

**Marie Franzos' (1870–1941) extratextual translatorship.
Archives and *biographies croisées***

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Abstract

Despite the increased attention in translator archives in recent years, studies based on archival sources in Translation Studies have generally focused on male writers who occasionally translated. The present article investigates the extratextual translatorship of the Austrian translator Marie Franzos (1870–1941), who dedicated over forty years to introducing Swedish writers to a German-speaking readership. In this paper, the combination of the multi-perspective approach of *biographies croisées* (Großmann, 2014) and the method of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) is tested on over 1,700 letters collected from several European archives. The correspondence sheds light on Franzos' outstanding contribution to cultural exchanges between Sweden and German-speaking countries and gives visibility to the working dynamics of a woman translator and her authors. The results show that *biographies croisées* and thematic analysis are productive to identify patterns of interactions between a translator and her authors. The tested approach addresses the limitations of traditional biographies by incorporating multiple viewpoints on one biographical subject. However, while patterns are useful to identify broader trends, they do not capture single biographical details. For this reason, a combination of traditional biography with *biographies croisées* is suggested for future research.

Keywords

Translator history, translator archives, *biographies croisées*, correspondence, female translators

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1. Introduction

In the past decade, reflections on the importance of archival material for Translation History (TH) have increased substantially with the so-called “archival turn” (e.g., Cordingley & Hersant, 2021; Woods, 2022; Zanotti, 2023). Although translation has usually been seen as a female activity (e.g., Dam & Koskinen, 2016), studies based on archival sources have mostly focused on famous—generally male—writers who occasionally translated, due to the priority given to preserving their estates (cf. Cordingley & Hersant, 2021, p. 18; Nunes *et al.*, 2021, pp. 8-9; Cordingley, 2022, p. 124). In fact, the papers of translators who worked solely with translation are rarely found in archives (cf. Cordingley & Montini, 2015, p. 7; Pickford, 2021; Svahn 2025). In this context, the over 3,500 extant letters addressed to the Austrian translator of Jewish heritage Marie Franzos (1870-1941) in her estate represent a notable exception. These papers are complemented by Franzos’ letters in several author and publisher archives, amounting to a total of around 5,000 letters.

The aim of the present paper is to contribute to knowledge on Franzos’ extratextual translatorship through the multiple perspectives allowed by *biographies croisées* (Großmann, 2014). My understanding of extratextual translatorship builds on Svahn’s (2020) definition as “a translator’s social role”. In the present article, correspondence—a type of epitext that can be paratextual if it discloses information on a text (Genette, 1997, p. 346)—is seen as a means to investigate Franzos’ actions and interactions with authors and other agents beyond reflections on the translated texts. The term extratextual translatorship is employed to specify the particular dimension of translatorship under examination. It serves to clearly characterize this study as socio-historical, in contrast to investigations using the same kind of epitexts to explore paratextual translatorship. Unlike traditional biographies, *biographies croisées* capture the dynamics of several biographical subjects. The reciprocal effects of their life-crossing are investigated, adding a multi-perspective dimension to traditional biography writing (Großmann, 2014, p. 30). Thus, archival sources not only shed light on Franzos’ exceptional contribution to cultural exchanges between Sweden and German-speaking countries but also give visibility to the working dynamics of a woman translator and her authors in the years around 1900. Completely forgotten today beyond her translations – still in print – Franzos worked exclusively as a translator for over forty years (1895–1940).

The study of Franzos’ extratextual translatorship through *biographies croisées* makes visible the construction of her social role and how it was shaped by her epistolary exchanges with authors, editors, and publishers (cf. Munday, 2014, p. 77; Kujamäki, 2018, p. 247). I propose that thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013) can complement *biographies croisées* in cases of abundant correspondence and overcome the impasse of the lack of an established systematic methodology for archive-based TH (cf. Paloposki, 2017, p. 33; Woods, 2022, p. 326).

This article presents the results of the deductive thematic analysis of letters to and from Marie Franzos during the period 1894–1932, guided by Kremmel’s (2021) categories for biographical studies on translators with correspondence as a source. First, I discuss the proposed approach in contrast to traditional biographical writing. I then introduce the materials and methods. After presenting the results, I discuss the advantages and limitations of *biographies croisées* combined with thematic analysis to explore extratextual translatorship.

2. *Biographies croisées* and Biography Studies

Since Venuti’s (1995) call to increase the visibility of translators, interest in the human agents behind translated texts has grown in Translation Studies (TS). Chesterman’s (2009) call for Translator Studies put this subdiscipline officially on the map and the edited volume (*Literary Translator Studies* (Kaindl *et al.*, 2021) consolidated it as an emerging field. Within German-

speaking academia, this trend stimulated reflections on translator biographies. Makarska (2014) advocates for the importance of translator biographies and proposes a model comprising the categories: language biography and topobiography, networks, (self)representation, and translator biography. In a later article, Makarska (2016) amends her model excluding (self) representation and translator biography and including language, translation criticism and context instead. While comprehensive theoretical or methodological considerations are not developed, applied examples are provided. Eberharter (2018, 2021) adds a Bourdieusian framework to Makarska's model to study 19th-century Polish translators, focusing on biographical data, their pathway to translating, and the translator's oeuvre to determine what translatorial image was built. Kremmel (2021) presents an English summary (geo biography, language biography, networks, and working conditions) of the model proposed in German by Makarska, Eberharter, and in the guidelines (who, what, why, how) for the German translator dictionary *Germersheimer Übersetzerlexikon* (UeLEX) and applies them to correspondence. In the present paper, the categories proposed by Kremmel are tested as the starting point for the deductive thematic analysis.

