach a consensus on its definition.

The phenomenon of globalization has received more attention in the fields of economics and culture than in the fields of communications, especially journalism, so my interest is in studying globalization in relation to how it is shaped by the journalistic practice of news translation. The following three sections will explore how globalization has influenced journalism, language, and the Internet. Such correlations have already been discussed by a number of scholars, such as David Block (2004), Esperança Biesla (2005), Gholam Khiabany (2003), and Neil Thurman (2007). Their theories will be introduced thereafter to clarify how journalistic academia can meet the challenges of globalization, and how the fields of language and the Internet have played a significant role in shaping modern reality.

2.1. Journalism and its role in globalization

Research on media globalization can sometimes be overly optimistic. Journalists are frequently identified as agents of democratization, educators, or peacekeepers. Stephen Reese (2010) believes that such a positive approach can lead to high

expectations from international journalism that cannot be fulfilled in reality. Even with a few global media players, there is a diversity of opinions and a diversity of ways in which journalism is done. To illustrate, *CNN, BBC, Sky News,* and *Reuters* all tend to distinguish news flows between linguistic and cultural zones. Rather than distributing a single version of events to the world, they adjust and conform to the local market for various reasons. When studying the globalization of journalism carefully, it becomes clear that adjusted story-telling has little potential for universal homogenization, even less so for benevolent knowledge dissemination. As Reese puts it, "if 'global' means giving 'dialogic' voices a chance to speak to each other without reproducing national ethnocentrism, then the world's media still fail to measure up" (346).

Generally, there are two arguments in which journalism scholars use to describe the global spread of news. On one hand, scholars tend to claim Westernization is the direct outcome of the global media systems dominated by the English language. On the other hand, others believe that it is local circumstances that frame how journalism is perceived in a global setting, embracing the idea of glocalization. Speaking of the former, the idea of Westernization, Americanization, or transnational capitalism is a phenomenon that can be seen in our daily life. Hollywood movies, fast food chains, clothing labels, music and books are distributed around the world, signifying the effectiveness of the "American dream" ideology. Sometimes the roads of social and media scholars intersect, resulting in studies of economic globalization through the lens of Americanization. For Sassen, while the influence that U.S. popular culture exerts on global culture is the most common instance of Americanization, the phenomenon also reveals itself in the "legal forms ascendant in international business transactions. Through the IMF and the International

Bank for Reconstruction and Development … the U.S. vision has spread to—some would say been imposed on—the developing world" (1995: 18).

Media institutions in many countries have been functioning on Western models for many years. Annabelle Mooney and Betsy Evans (2007) refer to it as "a colonization by American values and lifestyle" (164), where even if a country has its own media giant dominating the market (e.g. Mexican *Televisa*, Asian *Star TV*), it still employs Western models and imitates American shows so that advertisements can be sold more effectively (112). Understanding media globalization in this manner means, as Simon Cottle (2009) puts it, adhering to a "global dominance" paradigm. In other words, it is a concept where journalism is studied through a lens of political economy and power relations, thus explaining how media giants such as *CNN* or *BBC* set the standards for smaller local players, who further "monitor their content and adopt their models of production" (29). The idea of media globalization thus becomes blurred. Flows of information within it are unbalanced, meaning a few organizations set the example of what is right and what is wrong. Cottle calls it "corporate transnationalism," explaining that the idea of the global is flattened by the realities of Western power and corporate interests (30).

Nonetheless, I am reluctant to use the Westernization model as a framework for my research because to take this path means "to see globalization as a continuation of colonialism" (Mooney and Evans 2007: 244). Studying globalization of media through the lens of colonialism would not explain my findings. What happens at a local level in relation to globalization is a much more complex phenomenon that can be better understood through the theory of glocalization. Reese (2010) writes that globalization "connect[s] nodes, where people interact locally in real places with key members of other

networks, and where they develop common norms and logics necessary for the functioning of complex global exchanges" (351). *Al Jazeera* can be used here as an example to diminish the notion of Westernization. The Arabic independent broadcaster owned by the state of Qatar and established in 1996, has become popular today due to its creation of an Arab public space open to discussions, opinions, and criticism. *Al Jazeera* became popular on a global scale because it contested the hegemonic domination of Western media and questioned the notion of homogenized flow of information (Jackson, Nielsen, and Hsu 2011: 128).

Coming back to the notion of the local shaping the global, it is possible to assume that this approach is a more nuanced way to study globalization (as opposed to Westernization or economic globalization). Since glocalization encompasses more elements of the globalization paradigm, it allows me to coordinate the impact of the global and the local on each other. When seen though the lens of glocalization, globalized journalism entails many flows of information, opinions, and views. In other words, globalization does not produce a single global version of events, but a space with different media players reshaping the form and meaning of the global in their own way. Regardless of what media corporation it is (e.g. *CNN, BBC, ABC, New York Times, Le Monde, Xinhua*), journalism is done in accordance with local editorial standards and objectives. Again, it is misleading to talk about a single world monoculture or Americanization. As Reese suggests, such an "overly linear and hegemonic view conceals the actual pattern of interactions and global adaptations in response to special local needs and circumstances" (2010: 350). A media outlet in a global setting is still a local organization, only with a larger audience.

Furthermore, Reese shows that recent developments have changed the nature of global journalism. More citizen-based expressions have been added to the media dialog, and there are more alternatives to traditional media outlets. Moreover, journalism has greatly changed under the influence of technological developments. According to Reese, although technology did not create a new media forms, it has certainly constructed new hybrid versions:

> Old and new media continue to co-exist but become networked and interpenetrating, creating new structures of communication through which journalism happens. This, rather than the addition of any particular new medium standing alone, is the significant globalizing aspect for journalism (Reese, 2010: 350).

In addition, "the globalization of communications does not just make it easier to establish mutual understanding, but often highlights what it is that people do not have in common and how and why differences matter" (Held 2003: 479). Here, understanding can be replaced with the term articulation, which is sometimes used to describe the idea of flows of information in the globalized world. Reese writes that journalism has adapted to global influences, "even if one big 'global village journalism' has not evolved. Rather than speaking of 'flows,' other network-oriented concepts such as 'articulation' capture the sense of influence arising from the coupling across boundaries" (348). Wayan Suyadnya (2009) expresses the same notion:

> A closer understanding of 'the production of locality' is indeed a crucial issue if one wants to understand globalization's paradoxical articulation of flow and closure. That means, to understand globalization is not only understanding it from global cultural perspective but also from local cultural perspective.

The articulation of globalization processes at the local level is therefore potentially richer than the abstract articulation of globalization at the international level. The study of glocalization allows for a better examination of processes such as articulation of global

flows and cultural closure. Having discussed the importance of local media players for the understanding of a complex phenomenon of globalization, the following section addresses a key mediator between the global and the local: news translation.

2.2. Translation and its role in globalization

How do foreign articles enter local markets? What happens when a news item travels from its creator to a foreign recipient? Why are the same events covered so inconsistently in different countries? What does globalization have to do with this process? In addition to answering these questions, I am concerned with how little attention has been given to this stage of news production. According to Bielsa and Bassnett, while translation is a key mediator of global communication, it remains an invisible practice of news dissemination (2009: 23, 29). For example, Castells' theory of the "network society" describes globalization as a product of the progress of information technologies, but, as Bielsa notes, translation is "completely absent from his account of the network society. … [Castells] does not believe that linguistic diversity intervenes in its globalized core" (25). For him, the "network society" is built around a universal, digital language, and is therefore monolingual. But "the fact that the digital language is not a naturally existing language linked to territory makes its translation, its relationship to other languages, very abstract and difficult to conceive" (Bielsa 2009: 26). Michael Cronin writes that Castells expresses a simple desire "for mutual, instantaneous intelligibility between human beings speaking, writing and reading different languages" (2003: 59). This intelligibility certainly exists, but not among all people; it is generally ascribed to those with power, knowledge, and access to technologies.

Even though the situation is slowly changing, with interest in translation increasing

steadily since 1999, Erkka Vuorinen (1999) gives several important reasons why news translation is a subject that does not generate interest among scholars and practitioners in the fields of journalism, mass communication, and translation (63). One explanation is that translation work remains invisible for the majority of journalists and that it is to a large extent a centralized activity; the number of organizations and individuals engaged in it is relatively small. Another explanation is that media companies do not actually translate foreign news, but produce stories based on foreign articles and thus do not consider themselves translators. Lastly, when looking into writings dealing with journalism and international mass communication, one discovers very soon that they either completely ignore translation or do not discuss it in any detail; as Vuorinen puts it, "foreign news processing, which may involve various editing functions, does not seem to fit within the scope of 'translation proper' and therefore there may be a reluctance to include it among the subjects of translation and mass communication research" (63).

Another important but invisible aspect of news production, writes Michael Cronin (2003), is the time and effort required to establish and maintain linguistic connections. It might seem that news happens in different languages instantaneously. In addition, many translated texts do not carry by-lines of translators, making them even more invisible. What Lawrence Venuti described in his book *The Translator's Invisibility* in 1995 remains true to this day; translation is taken for granted and forced to the backstage of the globalization debate. While the effects of translation on globalization remain obscure, the reverse relation is more evident, as globalization has caused an exponential increase of translation all around the world (Bielsa 2009: 31). Within different economic systems, goods are tailored to meet the needs of local markets. The products are distributed at an

international level, appearing in different countries under the same names only transliterated into local alphabets. There are thousands of advertisements, brochures, and manuals that represent products in a local idiom. And the expanding global market requires more and more translation when it becomes a market product in its own right. According to Bielsa:

> Translation values and strategies in localization and elocalization (website localization) are not uniform but combine elements of domestication and foreignization to market products that have to appeal to their target buyers but, at the same time, often retain exoticizing connections to the language of technological innovation. (31)

This means that the globalization of translation results in a complex process heavily influenced by market needs and demands, in which translation is meant to adapt a text or a product to the locality where it is reproduced. In other words, globalization of translation operates in the framework of glocalization, similar to how the globalization of media has been operating.

However, in academia scholars prefer to speak of news translation as primarily an acculturating process (Cronin 2003, Bielsa and Bassnett 2009). Localization and acculturation, or in other words domestication, is the most practiced and acknowledged way to translate news. As I said earlier, the journalistic text is tailored to meet the needs of a specific local market, namely the target audience (Cronin: 13). Bielsa and Bassnett agree with Cronin that the knowledge of what the reader wants to know is more crucial than the accuracy of interlingual transferal (15). Accurate interlingual transferal is sometimes called "foreignization," a practice when translated news is meant to retain the message from a different continent or from a new culture:

> [T]ranslators are faced with the choice of either taking the reader back to the text or bringing that text across to the readers … When the first option is followed,

> features of the source text and its context are reproduced with the result that the final product might seem strange and unfamiliar, and this process has come to be known as foreignization. This form of translation deliberately foregrounds the cultural other, so that the translated text can never be presumed to have originated in the target language. (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009:9)

However, this approach is rare in today's economy of communications and, if not completely avoided, it is combined with the techniques of domestication. In this regard, Vuorinen adds that it is almost impossible for news to cross linguistic and cultural boundaries without being edited in content, style and perspective so that it will be understood locally (1999: 64).

Some scholars who study media and translation believe that foreign news sources represent a much wider range of perspectives than those offered by traditional media, and therefore people wishing to move outside their domestic ideological spectrum can use foreign news sources to access alternate perspectives (e.g. Best et al. 2005: 65). However, with respect to globalization such a statement would be one-sided. Taking into consideration the centralization of news production and the shrinkage of media ownership (where the number of enterprises decreases while the number of the media outlets they own increases), it is safe to suggest that diversification of viewpoints is relative. Vuorinen, in her study *Crossing Cultural Barriers in International News Transmission* (1999), writes that the great majority of countries have to depend on foreign, primarily Western news sources because they do not have enough resources to cover global events and improve their foreign reporting (61). In other words, translation of news does not result in the multiplication of viewpoints, but rather renders a forum for cultural imperialism. In my thesis, I too will challenge the notion of the multiplication of viewpoints.

The cultural imperialism theory is integrated throughout this literature review, and the thesis as a whole, due to its recurrent appearance in different fields of research such as media and translation studies. To illustrate, reading translated news on a daily basis taught me that the most cited sources are English-language media. Unequal power distribution in the world is not only about politics and economy, but also about language, and translation also contributes to the global dominance of Anglo-American culture. There are numerous examples that illustrate why this is the case, and why the English language bears more weight compared to other languages. For instance, the number of American books translated from English far exceeds those translated into English; there is evidence that the number of people speaking English in China is greater than in the United States; also, English media from developed countries often penetrates developing countries, eroding local cultural identity, national sovereignty, and political independence (Pennycook 1994, Dor 2004, Bielsa and Bassnett 2009, Dunton-Downer 2010, Saxena and Omoniyi 2010). With regards to globalization, Bielsa acknowledges that the number of translated texts from English and into English is an indication of how these powers are distributed, where "those at the core do the transmission and those at the periphery merely receive it" (140). Tunisia's ambassador Mustapha Masmoudi, in his 1978 statement at the "International Commission for the Study of Communication Problems" said that transnational (mostly English-speaking) media impose their own way of seeing the world upon the developing countries by choosing, filtering, and editing the news that serves as the main source of information for non-English societies.

According to Mooney and Evans, if we describe the status of the English language as hegemonic, we need not forget that this comes from the people using the language

rather than the language itself (2007: 106). The number of influential figures using English indicates how much power the language has. The result of this homogenization of English is the marginalization of other languages, and the "loss of culture and history and oppression of minority speakers" (147). And even though globalization can be understood as a means of spreading diversity, this might not be the case for the expansion of language diversity, as there is no evidence of people learning more languages. On the other side of the fence are those who believe Englishization in the digital age is an empty claim. Robert Phillipson writes:

> Labeling English as the world's lingua franca, or as 'the' language of the Internet, is wishful thinking. Many languages are used as lingua francas, and many languages are used on the Internet, including demographically small ones. The status of English may well be challenged in the future. (2003: 71)

I agree with Phillipson to the extent that the more the Internet spreads within each nation, the more access we will have to sources written in local idioms. However, the line between English-language dominance and the digital diversity of idioms is thin. While it is true that expanding access to the Internet increases the number of sources in non-English languages, it is also true that these local sources use translations from English to create local content. In this sense, English still dominates the online domain by being the original source for many non-English articles. The results of my research will also show that in the case of online news translation, English significantly outweighs all of other languages. To understand what role the Internet plays in media and translation dissemination, the next section will consider the scholarship on the Internet and its impact on globalization.

2.3. The Internet and its role in globalization

In the years since the Internet emerged as a popular communications medium, cyber-utopian thinkers have expressed the "hope that connecting every human on earth might make the world a better place," where "humanity united might do better than our lousy systems of government" (Goldsmith and Wu 2006: 27). As part of this communication revolution, traditional media were to become decentralized, and citizen-based journalism would prevail (Rheingold 1994). Some thought the Internet was meant to empower people, protect freedom of speech, and create greater democracy throughout the world (Barlow 1996, Godwin 2003), whereas others suggested that the global reach of the Internet could effectively appease nationalisms that re-emerged after the Cold War (Nisha Shah 2008).

Such enthusiasm about the potential of the Internet has generally been met with criticism and scrutiny. Scholars, observing the economic, cultural, and social penetration of the World Wide Web, realized anybody could take advantage of it. It became clear that developing countries do not benefit from technological progress as much as first world countries do. Even European countries have uneven success in developing and promoting universal services (Van Audenhove et al. 1999). Differential access remains "a major issue that reveals nothing but the digital reproduction of centuries' old disparities and divisions. In addition, it is a mistake to believe that access to technologies equals economic, social, and political developments," explains Khiabany (2003: 151). The mistake also lies in the fact that increased communications among nations are regarded as essentially neutral, well-intentioned processes. The questions of power, access, and content of communication are simply ignored. Recent studies of globalization and the Internet reveal cases of the Internet being used for hidden advertising, spreading

propaganda, and manipulating online communities. This definitely affects the very nature of social relations, but the question remains: how, and in what direction? Evgeny Morozov, for instance, says that the Internet is not a trusted source for the exchange of political information because it is heavily influenced by governing elites. He even suggests that Internet use might in practice decrease the effectiveness of collective action:

> In the age of the Spinternet, when cheap online propaganda can easily be bought with the help of pro-government bloggers, elucidating what fellow citizens think about the regime may be harder than we thought. Add to that the growing surveillance capacity of modern authoritarian states—also greatly boosted by information collected through social media and analyzed with new and advanced forms of data-mining—and you may begin to understand why the Green Movement faltered. (Morozov 2010)

Those who have power to decide what will be available online (and what will be suppressed) may not understand the Internet very well; nonetheless, they can understand how its impact "on collective action and its impact on access to information are likely to reshape their own areas of expertise and policy" (Morozov 2011). Edward Herman and Robert McChesney (1997) predict that the Internet can well become an integral part of the current communication oligopoly instead of incapacitating it. Media giants have incorporated the Internet in their production line, thus taking control over digital space and eroding the egalitarian potential of the new technology.

Some scholars have suggested that the globalization of the Internet is encouraged by economic growth (Main 2001, Shah 2008). As information flows across nations faster and faster, both time and space are becoming increasingly compressed. Meanwhile, the speed of economic development requires the development of communication technologies, which speeds up the process of communication among people, communities, and nations. Therefore, in the drive for economic stability or growth,

individuals network on the World Wide Web to a steadily increasing extent (Carpentier 2008).

As I indicated above in the sections on journalism and translation, the notions of cultural imperialism and Westernization is also an indispensable subject of Internet research because a major part of online communication occurs in English. But this tendency is changing. In accordance with journalism studies, where the idea of Westernization was dismissed as a continuation of colonialism, the dominance of Western languages on the Internet now also can be challenged. If previously statistically proven, the dominance of English is challenged today more and more by smaller online media (Dor 2004). Local players push back against the lingua franca in order to preserve their own language, and so that the information can be presented in its familiar, natural way. In this regard, Linda Y. Main poses an interesting question: "If more local content is developed in local languages, will the global nature of the internet change?" (2001: 94).

Encountering something online that seems interesting but written in a foreign language can be frustrating. It creates an incentive to translate, reformulate, and transfer information. Volunteers translators often republish and deliver it to a new audience, and connect it to the original source; this becomes an act of globalization in its own right. In this sense, translation on the Internet is a component of globalization because a text written in one locality becomes publicly available in other places. By generating interest among foreigners the text becomes localized, bringing along new cultural elements. Available in two or more languages, it becomes a cross-national unit—a unit of globalization. However, the challenge of being a global unit is that in each single locality where it is presented, the version differs. Indeed, the globalization of texts is no longer

seen as homogeneous, but as a "commodification of language-related materials." As Daniel Dor (2004) writes:

> [T]he Internet is indeed on its way to becoming a truly multilingual space, but this development does not necessarily carry the promise of freedom. The Net is growing multilingual mainly because the agents of economic globalization have realized that adapting to local cultures and languages is a necessary component of staying competitive—and because the commodification of language-related materials constitutes a huge global market. (115)

From this perspective, it can be argued that preserving the language diversity on the Internet is an achievable objective. However, the power to decide what languages will emerge first is left to government officials, media, software and advertising companies. In this setting, the global society would exist in a "state of market-based, imposed multilingualism" (Dor: 116), where the people themselves will have less influence on the dynamics of linguistic change. The outcome of language globalization is thus unknown because it will depend on the economic conditions of the future.

The outcome of this linguistic Internet proliferation is even more uncertain because localization processes seem to introduce a greater number of imagined boundaries than real geographical divides (Norris 2001, Williams and Copes 2005). Examples of these boundaries include social, cultural, and economic divides; subcultures are separated from the mainstream culture, technologically educated online users are separated from the amateurs, and even some social media is tailored only for rich consumers and excludes the majority. Each case is representative of the community where it is created; that is to say, the Internet outlet with expected international reach and access is still heavily defined by its geographical surrounding. The examination of the Russian online media will also illustrate how domestic outlets that incorporate items of global reporting are still strongly embedded in a local reality. In some cases, Russian readers of online news are

the ones who tightly bind the foreign product to its domestic reality. Since the focus of my research is on Russian online media, the next section of the literature review provides the necessary background for understanding the geographical context of this study.

2.4. The Russian media context

According to Floriana Fossato and John Lloyd (2008), even before Mikhail Gorbachev introduced the policy of *Glasnost* in the late 1980s, Russian people were already calling into question the superiority of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. Those who had access to *BBC World*, *Radio Free Europe*, Western newspapers, foreign pop music, films, and theatre challenged the Soviet status quo. "From that, it was easy to move to the view that a rapidly growing medium, much more difficult to block and offering countless links round the globe, would have an even more powerful effect," writes Fossato about the development of communication technologies and the Internet in particular (2008: 5-6). To describe what happened after the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s, Florian Toepfl (2011) writes that "a large 'grey area' of political regimes evolved that can neither be regarded as classic authoritarian nor as fully-fledged democratic" (1302). To understand better this "grey area" of political regimes, scholars invented a number of new concepts to help characterize the situation, the so-called "democracies with adjectives" (Collier and Levitsky 1997). Russia now became associated with words such as a "semi-authoritarian," "semi-democratic," as well as a "defective," "sovereign," or "guided" democracy, where "while at least semi-competitive elections are held on a regular basis, [though] civil rights and political liberties such as the freedom of association or the freedom of the press continue to be severely restricted" (Toepfl 2011: 1302).

