

Institution: University College London		
Unit of Assessment: 26 Modern Languages and Linguistics		
Title of case study: Theatre Translation at UCL: generating and supporting creative cultural transfer; and empowering theatre professionals to advocate for the importance of translation in the arts		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2013 – present		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Geraldine Brodie Judith Beniston	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Associate Professor in Translation Theory and Theatre Translation Associate Professor in German	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: 2012 – present 1994 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2013 – present		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? No		
1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)		
<p>The interlocking projects of Judith Beniston and Geraldine Brodie have increased the visibility of translation as a widely practised and socially significant phenomenon within the UK theatre sector, both in systemic terms and by promoting English-language translations of a specific Austrian dramatist: Arthur Schnitzler (1862–1931). While the UCL Theatre Translation Forum (TTF) instigated by Brodie in partnership with Notting Hill's Gate Theatre has supported industry professionals in reflecting on and advocating for the crucial role of languages and translation in theatre and performance, Beniston's activities as translator of and commentator on (especially) Schnitzler's medical drama <i>Professor Bernhardt</i> have generated and supported new creative work, emboldening theatremakers to engage with a major figure in European modernism and enriching audience responses to the resulting theatrical experiences.</p>		
2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)		
<p>Geraldine Brodie and Judith Beniston both undertake theatre-based research at UCL, with Brodie conducting theoretically informed studies of translation procedures in contemporary theatre and Beniston taking German-language source texts and their socio-cultural contexts as her starting point. Brodie's work focuses on how translated plays from a wide range of cultures reach and impact the UK theatre scene, thereby examining and publicising the shared communicative dimension of translation and theatre; Beniston focuses on the case-study of doctor-writer Arthur Schnitzler, on the translation of his plays into English and other languages, and on the enduring socio-political resonance of his work, especially <i>Professor Bernhardt</i> (1912).</p> <p>Originating in a range of periods, genres and cultures, translated texts are an inherent part of the theatrical repertoire. However, productions may be labelled as versions, adaptations or in other terms that camouflage the translation procedures taking place and their role in the communicative process. Brodie's research uncovers the networks – both organisational and artistic – that influence theatre in translation on the mainstream stage. In <i>The Translator on Stage</i> (R1), she argues that the concept of translation in theatre should not be restricted to language expertise but be expanded to include collaborating theatre practitioners. Equally, Brodie insists that the translation process should be more prominently signposted for audiences, acknowledging the range of contributors and rendering explicit the transfer between languages. The book (R1) draws on 18 interviews with directors, producers, dramaturgs, literary managers, translators and playwrights to investigate the sites and organisational cultures in which theatre translation functions and demonstrate their influence on commissioning procedures, translation and performance decisions, and the reception of translated productions. Brodie's article 'Indirect translation on the London stage' (R2) presents examples of best practice in highlighting theatre translation processes and argues for an increased valorisation of the intermediate contributors. Brodie estimates that every year 12–14% of plays in central London theatres have a source that has been subjected to a translation process, significantly more than the 4% reported by the British Theatre Repertoire in 2013 (R2).</p>		

Adapting Translation for the Stage (R3), edited by Brodie and Emma Cole, documents and extends the interdisciplinary dialogues generated by the Theatre Translation Forum (TTF), established in October 2013 with Brodie as Principal Researcher. The editors' introduction contends that acts of adaptation are fundamental to the process of bringing texts from other languages onto the stage; contributions from academics (including Beniston) and theatre practitioners, representing eight languages and three continents, interrogate the ethical and linguistic decisions underpinning that process. Beniston, for example, investigates successive English-language versions of Schnitzler's *Professor Bernhardt*, demonstrating how distinctions between translation and adaptation are blurred by changing responses to the play's historical specificity and to the challenge of presenting a comedy treating turn-of-the-century antisemitism to post-Holocaust audiences (R3). The entire volume points to the significance of theatrical contexts for the performability of translated texts and, as in Beniston's essay, to the ideological and political recontextualisation of translations, thereby opening up a space for the consideration of access to translation and the training of theatre translators.