Contrary to the Anglophone tradition of socio-politically engaged Life Writing, Biography Studies normally rely on methods developed in the discipline of History (cf. De Haan & Renders, 2014, p. 14). Biography scholars such as Klein (2009) and Fetz (2009) have attempted to systematize biographical research with publications that focus on the history and theory of biography, with the aim to create exhaustive typologies of biographical forms and approaches, while foregrounding the ethical, literary, and formal implications of biographical practice – yet translators are notably absent (cf. De Haan & Renders, 2014, p. 13). According to De Haan and Renders (2014, p. 16), the interdisciplinarity of biography comes to light not only in the attention it has received within different academic disciplines but also in its diverse biographical subjects. Consequently, I propose that TS develops its own research methodology based on the specific needs of biographical studies of translators. The present paper represents a first step in this direction by testing the combination of *biographies croisées* and thematic analysis. *Biographies croisées* (Großmann, 2014) were developed from *histoire croisée* (Werner & Zimmermann, 2006), focused on the study of interactions, relationships, and the circulation of intersecting transnational research objects. Großmann (2014, p. 29) problematizes the potential infinite number of such interactions and proposes *biographies croisées* to limit the scope of *histoire croisée*. *Biographies croisées* are an analysis model for group biographical studies that consider several subjects and their relationships as constantly evolving interwoven connections (Großmann, 2014, pp. 30-31). Therefore, *biographies croisées* add multiple perspectives – i.e., in the present case that of the translator, of one or several authors, or different aspects of translatorship – to the contextualization typical for biography studies. This multiplicity allows for a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the analyzed relationships, connections, and consequences on their historical context.

The only example of *biographies croisées* in TS today is Kaindl's (2017) study of a German female interpreter during the Nazi regime. In contrast to Großmann, Kaindl focuses on one subject—through a singular *biographie croisée*—and investigates how personal encounters influenced the interpreter's self-image and actions. To overcome Kaindl's exclusive focus on the subject's own views and implicit implementation of the analysis method, in the present article, I test the application of Großmann's multi-perspective *biographies croisées* combined with thematic analysis based on Kremmel's categories for correspondence-based translator biographies.

3. Materials and Methods

To reconstruct Franzos' extratextual translatorship through *biographies croisées*, I conducted a thematic analysis of selected letters. I limited the investigation to epistolary exchanges with authors that lasted at least 10 years for the timeframe 1894–1932: from Franzos' first published translation until Hitler's rise to power curtailed her career due to her Jewish heritage. These selection criteria led to the inclusion of epistolary exchanges between Franzos and the Swedish authors Fredrik Böök, August Brunius, Anna Lenah Elgström, Karl-Erik Forsslund, Per Hallström, Hjalmar and Stina Bergman, Ellen Key, Selma Lagerlöf, John Landquist, Sven Lönborg, Bertil Malmberg, Birger Mörner, Sigfrid Siwertz, Hjalmar Söderberg, and Hedvig Svedenborg. The composition of the sample reflects Franzos' main area of work: Swedish literature. For a more complete portrait, I added Franzos' early letters to the Austrian editor Auguste Fickert and the Danish authors Niels Møller, Peter Nansen, and Viggo Stuckenborg, for a total of 1,762 letters in German, Swedish, and Danish (Appendix). The thematic analysis was conducted on the transcripts in their original languages and selected excerpts for quotation were translated into English by the author after the analysis.

Thematic analysis is defined by Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 79) as “a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. Its qualitative nature compels reflections on the subjectivity of the analyzed correspondence and of the analysis itself (cf. Braun & Clarke, 2013, pp. 23-24). The thematic analysis of the manually transcribed letters was conducted in the software NVivo. I approached the material deductively, searching for information on Franzos' “language biography”, “networks”, “translatorial identity/image”, and “working conditions” (Kremmel, 2021, pp. 162-165). Instead of considering the writing language, its changes, and the proficiency it displays (cf. Kremmel, 2021, p. 162), language biography was investigated to discover more on Franzos' language acquisition, educational, and literary background to pinpoint how they contributed to her translatorial choices. Networks were approached not to examine the size of the network, nor the influence of the style and frequency of the correspondence on Franzos' relationships (cf. Kremmel, 2021, p. 162), but rather to assess the function of the networks in Franzos' work. For translatorial identity/image, I focused on Franzos' identity-building process but also on the image that she transmitted to her clients and their responses to her self-representations, with particular attention to “comments or reflections on the practice by the translator or by others” (Kremmel, 2021, p. 164). Working conditions were explored through relevant statements and comments referring to the situation in the literary market (cf. Kremmel, 2021, p. 163). After the deductive stage, I identified patterns within the data to generate themes and subthemes inductively.

4. Results

The results are presented following the deductive categories applied in the first phase of the analysis. The inductive themes identified in the second stage are connected to their deductive categories and contextualized through relevant quotes in my translation. A schematic representation of categories, themes and subthemes is available in Figure 1.