Talking about the post-Soviet media, Elena Vartanova and Sergei Smirnov propose that now it is the market that shapes the Russian media industry (2010: 21). The number of media outlets has been growing, and while television remains the main source of information for many Russians, the industry of newspapers, magazines, and the Internet has expanded significantly. While the lack of transparency makes the task of analyzing these outlets rather difficult, research is being done on the Russian media in relation to politics, censorship and identity, gender and sexuality (Beumers et al. 2009, Rosenholm et al. 2010).

The understanding of different ownership structures can also shed much light on the functioning of Russian media today. Since the early1990s, three companies have managed to form a small ownership circle that now leads the Russian media market (Vartanova and Smirnov 2010: 25). The first company—the state-owned Federation Broadcasting Company (VGTRK)—controls national and regional TV, radio, and the Internet. The second—Gazprom-Media—controls TV companies, a publishing house and advertisement agency, newspapers, radio, and movie theatres. The third—Prof-Media—owns publishing houses, radio companies, a movie company, and Internet media.

Other players, controlling the rest of the Russian media, are referred to as the "second echelon." Based in Moscow, these companies are also active in the regions, and constitute what Vartanova and Smirnov call Russian federal media (Ibid.). This regionalization of the market and media system demonstrates how journalism has changed in Russia. Vartanova and Smirnov suggest that there are at least three major reasons behind the regionalization of journalism (30). In the first place, media depends on a distribution system. Since almost none of the Russian media outlets have managed to

create a cheap and efficient distribution system, retail sales have become the main method of delivery. Second, the difference between how federal and regional TV operations function makes regionalization more likely to happen. The central (federal) channels have shifted the emphasis to entertainment and tabloid journalism, thus failing to form or foster a national political discourse. On the contrary, regional media focus on local audiences, thus providing information more tuned to their interests. Lastly, regional advertisement markets have been strengthened, which provides higher incomes for regional media. In the *Annual Report by the Russian Periodical Press Market*, the author writes: "Over recent years the interest of advertisers in regional media has considerably increased. The growth rates of the advertising component in regional media, including the network media, have exceeded those of most federal editions" (2008: 30). But it would be a mistake to say that the advertising market has expanded only on a regional level. Vartanova and Smirnov believe that "the fundamental change that triggered the transformation of the media system in post-Soviet Russia was the intensive growth of the advertising industry" as a whole (2010: 39). In this framework, constructing an audience for advertisers has become the priority, while the social functions of the media are secondary to commercial interests.

What happened to traditional media during the transition period in Russia is different from what is happening with the development of a new medium, the Internet. The Internet did not exist in the Soviet Union and thus was created in a completely new environment. The content of the Internet was frequently transformed, thus entailing optimistic as well as more critical debates among scholars. To illustrate, Marina Pavlikova in *Media Business Online* describes four major periods of Internet

development in Russia (2002: 88-91). At the beginning, news websites were created by the Russian Diaspora abroad, mostly people living in the United States and Israel. The first domain, .SU, was registered in 1990. At this time, very few journalistic organizations could be found online, and hence no large investments were made. Runet[1] was rather a marginal space and only "privileged" people could get access to it. Among these privileged, "there was forming a circle of playmakers, which would direct development of the media sector on the Runet in the future" (Ibid. 89). During the second period that started around 1998, people proficient in information technologies created the first professional media websites, which are still popular today: *Gazeta.ru*, *Smi.ru*, *Utro.ru*, *Vesti.ru*, and *Lenta.ru*. In 2000, "Russian experts began using the term investment boom in reference to the Internet" (90). And this, according to Pavlikova, began the third, optimistic period of the Runet development.

Russian businessmen in cooperation with American investors began buying popular Russian online sources and developing new ones. But the main excitement about investing was created by online journalists themselves, and in fact, there were just a few companies who dared to invest money in newborn digital projects (Pavlikova 2002). Moreover, the projects lucky enough to receive financial support could not adequately manage those investments. Their mistake was the production of so-called "shovelware"—a process whereby online media outlets copy and paste offline content, not taking into consideration new features and demands of the online market. 2001 and beyond is described by Pavlikova as a fourth, more pessimistic period of the Runet development. The reason for the pessimism was a lack of media that could demonstrate a

[1] "Runet" is the term that Russian-speaking online users commonly use to call the segment of Internet written or understood in the Russian language.

worthy business plan to their investors. Later, according to Natalya Tkacheva, head of Internet research at COMCON, the Russian online market was still limited because the technology needed to use the Internet with mobile telephones was still too expensive for the average regional user (considering that only 67 percent of Russians had fixed telephone lines) (Qtd. in Fossato et al. 11-12).

Today, the Russian-language section of the Internet consists of more than 3.7 million domain names (Stat.reg.ru 2012). And while it seems like the Internet is doing well compared to traditional media, about 90 percent of online activity still consists of social networking, shopping, and games (Vartanova and Smirnov 2010: 23). The geographical centre of the Internet usage in Russia is still Moscow, where more than five million people use it every month. Six percent of the Russian population has never heard of the Internet, and 73 percent do not have access to it on a regular basis (Ibid.). Russian researcher Andrey Yablonskikh (2010) explains that over the course of last four years, online media traffic has increased threefold, meaning that Russian society is increasingly using the Internet as its primary source of information (225). Another Russian scholar, Alexander Kuzmin (2008), adds that the Internet is becoming an increasingly influential political force capable of consolidating the supporters of different political ideologies (75). Since the growth of political diversity in Russia is prevented by a lack officially registered new parties, comprehensive organizational structure, and a restriction on entering the electoral processes, online media appear to be one of the most efficient political tools for those underrepresented.

Many scholars (Kuzmin 2008, Tewksbury and Rittenberg 2009, Best et al. 2005, Fossato et al. 2008) see the Internet, and especially the access to foreign online news, as

an important component for democratization and liberation. Fossato et al. (2008) propose a theory of Runet as a liberator. First, they write, it is a personal liberation, one that sets people free from the inaccessibility of information and knowledge limits. This liberation educates by providing "the potential for endless enquiry, scholarship and self-improvement" (2). Second, it is liberation from state control, one that allows people to publish and share the information that is normally suppressed by the authorities. And third, it is a force for the liberalization of the market allowing for the free trade of views, information, and commodities:

> Civil society, mass media and the capacity and motivation for independent social mobilization can also be important drivers of Russia's political system in the next decade. ... The rapid growth of access to telecommunications technologies, first and foremost the Internet, could empower greater independence among all these factors." (Fossato et al. 2008: 6)

In his article *Right Internet in Russia* (2008), Kuzmin continues, writing that specificity of political reportage found on Runet is that it provides an opportunity to learn not only the official version of events, but also an alternative perspective (74). All this contributes to the construction of a democratic state with visible informational cooperation between the authorities and society. Runet here is an alternative medium to state-controlled media. If Russian television represents a one-way information flow (one-to-many), from centre to periphery, the Internet operates on the principle of networking, or in other words, "peer-to-peer." Runet "continues the tradition of Russian dissidents, introducing the technical possibilities for the development of an alternative public sphere" (Kovalenko and Kudryashova 2005: 73). Kuzmin concludes that the political segment of Russian Internet is almost the only place that can be used for free political debate (75). Tewksbury and Rittenberg concur, pointing out that the online

decentralization of information and the opportunities for citizens to access a range of political content can enhance political involvement and debate (2009: 197-198): "[T]he availability and structure of news online may be serving democratic ideals more effectively than are the features of the traditional media" (197). In Moscow and other large cities too, Runet has been considered a liberator of Russian society. It became a space for the free exchange of opinions. Russians learned how to freely access foreign sources of information and participate in international conversations. But despite the climate of optimism about the Internet's potential, it remained evident that the access to the Web was and still is largely confined to a privileged group of people—particularly bilinguals conversant in English (Alexander 2004). Moreover, as the results of my research will show in the following chapters, Runet not only gives more access to foreign sources of information, but also empowers some preexisting attitudes and beliefs about foreign content.

Kuzmin (2008) writes that information obtained from online sources can not only shape public opinion, but also disrupt it, by fostering negative attitudes (74). Furthermore, some scholars associate a number of risks with translated online news. In their analysis of online journalism consumption, Best et al. (2005) and Bielsa and Bassnett (2009) state that foreign online news presents a new channel of communication between cultures helping to change societal consensus by constantly fragmenting the media environment. On the other hand, if domestic media cannot provide the range and depth of international issues and diversity of perspectives required for effective self-governance in the modern age, Best et al. write, "online foreign news sources may, at least in part, fulfill this role" (54).

To clarify this paradox in the case of Russian online media, the research conducted by Fossato et al. highlights a number of trends typical for Runet: the qualitative level of Internet discussion is low; there is a lack of trust that can be manipulated by the authorities; online networks are rather closed and intolerant; and leaders of online media can often be co-opted, compromised, or frightened (51). In addition, Russian online media could help to increase citizen satisfaction with the government; while state capacity could be strengthened from within, propaganda organs could benefit from Internet use by "helping the government to reach a new, younger audience" (Shanthi Kalathil and Taylor Boas 2003: 34). Nonetheless, Fossato et al. write that Russian Internet users rarely respond to political campaigning on the web (2008: 51). On the contrary, according to the Russian search engines *Rambler* and *Yandex*, the websites that receive most attention are those covering sport (particularly soccer), human stories, photos, video entertainment, and accidents.

While these subjects occupy the largest segment of the Russian Internet, it is shortsighted to ignore the growing number of politically oriented websites. As it will become clear from the following chapters, the case of news translation on Runet has led to a complex chain of nationalistic and xenophobic exchanges that can be traced through online commentaries and forums. Oleg Panfilov writes that the increasing access to the Runet made possible not only the uncontrolled delivery of alternative news, but also "the appearance of a large number of nationalistic and fascist websites" (2006: 143). The increase in nationalistic media started with Putin's popularity in the early 2000s. Rafael Khachaturian (2009) writes that such populist nationalism coincided with Russia's increasingly hardline foreign policies. The political climate became increasingly anti-

American with an irreconcilable opposition between Russia's national interests and those of the West. Khachaturian suggests that suspicious popular sentiment was "focused on American expansion into Ukraine and Georgia under the guise of NATO," which resulted in "a growing parallelism between nationalism at home and the renewed effort to build regional and international influence" (19). This nationalistic tendency in contemporary Russia is sometimes addressed as "Us-ism" (Fadeicheva 2009):

> The essence of "us-ness" in the nationalistic discourse of Russian postmodernism is Russia itself in its "great-power" state interpretation, which opposes it to other countries, primarily the United States and Western Europe. In addition to historical reasons, these states are chosen as "adversaries" because they challenge Russia in terms of modernization, a challenge to which Russia has not yet adequately responded. (Fadeicheva 2009: 9)

For Fadeicheva, Russians now take for granted the notions of Anti-Americanism and anti-Westernism. The distinct feature of such "Us-ist" nationalism is active aggression.

This aggression reveals itself in negative attitudes toward the policy of foreign states along with a rejection of foreign citizens. Statements such as "Russia for the Russians," "Russia needs Russian order" that are often heard on television, or the election slogans of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia (LDPR)—"We stand for the poor, we stand for Russians"—indicate that the discourse of ethno-nationalism is becoming an indispensable part of everyday Russian life. Fadeicheva writes that unfortunately many Russian citizens have embraced these views exhibiting an anti-Western and pro-Russian bias that is constantly reinforced by the Russian media outlets. My thesis will illustrate how this sentiment is embedded in the conversations about translated news, where the news is labeled and judged solely in accordance with the news' origin. In addition, in my thesis I will utilize the notion of the Other to depict the dichotomy of "Us versus Them," a journalistic method which simplifies complex situations in reporting (Bailey 2005). The

concept of the Other became widely known after Edward Said introduced it in his book *Orientalism* (1978). Said argued that the concept of the Other was derived from a discourse of the East as the West's inferior other, where the Other is represented as voiceless, sensual, female, despotic, irrational, and exotic; and by contrast, the West is represented as masculine, democratic, rational, moral, and progressive. This notion is especially essential for understanding the readership of translated news because, as the results will illustrate, translated texts are repeatedly estranged as foreign sources, as something that inherently opposes the local and familiar. In the case of my thesis, the roles are flipped in that the Russian readers refer to Western media as the inferior other.

To conclude, the Russian media market has notably transformed during the last twenty years. After Vladimir Putin's presidency (2000 and beyond), the Russian economy has been growing at seven percent annually and became one of the strongest economies in the world, writes Fossato (2008). The rapid improvement of living standards means that the Russian administration's view of the future is accepted and celebrated. Notwithstanding, if in terms of wealth people are prospering, their democratic rights are still very much in danger. Timothy Garton Ash writes, "although formally an electoral democracy, the Russian federation currently has strong authoritarian tendencies, and is attempting to recreate a sphere of influence in Eastern Europe and the Caucasus" (213). Fossato (2008) and Edward Lucas (2008) agree that already in 2004 Vladimir Putin had the media and business sectors under his control to the extent that traditional channels of information started to loose credibility (55–56). In 2012, the situation remains largely the same. The only positive change started to emerge within the space of the Internet. This digital medium constitutes "an independent alternative to the more

tightly controlled offline media and political space" (Alexanyan et al. 2012: 2). Keeping this in mind, my study of the Russian Internet, which represents an open public space for many Russian citizens, can shed light on how alternative ways of communication operate under the current political regime.

3. METHODOLOGY: The conduct of multidisciplinary inquiry

This multidisciplinary research, with a geographic focus on Moscow, was conducted through the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. The intention was to introduce the content and sources of translated news, in addition to speaking with editors and translators about it. Such an approach allowed me to compare the actual content of translated news with how this content was interpreted by its creators. Moreover, the content analysis of online news and the set of interviews I collected assisted me in examining the complex structure of news translation on the Internet in relation to a broader concept of globalization. Content analysis, which was initially introduced as a method for studying newspaper articles (Krippendorff 2004: 13, Neuman 2005: 293), helped me to collect my data quantitatively, and, in the later stages of research, to implement qualitative and interpretive methods. The combination of such methods revealed aspects of the texts' content that were difficult to comprehend otherwise (Neuman 2005).

As it was mentioned in the introduction, this study was constructed so as to test the hypotheses:

> **Hypothesis**: Foreign news that is translated on the Internet enhances Russian coverage by presenting new factual information previously unknown to the reader, therefore expanding informational boundaries, easing the processes of knowledge dissemination and media globalization.

In order to reach a conclusion on whether this hypothesis is true or false, I posed three research questions:

> **RQ 1:** What is the origin, the language used and content of translated news on the Internet? How do online media that translate foreign news operate?
>
> **RQ 2:** How do the editors and translators at online media outlets manage

journalism, technologies and translation? What are their reasons for translating news, and what role does translated news play in relation to the Russian coverage?

RQ 3: Who is the readership for translated news? What is the readership's understanding and interpretation of translated news? How does their interpretation relate to the editors' position on news translation?

3.1. The quantitative analysis

My data collection was divided among three stages. First, I selected three online sources that translate news into Russian: *Inosmi.ru*, *Inopressa.ru*, and *Perevodika.ru*. These are the most popular Russian websites that translate news on Runet (*Top100.rambler.ru* 2012). These three news outlets function under different ownership models, which allowed me to draw broader and diverse conclusions. *Inosmi.ru* belongs to the state-owned (and largest) Russian news agency RIA Novosti. This website is sponsored by the Federal Agency on Press and Mass Communications of Russia (FAPMC). *Inopressa.ru* belongs to a private media company owned by Vladimir Gusinsky, whose media holding is famous for creating the first independent TV channel in Russia, NTV. *Perevodika.ru,* with the smallest number of visitors of the three*,* is managed by a group of volunteers for whom news translation is a hobby. Thus the first source is an example of state-owned media, the second represents a privately owned media outlet, and the third is a creation of citizen-based journalism.

To answer the first question of my research, I used a computer program called SPSS for statistical analysis. I then coded more than 300 news articles covering the period between October 2011 and March 2012 (the distribution of articles between the three sources was equal). The selection of articles happened every week between Monday and Friday; the articles were taken from the front pages of the studied sources. Each

article was entered into the SPSS coding sheet. Their date, headline, and content were saved on my personal computer for future reference. The coding sheet included six variables:

- The name of the website (e.g. *Inosmi.ru*)
- The time of the publication (e.g. December 2011)
- The source of the translation (e.g. *The New York Times*)
- The language from which the article was translated (e.g. English)
- The subject/category of the news item (e.g. Economy)
- The geographical location of the news item (e.g. China)

This quantitative method allowed me to see what the most frequently chosen sources are, what language gets to be translated the most, and what subjects and countries receive the most attention.

3.2. The textual analysis

In order to examine the content of translated news, an understanding of how this news is situated within the Russian coverage was essential. To answer this question, I used comparative textual analysis. The decision to use comparative research came to me after I realized it was one of the most underdeveloped methods in communications research (Livingstone 2003; Hallin and Mancini 2004). Moreover, by using a comparative textual analysis, I could challenge the bias of my own cultural tradition (Neuman 2005: 408). According to Neuman, "by becoming multicultural, a researcher gains a better awareness of problems in doing social research and of Western bias, and can produce improved social research as a result" (Ibid.). Since all research is subjected to cultural bias, the explanation of how I dealt with it in my own case is required. On the one hand, the majority of my research was influenced by Western scholarship, making a Western cultural bias and ethnocentrism possible (Myrdal 1973: 89). On the other hand,

my own ethnicity and background added a Russian cultural bias, and I also introduced Russian scholarship in my literature review. I scrutinized each bias, making my findings more balanced.

Comparative textual analysis helped me to understand how news produced by Russian media and translated foreign news coexist; the close reading of news items and editorials helped me to explain how they resemble and differ from each other, how the events are framed in each case, what ideological and cultural values are privileged, and whether translation enriches Russian coverage. To narrow my sample, I decided to look at the events that received the most coverage during the data collection period. This included the Occupy Wall Street protests and movements that began on 17 September, 2011 in New York and continued throughout the year in different countries, and notably received a wide variety of responses from the media and readers. The protests addressed corruption, the influence of corporations on governments, and wealth and income differences. Another news subject that received a considerable amount of coverage was the death of Muammar Gaddafi, who served as a leader of the Libyan Arab Republic from 1977 to 2011. After revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia and an uprising that spread across Libya, he was captured by National Transitional Council fighters near his hometown of Sirte on 20 October, 2011 and killed the same day. The third and last event that I examined was the 2012 Russian presidential election held on 4 March. Among the candidates registered by the Central Election Commission were social democrat Sergey Mironov, centrists Mikhail Prokhorov and Vladimir Putin, liberal democrat Vladimir Zhirinovsky, and communist Gennady Zyuganov. According to the Central Election Commission, the election gathered more than 108,000,000 eligible votes, resulting in 64

percent for Vladimir Putin, 17 percent for Gennady Zyuganov, 8 percent for Mikhail Prokhorov, 6 percent for Vladimir Zhirinovsky and 4 percent for Sergey Mironov.

With these events as my focus, I chose more than 30 articles for each, carefully read them, and outlined the main points of each article (the sample for each category was not random; I covered all articles that were available on the websites). The following questions guided me through the textual analysis of the sample:

- Who are the authorities mentioned in each article?
- What is the judgment concerning each authority?
- What are the details of events outlined by the author?
- How is Russia depicted?
- What are the counter-arguments?

Having collected the facts from each article, I then searched for the similar information in the online news produced by Russian media. Russian online media included all the sources available through the news search engines *Yandex.ru* and *Rambler.ru*. Such a comparative method allowed me to examine whether translated news bore any additional information to that already published in Russian outlets.

The second stage of my research also included a textual analysis of readers' comments. I worked with the same sample of more than 90 articles analyzing the feedback left by readers. The sample of readers' comments included more than 450 entries left on the translated news webpages, and on forums. To understand the content of comments, I posed two questions: what is the subject of the comment, and what is the judgment of the subject? As an example, in a response to the article about the presidential election a user talks about Vladimir Putin. In his response, the commenter praises Putin's candidacy. In my analysis, this would translate into the subject, *Russian prime minister*, and the judgment, *praise*. Furthermore, subjects and judgments were divided by themes

so as to draw broader conclusions. A close reading of this data helped me to understand how translated news was received and interpreted by the Russian online community.

3.3. The interview process

The third stage of my research consisted of interviews with representatives of the two online sources, *Inosmi.ru* and *Perevodika.ru.* The other source—*Inopressa.ru*—could not be reached for comments (for this reason, the "Findings" chapter of this study includes *Inopressa.ru* only as a source for quantitative analysis). In the case of *Inosmi.ru,* I spoke with the editor-in-chief; in the case of *Perevodika.ru,* I had a chance to interview two editors and three volunteer translators who work for *Perevodika.ru* on a permanent basis. The interviews were conducted through instant messaging and e-mail. The subjects of the interview included the process of news selection and translation, accuracy and objectivity, online audiences, languages and cultures, Westernization, and globalization. By interviewing the editors and translators, I explored how they perceive the goals and strategies of news translation, and how they understand their role in a technologically advanced media market.