As Co-Investigator of the AHRC-funded 'Digital Critical Edition of Selected Middle-Period works by Arthur Schnitzler (1862–1931)' (2014–19), Beniston contributed to the edition of the *Marionetten* cycle (R4) and is lead editor for *Professor Bernhardt* (forthcoming 2021; delayed due to COVID-19). Editorial work on the latter play has shed light on Schnitzler's engagement not only with contemporary antisemitism but also with broader conflicts between Catholic-conservative and secular liberal values. These findings are discussed in (R5) where they underpin a reading of *Professor Bernhardt* as standing in ironic relation to the conventions of the political protest play. Beniston's contribution to (R3) is complemented by (R6), a study of how Schnitzler's work was disseminated beyond the German-speaking world in his lifetime. Like much of Brodie's research, but focusing on the age of classical modernism (c. 1895–1930), it explores commercial, legal and institutional aspects of the translation process, showing what it took in a range of theatrical cultures to bring a translated play by a major foreign writer into being and onto the stage.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- R1. G. Brodie. 2018. *The Translator on Stage*. New York: Bloomsbury. Nominated for the TaPRA Early Career Researcher Prize 2018. [submitted to REF2021]
- R2. G. Brodie. 2018. 'Indirect translation on the London stage: Terminology and (in)visibility'. *Translation Studies*, 11(3), 333–48. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14781700.2018.1447990> Peer Reviewed
- R3. G. Brodie and E. Cole (eds). 2017. *Adapting Translation for the Stage*. Abingdon: Routledge. Includes J. Beniston, 'Doctors talking to doctors in Arthur Schnitzler's *Professor Bernhardt*', pp. 39–55. Shortlisted for the 2019 Theatre and Performance Research Association (TaPRA) Editing Prize.
- R4. 2018. Arthur Schnitzler, *Marionetten* [*Der Puppenspieler, Der tapfere Cassian, Zum großen Wurstel*], ed. by A. Neumann with G. Babelotzky, J. Beniston, J. Glunk, K. Latifi, R. Vilain, A. Webber; Commentary on *Der tapfere Cassian* by A. Neumann and A. Webber with J. Beniston, in *Arthur Schnitzler digital*, <https://www.cam.ac.uk/Schnitzler-Edition>. Emerged from (i)
- R5. J. Beniston. 2019. 'Schnitzler and the Place of Tendentious Drama: *Professor Bernhardt*', *Austrian Studies*, 27: *Placing Schnitzler*, ed. J. Beniston and A. Webber, 195–209. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14781700.2018.1447990> Emerged from (i). [submitted to REF2021]
- R6. J. Beniston. 2017. 'Schnitzler und die "Uebersetzungs-Miseren"'. In *Textschicksale: Das Werk Arthur Schnitzlers im Kontext der Moderne*, ed. W. Lukas and M. Scheffel. Berlin: de Gruyter, 251–66. [submitted to REF2021]

Grants: (i) J. Beniston (Co-I), 'Digital Critical Edition of Selected Middle-Period works by Arthur Schnitzler (1862–1931)' (2014–18; no cost extension to December 2019) AHRC AH/L001683/1 Total GBP1,000,020 (GBP152,323.16 to UCL).

4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Although translation plays a fundamental role in mediating between cultures, in theatre it is under-acknowledged and undervalued, despite the fact that playwrights acclaimed within their own language area owe their international reputations to complex multi-agency processes of cultural transfer. Brodie's and Beniston's individual and collaborative activities with an overlapping set of industry partners have generated new translated theatre and brought it to performance; provided career development opportunities for industry professionals; improved networking between theatre practitioners, translators and academics; supported innovative approaches to the staging of translated drama; and enhanced audience engagement with the resulting theatrical experiences.

Creating new translated theatre and stimulating critical reflection in audiences. Schnitzler's *Professor Bernhardt*, last seen in the UK in 2005, is a very substantial work that offers the opportunity to create distinctively different performance texts. Beniston's abridged English-language version, developed alongside (R3) and (R6), foregrounds the play's exploration of still ongoing debates around end-of-life care and the relationship between medicine, religion and politics. A performance concept was developed in collaboration with Foreign Affairs, a London-based theatre company focusing on international cultural exchange. A key duologue was tried out at Bethnal Green Working Men's Club on 23/8/2014, as part of Foreign Affairs' summer preview show, and *Professor Bernhardt* was subsequently seen by c. 550 people in site-specific productions in London (Bart's Hospital Pathology Museum, 23–25/9/2015), Cambridge (Anatomy Lecture Theatre, University of Cambridge, 28–29/10/2016) and Exeter (Barnfield Theatre, 29/6/2017). Audiences were drawn from the general public and included attendees at medical humanities events. Feedback indicates that (for almost two thirds of individuals) temporal and geographical distance were no bar to critical reflection on the institutional and humanitarian issues raised by the play. Feedback included: 'Thoughtfully, imaginatively abridged, presented and performed. A very intellectual, analytical play, whose exploration of ethics and professional machinations is still relevant!' There was an increased desire to learn more about changes in medical ethics – 'I am now interested to find out how this development unfolded' – and a willingness to 'translate' insights derived from the play to other contemporary ethical concern, such as FGM and the 'Shocking parallels to today's manipulative portrayal of the "truth"' (A).