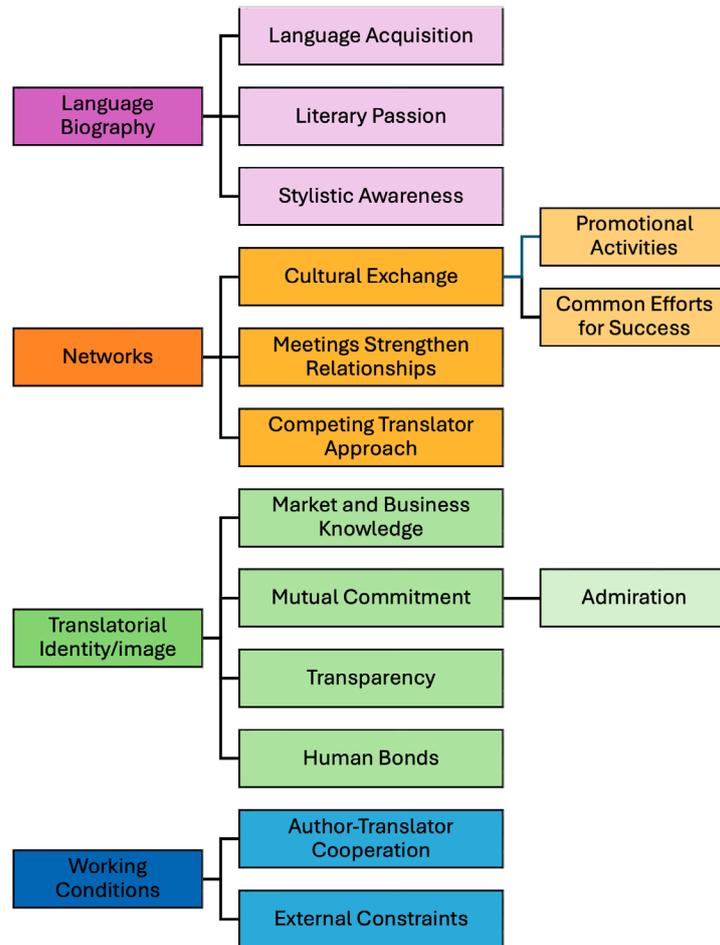


Figure 1. Themes and subthemes of the thematic analysis divided per category

4.1. Language Biography

Although some information about Franzos is available, it is limited to brief biographical entries. Very little is known about her education. Blumesberger (2006) provides a brief account based on previous biographical entries. However, this non-academic publication reproduces previous inaccuracies. More detailed investigations easily disprove the claims in secondary sources contemporary to Franzos. Although letters are partial and can never contain the whole truth about the subjects involved (Tamboukou, 2020, p. 158), as primary sources, they can contain previously unknown information that – if approached critically – can help rectify misinterpretations.

The themes identified for Language Biography are **Language Acquisition**, **Literary Passion**, and **Stylistic Awareness**¹. Franzos' early letters to Scandinavian authors are in Danish/Swedish, but since German was generally understood by educated elites, long-lasting epistolary exchanges usually evolve into each writer using their native language. This means that Franzos writes in German and the authors in Swedish. In fact, some writers apologize for not replying in German, presenting this as their own shortcoming while highlighting Franzos' fluent understanding of their native language (e.g., H. Svedenborg to Franzos, November 1, 1912). When writing in Swedish, Franzos often apologizes for her language level, stating e.g., "I have never seen a Swedish grammar and live only of my reading reminiscences" (Franzos to E. Key, March 21,

¹ Henceforth, Categories are capitalized, **themes** bolded and *subthemes* italicized.

1896). Her speaking skills improve thanks to Ellen Key (1849–1926) personally teaching her Swedish sounds and suggesting conversation lessons (Franzos to E. Key, March 20, 1899). In her letters, Key reassures Franzos by repeatedly praising her skills and commenting: “she writes Norwegian like a native” (E. Key to G. af Geijerstam, July 25, 1895). Generally, Swedish authors display a positive perception of Franzos’ mastery of her source language, yet her skills in the target language are questioned on a few occasions by German publishers. To defend herself, Franzos mentions that she studied German language and stylistics between the ages of 12 and 17 with Seligmann Heller (1831–1890), a well-known and demanding academic who praised her fine linguistic grasp (Franzos to S. Lagerlöf, September 11, 1925). Furthermore, she claims to have learned Italian, Spanish, and Danish autodidactically in a few weeks thanks to her “innate sensitivity to language forms and sentence structures” that also allowed her – based only on her school studies of French – to write short articles in this language published without corrections in a French newspaper (Franzos to E. Key, August 11, 1903)².

In her letters to potential new clients in 1895, Franzos introduces herself as a translator from French, English, Spanish, Danish and Swedish³. Over time, in similar introductory letters, she refers only to the famous Swedish authors that she published successfully, indicating her established position and main working language (**Market and Business Knowledge**, Translational Identity/Image). Some of Franzos’ letters in German have elements in French, Italian, English, and Swedish, demonstrating her familiarity with these languages.

For Franzos, languages are tightly connected with literature. This emerges clearly from the literary references in her letters but also from her constant interest in broadening her literary horizons. In fact, the second theme identified is **Literary Passion**. Through her network of contacts within the Swedish literary field, Franzos is able to discover literary novelties of potential personal and/or professional interest. She recommends German-speaking literature, creating a platform for literary and cultural exchanges (**Cultural Exchange**, Networks). For instance, Franzos recommends the German writers Fritz Reuter (1810–1874) and Thomas Mann (1875–1955) to Per Hallström (1866–1960) and Hallström gives her updates on emerging Swedish talents e.g., Sigfrid Siwertz (1882–1970) and Anders Österling (1884–1981). Furthermore, Franzos exchanges several books with Key and Key gives her recommendations on Swedish authors e.g., Oscar Levertin (1862–1906), Hilma Angered-Strandberg (1855–1927), Gabrielle Ringertz (1863–1945), Hjalmar Bergman (1883–1931), Sigfrid Siwertz, and Ludvig Nordström (1882–1942). To Selma Lagerlöf (1858–1940), Franzos suggests the women’s movement activists Gabriele Reuter (1859–1941) and Hedwig Dohm (1831–1919), and the writer Ricarda Huch (1864–1947).