The advantage of this technique for my research was the insight I gained on the issues. Since the comparative study of news texts only describes different structures and patterns, the dialogue with the creators helped me to understand the *human* side of the practice. I based my interviewing method on the Steinar Kvale and Svend Brinkmann's work (2008). Focusing on practical, epistemological, and ethical issues, I looked at how interviewing could contribute to the construction of knowledge. As Kvale and Brinkmann write, the "process of knowing through conversations is intersubjective and social, involving interviewer and interviewee as co-constructors of knowledge" (18). They also

describe how knowledge produced by interviewing can be subjected to the norms of reliability, validity, and generalization (242-248); they emphasize the ways in which interviews should be reported so as to present the most accurate results possible. Thus, they write, it is essential to validate the process of interview knowledge not at the final stage of an interview inquiry, but it should rather "permeate all stages from the first thematization to the final reporting" (241).

Moreover, Lawrence Neuman helped me to see, and hence challenge, bias among respondents (2005: 275). Since most of the interviewees are unfamiliar with their role in an interviewing process, I paid attention to how the communication process unfolded, to the cultural backgrounds of my interviewees, and to the subjects they were willing to speak about the most. It is often the case that a respondent finds a personal reason to see the interview as a bureaucratic exercise in completing forms, or as a citizen referendum on policy choices, or even as a form of deceit in which researchers are seeking to trick the respondents (Turner and Martin, 1984: 262-269).

In the case of my study, the editors and translators were enthusiastic about the research and willing to share their experiences. Nonetheless, some of them saw the interviews as a means of promoting themselves, thus magnifying some of the qualities of their companies. In addition to this, I encountered another dilemma, described earlier by Turner and Martin (1984: 282), where the editors tried to reinterpret my questions so as to make them applicable to their personal situations. Aware of this, I redirected them back to my initial formulations when appropriate. The interviews were coded and saved in a Word file on my personal computer. The results of the three stages of my research are discussed in the following chapters.

4. FINDINGS: The nature of translated online news

In this chapter, which is divided into three parts, I present the results of my data collection and analysis. Each section, composed of a combination of interviews, quantitative analyses and comparative textual analysis, is an attempt to answer my research questions. As a point of departure, I present the sources and content of translated news. The first section portrays the structure and functioning of the studied websites *Inosmi.ru* and *Perevodika.ru* and introduces the editors and translators who work for these projects. This section also introduces statistical findings of the most translated foreign media and languages. Looking at sources helped me to explore the phenomenon of cultural imperialism in relation to media (Tunstall 1977, Masmoudi 1978, Dor 2004); it also reveals how the editors and translators of the studied websites justify the prevalence of articles translated from the English language. Further, the content of translated news is described in terms of the subjects and geography of news events. Using quantitative data collection I attempt to answer the following questions: what foreign media is translated the most? And what foreign languages are considered the most newsworthy? Having described the sources and content of translated news, I then present the reasons for translating news on the Internet.

In the second section, I present my findings from the interviews with editors, translators, a comparative content analysis as well as quantitative data collection. The findings are collected and composed so as to establish some of the reasons for news translation. This stage also illustrates some challenges of news translation from one

culture to another (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009). Starting with the interviews, I explain how editors and translators present their news content as well as what this content means for them. Then, I compare translated news to the Russian coverage in order to clarify the differences and similarities between the two. The factual comparison is based on three news events: the Occupy Wall Street protests, the death of Muammar Gaddafi, and the 2012 Russian presidential election. The results of the comparison show a homogeneous representation of these events. To clarify this point, I then examine the sources of Russian news that yielded unexpected results. The section ends with a discussion of the implications for news translation where editors' opinions are set against the findings from quantitative and textual analysis.

The last section of the chapter speaks to translated news audiences and their role in the dissemination of foreign news. In order to clarify what "audience" means in the framework of my research I describe the readers of translated news through statistical analysis, approached with the help of *Liveinternet Statistics* and *Alexa Toolbar* software, as well as the editors' representation of their readership. I conclude this section by presenting the findings of the textual analysis of the readers' comments. The intention here is to outline readers' perceptions of translated news, and I therefore describe in detail certain patterns that emerge. These include criticism towards the West and the idea of democracy, the discussion of the role of Russia in translated news coverage, and certain readers' expectations that are not always fulfilled in reading translated news. Overall, this section illustrates one of the stages in the chain of translated news production and consumption, where the implications of this practice can be pronounced more clearly.

4.1. Sources and content of translated news

It can be argued that translated online news is double-sourced. First, news articles originate in a foreign medium and in a foreign language. Aside from addressing their own audience, foreign media are both voluntarily and involuntarily consumed by the global audience. And Internet technology allows those fluent in more than one language to select the information they consider important and translate it for a new group of readers. When news is marked as interesting or significant by the Western press, it is frequently taken up at the local level worldwide. The local reader thus receives the news from the local or national media that in turn borrows some of its news from foreign media. In this regard, an analysis of both sources of translated news—the local mediator and the foreign media/language source—is necessary.

In the following sections, I describe the two online media outlets that were selected for my study: *Inosmi.ru* and *Perevodika.ru*. Next, I present the analysis of the foreign sources of translated news illustrating the most translated media outlets and languages. And in the concluding section, the analysis unfolds around the subjects of translated news and its geography.

4.1.1. The structure and functioning of *Inosmi*

The first site studied in my thesis is *Inosmi.ru*[1] (pronounced ɪnɑːsmɪ; in Russian иноСМИ, a derivation of *foreign mass media*). It is a state-funded professional media website with an office in Moscow, Russia. *Inosmi.ru* was registered in 2001 and launched

[1] Statistical software *Alexa Toolbar*, that measures the popularity of websites, ranks *Inosmi.ru* at 5,332 (as of May 2012).

in 2004. In 2007, the project won the "Culture and mass media" category of the *Runet Prize Award*, created by the Federal Agency on Press and Mass Communications of Russia (FAPMC), which is also *Inosmi*'s funding organization. With the appointment of a new editor in 2009, *Inosmi.ru* went through a number of changes. While under the previous editor-in-chief the website had about 150,000 visitors a day, by the end of 2009 these numbers decreased to approximately 70,000. Among the reasons for this decrease in popularity were the closing of the forum and the establishment of a pre-moderation system where all new discussions had to be moderator-approved. The changes in the editorial policy provoked an open letter to the news agency *RIA* in which the website's readers criticized the new editor for having unethical views and intentions. The media coverage of the changes in the editorial policy of *Inosmi.ru* repeatedly emphasized the distinction between the two editors and their approaches on how to manage the project. Under the management of the former editor, *Inosmi.ru* was regarded as a pro-Russian space for a critical debate, whereas under the new editor, *Inosmi.ru* became a more commercialized, "Western-oriented website."[1] Nevertheless, and despite editorial changes and the decrease in the web traffic in 2009, *Inosmi.ru* has slowly been gaining new audiences.

Like many other media outlets, *Inosmi.ru* utilizes different strategies to overcome financial challenges. In this regard, academic research has analyzed a number of business models that sustain the Internet news industry as it makes the transition from traditional media to primarily digital platforms (Kaye 2010, Telesca et al. 2010, Macnamara 2010). Apparently, the most profitable strategy in this realm is charging for content (Macnamara

[1] The quotes in the following two chapters are my translations of the interviews with the editors and translators of the studied websites.

2010: 26-29). It goes to the top of the list of potential media business models followed by "advertisement 2.0" (e.g. banner ads, blogs, rich-media ads, social network advertising, and e-mail marketing), and finally public funding. In terms of revenue, *Inosmi.ru* follows the second business model; it generates a large part of its funds from online advertising. The price for 1,000 views of a 240x400-pixel banner throughout the website is approximately 17 CAN$[1] (the estimated price for the one-month package is 14,000 CAN$). During the time of this examination, the website had no paid banner ads whatsoever; instead, the space at the top was filled with the website's own ads for recently published articles. Another source of *Inosmi's* revenue is a targeted, contextual advertisement called "Direct," provided by large Russian search engine *Yandex*.[2] While revisiting the *Inosmi.ru* articles in December 2011, I found that they also sold the images attached to the articles. Each image had a button where a reader could click and purchase it in either low or high quality. The price for the low-res (LR) was 7 CAN$,[3] and the price for the hi-res (HR) was negotiable. All the images were provided by the news agency *RIA*. As of June 2012, *Inosmi's* images did not have this option anymore. Potentially, this could be explained by the lack of profit obtained from this financial strategy; namely, there was not enough payback on this service and the agency decided to terminate the initiative. The example of *Inosmi.ru* illustrates well that the best way forward to create multiple revenue streams is a hybrid model (David Carr 2010). At the same time, their adaptive strategy of trial by error shows how sensitive the online

[1] This is at an exchange rate of 500 RUB (as of May 2012).

[2] *Yandex Direct* functions similarly to the Google's *AdWords*, which offers pay-per-click advertising and site-targeted advertising for text, banner, and rich-media ads.

[3] The price for the low-res (LR) in Russian currency is 230 RUB (as of May 2012).

business has become. In this regard, Jim Macnamara writes that even though no consensus has been reached so far on any alternative business model, "economic feasibility and market acceptance need to be balanced sensitively" (2010: 31).

In addition to the financial profile of *Inosmi.ru*, I looked at the editorial composition and policies of the website. On this matter the editor of the project explained me that *Inosmi.ru* is a media outlet primarily focused on the translation of foreign news. Not only does it cover news about Russia but also world affairs in general. She emphasized that the priority is given to opinion pieces and op-eds. Moreover, the selected news that appears on the website is a result of the examination of more than six hundred foreign media sources on a daily basis. The process of news selection is rather subjective. After a thorough online research of the recently published foreign articles, *Inosmi*'s employees choose from five to ten most "interesting and rich" articles and then translate them to Russian.

While the project has several professional translators on its payroll, it also publishes translations provided by its readers on a voluntary basis. According to the editor of *Inosmi.ru*, nine people work in the Moscow office. On occasion, these employees are allowed to work from home. Seven people work during the day, one editor works during the night, and one editor works during the weekend. Among the spoken languages are English (three translators), German (one translator), French (one translator), Spanish (one translator), Italian (one translator), Polish (one translator), Serbo-Croatian (one translator), Czech and Slovak (one translator). While one English translator works every night during the week, sometimes all three English translators work over the weekend. In addition, *Inosmi.ru* has stringers, freelance journalists who translate news from the

national media of Ukraine, Georgia, Armenia, Latvia, Estonia, Belarus and Uzbekistan. The website also works with a few people who have no professional training in translation. These people usually reside abroad and speak foreign languages on a daily basis, which allows them to collaborate with *Inosmi.ru* as foreign correspondents.

Since the published material does not have translators' by-lines but only includes names of the original-language authors, it is difficult to confirm the identity of the translator. This problem has been addressed by a number of scholars tracing the challenges of translation from the seventeenth century to present times. One of the most prominent works on the matter, written by Venuti, addresses the prevalence of translators' invisibility. Translation as an action of rewriting tends to receive less attention than the original process of text creation. The example of news translation on *Inosmi.ru* follows this idea because it remains unseen and unclear who translates foreign articles into Russian.

In addition, the process of news production in a media outlet that utilizes journalistic work is different from a news outlet that does not require the production of such work. Due to the focus on translation and not on news production, the editors of *Inosmi.ru* are not interested in fieldwork, investigations, or interviews. Apart from programming, designing, and managing, *Inosmi*'s team only focuses on the selection and translation of news.

As I mentioned earlier, *Inosmi.ru* works with foreign media in more than nine languages. However, and despite the diversity of translators, *Inosmi.ru* relies more often on its English translators than on other languages, a situation that generally reflects the global dominance of English language media (Pennycook 1994, Dor 2004, Bielsa and

Bassnett 2009, Dunton-Downer 2010, Saxena and Omoniyi 2010). During the interview with the editor of *Inosmi.ru*, I discussed this inequality. She explained to me that in her opinion, balancing the number of articles from different European languages is essential; nonetheless, and it is often the case, *Inosmi.ru* translators are compelled to search for "interesting" articles instead of balancing the number of sources. This results in a prevailing number of translations from the *New York Times, the Guardian, the Daily Mail* and other English-speaking media outlets. For the translators themselves, English sources generally offer more variety and choice, thus justifying the predominant number of such articles on the website. *Inosmi*'s editor adds that translations from Chinese, Arabic, and Japanese could greatly enhance the Russian coverage; however, the problem of finding a translator for these languages remains unresolved.

4.1.2. The structure and functioning of *Perevodika*

Perevodika.ru (pronounced peri:vɒdi:kə; Russian Переводика, a derivation from the word *translator*) is a citizen-based online project[1] that publishes translations of foreign news. Created in 2009 by volunteers for whom news translation was a hobby, the website has developed into a solid news source with an extensive archive of articles. In terms of revenue, the website sells space for banner ads; however, as of May 2012, there was no advertising. The only source of revenue is targeted advertising, as with *Inosmi.ru*.

The structure of *Perevodika.ru* resembles many other citizen-based media projects that are sometimes called "participatory community media" (Reese et al. 2007, Viall 2009, Salazar 2010). According to the website, the project has no owners, no managers,

[1] *Alexa Toolbar* ranks *Perevodika.ru* at 173,583 (as of May 2012).

no administrators; users can join or leave at any time. The information page suggests that everyone can get involved with the production of translated journalism. Volunteers are invited to search, translate, and edit articles. The announcement published on the websites also invites web designers, programmers, and PR specialists who are interested and willing to volunteer. Distinct from *Inosmi.ru*, all articles include three by-lines: one by the searcher, one by the translator, and one by the publisher (though some of the articles are found, translated, and published by the same author). Furthermore, the interviews with the editors and translators working for *Perevodika.ru* helped me to compose an editorial profile of the website. As of April 2012, the project included two full-time translators and six part-time translators, as well as occasional submissions of articles from readers. The structure of *Perevodika.ru* resembles *Inosmi.ru* in a way that it does not work with journalists, only with professional and non-professional translators. Translators include Russian citizens as well as Russians living abroad who usually translate news from home on a voluntary basis.

When asked about the prevalence of English-language articles, a translator from *Perevodika.ru* explained to me that the website's team strives to cover as many languages as possible; however, to find people speaking languages other than English remains a serious challenge. She continued, saying that even with a variety of translators, it would be extremely difficult to fill the gap of non-English media coverage because English sources still dominate the media sphere. As reported by *Perevodika*'s translators, the news in other languages is more difficult to find and, most of the time, "less interesting" to translate. "Even French and German media together produce less translatable material than English media does, and we can do nothing about it," explained the *Perevodika*

translator. Overall, the opinions of the editors from *Inosmi.ru* and *Perevodika.ru* coincide in their acknowledgement of the importance of English (Dor 2004, Bielsa and Bassnett 2009, Dunton-Downer 2010, Saxena and Omoniyi 2010). However, it would be wrong to assume the permanence of the status quo, because the editors from both projects expressed interest in expanding and broadening their staff of translators. Considering what *Inosmi*'s editor said about Chinese, Arabic, and Japanese, the current situation of online news translation reflects the shifting interest of media players to cover and deliver more news from non-English speaking regions. In an attempt to clarify what other media and languages appear in the translated news, the following sections summarize the quantitative findings of my research.

4.1.3. The foreign sources of translated news

The quantitative data collection of the translated articles was divided into two sections: one covered the sources—foreign media outlets—while the other counted the languages from which news was translated. Figure 1 shows that the *New York Times* received the largest percentage (5.2 %) of translated coverage (16 articles out of 310). *The Guardian* took the second place with 3.5 percent of the sample (11 articles out of 310). The third and the fourth places were split between the *Daily Mail* and the *Financial Times*, with 3.2 percent each. *The Daily Telegraph, El Pais, The Wall Street Journal, Der Spiegel,* and *The Washington Post* followed with 2.6 percent each (8 out of 310 articles). Hence, the 15 most translated media outlets consisted of 10 English-speaking, three German, one Spanish, and one Italian. Figure 1 includes the 19 media outlets that comprise the largest percentage in the data collection.

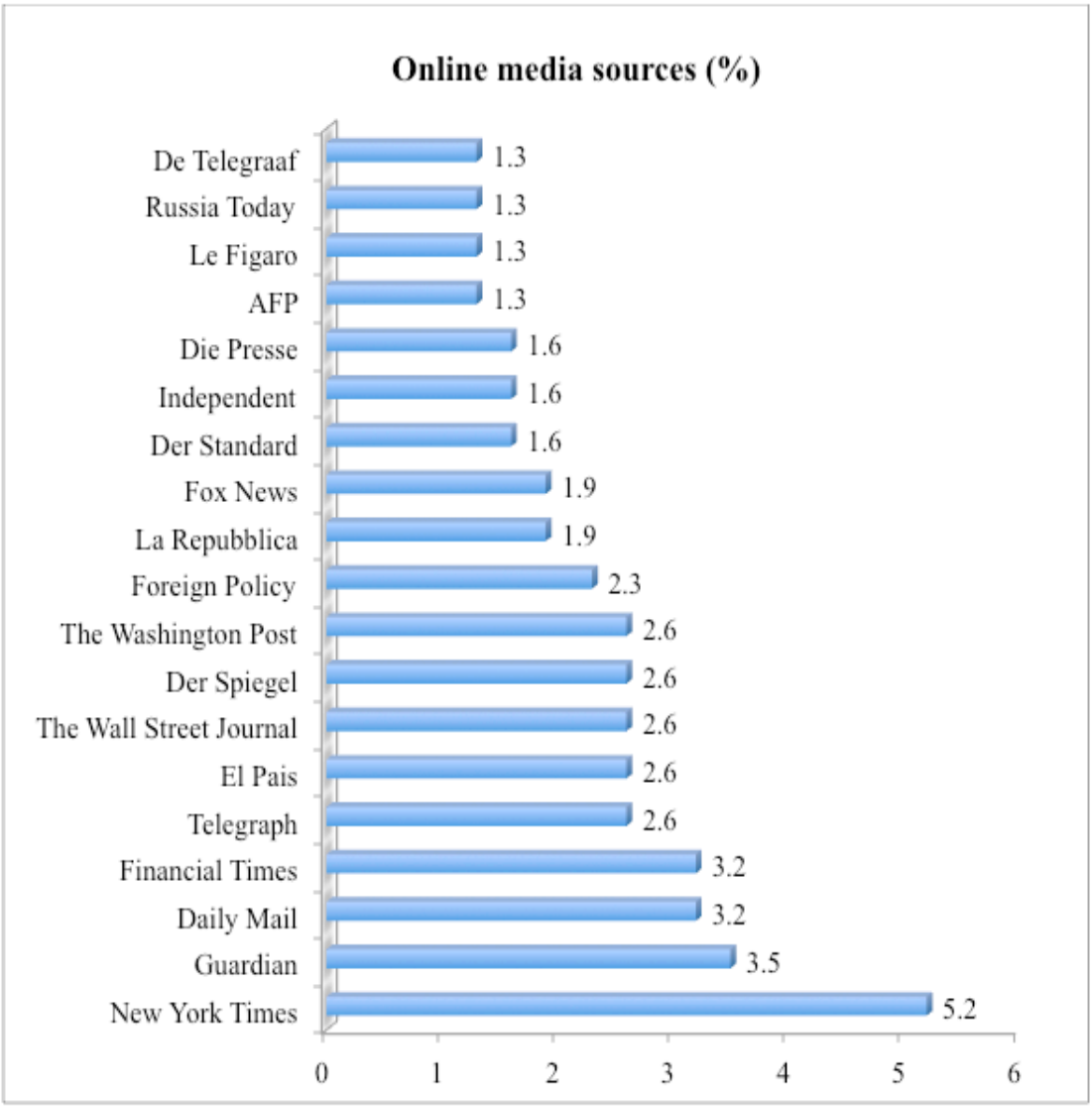

Figure 1. The percentage of the most translated foreign media

Each of the remaining media outlets represents less than one percent of the whole sample, and all together amount to 52.3 percent. Overall, the sample of 310 articles consists of 142 different foreign media sources, which speaks to the diversity of chosen outlets. The growing number of online media on a global scale explains the abundance of sources for news translation in the case of this study (Herman and McChesney 2001,

Khiabany 2003, Chen et al. 2008, Shah 2008).

4.1.4. The languages chosen to be translated

In this section, I present my findings on language distribution in the translation of online news. Drawing from the conversations with the editors, it can be argued that English is the most translated language. And the results of the statistical data collection support this idea. Figure 2 illustrates the distribution of language sources. The divide here is more evident than in the case of the foreign media outlets. The English language receives 57.7 percent of the whole sample. French follows with 12.9 percent, then German with 10.3 percent, and Spanish is fourth with 5.5 percent. In other words, the findings include 179 English articles, 40 in French, 32 in German, and 17 in Spanish (of 310 articles). Each of the remaining languages has fewer than 11 articles. These include Italian (3.5 percent), Swedish (2.9 percent), Polish (2.3 percent), Dutch (1.3 percent), Armenian (1.3 percent), Ukrainian (1.0 percent), Serbian (0.3 percent), Estonian (0.3 percent), Czech (0.3 percent), and Latvian (0.3 percent). There were small deviations in how articles were distributed among the studied websites. *Inopressa.ru*, for example, had more articles in German (23) than *Inosmi.ru* (8). *Inosmi.ru* and *Inopressa.ru* had 57 English articles each, and *Perevodika.ru* had 65. *Inosmi.ru* had 12 articles in Spanish while *Perevodika.ru* had none. This speaks to the availability of specific translators at each website. Indeed, the interviews revealed that *Inosmi.ru* has Spanish translators, while *Perevodika.ru* does not.

