

## Ideology, subversion & the translator's voice: a comparative analysis of the French and English translations of Guilleromos Cabrera Infante's *Tres Tristes Tigres*

Andrea MODREA  
University of Ottawa

### Resumen:

For the past twenty years, there has been a growing trend in translation studies to follow a deconstructionist philosophy and give the translator authorship of their work. Translation, in this sense, is no longer a target language equivalence of an 'original' writing by an author, but rather a creative process of 're-writing'. In this regard, the translator has the possibility of showing their own voice in the translation. The purpose of this thesis is to examine whether either of the French or English translators (Albert Bensoussan and Suzanne Jill Levine, respectively) of the Cuban novel *Tres Tristes Tigres* (Barcelona: 1967) intervened in the text to show their own voices; and in Levine's case, whether this intervention corresponded to a declared ideology of 'subversion.'

A systematic analysis of the wordplay in Chapters 16, 17 and 18 of the two translations reveal significant differences. Whereas the French translation has only minor adjustments, the English translation shows a large number of alterations to existing source text wordplay as well as additional instances of wordplay. In the final tally, there are almost twice as many instances of wordplay in Levine's English translation than in the Spanish source text. From the results of the analysis and from Levine's own self-portrayal in her book *The Subversive Scribe* (St. Paul: 1991), it would appear that her extensive intervention in the text is ideologically motivated. However, closer examination of circumstances surrounding the actual translation process reveals that the author, Guillermo Cabrera Infante, greatly influenced the final 're-writing'. Therefore, Levine's translation was not so much subversion as it was a sub-version of the original.