Literature plays an important role in Franzos’ life from childhood: “I immersed myself with delight in the masterpieces of Dickens” (Franzos to F. Böök, October 12, 1927). In her teenage years, she “virtually lived in this book [*Little Women*] and the others *Little Women wedded*, *Little Men*, *An old-fashioned Girl*” (Franzos to S. Bergman, March 7, 1935). When she comments on the books that she is translating to their respective authors, she often repeats that she lives immersed in their world and is extremely grateful for their intellectual enrichment. According to Key, Franzos’ mother believes that translating Key and other Swedish authors gave her daughter the support that she needed after her father’s death (E. Key to L. Hultin-Petterson, June 14, 1901). Franzos confirms this by stating: “For years my readings, my intellectual life

² I could find published translations in all the mentioned languages except Italian. Although the name of the French publication is not mentioned, I found a piece by Francis Maro in the French magazine *L’aube*, 1 April 1896. <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k1425914c/f305.image.r=%22francis%20maro%22>.

³ I have not identified translations from French, yet Franzos wrote in French to the Spanish author Benito Pérez Galdós (1843–1920).

altogether, were entrusted to your guidance completely” (Franzos to E. Key, December 11, 1919). Her intimate connection to literature is exemplified by her experience with Hjalmar Bergman’s works: “I have immersed myself so deeply in the world of his writings, and I admire his genius so greatly” (Franzos to S. Bergman, January 5, 1931), also coded for **Admiration (Mutual Commitment, Translatorial Identity/Image)**.

Franzos’ love for languages and literature are combined in her work. In fact, her enthusiastic judgement on the texts—and the authors—that she translates makes it clear that she follows her own literary standards and intuition in her selection (cf. Lengefeld, 1994, p. 181). When she reports on the readings of the source texts (ST), the words “pleasure” (*Genuss*), “joy” (*Freude*), “delightful” (*entzückend*), and “wonderful” (*wunderbar*) recur. To undertake a translation, she has to feel a connection to the ST.

I believe that due to my own disposition, I am able to fully grasp the underlying tone of everything you write; I always feel as if my whole being resonates with it, and so I truly long to have the opportunity to attempt to emulate your prose works – as for the wonderful verses, I would never dare to attempt that. (Franzos to B. Malmberg, December 5, 1935)

The quote shows not only the personal reason for this translation choice but also a clear sense of the author’s style and awareness of Franzos’ limits for poetry translation. Therefore, it was also coded for **Stylistic Awareness**. This emerges clearly in a comment on an article by the Norwegian writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson (1832–1910). Franzos writes that if “it is somewhat vague and elusive in its expression – this is solely due to the original, and the translation can only replicate it, not clarify or add to it” (Franzos to A. Fickert, undated, Donnerstag). The quotes in this passage also clarify Franzos’ view of her translatorial identity/image. When a translation is criticized for the frequent use of the *dass*-construction, she rebuts:

[T]his construction is characteristic of Selma Lagerlöf’s style, and it is the translator’s task to faithfully reproduce the author’s unique diction (especially in a closely related language!), not to replace their individual manner of expression with an uncharacteristic, colorless, generic style. (Franzos to S. Lagerlöf, copy of a letter to A. Langen, February 28, 1916)

The accusation of using Austrian German instead of standard German put forward by Lagerlöf’s publisher Langen is counteracted by showing stylistic awareness: “Perhaps, the provincialisms refer to the way of speaking of the Baner people – this was of course intentional” (Franzos to Lagerlöf, September 11, 1925). This awareness of linguistic variations is reinforced in the correspondence when typically Austrian terms are highlighted e.g., “The *Weihnachtsmann* [Father Christmas] comes to our children in Northern Germany, the *Christkind* [Christ Child] in Southern Germany (here called *Christkindl*)” (Franzos to S. Bergman, January 10, 1928). Similarly, the reflections voiced for the translation of particularly difficult terms confirm that Franzos made well-considered lexical choices.

4.2. Networks

Networks are fundamental for Franzos’ work. Her connections to the source culture are needed to expand her literary and business horizons, and her contacts in the target culture are pivotal to introducing Swedish authors to the German-speaking literary market. This mutually beneficial pattern is captured in the theme **Cultural Exchange**. Through Franzos’ Swedish network, Austrian requests are fulfilled, and her Viennese network is used to help Swedish writers. For instance, she is approached for information on the Austrian architect Adolf Loos (1870–1933) and the writer Arthur Schnitzler (1862–1931) (A. Brunius to Franzos). Franzos facilitates encounters between the Austrian poet Hugo von Hofmannsthal (1874–1929), the Austrian

philanthropist Eugenie Schwarzwald (1872–1940) and Hallström. Furthermore, Franzos is close to the Swedish association *Rädda Barnen* (Save the Children) helping Austrian youths after World War I, and manages to involve Lagerlöf in a publication in honor of the Austrian feminist Rosa Mayreder (1858–1938) (Franzos to S. Lagerlöf, May 6, 1928). Additionally, she promotes the relationship between the philosophers Carl Dallago (1869–1949) and Sven Lönborg (1871–1959) in the hope of introducing the former to Sweden (S. Lönborg to Franzos, September 6, 1921). Franzos also sends notes to the Austrian press to commemorate anniversaries of Swedish authors and organizes lectures to support Swedish literature.