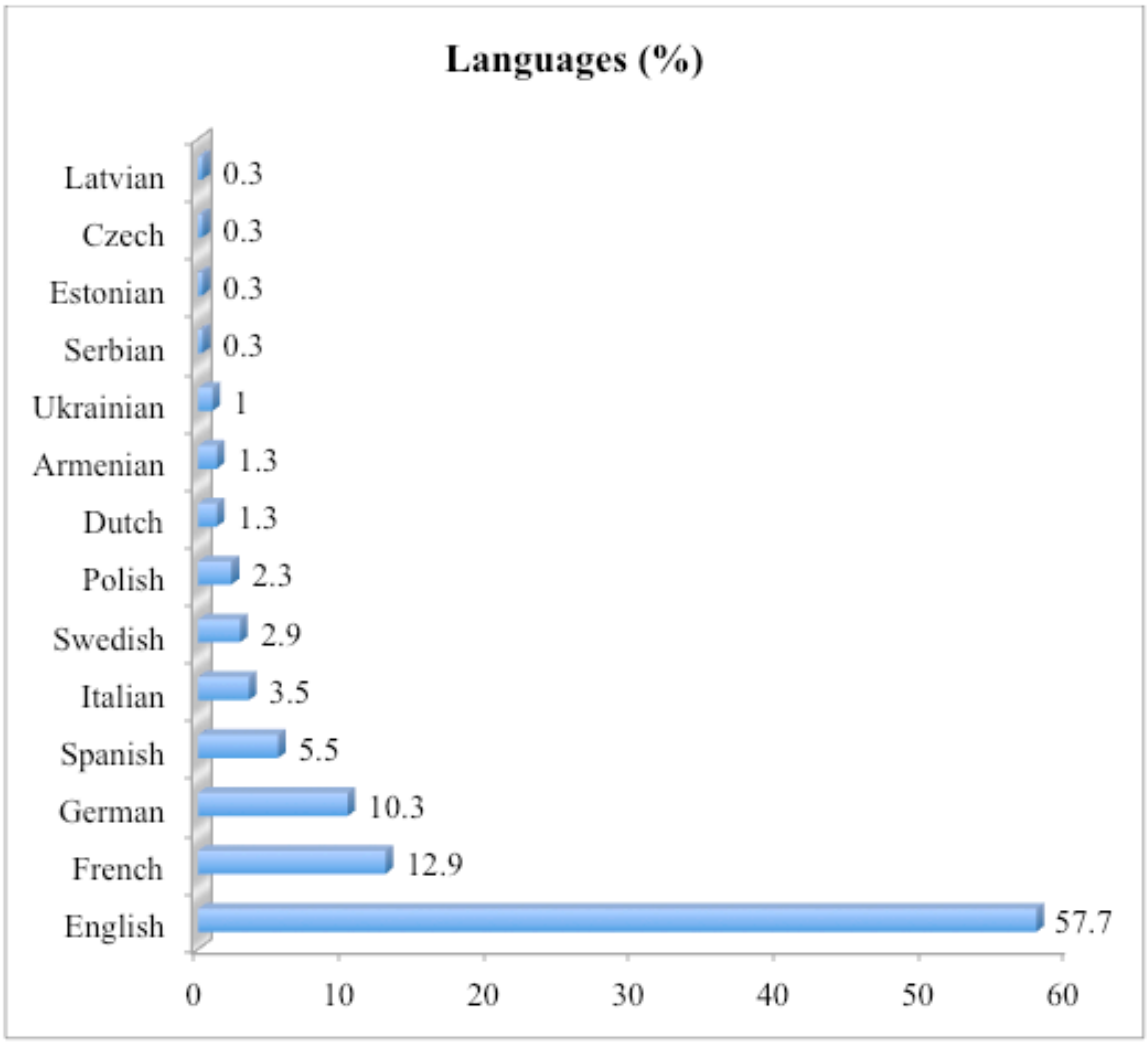

Figure 2. The percentage of the most translated languages

At the same time, *Perevodika.ru* has volunteers translating from Dutch, while *Inosmi.ru* does not. Overall, the deviations are minor and can be ascribed to the human resources available rather than to an intentional refraining from certain languages.[1]

In the following section, I present the results of the quantitative analysis of news subjects to reveal what themes received the most of translated coverage (Neuman 2005). I

[1] The fact that Russian online media translates news from only 14 different languages suggests that the remaining 6,500 languages (a rough number of the spoken languages in the world) remain highly under-represented.

used the same quantitative technique to depict the geography of translated news subjects in order to further illustrate what countries and regions are considered newsworthy (Wark 1994, Morley 2007).

4.1.5. The subjects chosen to be translated and their geography

In order to establish a more objective profile of the content of translated news, the results of the quantitative data collection in relation to the subjects and geography of translated news need to be evaluated. During the examination of 310 news articles, two questions were posed for each text: 1) what is the theme of the translated news? 2) What is the location of this theme? I outline the answers to the first question in Figure 3. The greatest number of translated articles concerns the 2012 presidential elections in Russia, with 21.6 percent. The following category received almost the same amount of coverage—21.3 percent—and includes all articles about international politics, meetings and conferences among governing elites, as well as transnational issues and global problems.

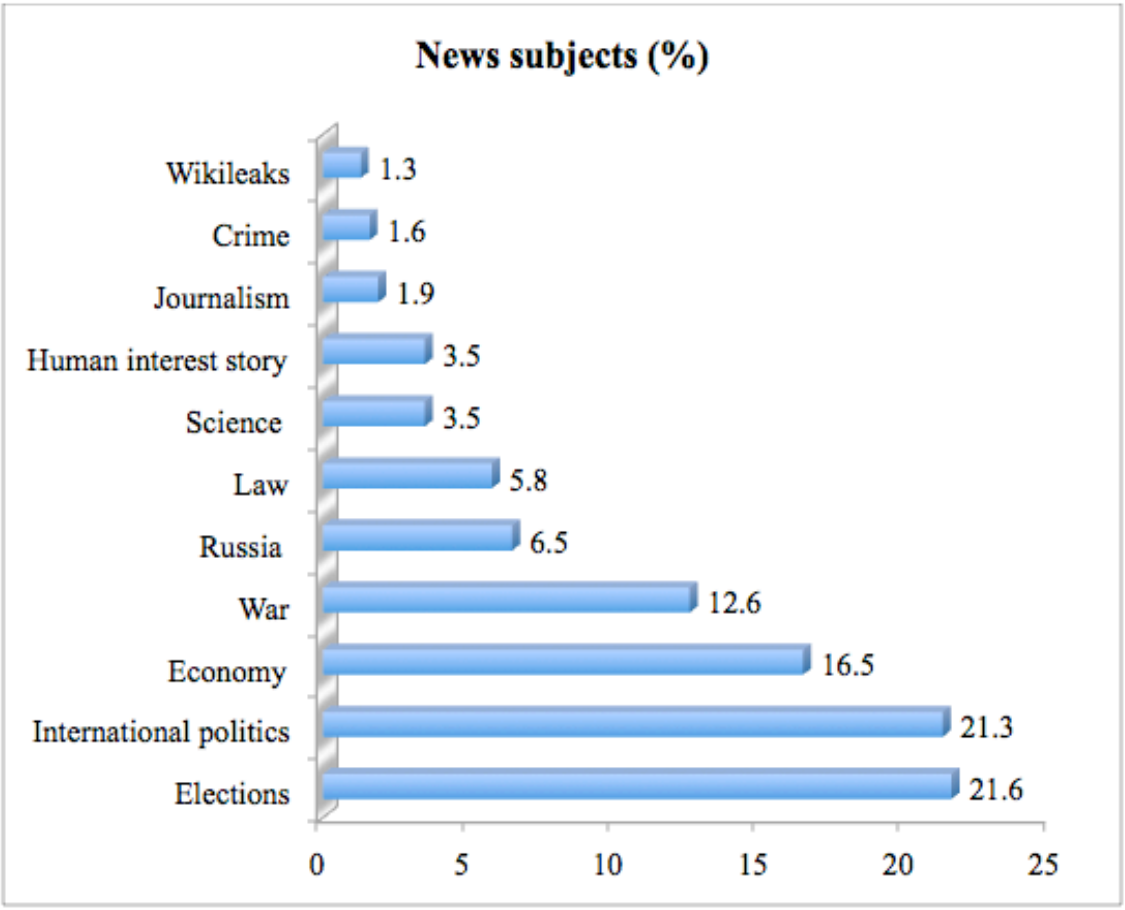

Figure 3. The percentage of the most translated news subjects

The articles about the economy came in third with 16.5 percent of the coverage. This category includes news and opinions about the financial crisis, money and banking, business deals involving natural gas and oil, as well as articles about corruption. Another large category includes articles about war and nuclear power accounting for 12.6 percent of the coverage. Coverage of Russian cities, communities, people, and events accounted for 6.5 percent of the articles, followed by the legal issues with 5.8 percent. This section includes the coverage of new laws, legal cases and investigations, reports from court hearings, and other jurisdictional events. Coverage of scientific discoveries and human-interest stories both received 3.5 percent of the whole sample, while many other

categories received less than 2 percent, such as journalism, crime, violence, terrorist attacks, Wikileaks, diplomacy, sports, propaganda, racism, nationalism, immigration, and art. Figure 4 outlines the answers to the second question about the geography of news subjects. Unsurprisingly, Russia is first with 37.4 percent of the articles, while European countries come second with 23.9 percent.

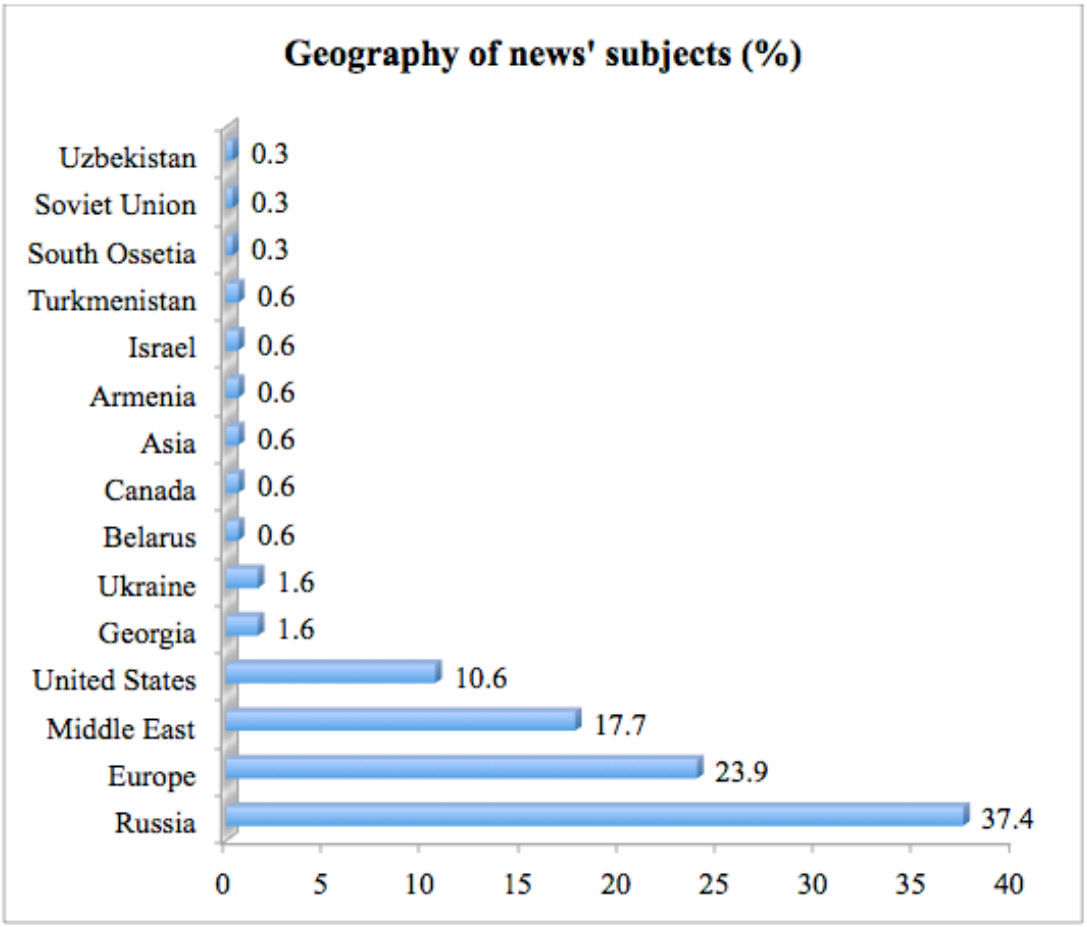

Figure 4. The percentage of the countries that appear in translated news

Third, 17.7 percent of all articles cover events in the Middle East, while news from the United States comes fourth with 10.6 percent of the coverage. The rest of the countries received less than 2 percent: Canada, Israel, Cuba, Venezuela, Asian countries,

as well as former Soviet Union nations Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Armenia, Turkmenistan, South Ossetia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, Abkhazia, Latvia, and Kazakhstan.

In order to understand the correlations between the themes and the countries, I created the following place/subject cross tabulation (Figure 5):

	International Politics	Elections	Law	Economy	Russia	War
Russia	8	64	3	14	16	3
United States	4	0	1	7	1	5
Europe	15	1	10	25	2	5
Middle East	22	0	1	2	1	24
South Ossetia	1	0	0	0	0	0
Soviet Union	1	0	0	0	0	0
Georgia	2	1	0	1	0	0
Ukraine	3	0	1	1	0	0
Uzbekistan	0	0	0	0	0	0
Belarus	1	0	1	0	0	0
Canada	0	0	0	0	0	0
Asia	2	0	0	0	0	0
Azerbaijan	1	0	0	0	0	0
Armenian	1	1	0	0	0	0
Kyrgyzstan	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cuba	0	0	0	1	0	0
Israel	1	0	0	0	0	1
Turkmenistan	2	0	0	0	0	0
Abkhazia	1	0	0	0	0	0
Latvia	0	0	1	0	0	0
Venezuela	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kazakhstan	1	0	0	0	0	0
Total	66	67	18	51	20	39

Figure 5. The number of articles published in five categories for each country

This table illustrates the number of articles in the six most popular categories in relation to different countries: elections, international politics, law, economy, war, and Russia. Thus, 22 out of 66 articles on “international politics” concerned Middle Eastern

countries. In the "elections" category, 64 out of 67 articles covered "Russian elections." 10 out of 18 articles about "legal issues" came from Europe, which is also the leading source for articles about "economy and financial crisis" with 25 out of 51 articles. Not surprisingly, 16 out of 20 news events about "Russia" originated in Russia, and 24 out of 39 articles about "war and nuclear weapons" came from the Middle East.

Having established the statistical profile of the translated news content, it will now be useful to investigate how the editors and translators perceive such content. This will be the task of the following sections. In addition, reasons for translating news on the Internet will be suggested, with the final section exploring how the content of translated news differs from the content of the Russian coverage.

4.2. The reasons for translating the news on the Internet

To determine the reasons for translating the news on the Internet, I examined the news content from a number of different angles. First, I asked the editors and translators how they choose and frame their articles. In this case, I used interviews to help better understand the content and nature of translated texts (Kvale and Brinkmann 2008). As well, I conducted comparative content analysis of translated foreign news and news produced by Russian media in order to reveal the differences and similarities between the two (Krippendorff 2004). Third, a deeper comparison of translated foreign articles and articles produced by Russia-based reporters was conducted through an examination of the sources of information for these media. At this stage of my research, it was possible to explain why translated foreign news and news that originates in Russia is so similar in terms of content. Finally, I spoke with the editors and translators about the reasons for news translation, analyzing the results from comparative content analysis with the

information acquired from the interviews.

4.2.1. Editors and translators' representation of news translation

The conversations with the editors of *Inosmi.ru* and *Perevodika.ru* about the content of their websites revealed a number of aspects, ranging from how news is produced to what role journalistic professionalism plays in news translation. *Inosmi*'s team publishes translated news on a daily basis with each news item (or editorial piece) ascribed to one of six different categories: world; the Commonwealth of Independent States and Baltic States; Russia; multimedia; breaking news; and sports. While the range of topics varies, most of the articles were analytical essays written by Western journalists about Russia. The multimedia section has video, photo and infographics sections. The majority of videos are republished with an extra audio translation from the *Stratfor*[1] and *Russia Today*[2] websites.

Similar interviews were conducted with the editors and translators of *Perevodika.ru* where the content of translated news was discussed. According to one editor, *Perevodika.ru* clearly sets no limits on what type of translation or language can be published. However, and despite having translations from a variety of languages, articles from the United States regularly dominate the news coverage. As opposed to six categories on *Inosmi.ru*, *Perevodika*'s articles are divided into five categories: archives, breaking news, issues of the week, articles of current interest, and popular news topics. A distinctive feature of *Perevodika*'s content is in the "Issues of the Week" section, where main topics are divided into ten events. As of May 2012, the website considered the

[1] *Stratfor* is a subscription-based provider of geopolitical analysis.

[2] *Russia Today* is a Russian government-funded multilingual television news network.

following issues to be important: the 50th anniversary of manned spaceflight; the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster that followed the earthquake and tsunami in Japan on 11 March, 2011; Middle Eastern conflicts; Wikileaks; the 70th anniversary of World War II; and events in Western and South West Africa. In addition, the website has a complementary section named "Community Projects." There, *Perevodika.ru* publishes translations made by other friendly online sources. It also includes translations of editorials, blogs, and forums. *Perevodika.ru,* unlike *Inosmi.ru,* still has its own forum, and it also has an option for readers' comments below each article. *Perevodika's* forum has more than 2,400 registered users and more than 70,000 messages.

Besides the actual content of the websites, my intention was to explore what type of journalistic decision-making precedes the stage of news translation. To determine this, the editors and translators of *Inosmi.ru* and *Perevodika.ru* were asked about the notions of accuracy and journalistic professionalism (e.g. following journalistic standards of integrity, objectivity, ethics), including the foreignization and domestication of foreign news (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009: 9). According to the editor of *Inosmi.ru*, the accuracy of translation is less important than the domestication or localization of foreign journalism. Accuracy of the information remains on "the conscience of the author of the original article and the foreign media,"[1] explained the editor.[2] Reliance upon the author's conscience means that the editor avoids the professional issue of accountability by depending on the ethical responsibility of the creator of the source text. The *Inosmi*

[1] This quote is a translation of the interview with *Inosmi.ru* editor: "Мы лишь занимаемся переводами, точность информации остается на совести автора и издания, где опубликована оригинальная статья."

[2] Utilizing conscience when writing journalistic articles remains an important subject of inquiry for many scholars (Hausman 1992, Altschull 1996, Doyle 2006).

team's only objective is to rewrite the message in an idiom familiar to the reader, leaving behind the fact-checking, standards of objectivity, and journalistic ethics that are crucial to Western notion of professional journalism (Tuchman 1972, Hausman 1992). *Inosmi.ru* translators can interpret foreign news more freely using literary style translation (as opposed to directed "word-for-word" or technical translations); furthermore, the editor's task is to make the translated text reach about 95 percent consistency with the original article. Before the publication, when the translation is complete, the editor proofreads the text to make sure it complies with the website's overall make-up. This approach falls somewhat in between foreignization and domestication strategies because the effort to preserve the source text coincides with an attempt to make it understandable for readers (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009).

Since, in this thesis, the term domestication can be replaced with the term "russification" (e.g. editing the text in a way so as to make it more familiar and clear for the Russian audience), I asked the editor about the practice of foreign news russification. He explained that on occasion a translated text requires extra references to help clarify unfamiliar expressions or historical remarks from the foreign country; *Inosmi*'s team hence seeks to explain these expressions, providing extra notes in a special section after each article. On a larger scale, and besides these additions, the editor claimed not to russify translations of foreign articles.

As in the previous interview with *Inosmi.ru*, I asked *Perevodika*'s editors and translators about their perception of the notions of accuracy as well as notions of foreignization and domestication of foreign news. A *Perevodika* translator said that they never use a "technical or legal style of translation, which would require 100 percent

compliance."[1] However, they try to accurately convey the meaning and save, as much as possible, the style of the original author. Similar to *Inosmi.ru, Perevodika*'s editors do not fact-check the articles, "relying on the foreign author's conscience."[2] And while *Inosmi.ru* did not believe in a profound russification of news, *Perevodika*'s team acknowledges that russification is a necessary technique for translating from one culture to another. They say that not only does russification play an important role in news translation, it remains essential to think objectively, trying to depict foreign mentalities, values, and beliefs in a most accurate way possible. *Perevodika*'s volunteers strive for balance so that the reader can explore and understand the Other in a familiar environment and idiom.

Regardless of the editors and translators' intentions, it is not always the case that the reader's intention is to explore and understand the Other. Quite to the contrary, the conversation with *Inosmi*'s editor showed that translated news contributes to the growth of nationalism, especially among those who believe "that all that is written in the West about Russia is a lie."[3] The editor continues that it is sometimes true that Western media shows a bias constructed around the idea that Russia should act in the best interests of the West. This type of publication especially contributes to the growth of nationalism among the readers. Speaking of the remaining part of the audience, *Inosmi*'s editor says that they can definitely be called "global citizens" who "sincerely expresses interest" in

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[1] This quote is a translation of an excerpt from the interview with the *Perevodika.ru* editor: "У нас нет технического или юридического перевода, где требуется 100% соответствие. Я стараюсь точно передать смысл и при этом сохранить насколько возможно стиль автора."

[2] This is also a translation from the *Perevodika* interview: "Материал переводится как есть, все огрехи—на совести автора."