In May 2018, Beniston collaborated with the Austrian Cultural Forum, London to organise 'Adapting Schnitzler', which brought together theatremakers, academics and others to workshop a staging concept and translation brief for *Der tapfere Cassian* (1904), a one-act puppet play that is part of the *Marionetten* cycle. While Brodie drew on (R1) to consider the play's prospects on the London stage, Beniston's work on the critical apparatus of the digital edition (R4) underpinned her emphasis on the adaptive potential of its aesthetic of excess and exaggeration, of compulsive behaviours and compromised free will. Feedback from the sold-out event suggested that it stimulated participants to 'explore [Schnitzler's work] further in a contemporary context' and informed 'an ongoing conversation' about theatre translation (A). Subsequently, participant Marta Niccolai staged *Gallant Cassian* in a public event at the Bloomsbury Studio Theatre 26–27/5/2019, in an English version produced by a student group led by Beniston. The performances stimulated thought on fundamental questions such as the nature of 'human desire' and 'whether people allow themselves to be controlled by others, and conform to gender, class, societal norms' (A).

Providing career enhancement for theatremakers and translators. Beniston's abridged translation of *Professor Bernhardt* emerged and evolved through discussions with the actors and with Foreign Affairs' Co-Artistic Director (B), who reports that 'expert academic insights into the world of the play, its source language and context provided [the] creative team with a deeper understanding of the play and its characters, enabling us to successfully develop the abridged version, using a text-based devising process'. The collaboration allowed the company to perform at historical venues that 'may not otherwise have been accessible' to them and thereby 'solidified our site-responsive/sensitive practice, which is a core element of our practice today' (B). Furthermore, the lengthy, multi-stage, multi-agency collaboration including a pilot project has 'formed the blueprint' of the company's 'project management procedures, especially when it comes to collaborating with multiple partners'. The Co-Artistic Director reports that her work 'as a

theatre-maker and practitioner' has 'benefited tremendously' from her collaboration with Beniston (B).

Brodie's TTF (October 2013–March 2014), which drew on (R1) and generated (R3), consisted of 4 seminars and 4 workshops addressing theatrical themes particularly relevant to staged translations. The events attracted 140 participants, representing 16 languages in addition to English: actors, directors and translators came together with academics to explore and reflect on the use of translated texts in their working practices, an experience that furthered the training of especially early-career practitioners. A Greek freelance translator and theatre director who attended 7 of the 8 events describes how testing different translations of the same source text on stage encouraged him to reflect on his translation choices: 'TTF discussions made me realize that when I work with a play written in a language other than Greek, in order to direct it better through a deeper understanding of the text, I would do the translation myself (if it's written in English) or [be] involve[d] in the process of translating as much as possible (if it's written in another language). And thus it has happened: I translated and directed more than one British play in Athens and at the moment I'm working very close with a translator in order to prepare the text for a play by Lorca' (C). Another participant, a freelance dramaturg and translator, reports that the TTF 'reinforced [her] belief that staging plays in translation is immensely important, especially in today's pre-Brexit climate', leading her to be 'involved in various theatre festivals that promote staging plays in translation in the UK, such as Voila!' (C).

Foreign Affairs' Co-Artistic Director states that the collaboration with Beniston 'in many ways informed our approach to working with translators, recognising (and advocating for) the translator as an integral part of the creative team' (B); furthermore, the knowledge and expertise accessible through the TTF have 'been instrumental' in the development of Foreign Affairs' ground-breaking Theatre Translator Mentorship programme. Set up in 2016, it has so far allowed 15 translators to develop skills and approaches to translating for the stage; to workshop translations with industry professionals; and to showcase their work in front of audiences. As a spin-off, Foreign Affairs have presented the programme at events run by the British Library and the American Literary Translators Association, and held masterclasses at venues including the School of Oriental and African Studies and the British Centre for Literary Translation. These initiatives have generated many more indirect beneficiaries of the collaborations with Brodie and Beniston.

Constructing new networks amongst theatre practitioners and academics. The lack of a significant database of theatre translation specialists presented a challenge to the UK theatre community, as theatres relied largely on word-of-mouth and informal networks to locate translators with relevant expertise for commissions. To address this problem, Brodie used the TTF network to create such a resource, with 49 of the 2013–14 TTF participants requesting inclusion. Although GDPR prevents its further dissemination, the initiative has enhanced Brodie's reputation as an expert adviser in commissioning translations for stage performance. The Literary Manager at the Donmar Warehouse, for example, notes: 'I was in touch with Geraldine Brodie asking to be connected to potential German speakers for a literal translation of *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui* (performed April – June 2017) at short notice and she was instantly very helpful' (D). Other agencies seeking to highlight the significance of translation have likewise harnessed Brodie's expertise. In 2014, she organised a workshop on theatre translation for Europe House. The European Commission Officer, who commissioned Brodie, states that she 'succeeded in facilitating knowledge exchange between theatre practitioners and academics on issues surrounding translation and encourage theoretical reflection on practice. This was highly appreciated by our audience and the event was oversubscribed. Feedback was enthusiastic. This event gave birth to a series of explorations between translation and performance: other events on theatre translation were subsequently organised including three events on translating music. Geraldine's contribution opened up new networks and opportunities to Europe House and her legacy is still present' (E).