The subtheme *Promotional Activities* gathers codes concerned with Franzos' use of her network to sponsor her translatorial work and thus the Austro-Swedish cultural exchange. For instance, she inquires if the literary critic Fredrik Böök (1883–1961) can publish a note with her most recent translations in the newspaper *Svenska Dagbladet* (Franzos to F. Böök, June 4, 1912). Similarly, she recommends that the first issue of the women's magazine *Dokumente der Frauen* containing essays by Scandinavian writers be sent to influential women in Vienna (Franzos to A. Fickert, undated, Freitag).

Franzos often tries to support her authors by translating and marketing reviews or essays on their work written by other Swedish writers. For example, she publishes essays by Levertin and Key on Lagerlöf, by Böök and Levertin on Hallström, by John Landquist (1881–1964) on Key, and by Alf Nyman (1884–1968) on Lönborg. For the same purpose, she also sends her translated books to literary critics for press reviews.

Thanks to Key's introduction to the Swedish journalists Karin Jensen (1866–1928) and Ragnar Fehr (1880–1915), interviews with Franzos appear in *Idun* (1902) and *Göteborgs Handels- och Sjöfarts-Tidning* (1904) respectively. Thus, Franzos is presented to the Swedish readership. Upon her wish and thanks to the intercession of two of her writers, Count Birger Mörner (1867–1930) and Key, Franzos is received by the Swedish king Oscar II (1829–1907).

Through their respective networks, Franzos and her authors promote each other's work. For instance, Key puts Franzos in contact with Lagerlöf and Geijerstam; Lagerlöf introduces Franzos to Sophie Elkan (1853–1921); Hedvig Svedenborg (1872–1962) is Franzos' link to Johannes Buchholtz (1882–1940); and Hallström connects her with Böök. All these connections lead to translations and – for the most part – publications. In some cases, through her authors, Franzos also gets the translation rights to books by other writers. Franzos arranges for the Bergmans to meet Stefan Zweig's (1881–1942) wife Friderike (1882–1971) in Salzburg (S. Bergman to Franzos, January 9, 1922). When her authors are in Austria, Franzos introduces them to her literary circles, giving them access to part of the German-speaking cultural elite.

The subtheme *Common Efforts for Success* reflects the cooperative pattern in the use of the authors' and translator's networks for positive outcomes. All authors cooperate with Franzos to different degrees to find favorable publishing opportunities. Some recommend who to contact and let her manage the negotiations while others meet publishers and promote Franzos as their translator. This cooperation pattern is particularly strong with Stina Bergman who works relentlessly for her husband Hjalmar in Germany. She is in contact with publishers, radio stations, film producers, theater directors and agencies. While Franzos attempts to find outlets through her network e.g., the director of a Viennese theater and of a radio station (e.g., Franzos to S. Bergman, November 2, 1928), Bergman is in contact with the film production company UFA and the radio station *Deutsche Welle*, and instructs Franzos on where to send her translations.

Meetings Strengthen Relationships is concerned with the constant mention from both correspondence sides of a wish for an encounter. When meetings do not occur, disappointment

is voiced e.g., “I was sincerely sorry that your journey did not lead you to Grundlsee” (Franzos to S. Lönborg, November 7, 1922). After successful encounters, thankful and affectionate words are written. Anna Lenah Elgström (1884–1968) is grateful for Franzos’ “kind trouble for helping me with my German!” (A. L. Elgström to Franzos, July 8, 1926). Siwertz sends “Heartfelt thanks for the exceptionally kind reception you gave us” (S. Siwertz to Franzos, April 20, 1911). Stina Bergman remembers a

delightful day in Torbole. We had such a wonderful time, and I admire and envy your perfect skill in the difficult art of being a hostess. I hope that I will soon have the opportunity to show you and your dear mother what I can do in that regard. (S. Bergman to Franzos, undated [between 15 and 23 September 1910])

In the cases of Siwertz and Bergman, Franzos, accompanied by her mother, also meets the writers’ wives. Consequently, the private and professional sphere are tightly intertwined. Svedenborg cannot meet Franzos but her friends travel to Vienna and a gathering is arranged: “it is lovely that you got to meet” (H. Svedenborg to Franzos, April 13, 1930).

The last theme concerned with Networks is **Competing Translator Approach**. The mentions of other contemporary translators in the letters reveal that they have the same approach as Franzos to acquiring clients i.e., by correspondence. In most cases, Franzos is eager to secure or maintain translation rights e.g., “I deeply regret that the rights for *Osynliga Länkar* have already been given away” (Franzos to S. Lagerlöf, August 15, 1896). However, she is open to pass them on to other translators if she does not believe in the literary quality of a work e.g., “I already wrote to you [...] that I could by no means undertake the translation of this junk [*Schrott*]” (Franzos to A. L. Elgström, February 1, 1918); or if she prioritizes other authors e.g., “I am so short on time that I cannot translate much [...], perhaps you could let the other translator take some of the remaining stories” (Franzos to K. E. Forslund, October 31, 1899). This behavior indicates that professional ethics are part of her translatorial identity/image. The investigated authors usually prefer Franzos and refuse offers from other translators e.g., “I have received several offers from prominent German translators [...]. But [...] I wanted to ask [you] first” (A. L. Elgström to Franzos, January 16, 1918).

4.3. Translatorial Identity/Image

The first theme identified is **Market and Business Knowledge**. Through references to Scandinavian newspapers and magazines and to the German-speaking press, it is clear that Franzos is constantly up to date on literary novelties in the source culture and on the literary market in the target culture. She acquires or declines translations depending on her market assessments. In general, Franzos introduces new writers in the press and then looks for book publishers e.g., “I believe that it can only be beneficial if many of your novellas are published in magazines, as this will make you known” (Franzos to S. Siwertz, June 26, 1909). She follows this working mode even with a planned book publication: “the publication of such small excerpts is usually beneficial for the work itself” (Franzos to B. Mörner, June 10, 1914). During and after World War I, the market becomes more difficult – affecting Franzos’ working conditions – and she demonstrates awareness: “Longer works are unfortunately infinitely difficult to place” (Franzos to A. L. Elgström, May 26, 1917).