[3] The translation from the interview with the *Inosmi.ru* editor: У нас есть читатели которые верят все что пишут на Западе про Россию—это ложь."

international media and foreign perspectives. Global citizens, or cosmopolitans, are also known in the academia as "elites," "educated minority," or simply people who have access to technologies and new media (Sassen 1996, Evans 2000, Papastephanou 2005). However, this readership group is rather small compared to the "nationalistic" majority. In the view of *Inosmi*'s editor, the majority of the Russian media's readership prefers the domestic news to international coverage. These readers are interested in what happens in their neighborhood "more than in what happens on another continent"; in other words, there is a level of mistrust in translated texts that refer to events concerning the Other.

The editors of *Perevodika.ru* expressed similar opinions. News is translated because it allows the reader to understand how news addresses foreign audiences; it illustrates the unknown and sometimes physically unreachable otherness (Norton and Gieve 2010, Szpunar 2012). However, the information provided by *Perevodika*'s editors coincides with my findings in the sense that it is almost impossible to find and translate something new, something that has not yet appeared in the local media. One translator explained that Russian online media covers all kinds of events and opinions, and the range of information that the reader can get from the Internet is much more diverse from what he had access to before the advent of the new technology. In order to understand how the Other—or translated news—integrates with the Russian online coverage, the following section presents the findings from the comparative content analysis.

4.2.2. The synergy of foreign and Russian news

From the initial stage of my research, the question that concerned me the most was whether translated foreign news could enhance the Russian coverage by presenting new or different information to the reader. In this regard, I decided to test my assumption by

comparing Russian news coverage with translated foreign news coverage of the same events. To narrow my sample, I focused on the events that received the most media attention during the study: the Occupy Wall Street protests, the death of Muammar Gaddafi, and the 2012 Russian presidential election.[1] Using a comparative content analysis, I examined more than 100 translated articles and over 400 articles produced by Russian media. For each fact or opinion presented in a foreign source, I searched for the similar fact or opinion initially introduced in the Russian coverage.

As an illustration, after reading a translated Spanish-language article from *Agencia EFE* in which the author writes about Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez expressing regret over the death of Muammar Gaddafi and describing him as a fighter and a martyr, I found similar statements in at least three Russian articles published on the same day (21 October, 2011) in the federal information agency *Rosblut*, news agency *Oreanda*, and information and analytical portal *Eurasia*. Another example is an article translated from the French news magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* (*Inosmi.ru,* 21 October 2011) where the author writes about the Libyan political transition to democracy and about the "striking similarity between Colonel Gaddafi and Saddam Hussein." The writer expresses concern that even after Gaddafi's death the Libyan people will have many challenges and obstacles on the way to a better, more peaceful life. He suggests different ways in which the National Transitional Council of Libya could restore its economy and create new jobs for a younger generation. Using the key words "Libya," "Saddam Hussein,"

[1] Occupy Wall Street protests and movements began on 17 September, 2011 in New York and continued throughout the year in different countries. The protests addressed corruption, the influence of corporations on governments, and wealth and income inequality. The second event, the death of Muammar Gaddafi, covers how he was captured by National Transitional Council fighters near his hometown of Sirte on 20 October 20, 2011 and killed the same day. The third event, the 2012 Russian presidential election, presents the news about the candidates Sergey Mironov, Mikhail Prokhorov, Vladimir Putin, Vladimir Zhirinovsky, and Gennady Zyuganov.

"democracy," and "economy," and refining my search to October-December 2011, it was easy to find Russian sources expressing exactly the same points as in the translation of *Le Nouvel Observateur* article: one article was published on a television channel *NTV* website, another appeared on the website *Siteua.org*, and another was found on the information agency *RosInfoNet* website. Importantly, all of the aforementioned news appeared online within the range of four days from 21-24 October, 2011. This speaks to the instantaneous nature of online news publishing, in both the local/national media and the foreign media (Best et al. 2005, Thurman 2007, Tewksbury and Rittenberg 2009).

My examination of the Occupy Wall Street protests and the 2012 Russian presidential election coverage generated similar results. For example, an article translated from the website *American Thinker*[1] suggests that in order to understand the Occupy Wall Street movement, we need to look at the Greek example. The purpose of protests in Greece, as the writer puts it, "is a violent confrontation in the hopes that excessive force can be exploited for propaganda purposes." Using the key words "Occupy Wall Street" and "Greece," I found an article published on the *Forbes Kazakhstan* website[2] in December 2011 in which the writer compares the protests in Greece to the Occupy Wall Street protests in the United States. The message from *Forbes Kazakhstan* resembles the message from *American Thinker*: the protesters are trying to manipulate the public mood and opinion, which has resulted in a mix of deep frustration and disillusion. This is another example of translated foreign news resembling news produced by the Russian media.

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[1] The article was translated for *Inosmi.ru* on 14 February, 2012 under the title: Захвати Уолл-стрит на стероидах.

[2] The article was published on *Forbes.kz* in December 2011 under the title: Доберется ли движение «Захвати Уолл-стрит» до Афин?

Overall, it was almost impossible to find discrepancies between the translated foreign news and news produced by Russian media. There is range of interpretations to explain such an outcome. One is that Russian editors and translators focus their attention on foreign news items and editorials about Russia and Russian people. My research illustrated that the largest number of translated items covers Russian events. Considering that the Russian online coverage of Russia-related events is already diverse and encompassing, focusing on the translation of news about Russia might not enhance existing coverage. Another explanation could be that the number of online Russian media sources has grown so quickly, and the speed of online publication has become so instantaneous, that it has become almost impossible to find a foreign text that has not yet been republished in the Russian media. The findings of my research indicate that foreign translated news, when compared with the content that Russian media have already produced, does not carry significant newness or originality. However, there is another, more logical explanation: Russian media have been influenced by Western media corporations for more than ten years. This resulted in the centralization of the sources of information and therefore affected the diversity of points of view and opinions. The following examination of the sources of Russian news provides some examples.

4.2.3. The sources behind the sources

It did not come to my attention until I found the Occupy Wall Street article on the *Forbes Kazakhstan* website that the comparison between translated news and Russian news could be reinterpreted differently. Namely, an analysis of the sources of the news produced by Russian media illustrates that some items are based on foreign media coverage or news agencies. In a number of cases, some of the foreign sources appear to

be the same for translated foreign news *and* news produced in Russia. To illustrate, the article originally written in Russian and published on the *Forbes Kazakhstan* website comes from an organization with their head office in New York. *Forbes* is an American publishing and media company with an international reach that includes outlets in Africa, Argentina, Bulgaria, China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Russia, Georgia, India, Indonesia, Israel, Kazakhstan, Korea, Latvia, Middle East, and other countries. In the case of Occupy Wall Street article, the author of the piece is Mallory Factor. His name is spelled in the Russian alphabet (Мэллори Фактор), and the absence of source-links implies the article was written in Russian. However, a Google search shows that Factor is an English-speaking *Forbes* journalist, co-chairman and co-founder of *The Monday Meeting* in New York City, a well-known merchant banker who speaks and writes frequently on economic and fiscal topics, and is frequently seen on *Fox News*. Moreover, the search helped me to find the original Forbes article, "Occupy Wall Street...Next Stop, Athens?" published on 2 November, 2011 on *Forbes.com*. While this indicates that the Russian article was based on the English-language *Forbes* article, *Forbes Kazakhstan* does not provide any links to the original source and thus makes the connection between the foreign source and the Russian source rather vague. While the connection between *Forbes U.S.* and *Forbes Kazakhstan* might seem obvious for some, there are still readers who are not aware of the ownership structure of *Forbes*. Especially on the Internet, access to *Forbes Kazakhstan* is open to anyone, which is simplified by the use of search engines such as *Yandex.ru* and *Rambler.ru*. The Internet user, by utilizing Russian key words, can be redirected to the Russian-language website *Forbes Kazakhstan* and may thus assume that the source of news is from within Russia. It follows that my comparison between translated news and

Russian news was actually the comparison between two articles written by American journalists: Mallory Factor (*Forbes U.S.*) and Jason Pappas (*American Thinker*), with coinciding points of view on the issue of the Occupy Wall Street movements.

This anecdotal example is supported by hundreds of other examples in which Russian media obtain their news from foreign sources of information (sometimes without mentioning the original source). To make this statement unambiguous, I revisited all of the articles that were found in the online Russian media. My examination of the sources showed that many articles were based on reports by *Reuters*, an international news agency headquartered in London that serves as a news source for media all around the world. While the quantitative analysis of translated foreign news shows 1.3 percent of the samples sourced from *Reuters*, the analysis of the Russian news sources indicates similar results with one distinction. The Russian articles are not presented as direct translations from foreign sources, but rather as local/national/international news items based on the *Reuters* newswire. Thus while translated foreign news is directly translated from *Reuters*, news produced by the Russian media is simply *based* on *Reuters* reports.

The list of examples continues. In the case of the three news events covered in this study, some of the Russian articles were found on *BBCrussian.com* website, a Russian online media that belongs to the largest broadcaster in the world, the London-based *BBC*. Other Russian articles were found on *Metronews.ru,* the Russian-language website that belongs to international corporation *Metro International,* based in Luxembourg. *Metro* websites are present in more than 100 different cities, while *Metro* newspapers are active across Europe, North and South America, and Asia, with an audience of more than 17

million daily readers and 37 million weekly readers.[1] Other sources of Russian news include Spanish news agency *EFE* (the largest news agency in Spain), British national daily newspaper *The Guardian*, French daily newspaper *Le Figaro*, and U.S. cable news channel *CNN*. Even news articles based on the reports by Russian non-governmental news agency *Interfax* cannot be unquestionably considered a Russian source of information because *Interfax* is known for its collaboration with business data provider *Thomson Reuters Corporation* from New York, as well as news disseminator *Business Wire* based in San Francisco. This notion brings the comparison between different news sources to a completely different level, where capitalist globalization and the ubiquitous penetration of world's largest media corporations explain the needlessness of comparing among similar sources of information. The purposefulness of news translation has therefore become disputable, as it hardly enhances the coverage already provided by the Russian media. The controversy lies in the fact that in what appears to be different media outlets, the exact same sources of information are often disguised from the reader, making the abundance of (similar) information seem naturally diverse.

My analysis of translated online news raises another question: where do we draw a line between the sources of Russian news and sources of translated foreign news? Translated news is taken from the foreign media and produced by local editors and translators. Some of them work for the established Russian media outlets, some of them create their own online media. Hamilton and Jenner call the latter group "amateur correspondents," the unaffiliated and often untrained de facto journalists who report on international events (314). Russian news is produced by a number of media outlets based in Russia. These outlets include organizations that originated in Russia as well as Russian

[1] According to Metro International S.A. Annual Report 2009.

affiliations of foreign media corporations. The latter group can be represented by organizations such as *BBC Russia* and *Metro News Russia*. While news in these media is produced in accordance with foreign editorial policies, the staff consists only of Russian professionals. They too translate news from different media outlets. The difference, however, remains in the fact that Russian news providers do not generally mention that articles were inspired by, and sometimes plagiarized from, foreign sources. The translation in this case is regarded as a journalistic practice of newsgathering that involves the analyses of foreign media or foreign news wires. Overall, to answer the above question, it becomes clear that Russian professionals and Russian "amateur correspondents" produce both translated foreign news and Russian news, and to a different extent they both use foreign articles as a source of information. However, Hamilton and Jenner argue that this tendency, particularly on the Internet, is beneficial, as "amateur reporting offers valuable perspectives on the news often missed by traditional media, especially when the number of traditional foreign correspondents is in decline" (2004: 312). They suggest "the ability of the public to get foreign news for itself may offer one of the best solutions to dwindling foreign reporting by traditional media" (Ibid.). This is a contestable assumption because getting access to foreign news does not necessarily mean the acquisition of new information. The centralization of sources, the market capitalization of news corporations, the merging of small media into large entities—all this undermines the expectation of the global media coverage to be diverse. My research confirms that amateur translation of online news, including professional translation of online foreign media adds very little to what is already covered by the

Russian outlets. Nonetheless, there is another aspect to news translation that needs to be examined before making this assumption: the audience for translated news.

4.2.4. Answering the "why" of news translation

The interviews with the editors and translators provided me with a different perspective on how to interpret translated news in Russian coverage. When asked about the connection between the production and consumption of translated foreign news, the editor of *Inosmi.ru* explained to me that due to Russian people's custom of living and working within a closed political system, many are still very interested to know what the rest of the world thinks about them and about their country. This is at least one part of the motivation behind translating and reading the translated news. The editor added that "reading translated news means having an alternative source of information; many Russians use translated news in addition to what they read in the local media."[1] In terms of how translated foreign media affect the Russian media, *Inosmi*'s editor noted that translated news undoubtedly enriches the information flow and diversifies information available to Russian society. However, the news flow is enriched not simply by alternative factual information, but by how this information is presented. The fact that translated news was not originally addressed to Russian audiences, but foreigners—i.e. British, Italian, German, Canadians, and so on—presents Russians with a unique opportunity to see the world from a different angle (Pavlikova 2002, Thurman 2007, Tewksbury and Rittenberg 2009, Beumers et al. 2009). Hence, from the point of view of

[1] From the interview with *Inosmi.ru* editor: "Люди читают переводные новости, потому что они являются альтернативным источником информации. Многие читают переводные новости в дополнение к информации получаемой из традиционных СМИ."

the *Inosmi*'s editor, news translation enhances the Russian coverage in that it does not speak to the Russian reader; on the contrary, it speaks to the foreigner.

This opinion resembles the one expressed by *Perevodika*'s team. Discussing the reasons behind the production and consumption of translated foreign news, one of *Perevodika*'s translators noted that for her, to share and learn different information, especially if it concerns Russia, is a "very interesting and fascinating process." She added that the lack of interesting news sources was the reason to start translating foreign news:

> There were times when Russian users would discuss a subject on an online forum and would share a foreign article about it, but not everybody could understand the foreign reference and the author of the citation would have to translate it for those not speaking the idiom. This became the first impulse to create *Perevodika.ru*. It followed, the authors of the website realized, that translated articles inspired and excited a great deal of debate on Runet. To translate an article meant to start an interesting conversation.[1]

For *Perevodika's* translators accessing foreign media means better understanding of world events. Even though the information varies slightly from what is already published in the Russian media, reading articles that address foreigners not only enhances the understanding of the Other, but also of Russia itself. *Perevodika*'s team repeatedly mentioned that the most interesting debates unfold over articles covering Russia or Russian people. The reader wants to know what the Other thinks about him or her, and most often the reader looks for this kind of information, predicting beforehand that it must be different from what Russian media have to say. Having established the uniformity of Russian and translated foreign news, the following section explores how

[1] From the translation of the interview with *Perevodika.ru* translator: Всё началось с того что были форумы где люди обсуждали разные зарубежные статьи и тематики, они публиковали ссылки на зарубежные статьи или отрывки из новостей. Но не все могли это понять. Тогда люди переводили зарубежные статьи и публиковали перевод на форумах. Это то и стало первым толчком к созданию Переводики. Потом авторы сайта поняли что переводные новости обычно вызывют много обсуждений, привлекают много внимания. И перевод новости для нас стал поводом начать интересный разговор.

and why readers expect translated news to be different from Russian news.

4.3. The audience role in the translation of online news

The final section of my findings aims to create a profile of the readership of translated news. Having discussed the sources and content of translated news, the stage of news consumption is further addressed, suggesting ways that different readers reinterpret this information. The study of audiences was approached through the data collection from the online statistics applications, textual analysis of user comments on the websites and forums, and interviews with the editors of the websites under examination. This multi-faceted approach helped me to understand a complex phenomenon, namely uncovering how the readers are addressed, how they are measured, and how they respond to news translation. In the following sections, I summarize the findings from my statistical analysis, as well as from the interviews with the editors, who share their understanding of the audiences. The final section describes how readers of translated news interpret foreign messages.

4.3.1. Defining the audience

In the interview with the *Inosmi.ru* editor, I was presented with a rather advertisement-directed profile of their readership: "People over 25, with a graduate degree, mainly professionals, managers, civil servants, with the number of men being higher than that of women."[1] However, some of this information was not backed up by an independent source and could not be verified. I thus looked at the online statistical data in

[1] From the translation of the interview with *Inosmi.ru* editor: Читатели ИноСМИ – это в основном люди старше 25, с высшим образованием, профессионалы, служащие, госслужащие, мужчин обычно больше чем женщин.

order to enhance a factual profile of the audiences.[1]

Inosmi.ru obtains about 130,000 unique site visits, or more precisely unique browsers, a day. An average of 75 percent of the visitors come from Russia, 6 percent from Ukraine, 2.5 percent from both the United States and Germany, and almost 2 percent come from Belarus. Figure 6 demonstrates fluctuations of readership by country over the period between 27 April and 27 May, 2012.

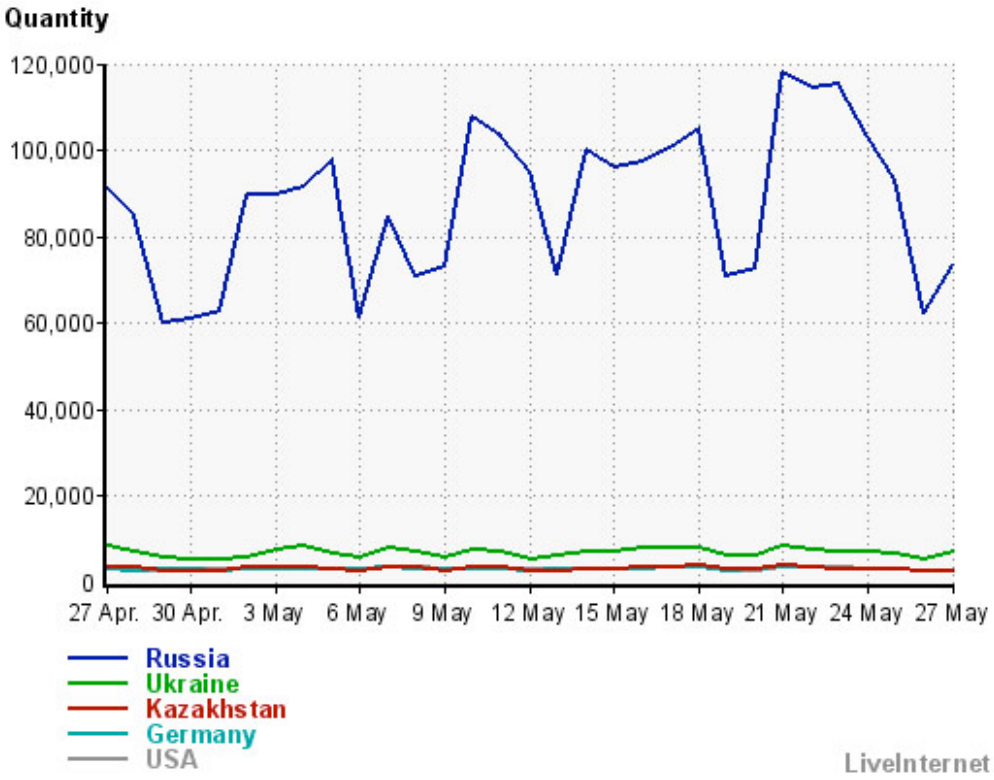

Figure 6. The number of *Inosmi.ru* visitors by country

Other visitors come from Latvia, Estonia, Moldavia, and Great Britain, with the rest of the world making up less than one percent of visits. On a national level, 35.5 percent of visitors come from Moscow, 10.5 percent come from Saint Petersburg, almost 4 percent

[1] The information was acquired from the *Liveinternet* statistics software as of May 2012.

from Yekaterinburg, 3 percent from Krasnodar, while other cities share less than 2 percent of visitors each.

In addition, I used the statistical software Alexa Toolbar[1] in order to profile the *Insomi.ru* audience. It presented demographics relative to the general Internet population reflecting how popular the website is with each audience (Figure 7). Demographics by gender, age, education, family status, and browsing location illustrate that the majority of *Insomi's* readers has a graduate degree. Their age ranges primarily between 35 and 44 years old, and 55 and 64 years old.

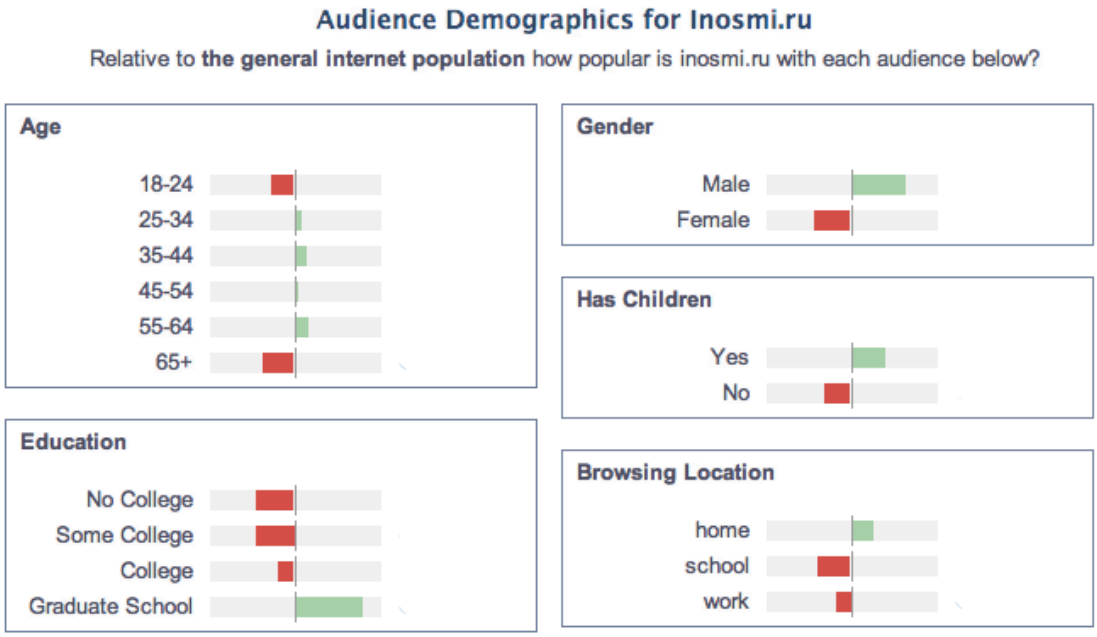

Figure 7. Audience demographics for *Inosmi.ru*

In addition, there are more male visitors than female, and the majority of the readers have

[1] The Alexa Toolbar is the computer program produced by Alexa Internet that is used to measure website specific statistics.

children and read the website from home (as opposed to those who access the website from work/school/university).