Extending the reach of theatre translation. In March 2019, the impact of the partnership between Brodie's TTF and the Gate Theatre was evidenced in the 'Theatre Translation Futures Forum', which celebrated the fifth anniversary of the collaboration by looking forward to future developments in theatre translation. Feedback from this event, which sold out the 70-seat Bloomsbury Studio, attested that involvement with TTF has prompted 'deeper reflection', 'new

collaborations', and 'changed approaches' for theatre practitioners and translators (F). The event embraced the challenge of expanding theatre translation in London beyond European languages and drama, by workshoping award-winning Taiwanese playwright Wei Yu-Chia's *A Fable for Now* in a translation by New York-based Jeremy Tiang, who appeared by video to discuss the implications of his translation decisions for performance in English. Sui He observed in *The Theatre Times* that this event showed 'how research and practice can combine to forge new creative pathways' (G). The audience composition (evenly split between theatre practitioners, translators and UCL staff/students) showcased how the TTF has facilitated networking between academia and creative industries by building links to explore knowledge-sharing and training opportunities between the different communities.

Supporting the theatrical re-imagining of *Professor Bernhardt*. On 12/8/2019 *The Doctor. Very freely adapted from Arthur Schnitzler's Professor Bernhardt* by world-leading writer-director Robert Icke premiered at London's Almeida Theatre. (Initial sell-out run to 28/9/2019, approximate audience 17,550; transfer to Dunstan Playhouse, Adelaide, Australia, 27/2–8/3/2020; UK tour and transfer to Duke of York's Theatre, London, 18/4–18/7/2020 postponed to 2021 due to COVID-19.) Beniston read two rehearsal drafts of the play, providing face-to-face and written feedback. [TEXT REMOVED FOR PUBLICATION] (H). Beniston is one of the people thanked in the Acknowledgements to the published playtext for having 'shared their expertise, and offered thoughts and notes on the script in its various drafts'. *The Doctor* received a 5* review in *The Guardian* which declared it one of the Top Ten Theatre Shows of 2019, and Icke won Best Director at the Evening Standard Theatre awards (November 2019) (J). In comparing Schnitzler and Freud, *The Independent's* 4* review implicitly draws on Beniston's essay in the programme (G).

Enhancing audience engagement with translated plays and translation practices. Brodie and Beniston, as acknowledged experts in translation and Austrian theatre respectively, have both contributed to programme notes and publicity materials, thereby extending the reach of their research to the theatregoing public and into drama education. In 2013, Brodie was invited to write an article on theatre translation for Studio 180 Theatre, a Canadian company committed to provoking public discussion and promoting community engagement. This article was reproduced in study guides in 2013 and 2015 and distributed to 220 school pupils during educational visits. It can be downloaded from the theatre website (I). Beniston gave a pre-show talk when her adaptation of *Professor Bernhardt* was performed in London in 2015 and contributed an essay on 'Arthur Schnitzler and his Medical Drama *Professor Bernhardt*' to the programme for the initial run of *The Doctor* at the Almeida Theatre in 2019 (3000 copies distributed) and for the play's (postponed) UK tour and West End transfer. The Press & Media Relations Manager notes that the Almeida Theatre rarely includes such essays in its programmes, but that Beniston's work 'made for an informative and interesting read' (J). Drawing on (R5), the essay (available on the Almeida Theatre website; 477 hits to 20/7/2020) highlights facets of Schnitzler's play taken up by Icke: above all, his critical engagement with the identity politics of his day and with the 'state-of-the-nation play' as a theatrical genre. With these various interventions, Brodie and Beniston have succeeded in making foreign-language source texts and translation processes more visible to theatre audiences, thereby enriching the theatrical experience.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- A. Feedback: performances of *Professor Bernhardt*, *Gallant Cassian*, *Gallant Cassian* workshop.
- B. Statement: The Co-Artistic Director of Foreign Affairs.
- C. Statements: A freelance translator and theatre director; and a freelance dramaturg and translator.
- D. Statement: Literary Manager, Donmar Warehouse.
- E. Statement: Language Officer, European Commission Representation in the UK.
- F. Feedback: Theatre Translations Futures Forum.
- G. Media pack: *The Theatre Times*, reviews of *The Doctor*, *The Guardian* and *The Independent*.
- H. [TEXT REMOVED FOR PUBLICATION]
- I. Studio 180. 2019. 'School Study Guides'. <http://studio180theatre.com/school-study-guides/>
- J. Confirmation of programme sales and hits on Beniston's essay from Press and Media Relations Manager, Almeida Theatre.