Her clients recognize her qualities and ask for both her literary and business opinion on possible translations e.g., “I am very interested to hear what you think about the possibility of publishing the book” (S. Lagerlöf to Franzos, September 24, 1899). Furthermore, they trust her judgement on compensation and do not interfere: “I also leave any potential business matters between us in your hands” (J. Landquist to Franzos, August 20, 1907). Franzos’ recommendations of deletions or changes to the STs are generally accepted. Hallström even

rewrites the end of his novel *Ein Schelmenroman* (1913) for the German translation following her suggestion (Franzos to P. Hallström, January 26, 1913). The authors are generally afraid that Swedish-specific texts might not be received well in German-speaking countries and propose amendments accordingly, yet the final decision is left to Franzos.

At the beginning of her career, Franzos acquires clients thanks to her connections to the press, and introduces herself as a contributor to renowned newspapers and magazines such as *Die Zeit*, *Neue Revue*, and *Frankfurter Zeitung*. Thereafter, she is endorsed by Key who, for instance, informs Geijerstam that Franzos “has relations to the finest press!” (E. Key to G. af Geijerstam, July 25, 1895). After becoming the translator of many Swedish writers, Franzos mentions their names to show her potential new clients that she is established. The response is generally positive, as indicated by **Mutual Commitment**. The pattern of cooperation and acknowledgement highlighted in *Common Efforts for Success (Cultural Exchange, Networks)* is also reflected in the present category illustrating the same phenomenon while offering an insight into Franzos’ translatorial identity/image. It builds on the reciprocity typical for the investigated relationships. Franzos constantly expresses interest in the literary production and personal life of her clients.

The subtheme *Admiration* reflects a widely spread cultural phenomenon of the time (cf. Kinnunen, 2000, p. 25). In this case, admiration is expressed by words of appreciation for the authors (**Literary Passion**, Language Biography), towards Franzos and through actions e.g., the exchange of portraits, books with dedications, and presents (cf. Kinnunen, 2000, p. 127). The authors are generally happy to give Franzos their translation rights. A typical reaction is: “I am glad that a translator of such great authority and solid reputation as you has noticed [me]” (A. L. Elgström to Franzos, January 31, 1910). Franzos’ translations are usually described as excellent (*utmärkt*) by the writers. Even in cases of minor misunderstandings, the overall reaction is positive e.g., “I was satisfied with the translated parts, only a couple of errors [...] and that is probably unavoidable when one writes such a detailed language as I do” (P. Hallström to Franzos, September 3, 1895). Hallström suggests that the complexity of his style had an impact on the translation, which, nevertheless, was deemed adequate. Some authors blame imperfections on the lack of clarity in the ST e.g., “thank you for the beautiful and faithful translation [...] the only misunderstanding that occurs [...] is due to the ambiguity of the Swedish text” (J. Landquist to Franzos, August 2, 1912). Landquist’s perception of the translation as “faithful” reflects Franzos’ intentions expressed in the quote on Bjørnson and repeated in her correspondence. Thus, she identifies and is perceived as a ST-oriented yet not foreignizing translator, following the German norms of the time (cf. Weiß, 2019). In fact, the authors appreciate the degree to which Franzos adheres to the ST. Hjalmar Bergman writes: “I really enjoy reading my works in your translation. For every time I think: what a clear and smooth [*klar och smidig*] style I have!” (H. Bergman to Franzos, October 12, 1921). This ironic appropriation of the translations indicates that the author approves the TTs. Similarly, Lagerlöf finds the translations excellent (*praktig*) and does “not think that it is another language” (S. Lagerlöf to Franzos, April 4, 1897). Additionally, she praises Franzos’ marketing qualities: “You have such a talent for finding publishers, and that is exactly what all my translators in every country have lacked” (S. Lagerlöf to Franzos, February 11, 1897). Excelling in these two areas makes Franzos particularly popular among writers.

A further behavior typical for Franzos and her authors is reflected in the theme **Transparency**, concerned with clear communication. This regards not only constant requests to acquire translation rights and updates on the different translation stages – from drafts to publications – but also explanations for unclear words or expressions. Franzos asks questions without hesitation and the authors are largely available for clarifications e.g., “I am happy to be at your

disposal” (J. Landquist to Franzos, [1910]). The lengths of explanation lists go from a few words to several pages. Since the majority of the writers understand German, they often read the translations before publication and give their feedback. Particularly difficult expressions are often discussed to come to a satisfactory result:

A little concern is caused by the word *kräk* [scum] that Mr. Markurell applies to himself, and that Mrs. Markurell and lecturer Barfoth use in reference to him – there is hardly a word in German that is as fitting and simple. (Franzos to S. Bergman, November 5, 1927)

The author suggests a solution: “*du lump* [sic] [you scoundrel] in German is the word that best covers the meaning of the Swedish word. What do you think?” (S. Bergman to Franzos, May 9, 1928). Franzos explains why she does not agree with the proposed translation through a well-reasoned argument that displays great attention to linguistic and stylistic nuances.