The following two figures demonstrate the statistical profile of *Perevodika.ru.* *Liveinternet* statistics shows the website has almost 4,000 unique site visits a day.[1] The demographics resemble those of *Inosmi.ru* with 71.5 percent of the visitors coming from within Russia,10.5 percent from Ukraine, 2.5 percent from Belarus, 1.6 percent from Germany, 1.5 percent from United States, and 1.1 percent from Latvia (Figure 8).

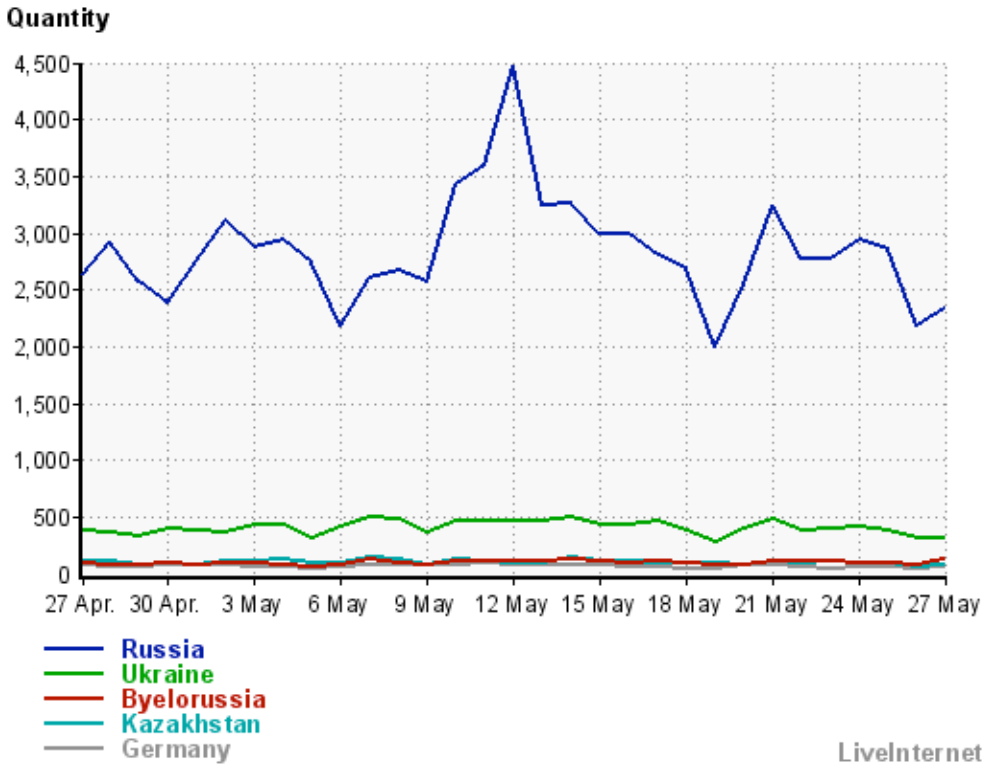

Figure 8. The number of *Perevodika.ru* visitors by country

[1] The information was acquired from the *Liveinternet* statistics software as of May 2012.

Nationally, *Perevodika.ru* readership includes 33 percent of online users from Moscow, 11 percent from Saint-Petersburg, 2.7 percent from Krasnodar, 2.3 percent from Rostov-on-Don, and 2.2 percent from Nizhny Novgorod. According to Alexa Toolbar, the majority of readers are male, between 35 and 44 years old, and have a graduate degree. (Figure 9).

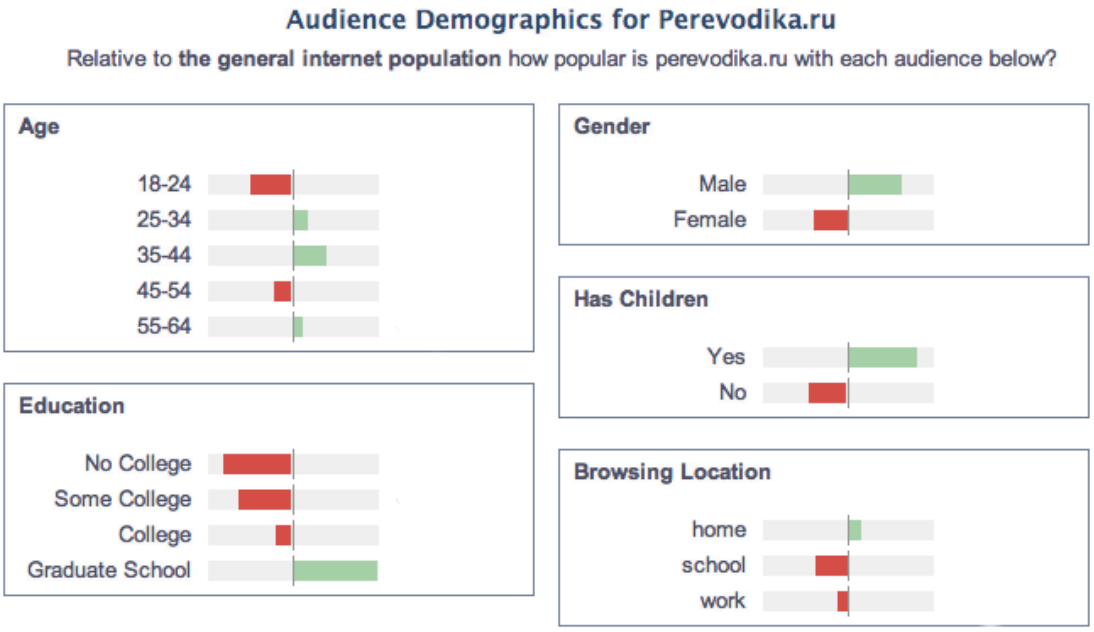

Figure 9. Audience demographics for *Perevodika.ru*

Having established the statistical profile of the two websites, I now turn to the analysis of the interviews with the editors to help me to establish a more detailed description of the readership. In this case, the editors' understanding of the audiences was built around the feedback they received (in the form of readers' comments on the forums or underneath news items, and from e-mails to the editors). When asked about how the

website addresses its readers and how the trust is built around foreign sources of information, *Inosmi's* editor explained that its readers can be divided into a few categories. There is a group of readers who always and without a doubt rely on Western sources of information. Then there is a large group of people who do not trust foreign media at all, according to the notion discussed by Papastephanou (2005), Norton and Gieve (2010), and Szpunar (2012). *Inosmi.ru* has also identified a group somewhere in between: those who regard translated news with criticism. Therefore, the question of building trust around foreign media appears to be irrelevant due to the diversity of readers' responses. There is always going to be a skeptical group of people that will not believe in the information presented by the Other (Tsfati 2003).

From the interview with *Perevodika*'s editor, I discovered that the audiences are perceived in a very similar manner to that of *Inosmi.ru*. The editor underlined that readers of translated articles can be characterized by a healthy amount of skepticism towards foreign opinions. Overall, the editors agreed that working on the credibility of the foreign source is not as important as, for example, understanding the variety of feedback that the articles receive. The complexity of online credibility has been discussed by a number of scholars who have suggested that the degree of credibility depended on a group of online readers rather than on news itself (Tewksbury and Rittenberg 2009, Best et al. 2005, Fossato et al. 2008). According to the editor of *Perevodika.ru*, for a reader it is more important to agree or disagree with the foreign author rather than think about trust and plausibility. On the whole, the editors of both websites claimed that their translated news was read by both groups of people, those who tend to criticize foreign points of view and those who find them convincing; a similar idea was expressed by Papastephanou (2005)

who suggested the coexistence of open-minded (cosmopolitans) and close-minded (locals) citizens in the age of globalization. In the remaining sections of my findings, such a dichotomy of the readership will be challenged by the analysis of how audiences respond to and reinterpret the translation of foreign media. It will become evident that while translated news evokes different types of reactions, some persistent patterns emerge where the majority of readers can still be considered intolerant of the beliefs and opinions of others.

4.3.2. The audience's interpretation of translated news

Through the textual analysis of users' comments it was possible to summarize the general attitudes and judgments towards the Other. Anticipating some degree of acceptance of the translated information, I was surprised to find that the majority of readers confronted and disputed the foreign news, regardless of its content. The process of the analysis unfolded in the following manner: the first question—"what is the subject of the comment?"—was posed so as to reveal the interests of the readership, what particular subjects they found worthy of talking about. The second question—"what is the judgment of the news subject?"—was posed so as to explain how the chosen subjects were judged or evaluated. I therefore examined more than 450 comments published on the studied websites' news pages and forums. When interviewing both *Inosmi.ru* and *Perevodika.ru* editors about the readers' feedback and what types of comments are permitted on the websites, I was told that employees monitor incoming responses. Spam, expletives and offensive language, and off-topic comments are deleted, along with the comments that can be interpreted as inciting national or religious hatred. However, during my examination of the comments, I encountered a number of conversations that were off-

topic. This posed a special challenge for my analysis because I had to filter the readers' conversation, searching for relevant views related to the translated article. While the majority of the comments could be regarded as a forum for the exchange of offences (on a personal level), there still were many readers who concentrated their attention on the news subject and conversed about it extensively with fellow readers.

Based on an analysis of more than 450 comments taken from the websites' news pages and forums about three distinct events—Occupy Wall Street, the death of Gaddafi, and the 2012 Russian presidential election—I was able to distinguish a few major tendencies in users' thinking, among which was criticism towards the West, a concern with the implications of foreign events for Russia and Russia's role in them, and certain expectations from the news content. I illustrate these tendencies in the following three sections.

4.3.3. Criticism towards the West and the idea of democracy

Regardless of the news subject, between 60 and 70 percent of the feedback carried at least some degree of criticism towards Western democracy, capitalism, and American values (Dennis et al. 1991, Szpunar 2012). Many comments were filled with anger and resentment towards non-Russian communities and governments. For example, analyzing the feedback left after the news about the Russian election, I realized that the majority of commenters were using anti-Western and pro-Russian perspectives to judge the articles. One reader wrote about the United States that:

> They carefully try to erase from history and from the present the fact that Russia is an antagonist of the notion that Anglo-Saxons dominate the world. Russia has always been and always will be a defender of humanity, protecting people from those who like to dominate: Mongols, Napoleon, Hitler and the Anglo-Saxon politicians of today. Their [Anglo-Saxons'] idea is to divide and conquer, our

> [Russia's] idea is friendship between the peoples, regardless of how arrogant and trivial it may sound. (In response to the article "US and Russia—the geopolitical twins?" published on *Inosmi.ru*, 14 May, 2011.)[1]

The "Us versus Them" positioning displays a persistent nationalistic component of translated news consumption. The commenter's thinking is linear in a way that there is a very clear division between Russia and the rest of the world. And deviations from this approach are rare. The reader thus chooses to position himself as a representative of his nation, which needs to be defended. Another commenter, reacting to an article where president Putin is described as a suppressor of alternative viewpoints, writes about the United States:

> The United States has only two political parties with different names, and both of them use exactly the same approach. However in this case, Americans do not call themselves 'suppressors of the alternative viewpoints.' I hate it! (In response to the article "President Putin: A View from the US" published on *Inosmi.ru*, 9 May, 2011.)[2]

The coverage of the Russian presidential election, including the aftermath, is filled with "Us-ist" nationalism that, as Fadeicheva (2009) describes it, is highly aggressive towards the policies of Western societies.

Another example of criticism can be found in the coverage of the Occupy Wall Street movements and the Libyan uprising. The readers of this news connected the dots between how police treated the protesters in the United States and how police treated

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[1] From the translation of users' comments: "они тщательно стараются вымарать из истории и из настоящего то, что Россия является антагонистом Англосаксонской идее о мировом господстве. Россия всегда была и всегда будет защитником человечества от любителей мирового господства вроде Монголов, Наполеона, Гитлера и Англосаксонских политиков современности. Их идея - разделяй и властвуй, наша - дружба народов, как бы пафосно и банально это не звучало."

[2] From the translation of users' comments: "а сами-то две партии с разными названиями, но абсолютно одинаковым подходом. Но это у них почему-то не называется подавлять альтернативное мнение, ненавижу!"

protestors in the Libyan uprising. On the one hand, the discussion was built around different stories of police brutality during the Occupy protests, the most popular being reports of pepper-spray used by the police against the protesters.[1] On the other hand, Russian commenters recalled the coverage of Libyan uprising, where police used tear gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets to disperse protesters.[2] Citing stories about the NATO intervention in Libyan civil war that called for a no-fly zone and protection of civilians, Russian commenters suggested the Occupy Wall Street unrest also needed an external intervention and help from foreign countries. "All in the name of democracy and against totalitarianism,"[3] concluded one reader with skepticism. Thus the readers' comments reflected an opposition to the notion of democracy, with skepticism and derision being employed as tools for judgment. Some of the readers interpreted the coverage of the Occupy protests as American propaganda, an opinion that was raised by a number of scholars who argued that the primary intention of some Western media was to spread American propaganda (Snow and Palast 2003, Cull 2008, Ioffe 2010). According to one commenter, American media meant to agitate the world with the protests planned by the American government itself "so as to reestablish its democratic superiority in the world." A similar conclusion was drawn from the coverage of Gaddafi's death. The readers suggested that the United States played a crucial role in the outcome of the battle

[1] To read the full story, go to guardian.co.uk, "Occupy Wall Street: 'Pepper-spray' Officer Named in Bush Protest Claim," from 27 September, 2011, or washingtonpost.com, "'Occupy Wall Street' UC Davis Protests Escalate After Pepper Spray Use Sparks Anger," from 21 November, 2011.

[2] For more information, see alarabiya.net, "Clash Breaks Out as Libya Braces for 'Day of Anger,'" from 16 February, 2011.

[3] From the translation of users' comments: Все ради демократиии и против тоталитаризма!

and that their intention was "to gain control over the Libyan government."[1]

The sentiment of Russia's failure to live up to Western standards of democracy was another tendency among the readers of translated news. However, the argumentation of the sentiment varied. Some commenters attempted to logically explain why a democratic system is not an appropriate state of governance for Russia (as opposed to comments that were hyperbolic and emotional). To illustrate, one reader, in a response to an article from *Foreign Policy Journal*,[2] explained that although Russia is culturally and historically much closer to Europe, the views and attitudes of Russian people are significantly different; and while the debate about Russia's identities continued for about two hundred years, it hardly can be considered complete.

The commenter supported his arguments with the results of a poll conducted by the Levada Centre, an independent Russian, non-governmental polling and sociological research organization.[3] Regarding the notion of the unsuitability of a democratic system for Russia, another commenter suggested that Russia has a low level of confidence in

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[1] From the translation of users' comments: "чтобы восстановить своё демократический превосходство в мире" and the second quote reads "получить контроль над ливийским правительством."

[2] The Russian translation of "How to Make Russia Democratic?" published on *Inosmi.ru*, 7 Februar[y], 2012.

[3] To make sure the cited information was valid, I contacted the Levada Centre about the poll. It turns out the study exists and was conducted in October 2007. According to the poll, the proportion of those who believe that the country needs democracy has remained steady at between half and two-thirds of the population (those who believe that democracy is not for Russia is about a quarter of the population). Nevertheless, Russians are not allergic to authoritarianism: in the last decade the number of those who thought that having all the power in the hands of one man is unacceptable was no more than 20 percent. Regardless of the critical situation in Russia, altered by corruption and ignorance of the laws, the idea of favouring absolute obedience to authority (against individual freedom) has been accepted and popular. Between 63 and 71 percent of Russians agreed with the statement, "the State should take care of all its citizens, providing them with a decent level of living"; only 19 to 25 percent agreed with the statement, "the State should establish uniform rules for everybody and ensure that these rules are not violated."

parliamentary government and political parties, whereas it has a relatively high ranking for institutions such as the head of state, the army and the Orthodox Church. Russia also holds a high degree of personalization where politics is involved, meaning that the political leaders are judged by their personal qualities and their public image rather than their actions or statements. Another issue, he raised, was "Russia's deep commitment to its greatness and power." The commenter cited the results of a poll conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation, in which 82 percent of respondents answered positively to the question of whether Russia should strive to become the most powerful country in the world.[1] The commenter noted that recently Russians have begun "experiencing more anger and mistrust towards the West," and denying some of the liberal values of the West, including "tolerance, the legalization of drugs, homosexuality and same-sex marriages."[2] Keeping all this in mind, the commenter concluded that:

> If we try to imagine an ideal portrait of Russia where most of its citizens can live safely and comfortably, we will see the Russia of Vladimir Putin, structured by the dictatorship of the law, where the major business corporations and the state government are divorced, the effectiveness of social programs prevails, and vivid parliamentary life and politically diverse media thrive. (In response to the Russian translation of "How to Make Russia Democratic?" published on *Inosmi.ru*, 7 February, 2012.)[3]

These and other comments help illuminate how Russian readers respond to translated

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[1] The Public Opinion Foundation is a Russian organization that conducts sociological research. The results of the poll were cited by the commenter. I verified them on the foundation's website, *Fom.ru.*

[2] From the translation of users' comments: "нарастающее раздражение и недоверие по отношению к Западу." The second quote reads, "толерантность, легализация наркотиков, гомосексуализм, однополые браки."

[3] From the translation of users' comments: Если составить из всего перечисленного портрет идеальной России, в которой было бы уютно жить большинству ее нынешних граждан, то получится картина России Владимира Путина - диктатура закона, равноудаленность крупных предпринимателей от государственной власти, эффективность социальных программам, довольно жива парламентская жизнь и политически разнонаправленность ведущих СМИ.

news. They are conscious of the political imbalances in the Russian government; however, they find this order of things to be normal and acceptable. Many readers are proud of the current state of affairs in Russia and ready to defend their position. This is a depiction of what Fadeicheva called "Us-ist" nationalism with anti-Western and pro-Russian bias playing a decisive role in the consumption of translated news. In the following section, I will provide more examples of how Russian audiences associate themselves with the coverage of local and foreign events.

4.3.4. The role of Russia in translated news coverage

The translated coverage of the Russian presidential election was almost identical to that found in Russian media, with two-thirds of all articles covering Vladimir Putin's candidacy and the rest covering other candidates (usually all of the candidates presented within one article). In the case of Putin, the number of positive and negative articles was almost equal, whereas the rest of the candidates received more criticism than praise. Similarly, the readers' reaction to the coverage of the election was mixed. Some praised Putin, some criticized him, while others joked about Dmitry Medvedev's and Mikhail Prokhorov's candidacies. Medvedev was compared to "a character from the Muppet Show," Prokhorov was called "a fictional candidate" and "a shameful oppositional candidate," whereas Putin was addressed as "a leader of a country" and "a future president."[1] One commenter wrote that if Prokhorov became the president of Russia, the country would come to an end; the working class would operate twelve hours a day; exports from Russia would stop; the West would pump Russia's oil for free "like it was

[1] For more detailed information, see *Inosmi*'s articles: "Медведев не проявил сочувствия к Pussy Riot" (translated from *The Times* on 27 April, 2012) and "Высокий, богатый и скучный" (translated from *La Stampa* on 15 February, 2012).

in the 90s; thieves would come to power; and democracy that had just begun to emerge in Russia would completely disappear."[1]

Despite the fact that many Vladimir Putin-related comments were supportive and laudatory, there also were those who expressed disapproval. One reader wrote that Putin "is a weak man," he is frightened to participate in open debates and not ready to be a part of an honest election. Putin "employs undercover tactics by closing oppositional and even neutral media channels." The commenter recalled how at the beginning of Putin's presidency, the weekly magazine *Continent* disappeared from magazine racks (a dissident paper that focused on the politics of the Soviet Union and its satellites), the Federal Security Service stormed the Russian television channel *NTV* office (right after *NTV* expressed opposition to Putin's presidential electoral campaign), which was followed by Gazprom[2] acquiring a controlling stake in *NTV*. "Now only *Echo of Moscow* is left, the rest is a number of zombie media that proclaim Putin's greatness from the early morning to the late night,"[3] suggests a commentator. The Russian radio station *Echo of Moscow* is one of the last resorts of free media in Russia, reflected in the scholarship produced on

[1] From the translation of users' comments: "Если президентом, не дай бог, станет Прохоров, то России прийдёт конец. Рабочий класс будет трудиться по двенадцать часов в день; экспорт из России прекратится; нефть начнёт качать запад за дарма как в 90-е года; к власти придут воры. Демократия, которая только-только стала зарождаться в России совсем исчезнет."