Unfortunately, *Lump* is no solution. I briefly considered it as well, but it is too close to *Schuft* [scoundrel] and *Schurke* [villain]; it has nothing of the pitiful, insignificant, or miserable that *kräk* implies. *Lump* carries a moral condemnation that *kräk* does not have. (Franzos to S. Bergman, May 19, 1928)

The effects of the described symbiotic working relationships characterized by mutual respect even in times of disagreement are reflected in the theme **Human Bonds**. In fact, the authors’ long-standing business ties to Franzos often develop into close relationships. Inquiries about family members and their wellbeing, and descriptions of daily life reoccur in the correspondence. For instance, Franzos sends a book to Mörner’s daughter (B. Mörner to Franzos, January 31, 1904), helps Stina Bergman with a surprise for her mother (S. Bergman to Franzos, August 31, 1911), and for Key’s and Lagerlöf’s milestone birthdays, she organizes albums with dedications from Austrian personalities (E. Key to Franzos, December 17, 1909; S. Lagerlöf to Franzos, January, 1929). During her times of difficulty, Franzos is not only supported by compassionate words but also through concrete actions. After World War I, Lönborg sends her parcels with food and Svedenborg offers to do the same (S. Lönborg, January 11, 1921; H. Svedenborg to Franzos, January 17, 1920). During Franzos’ depression following her mother’s death, Lagerlöf sends her money (S. Lagerlöf, November 28, 1932). At the time, Franzos was deeply depressed and could hardly work (Franzos to S. Lagerlöf, December 2, 1932).

4.4. Working Conditions

For most of her career, Franzos’ working conditions are characterized by a good synergy with her clients, as reflected in the theme **Author-Translator Cooperation**, a different facet of *Common Efforts for Success* (**Cultural Exchange**, Networks) and **Mutual Commitment** (Translatorial Identity/Image). After the initial step of acquiring the translation rights, the authors offer or send the available material to Franzos spontaneously. In other cases, the translator inquires about specific texts. Franzos usually manages both the textual and the commercial aspect of her translations. Press publications are more common than books and follow more regular patterns concerning the division of the fees with the authors. Therefore, I focus on press publication-related fee payments exclusively. Initially, 25% of the royalties is given to the writers. However, the usual division soon becomes 50%. Franzos negotiates with the press and transfers the payments to the authors. She also sends translation copies and reviews to her clients. Sometimes, she requests Swedish reviews to translate and use for promotional purposes. Typically, the translator implements textual changes wished by the authors for the STs e.g., “I am grateful to you for taking the trouble to implement the changes I suggested” (J. Landquist to Franzos, October 18, 1912); “Apart from the deletions already made, the following chapters are suggested to be omitted entirely” (H. Svedenborg to Franzos, April 13, 1930). This editorial work bears consequences for Franzos’ workload.

Among all the investigated relationships, the majority continue throughout Franzos' career. However, some experience pauses due to Franzos' difficulty in finding publishers during the interwar financial crisis but remain amicable. Only one connection is ended abruptly after fifteen years: Mörner accuses Franzos of publishing translations without his permission. During his travels in South East Asia, Mörner has some stories printed in Swedish papers. Simultaneously, he sells the exclusive book rights to a German publisher without informing Franzos. Unaware and unable to reach Mörner, Franzos publishes some translations in the press following her usual working pattern with him. Upon Mörner's return to Europe, Franzos informs him of the publications and sends him his royalties. Despite Franzos' transparent behavior and withdrawal of further translations once informed of the exclusive book deal, the relationship is shattered when Mörner engages a lawyer and accuses Franzos of having kept the fee for herself. Judging by the development of the rest of Franzos' career, it does not seem that this incident affected her reputation or her relationships with other Swedish writers.

Franzos' working conditions depend on several factors (**External Constraints**) out of her control e.g., postal issues (late or lost deliveries), unannounced editorial changes, and conditions imposed by the writers. Among the constraints dictated by the authors, the most common are not approving specific texts for translation, not giving Franzos the translation rights, or lack of new material. However, by having a broad clientele and translating different genres – fiction, essays, children's literature, radio dramatizations, film scripts, speeches, and plays – Franzos compensates for this.

External constraints increase in the interwar period due to political and economic instability. In the 1920s, many authors start waiving their part of the fees in favor of Franzos who cannot afford subscriptions to the Swedish newspapers fundamental for her work (Franzos to P. Hallström, January 18, 1920). Consequently, some authors send her newspapers and magazines or books to help her. The translator is thankful for the financial help but clarifies that she intends to act fairly towards her benefactors.

I gratefully accept this offer, given how extraordinarily difficult the times are here. However, I do not consider this as binding for the future and, of course, remain ready at any time to continue working on the originally intended basis. (Franzos to F. Böök, September 20, 1926)

However, “the financial situation in Germany is currently extremely difficult, and publishers avoid any risk” (Franzos to S. Lönborg, October 18, 1922). Consequently, it becomes increasingly harder to market her translations. At this time, Franzos has to find new clients to ensure her livelihood. Particularly productive cooperations are established with the detective writer Frank Heller (pseudonym for Gunnar Serner, 1886–1947) and the entertainment reporter Annie Quensel (1886–1938), indicating a shift toward less high-brow literature for commercial reasons. Despite Franzos' resourcefulness in identifying new possibilities, her situation becomes increasingly difficult with Hitler's rise to power in 1933 and the annexation of Austria to the Third Reich in 1938. However, due to the limited scope of the present article, this period is not investigated here.

5. Discussion and concluding remarks

The results of the present article demonstrate that the combination of *biographies croisées* and thematic analysis is fruitful in shedding light on a translator's social role in history if abundant correspondence is available. Specifically, *biographies croisées* have been beneficial in foregrounding different perspectives and highlighting the importance of synergies between translators and writers. In the case of Franzos, this approach has enabled a multi-faceted portrait of her extratextual translatorship, revealing the pivotal importance of the interaction between

the translator and her authors in her work. The thematic analysis has helped systematize the approach to large datasets thanks to the identification of patterns. While the longitudinal aspect inherent in biographies may have occasionally receded into the background, this shift offers an opportunity to foreground other narrative dimensions. Nonetheless, maintaining a connection to the historical developments that shape the lives under investigation remains essential, underscoring the importance of thorough contextualization. The application of pre-determined categories was useful to handle the rich data selectively. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge that they introduce a degree of artificial categorization that may lead to overlaps and repetitions, foregrounding certain aspects over others – a characteristic feature of interpretive research.

By considering both sides of the extant correspondence with various authors for a considerable number of years i.e., several perspectives, this study has demonstrated that it is possible to go beyond the micro level of individual biographical investigations if abundant material is preserved. The limitations of traditional single-perspective biographical studies were addressed by studying numerous, long-lasting epistolary exchanges. Furthermore, by incorporating multiple viewpoints on the same biographical subject – namely, not only the perspective of the main person under investigation but also those of the correspondence partners – the analysis produced a more nuanced and less biased portrayal.

The thematic analysis has shown that Franzos behaves consistently towards her clients and that their individual responses reflect similar general patterns. It emerged clearly that Franzos' strengths consist in her linguistic talent not only for foreign languages but also for her mother tongue, combined with the ability to build, expand, and maintain a broad social network both in the source and in the target culture. Her connections to renowned newspapers and magazines facilitated her client acquisition and the endorsement by established names in the Swedish literary sphere ensured her success, combined with her own drive and determination.

The findings suggest several possible avenues for future research. First, it might be advantageous to apply alternative deductive categories or to adopt a fully inductive approach. While patterns are useful to identify broader trends, they do not capture individual biographical details. The findings of the present study are indicative for the general developments of Franzos' extratextual translatorship with the considered authors in a specific timeframe. More detailed couple or group biography investigations conducted with the same approach on the same Franzos-related datasets and considering the same or other timeframes are recommended to add nuances to her translatorship, her relationship with her authors, but also the cultural and literary exchanges between Austria and Sweden. Future research testing the combination of traditional biography and *biographies croisées* would be welcome to possibly contribute to a well-rounded investigation that includes both patterns and non-reoccurring biographical details. Finally, Franzos' correspondence gives insights not only on her work but also on other translators and authors of the same era. Further studies on Franzos' letters yet with a different focus would be advantageous to discover more on under-researched translators, female writers, or forgotten authors and their role not only in TH but also in transnational literary history.

In conclusion, only a fragment of Franzos' extratextual translatorship has been explored. Nonetheless, groundwork has been laid for future research. Archival sources have proved paramount to rescue from oblivion a woman translator who dedicated her life to cultural exchanges between Sweden and German-speaking countries. Further investigations would allow to confirm, reject, or add to the patterns identified in the present article. As Paloposki (2017, p. 44) highlights, general conclusions are inevitably tied to individual cases. Still, even a small piece can help fill the gaps of the big puzzle of Translator History.

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7. Appendix

Archives

Austrian National Library – Nachlass Marie Franzos.

Bergman, Hjalmar (55, 305/26),
 Bergman, Stina (120, 305/27),
 Böök, Fredrik (11, 305/32),
 Brunius, August (8, 305/39),
 Elgström, Anna Lenah (13, 305/53),
 Forsslund, Karl-Erik (5, 306/8),
 Hallström, Per (102, 306/21),
 Key, Ellen (187, 258/68, 306/50),
 Lagerlöf, Selma (214, 292/36, 307/12),
 Landquist, John (37, 307/13),
 Lönborg, Sven (74, 307/31),
 Malmberg, Bertil (3, 307/38),
 Mörner, Birger (19, 307/44),
 Siwertz, Sigfrid (40, 308/36),
 Söderberg, Hjalmar (72, 308/42, 516/58),
 Svedenborg, Hedvig (31, 308/51);

Gothenburg University Library

Söderberg, Hjalmar (21, Hjalmar Söderbergs papper),
 Key, Ellen to Geijerstam, Gustaf af (1, Gustaf af Geijerstams papper);

Lund University Library

Böök, Fredrik (17, Fredrik Bööks arkiv),
 Hallström, Per (103, Per Hallströms arkiv);

National Library of Sweden

Brunius, August (9, KB1/1981/105:2),

Elgström, Anna Lenah (13, KB1/L94:12),
Key, Ellen (13, KB1/L41:63:4, L41b:1),
Key, Ellen to Hultin-Pettersson, Lisa (1, KB1/L41:55),
Lagerlöf, Selma (146, KB1/L1:1, L1:1a),
Landquist, John (57, KB1/Ep.L33:1),
Malmberg, Bertil (3, KB1/L74:2),
Siwertz, Sigfrid (49, KB1/L96:2);

Nordiska museets arkiv

Forsslund, Karl-Erik (12, ACC.NR 1947/154, LA 471);

Örebro University Library

Mörner, Birger (27, Mörnerarkivet);

Royal Danish Library

Møller, Niels (8, NKS-4-4611),
Nansen, Peter (8, NKS-4-4043),
Stuckenberg, Viggo (4, NKS-4-4955);

Stockholm University Library

Bergman, Stina (126, Hjalmar Bergmans arkiv);

Swedish National Archives, Vadstena

Svedenborg, Hedvig (9, Backegårdens gårds- och släktarkiv);

Uppsala University Library

Lönborg, Sven (142, Sven Lönborgs arkiv);

Wienbibliothek im Rathaus

Fickert, Auguste (3, Nachlass Auguste Fickert).



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