[2] Gazprom is the largest extractor of natural gas in the world and is owned by the Russian government.

[3] From the translation of users' comments: "Путин слабый человек, он даже теледебатов испугался; открытая борьба не для него. Поэтому он использует подковерную тактику; он закрывает оппозиционные и даже нейтральные СМИ. В начале его президентства бесследно исчез еженедельник *Continen* … потом зачистили *НТВ*, убрали даже сверхпопулярные "*Свободу слова"* и *"Времечко*." Сейчас пришла пора "*Эха москвы*," оставили только зомбо-каналы, которые с утра до вечера прославляют великого Путина."

the problem of freedom of the press in Russia (Fossato and Lloyd 2008, Loory 2009).[1]

The discussion of the Russian media and politics brings me to a more specific theme of news' comments: the remarks about Russia and Russian president Vladimir Putin. This phenomenon can be directly ascribed to the timing bias of my sample, because the articles were collected during the 2012 Russian presidential election. However, the analysis of comments about the Occupy Wall Street protests and the death of Gaddafi also found a number of the remarks about Russia and the Russian president. The following quotes illustrate this tendency with the sample of the responses to the articles about Gaddafi's death:

> In the U.S., Putin is already being demonized right on the TV, he is put on a par with Gaddafi, while Gaddafi is put on a par with Hussein. One was hanged; the other was shot at surrender. And all this is coming from Senator John McCain.[2] (In response to the article "Muammar Gaddafi Killed in Libya" published on *Inosmi.ru*, 21 October, 2011).

> What is there to understand? He was killed, so what? Just think of the civil war in Russia, and indeed of any other civil war—nobody tried to understand them after all.[3] (In response to the article "Gaddafi 'Killer' Tells of Colonel's Last Moments" published on *Inosmi.ru*, 25 October, 2011).

> NATO now controls the oil in entire Middle East. Only is Iran left. However, it can also be taken away. Putin's plans for the rearmament and improvement of the

[1] David Remnick from the *New Yor*ker ("Echo in the Dark" from 22 Sepember, 2008) writes: "In the authoritarian ecosystem of Vladimir Putin, *Echo of Moscow* is one of the last of an endangered species, a dodo that still roams the earth." Benjamin Bidder expresses the same opinion in the *Spiegel Online* ("*Echo of Moscow* Under Pressure in Russia" from 17 February, 2012), writing that "*Echo of Moscow*'s success as a critical voice is one of the anomalies in Putin's new Russia, a country that fails to live up to Western standards of democracy."

[2] From the translation of users' comments: В США уже Путина начинают прямо на телевидение демонизировать и ставить в один ряд с Кадаффи, а Кадаффи в свою очередь с Хусеном. И это прозвучало из уст их Сенатора. Одного повесили, второго пристрелили при сдаче в плен.

[3] From the translation of users' comments: Что тут разбираться, убили и убили. Вспомните гражданскую войну в России и вообще любую гражданскую войну - кто там потом в чем разбирался.

> standard of living will not come true.[1] (In response to the article "Lavrov Calls for Investigation of the Death of Gaddafi," published on *Inosmi.ru*, 22 October, 2011).
>
> Anyway, Putin has lost the Libyan war because the desperate population of Russia (meaning absolute majority) has realized what to do with the overstayed dictatorship.[2] (In response to the article "U.S. and Russia: Geopolitical Winners of the Libyan Campaign" published on *Inosmi.ru*, 14 November, 2011).

These comments show how readers tend to make connections between foreign events and Russia's role in them. It seems relating to the event helps the reader to make a judgment about it, and to make it look more locally relevant and hence understandable. It is possible to assume that regardless of the news subject, between 70 and 80 percent of responses praised Putin with the varying degree of criticism. In many cases, readers demonstrated a critically reasoned analysis of the president's candidacy.

In addition, some commenters expressed resentment that they had no choice in the elections but Putin, and that they wished to have more than just one alternative. Again, besides hyperbolic and emotional responses, there were people with logical and reasonable responses to the election. One commenter acknowledged that it is very likely that the majority of Russians would vote for Vladimir Putin; however, he added, this was not important. What was important is that:

> Victory was fair and acquired according to the voting standards; the schoolteachers and other state employees were not going to compromise with their conscience for the sake of short-term benefits—their next salary. When we, each of us, lie and allow to be lied to, we are too short-sighted. And yes, today and tomorrow we will have food for our children, but by not seeing the future clearly we are leaving our children and our grandchildren in a country riddled with corruption and fraud. (In response to the Russian translation of "Les Russes mobilisés en masse pour

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[1] From the translation of users' comments: Теперь НАТО контролирует всю ближневосточную нефть. Остался Иран. Если подомнут и его. Планам Путина по перевооружению и поднятию уровня жизни будет не суждено сбыться.

[2] From the translation of users' comments: Путин всё равно проиграл в ливийской войне потому что отчаявшиеся было население России (абсолютное большинство) поняло что надо делать с засидевшимися диктаторами.

manifester contre Poutine" published on *Perevodika.ru*, 4 February, 2012).[1] This and other opinions coincided across different news subjects, reflecting how the readers understand and interpret foreign sources, and how they reflect on the information in terms of their own culture and politics. The overall impression from reading these responses was that readers enjoyed the sense of belonging, and exhibited pride for their country. Despite the availability of numerous sources of foreign information, including widespread access to diverse online media, Russian national identity indeed remains strong.[2]

4.3.5. Readers' preconceived expectations

Another example of responses to translated news was some readers' expectations that foreign news would bear opposite statements and opinions to that of Russian media. An exchange of opinions unfolded when such expectations about the content of foreign media were not met. One example of this was a response to piece called "Stop the Pointless Demonization of Putin," written by Stephen F. Cohen and published on *Reuters.com* blog on 7 May, 2012. The article was translated by *Insomi.ru* on 9 May, 2012 and titled "Прекратите бессмысленное демонизирование Путина." In it, Cohen criticizes American media for demonizing Vladimir Putin:

> The relentless demonizing of Putin makes rational U.S. policymaking all the more difficult. Mitt Romney's recent assertions that Russia is America's "number one

[1] From the translation of users' comments: Важнее, чтобы эта победа досталась ему честно и по правилам. И чтобы учителя и другие бюджетники не шли на компромиссы с совестью ради сиюминутной выгоды – ближайших зарплат. Когда мы, каждый на своем месте, обманываем сами и позволяем обманывать себя, мы слишком недалеко смотрим: да, сегодня и завтра мне будет, чем накормить детей, но при этом я работаю на то, чтобы оставить своим детям и внукам страну, пронизанную коррупцией и обманом по мелочам.

[2] A large amount of globalization media research focuses on national identity issues, as in Wheeler (2000).

> geopolitical foe" and that Moscow has made no "meaningful concessions" seem to reflect widespread ignorance or amnesia. Are U.S. policymakers aware of Putin's extraordinary assistance to the U.S. war effort in Afghanistan after 9/11, his crucial help in supplying NATO troops now there or his support for harsher sanctions against Iran? Do they know that for these and other "pro-American" concessions he is viewed by many Russian national security officials as an appeaser?

He goes on to defend Putin's years of presidency, denying his involvement in the killing of political opponents, and blaming media malpractice of the presidents' representation in the West. On *Inosmi.ru*, the translation of this article received more than 100 responses. To understand how it was received by Russian readers, below are translations of three user comments:

> This is an exceptional, adequate article. I joined *Inosmi.ru* not that long ago, sometime in October last year, and it is the third or fourth article in six months that has no hysterical statements about how terrible and bloody Putin's regime is.[1]

> What happened to the British press? Is this even possible? This is an adequate, analytically exceptional article, and most importantly, without any fictional information. Bravo to Stephen Cohen! You have all the right to be a journalist. Thank you for writing this article.[2]

> Now, even *Inosmi.ru* publishes clever and boring articles. Well, then what will I read now to amuse myself?[3]

The readers are surprised to see a foreign article that praises the Russian government and criticizes the Western depiction of it. They find this news to be "adequate," "reasonable," and "well written." Nonetheless, they are discouraged by the "normality" and "plausibility" of the text meaning there is little left for a discussion or

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[1] From the translation of users' comments: На редкость адекватная статья. Я на Иносми не очень давно, где-то с октября прошлого года, это 3-я или 4-я статья за полгода без истерик и воплей про кровавый режим ужасного, отвратительного Путина.

[2] From the translation of users' comments: Что случилось с британской прессой? Разве такое еще возможно?! Адекватно, аналитически, а главное без выдуманных оценок. Браво, автор. Стивен Коэн, ты имеешь право называться журналистом. Спасибо за статью.

[3] From the translation of users' comments: Что ж теперь читать то для повышения настроения, если даже на Иносми начали появляться скучные и разумные статьи?

debate. The message of this article does not confront their ideological and political beliefs; it is somewhat unusual and "boring" to see a foreign source conforming to the local way of thinking. This is not a type of article that the local reader expects to see in a foreign media outlet, and may be disregarded and rapidly forgotten. Approaching the translated news in this way means expressing "Us-ist" nationalism, mentioned in my literature review (Fadeicheva 2009, Khachaturian 2009). Fadeicheva writes that, "anti-Americanism and anti-Westernism have become customary and are now taken for granted in the discourse of contemporary Russia" (10). Indeed the analysis of the translated news' readership shows how the articles are filtered through this ideological conviction and how deeply rooted the judgment about the Other is.

To summarize, my findings present a complex combination of sources, translators, and audiences constituting the phenomenon of news translation. What becomes evident is that the role of news translation is not the expansion of knowledge or the introduction of new information. Rather, it is an impulse to start a conversation, and moreover a means for the creation of an online public forum where readers continuously seek information suitable for reaffirming their beliefs and opinions. As Beck et al. put it, "individuals use foreign news sources not simply to satisfy a hunger for political news generally, or even information about foreign events specifically, but primarily to appraise attitude-consistent news stories" (2005: 65).

5. DISCUSSION: Understanding globalization through news translation

In this chapter I summarize my findings in relation to the literature, followed by a discussion of the main findings regarding the research questions and the hypotheses of my thesis. General characteristics of the practice of news translation will be presented with the aim of situating this practice in the field of traditional journalism. Another aim is to determine the role that cultural imperialism and national identity play in the production and consumption of translated news. Finally, an analysis of the results of my research reveals the dual nature of news translation: a similarity between content at the production stage and a diversity of interpretations of this content at the consumption stage. Consequently, the homogeneity and heterogeneity of translated news are analyzed within the framework of media globalization. A statement of the limitations of the thesis, conclusions, and suggestions for future research will follow at the end.

5.1. Situating the discussion in relation to the research aims

The findings described in the preceding chapter will now be addressed with reference to the aims stated in the introduction of my thesis. Here is the hypothesis:

> **Hypothesis**: Foreign news that is translated on the Internet enhances Russian coverage by presenting new factual information previously unknown to the reader, therefore expanding informational boundaries, easing the processes of knowledge dissemination and media globalization.

These were the three research questions:

> **RQ 1:** What is the origin, the language used and content of translated news on the Internet? How do online media that translate foreign news operate?
>
> **RQ 2:** How do the editors and translators at online media outlets manage journalism, technologies and translation? What are their reasons for translating news, and what role does translated news play in relation to the Russian coverage?

> **RQ 3:** Who is the readership for translated news? What is the readership's understanding and interpretation of translated news? How does their interpretation relate to the editors' position on news translation?

Constructing the "Discussion" chapter in accordance with the posed research questions would limit my ability to extract and highlight the most important elements of this study. I arrived at my conclusions after careful examination of my findings where certain patterns emerged across different sections. For this reason, I decided to construct the "Discussion" chapter in accordance with the major patterns of my findings; these patterns show how translated online news operates from the stage of production to the stage of consumption. The first section below covers the process of integration of online translation within the larger framework of journalistic practices. This stage of my research sets the foundation for the understanding of the following two sections, where journalism is examined in the broader framework of the globalization debate. In the second and third sections, the discussion unfolds around the notions of cultural imperialism and national identity and how those two factors influence the construction and interpretation of translated news, and the last section will test the hypothesis presented earlier in the thesis. As will become evident in this final section, my hypothesis cannot be completely proven or disproven because my findings reveal a much more complex combination of practices inherent to the production and consumption of translated news. Two critical patterns, homogenization and hybridization, emerged from the fact that translated news has dual implications for the definition of media globalization. Because of this, my hypothesis was tested in relation to both the homogeneous and heterogeneous nature of translated news.

5.1.1. The integration of online translation in journalism

My findings have illustrated different aspects and settings of the translation of online news. Although the translation of online news has little in common with professional journalism, some techniques and strategies still overlap. While the studied online media outlets do not hire journalists (only professional and non-professional translators), they still have an editorial staff responsible for editing, publishing, and laying out the news—all typical features of traditional news production. However, what distinguishes online news translation from professional journalism is the editors' disregard for fact-checking, accuracy, and the credibility of information. Both editors agreed that accuracy of the content of foreign news remains on "the conscience of the author of the original article and foreign media," indicating that intervention at the level of the original article was not considered. Nonetheless, a more professional approach was chosen during the translation process itself. Thus editors claimed that objectivity and an accurate depiction of foreign mentalities, values, and beliefs are essential to news translation. Accurately conveying the meaning and saving the style of the original author was therefore important for the translators.

Stetting (1989) and Bielsa and Bassnett (2009) describe the integration of translation in journalism as the practice of "transediting." This is a combination of editing and translating techniques that is widely practiced in journalistic translation to better suit the needs of the receivers (Bielsa and Bassnett 2009: 63). Some of the components of this practice include: changing the title and lead, eliminating unnecessary information, adding important background information, changing the order of paragraphs, and summarizing information (64). However, to apply the concept of transediting to the outlets I studied is

problematic. It appears that from all of the presented modifications to which the source text can typically be subjected in the process of transediting, online translators and editors only occasionally employ the addition of important background information. Changing titles, re-ordering paragraphs, eliminating information, and summarizing are not practiced by the online media outlets I studied.

Bielsa and Bassnett write, "the outcome of the process of news translation is the creation of a new text, destined to function as 'news' for a different public according to the textual conventions of another language" (2009: 64). This indicates that the target text is translated in a way so as to address new, local audiences—the practice more commonly known as localization. However, the editors of the studied media outlets contested this notion. They suggested that, in general, translated news does not address Russian audiences, but addresses the audiences of the foreign media. This gives locals a unique opportunity to see the world from a different angle and enhance their understanding of world events. Therefore the task of online translators was to preserve this address and deliver an accurate translation of the text. As I mentioned earlier in the "Findings" chapter, this approach lies somewhere in between the practices of localization (or domestication) and foreignization.

Bielsa and Bassnett suggest that "in news translation, the dominant strategy is absolute domestication, as material is shaped in order to be consumed by target audiences, so has to be tailored to suit their needs and expectations" (2009: 10). They emphasize that the theory of foreignizing in translation "ceases to hold any value" with respect to journalistic translation. My findings, on the contrary, show that on the Internet, both practices—foreignization and domestication—are common. When news is translated

online, the editors mean to depict the foreignness of the message as accurately as possible. But the interviews illustrate that while explaining unfamiliar expressions is important, it is equally important to deliver the accurate version of the foreign news.

The notion of domestication (interchangeable in this study for the term russification) is as important as trying to depict foreign mentalities, values, and beliefs in the most accurate way possible. To achieve this, translators seek a balance between foreignization and domestication so that the reader can explore and understand the Other in a familiar environment and idiom. This approach of news delivering represents an example of media glocalization (Beck 2002, Roudometof 2005). In the literature review, I mentioned that glocalization is the process of the local adopting the global, where the global product is modified in accordance with local needs and demands. The degree of adaptation or modification can fluctuate from medium to medium, and from country to country. However, studying news translation will always involve an analysis of to what degree news is localized or alienated. The results of my research illustrate that online news translation can serve as an example of glocalization of global media market.

Overall, the integration of online translation in journalism indicates the creation of a hybrid version of journalism in which some of the inherent traditional media ethics and norms are dismissed while others are encouraged. Translators of online news strive for a balance between an understandable depiction of events and accurate conveyance of foreign meaning. The priorities have shifted from fact checking and credibility of sources to the efficient transferal from source text to target text. In online news translation the focus is on the accurate representation of the Other, whereas in traditional journalism the focus is larger, encompassing concepts such as objectivity, integrity, ethics, and freedom

of speech. The above assumptions are constructed on the basis of the interviews with the editors and translators of the studied outlets. The following section establishes a more detailed depiction of online news translation in which quantitative as well as qualitative findings complement the information acquired from the interviews.

5.1.2. Cultural imperialism

In the following two sections, the interaction between cultural imperialism and national identity in the production and consumption of online news is discussed. First of all, it needs to be acknowledged that the English language plays a significant role in the translation of online news. The results of my research show that almost 60 percent of all articles are translated from English, a tendency that is also reflected in the most translated media outlets. The American media outlet *The New York Times* and British national dailies *The Guardian* and *The Daily Mail* are the most popular sources for translation, followed by *The Financial Times* and *The Daily Telegraph*—also English language media. In this regard, editors claimed that finding translators speaking languages other than English is a serious challenge, and therefore the coverage was linguistically constrained. The translators themselves added that it was also difficult to find diverse and "interesting" news in non-English media outlets. The analysis of the sources of translated news thus reflects the notion of English-language dominance in the global dissemination of information. Indeed, such dominance shows how cultural imperialism reveals itself in news dissemination.

This tendency has already been discussed by a number of scholars. Bielsa and Bassnett, for example, argue that "translation, which makes it possible for people to have access to information in their own language, contributes to the global dominance of

Anglo-American culture"; or, to put it differently, it helps to spread cultural imperialism through the distribution of news (2009: 29). This notion was echoed by Masmoudi (1978), who said that transnational (mostly English-speaking) media impose their own way of seeing the world upon the developing countries by providing the news that serves as the main source of information for non-English societies. For Pierre Bourdieu and Loïc Wacquant, the dominance of Anglo-American culture has even deeper implications. They write that the function of the "highly polysemic notion" of globalization is to "dress up the effects of American imperialism in the trappings of cultural oecumenicism or economic fatalism and to make a transnational relation of economic power appear like a natural necessity" (2001: 4). Bourdieu and Wacquant regard the question of cultural imperialism in the political dimension as influenced by the global dominance of English. This approach illustrates a form of imperialism that universalizes the particularisms of Western societies across the globe.

Considering the evidence for English-language dominance (or as Bielsa and Bassnett call it, "the global dominance of Anglo-American culture"), Tomlinson (1999), Iwabuchi (2002), and Straubhaar (2007) have all contested the interpretations of this phenomenon. Straubhaar writes that cultural imperialism, especially one rooted in the United States, is a more general, deeper globalization of capitalism (2007: 83). Given that the reason for English dominance is actually the wider, global introduction of capitalism, Tomilson argues that a decentering of the latter from the West is taking place, resulting in the emergence of concepts such as Japanization. In this regard, Iwabuchi claims the existence of distinct Asian versions of both capitalism and cultural modernity (Tomlinson 1999: 140, Iwabuchi 2002). Iwabuchi writes that "theoretical reformulation is imperative

in order to grasp the gist of the decentering forces of globalization that make transnational cultural flow and power relations much more disjunctive, non-isomorphic and complex" (6). Straubhaar also supports the claim of a new power distribution among global media players; he says that Latin America, the Middle East, and East Asia have developed their own cultural trade within cultural-linguistic regions. "Between 2002 and 2006, for example, the hot new phenomenon in television imports in East Asia was dramas from South Korea, not Hollywood," writes Straubhaar (6). The results of my research reflect a similar tendency towards the decentering of cultural influences. Some of the interviewed editors expressed interest in expanding and broadening their staff of translators, in order to represent Chinese, Arabic, and Japanese news outlets. Such a change in the focus of newsworthiness suggests that the notion of cultural imperialism is shifting from the West to other nations.

Other reasons for inadequacy of the cultural imperialism theory for news translation can be found in Straubhaar's work on media globalization. He writes that such an approach takes "structures and economic factors as determinants and does not give much attention to the interaction of the audience with the actual text or content of the cultural products" (2007: 59). This important stage of news dissemination is often overlooked in comparison with a source-focused approach to studying media globalization. In the following section I thus attempt to explain how local audiences understand and interpret foreign cultural products. I also discuss how a sense of national identity can sometimes overshadow a more rational interpretation of foreign news content.

5.1.3. National identity

The findings of my research have illustrated that the most covered news subject for

translation was the 2012 Russian presidential election. And regardless of the news subject, in terms of geography, the largest number of translated news items covered Russia-related events or Russian citizens. The analysis of the websites' content has shown a large number of analytical essays written by Western journalists about Russia. Moreover, my examination of users' comments has illustrated the consistent tendency to connect and compare foreign news subjects to Russia or Russian governance. The conversation about Middle Eastern wars, protests in Europe and the United States entailed a discussion of Russia's role in the outcome of these events. Quite possibly, making connections between foreign events and native country helped readers to understand and interpret translated news more easily. Such a tendency could also be explained in terms of preferences generated on the basis of cultural proximity (Straubhaar 1991). According to Straubhaar, "cultural proximity theory argues that countries and cultures would tend to prefer their own local or national productions first, due to factors such as the appeal of local stars, … themes and issues, the appeal of similar looking ethnic faces, and the familiarity of local styles and locales" (2007: 91). In this regard it can be argued that the readership of online translated news, by focusing on articles about Russia and by discussing foreign events in relation to Russia, similarly looks for cultural proximity. Considering that "the expectations of audiences form boundaries within which producers work," a loop for online news translation emerges, where Russia-related news is always a priority for both editors and readers of this media (Straubhaar 2007: 142).

At a deeper level of examination, the consumption of foreign news about Russia triggers nationalistic (sometimes even xenophobic) responses from readers, a notion addressed by Khachaturian (2009) and Fadeicheva (2009) and mentioned earlier in the

literature review. My conversations with the editors provided me with some examples of the growth of nationalism among the readers of translated news; likewise, my examination of readers' comments yielded similar results. Many readers were proud of the current state of affairs in Russia and were ready to defend their position. Others fiercely attacked the notions of Western democracy, capitalism, and American values. A considerate amount of feedback concerned the subject of Russia becoming a democratic nation; in these exchanges of opinions, the majority of the commenters questioned the efficiency of democratic governance, defending the current political, economic, and legal state of governance in Russia. Research on nationalism on the Internet has illustrated that Russia is not the only country subjected to such influences. For example, the Chinese government has used the Internet to direct anger away from the Communist government and toward China's foreign enemies, resulting in Internet support for Chinese nationalism, which is "often laced with virulent anti-American or anti-Japanese sentiment" (Goldsmith and Wu 2006: 98). In China, Goldsmith and Wu write, "Internet-driven nationalism appears to be beating democracy hands down—especially when the democratic movement is saddled with extensive control" (2006: 103-104).

My findings illustrate a rather minor exception to the nationalistic interpretation of foreign news. The editors acknowledge that in addition to the majority of nationalistic and xenophobic responses, there is a small group of "global citizens" who "sincerely expresses interest" in international media and foreign perspectives; and who are open and considerate about different points of view and opinions. Straubhaar (2007) describes similar groups of global citizens (the "global elite") in his study of television and globalization. He underscores that cable and satellite channels have their own global

audiences. For example “the CNN audience, while small, tends to include the world's political and economic elite who are interested in truly global contents,” meaning that the global elite can access “virtually everything, from satellite or cable TV to the Internet” (92, 113). The notion illustrated in my findings that some of the “global citizens” are more open-minded about translated news supports Straubhaar’s notion of cultural proximity. Namely, Straubhaar provides an example in which “people with more economic and cultural capital are more likely to choose to watch imported U.S. television shows, which often demand knowledge of U.S. or global culture.” On the contrary, “those with less economic or cultural capital are more likely to choose local, national, or regional material, which is easier for them to understand” (2007: 92). This dichotomy explains the existence of both groups of translated news consumers: those with richer economic or cultural capital capable of processing a more diverse range of perspectives and opinions, and readers with a smaller economic or cultural capital who lean toward the national, and thus familiar representation of events.

My examination of readers’ feedback provided me with a larger number of the latter group; however, there also were a few readers who could be described as “global citizens.” Their judgments deviate from nationalistic and hyperbolic responses in that they contain more reasonable arguments and in many cases are based on statistical data. Such feedback is usually based on the values of equality, inclusion, and fairness, with statements such as: “Not only do we bear guilt, let’s not forget about other countries,” “the oligarchy is the world's problem,” and “to avoid ideological burden, I need to have access to foreign media.” Nonetheless, and I want to emphasize this, this type of feedback is extremely rare. As mentioned in the literature review, the dichotomy between

the global and the local reader is representative of the notion of glocalization. More specifically, the discrepancies in the interpretation of translated news reflect the idea of the coexistence of global and local mind-sets that encompasses cosmopolitans and local citizens respectively (Roudometof 2005: 121). The readers of translated news are the ones responsible for the process of the local adopting the global, where the global product is digested in accordance with domestic cultural preferences.

As it was mentioned above, the examination of translated news along with the readers' feedback shows a steady pattern of nationalistic interpretation of foreign news, as well as an exceptional focus on Russia-related articles. Despite the availability of sources of foreign information, including widespread access to diverse online media, Russian national identity on the Internet remains strong. Even though Straubhaar (2007) has suggested that national television networks are the most national media across continents, it is now possible to add the Internet as a media space heavily defined by its national boundaries. Having discussed the role of cultural imperialism and national identity in news translation, I now turn my attention to testing the hypothesis in relation to my research findings.

5.1.4. Testing the hypothesis: The homogeneity and heterogeneity of news

The hypothesis of my research was that translated foreign news enhances Russian online coverage by presenting new factual information, previously unknown to the reader. It also expands informational boundaries, easing the processes of knowledge dissemination and media globalization. Regarding the enhancement of Russian coverage, the findings of my research show that translated news bears little difference from what

has already been published by Russian news providers. On the other hand, editors of translated news sources argue against this observation; they claim that translated news enriches the information flow and diversifies information available to the Russian society. This happens at the level of whom this news is addressed to. Namely, translated news remains contextually and ideologically targeted towards its original audience—whether the audience be British, Italian, German, Canadian, American or of another origin. This address therefore gives local readers a slightly different, foreign angle to look at news events.

Regarding the expansion of informational boundaries and knowledge dissemination, the fact that foreign news is translated on the Internet shows that information indeed travels more easily across continents and national boundaries. However the question of knowledge dissemination raises other important issues: how is the increasing amount of information accepted by foreign readers, and does this information contribute to learning processes or simply reinforce preexisting knowledge? The findings of my research confirm that the latter is rather the case; meaning that translated online news reinforces preexisting beliefs and opinions. However, some clarifications are needed in order to understand this statement in relation to my hypothesis.

First of all, the evidence from the "Discussion" chapter shows that translated news largely bears information that has already been introduced by Russian media. It needs to be clarified why this is the case. My examination of sources of Russian online news has proven that the Russian media market has integrated a number of international news providers, hence filling Russian news coverage with foreign content. Such changes in the

production of journalism made the comparison between Russian news and translated foreign news unnecessary because capitalist globalization and the ubiquitous penetration of the world's largest media corporations made journalistic practice highly dependent on the same sources of information. Pablo J. Boczkowski and Martin de Santos (2007) have raised the issue of news content homogeneity. They looked at patterns of content homogenization in Argentina's leading print and online newspapers, where the majority of produced news appeared to be uniform in both subject and message. Boczkowski and Santos also suggest that content homogenization was tied to an intensification of monitoring other media as well as heavy reliance on wire services and international media organizations (177). Similar concerns have been raised by Steven Ellis (2011)—press freedom adviser at the International Press Institute (IPI)[1]—who has suggested that the amalgamation of news sources around the world could endanger journalism in a way that news would become homogeneous and would therefore limit peoples' ability to get diverse information and stay adequately informed. The consequence of fewer original news producers will result in a much narrower content dependent on a small pool of sources. In the online media sphere, this tendency would result in an increased number of news outlets chasing a diminishing number of credible original sources. For Ellis, reasons for news homogenization are straightforward: the closing of foreign bureaus due to money shortage and the uniform flow of information coming from the same news agencies. The findings of my research yield similar results. Translated foreign news resembles news produced by Russian media due to having similar international sources of information. Nonetheless while the homogenization of online news happens at the level

[1] The International Press Institute (IPI) is a global organization with headquarters in Austria that promotes and protects press freedom and the improvement of journalism practices.

of production and dissemination, this might not be the case for the stage of news consumption.

My findings illustrate that audiences persistently challenge the processes of knowledge dissemination through news translation. The interviews with the editors and translators show that the audience for translated news is diverse in its perception of foreign sources. Three groups of the readership were highlighted: those who undoubtedly rely on Western sources of information, those who do not trust foreign media at all, and those somewhere in between, who consider translated news with some degree of criticism. Based on the research sample, it was also possible to distinguish certain attitudes toward foreign news. This included criticism towards the West and the idea of democracy, the discussion of Russia in relation to foreign events, and preconceived notions about the nature of foreign news coverage of Russia. Foreign news content was persistently reinterpreted and adapted so as to sound familiar and understandable to the reader. The final section of the "Findings" sections shows that the readers were surprised to see a foreign article that praised the Russian government and criticized the Western depiction of it. They were discouraged by the "normality" and "plausibility" of the text because the message of this news did not (as usual) confront their ideological and political beliefs. The interpretation was built on the basis of the *foreignness* of the article and not on its factual content. The readers tended to distinguish between differently sourced information, even if this information was factually similar. Apparently, what mattered in translated news was not the content, but the fact that the *foreign* perspective existed in a local setting, rendering an online space for a heated exchange of opinions.

If this is the case on a larger scale, then translated articles, homogeneous at the stage of production, receive rather heterogeneous readings at the stage of consumption by the local audiences. This phenomenon is often called hybridization (or glocalization) of media (Roudometof, Straubhaar 2007, Mooney and Evans 2007, Reese 2010). As was mentioned above, glocalization is a global change that is constantly adapted into existing ways of local perception (Straubhaar 2007). This perception is shaped by "a historical process in which existing local forces mix with new global ones, producing neither global homogenization nor authentic local culture, but a complex new hybrid with multiple layers of culture" (6). Straubhaar continues, arguing that glocalization is neither "a resistance to rejoice about nor a loss of identity to despair about, but a complex contradiction of both continuity and change" (Ibid.). This might be the case for some countries. The findings of my research illustrate that in the case of Russia, glocalization results in more resistance from audiences than in the deformation of identity because greater number of readers oppose everything that they perceive as being foreign. In this framework, knowledge dissemination is challenged by the unwillingness to accept the Other. To think about knowledge dissemination through news translation thus means to accept all of the different implications that this practice might have on the local readership. In this regard, Held writes that:

> The globalization of communications does not just make it easier to establish mutual understanding, but often highlights what it is that people do not have in common and how and why differences matter. … Ethnic self-centeredness, right-wing nationalism and unilateralist politics are once again on the rise, and not just in the West. (2003: 479)

The findings of my research illustrate a paradox: the dissemination of information not only educates the reader, but also reinforces pre-existing beliefs and opinions. While

the above sections present some evidence for the homogenization of news flows at the level of production, at the level of consumption the same news can fuel nationalistic and ethnocentric attitudes. In this framework, it is problematic to address news translation and media globalization as purely homogeneous practices. When homogeneous coverage, consisting of foreign news and news produced by local reporters, is perceived by the audience and editors as a heterogeneous flow of information, the concept of globalization reveals its ambiguous complexity. This dichotomy is well addressed by Robertson (1992), who states that the essence of globalization, or glocalization, is the coexistence of homogeneous and heterogeneous spheres, driven by the "universalization of particularism" and the "particularlization of universalism." Robertson prefers to use the term glocalization because he believes in the inter-penetration of the universal (global) and the particular (local). In the case of my thesis, universalization of particularism introduces us to the issue of worldwide news homogenization, whereas nationalistic reading of the translated news is one of the manifestations of the particularization of universalism. These two processes are heavily intertwined and in both cases the concept of globalization reveals itself in a more material form.

5.2. Limitations of the research

Although my research has reached its aims, there were some unavoidable limitations. First, because of time constraints the research centered on the examination of media outlets from only one city: Moscow. However, this is not a large limitation in terms of my analysis of audience, because the feedback came from readers across Russia and the globe. In this setting, the study of additional regional media outlets could yield

different results, where the translation of online news could have varied implications on its readership and on the process of globalization in general. Similarly, since Russia is not representative of every country with a system of semi-democratic governance, the results are limited geographically and thus further research from other countries is needed to complement the findings. Moreover, the decision to study online media outlets exclusively constrains the generalization of results for defining media globalization. A comparative study of print, TV, radio, and digital media could more fully illuminate the relationship between journalism and globalization. Overall, to generalize the results for larger groups, the study should have involved more diverse media outlets that practice news translation at different levels.

Second, the study of translated news audiences was limited methodologically and quantitatively. Since the assessment of the readership was approached through statistical software, the interviews with the editors and translators, and the evaluation of online comments, studying audiences by interviewing them could be regarded as a more comprehensive approach. In addition, evaluating how much time is spent on reading translated news in relation to other media channels could enhance insights into audiences' preferences and consumption habits. Comparing audiences between offline and online domestic media and translated foreign news could also bear some degree of clarification as to what impact journalism globalization has on local cultures. As well, the methods of ethnography, surveys, and experiments could represent additional insights into the practices of news translation and knowledge dissemination. Importantly, the abovementioned limitations have resulted in uncertainty regarding the interpretation of some of the users' feedback. Thus in the instances indicated, the interpretations provided

are necessarily tentative. Moreover, the findings illustrate that the method of source comparison among different news providers is a limited technique due to the centralization of news production and occasional inability to establish the original source of Russian news.

Third, the choice to study globalization processes from a journalistic perspective imposed limitations on the ability to generalize the phenomenon in a way that globalization could be subjected to other interpretations based on the chosen field of research. Such approaches include the study of globalization through political economy, social and cultural aspects of global integration, as well as the study of globalization through history. Since this research has illustrated the dual implication for media globalization, where global forces often encounter some degree of national resistance, a cultural study of globalization could possibly prove the opposite. In addition, this research, while providing a vivid depiction of today's online media activity, fails to measure up the historical implications of media globalization; thus research in this area is also needed.

Since the assessment of the existing online media and the selection of online news items were conducted by the author herself, it is unavoidable that in this study, a certain degree of subjectivity can be found. In fact, the studies' results would have been more objective if two or more examiners had conducted the research. Readers are thereby advised to consider the background of the researcher when evaluating the reported data and its discussion.

5.3. Suggestions for future research

This study improved the understanding of the concept of globalization from a journalistic point of view in that it takes into account the practice of online news translation. The research reviewed has demonstrated correlations between online news dissemination at the international level, news distribution at the local level, and the final stage of news interpretation where the Internet audience creates meaning. There remain, however, some quantitative and qualitative gaps in the depiction of news readership because only a limited number of sources were studied. It would be useful to expand the readership sample to include an examination of international online readership of translated news. For example, the study of translated news and its audiences in the Middle East and Latin America would likely yield interesting results with further implications for the globalization of journalism in countries with a restricted flow of information or constrained freedom of the press. It is worthwhile to look at what level translated news in these countries alters the local/national/international coverage and whether translated news represents a dissimilar depiction of news events to that already presented by the domestic media. Furthermore, it is important to establish the relationship between translation practices in online and offline media where the aims and strategies can substantially vary. To illustrate, the comparison between the translation practices of a news agency and online media translation can better clarify the concept of media globalization and show whether the homogenization of news and hybridization of meanings happen across all media.

Another gap and therefore potential object of investigation that emerged in the findings was the issue of nationalism and xenophobia in the process of media

globalization and knowledge dissemination. A rather unexpected conclusion of this study, the translated news' potential to trigger nationalistic attitudes, opens up a large venue for exploration. Expanding the research on the role of nationalism for media globalization will thus shed light on possible venues for the improvement of journalistic practices. This could be especially helpful for societies where nationalistic movements evolve and become xenophobic, lead to distress in the societal order. To illustrate, the study of news translation in countries such as North Korea, Pakistan, France, Slovenia, and others can potentially explain the relationship between the integration of foreign media and the highly nationalistic attitudes of the citizens of these countries. Most importantly, this examination could reveal the implications of foreign media integration for the future development of these nations.[1]

5.4. Conclusions

The significance of my findings will be discussed here in two contexts. First of all, an important contribution was made to the interdisciplinary field of media, translation, and the Internet. The achievement of such an aim allowed for a better understanding of the interaction between these fields of research. Second of all, the examination of online news translation was instrumental in defining the concept of media globalization. This was important because understanding the factors that influence the global process of news dissemination can shed light on some of the useful approaches for the improvement of journalistic practices in future. This contribution will be addressed at the end of this section.

[1] To read about xenophobia in different countries, see Baumgartl and Favell 1995, and Jureidini 2003.

Analyzing the literature in these fields, I was able to situate points where each of the discussed subjects intersects. The first and most evident intersection was that journalism, translation, and the Internet all represent a means of information dissemination. News presents us with the information about local and global events, translated texts introduce us the foreign cultural product, whereas the Internet is known for providing tools for information distribution and giving access to the most remote parts of the world. My research showed that when combined together, these tools of information dissemination could be a powerful, accessible, and boundless source of knowledge. Nonetheless, the existence of this source does not necessarily lead to increased awareness among the readers who were examined earlier in the thesis. In my research, it rarely creates a rational discussion, and neither does it result in the ability to make informed choices from among alternatives (Hutchinson and Huberman 1994). Possibly, the future analysis of how information is interpreted by audiences in different countries will explain why this is the case. My thesis raises the important issue of resistance to certain information, and within it the knowledge delivered through foreign news. This information dissemination is ineffective in a way that it does not contribute to the expansion of worldviews, but simply reinforces pre-existing beliefs and opinions. Divides are growing, and when faced with foreign products, nations often detach in protest. The globalization of information can become, in reality, a separating force that illuminates "what it is that people do not have in common and how and why differences matter" (Held 2003: 479).

The question that is yet to be answered is: what are the causes of such mistrust and differentiation? My research has illustrated that in many cases, "foreign" implies written

in English language or produced in the West. Receiving knowledge from the dominating power may, in reality, entail resistance and mistrust. The examination of Russian media has shown that in this particular case, resistance is directed towards the dominant Other, because, as one of the commenters noted, Russia's deep commitment to its greatness and power is still very strong. When this commitment is challenged, Russian readers often reject foreign information as propaganda or deception. The dominance of Western powers and the English language, another cross-point of this thesis, is perhaps the most evident preoccupation for media, Internet, and translation scholars. The concern comes from the fact that the majority of sources of information originate in English, resulting in unequal power distribution in the world. This issue is addressed in my thesis as the concept of cultural imperialism (Cottle 2009, Dor 2004, Bielsa and Bassnett 2009, Alexander 2004). The abundance of news from English media and news agencies, the excess of literature translated from English, and the large number of English websites all illustrate the English information overload. My research has shown that news translated on the Internet is subjected to such influence due to at least three constraints: the lack of "interesting" news in non-English media, the lack of professional translators from languages other than English, and the lack of knowledge about non-English websites that produce news. However, there is hope that this situation will change in the future, with different languages being equalized. With this anticipation, Phillipson (2003) argues that more and more languages are used on the Internet, including demographically small ones, and that the status of English may well be challenged in the future.

One of the reasons why this challenge may occur in the future is the rate of technological development of media and the unpredictable outcomes of this process.

Reese (2010) writes that journalism has changed under the influence of technological development, resulting in the creation of a new hybrid version of it. It is similarly evident that translation and the Internet went through a number of changes under the development of recent technologies. The creation of online translation tools allowed people to access previously inaccessible information. Technological developments have resulted in the creation of computer software that now facilitates human translation. In terms of World Wide Web, new technologies have allowed for the creation of online markets, digital media, social networks, entertainment spaces, and business domains. Taken together, the technological evolution brought the existing means of information dissemination to a new level. My research suggests that technology allows more and more individuals to participate in the dissemination of knowledge. Those who decide to take upon this undertaking are given tools to make news in inventive new ways. This thesis illustrates that translating foreign news on the Internet is one of these approaches. It is, however, difficult to predict in what direction the technological evolution will challenge (or reinforce) the cultural imperialism paradigm and, more importantly, the dominance of the English language; as well, it is too soon to conclude how media will develop under these circumstances. Nonetheless, the research on how globalization impacts journalism may answer some of these questions. My thesis in particular might be a useful springboard for a discussion of the future of media.

As I said earlier, the examination of news translating was instrumental in defining the concept of media globalization. News, the Internet, and translation, in the case of my research, underwent the process of global distribution and then were locally adapted. Each of them served as a key mediator between the global and the local. Research into

media globalization, which has typically viewed the topic of journalistic translation as comparatively minor, can now be enhanced by the findings of my thesis that prove translation is an important mediator between global and local forces. Moreover, understanding news' dual implications to homogenize information and diversify its interpretations provides us with the necessary tools for understanding glocalization processes. For this reason, Bielsa (2009) argued that translation represents a complex process heavily influenced by market needs and demands, and is meant to adapt a text or a product to the locality where it is reproduced. Suyadnya (2009), too, has argued that understanding media globalization means not only understanding it from a global cultural perspective but also from a local cultural perspective. Norris (2001), and Williams and Copes (2005) have written that online websites with expected international reach and access, can be still heavily defined by their geographical boundaries. Understanding that the most global medium—the Internet—in practice is subjected to national regulations, influenced by local cultures, and is limited ethnically and linguistically, means that the media is as much global as it is local.

Overall, understanding the factors that influence production, dissemination, and consumption of journalistic products on the Internet may provide us with some insights that are useful for the improvement of journalistic practices subjected to rapid change in the globalized economy. In the literature review, I quoted Reese as saying "if 'global' means giving 'dialogic' voices a chance to speak to each other without reproducing national ethnocentrism, then the world's media still fail to measure up" (2010: 346). My research has shown that translated online news, too, fails to measure up because so often the global penetration of news encounters rejection from local audiences. The lack of

"dialogic" voices at the global level means that the media are not ready yet to connect and introduce to each other different nations and societies. On the other hand, my results suggest that examining audiences' responses to foreign media is a fruitful approach to studying the limitations of cultural globalization. The information obtained in such an approach is useful for the further exploration of limitations imposed by audiences on the expansion of knowledge. Answering these questions will help us in understanding the forthcoming forms of communications. Acknowledging that there is a gap in this area of research that needs to be bridged, I expect my thesis in part fulfills this role.

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