

# *Interpreting the un-expected: Oral realization and translation*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This study deals with the English prefix *un-*, its oral realizations and translations into French. *Un-* basically refers to a value which is complementary to the value of the base which is the normal, expected one. As a result, adjectives prefixed in *un-* often express the unexpected and their translations often highlight this meaning.

This other value will be called *otherness*. We will see that *un-* is translated according to separate ways of constructing otherness. We will ask ourselves if its oral realizations are also connected to these different types of otherness in an attempt to link oral realizations and translation. Chuquet and Paillard (1987:192) note that these synthetic forms prefixed in *un-* often expand into more analytical forms in French. Therefore, the French prefix *in-* is far from being its most frequent equivalent. Still, the translations in the corpus to be considered sometimes illustrate French synthetic adjectives prefixed in *in-* that will have to be accounted for.

We will concentrate on adjectives and past participles, although the distinction between the two categories remains unclear. This study will therefore be based on syntactic properties defined by Quirk et al. (1985:403), namely their attributive or predicative functions and their gradability or ungradability, that is the potential properties of adjectives. We will first examine the ungradable use of adjectives. We will then move on to gradable adjectives and finish with past participles, which are always ungradable. Before doing so, it is necessary to present the corpus, the theoretical framework, and the methodology of this study in order to propose a definition of what we mean by *(un)expected*.

## 2. CORPUS, THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK, AND METHODOLOGY

The corpus of the study is *The Picture of Dorian Gray* by Oscar Wilde, two separate translations by Richard Crevier (2008) and Jean Gattégno (1992),<sup>1</sup> and two audio

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<sup>1</sup>In our examples, the English text includes the context, whereas the French text only focuses on the translation of the sentence that contains the word with the prefix *un-*.

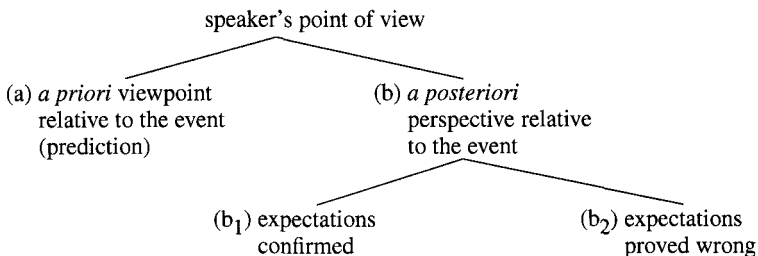
versions read by native speakers of English (*librivox* and *freeclassicaudio*—book; see bibliography). The corpus and our acoustic analyses are therefore based on prepared speech. Each extract from both recordings is analyzed with the help of PRAAT, a piece of acoustic analysis software, to determine the prosodic characteristics of the adjective/participle in context. The main features that we are interested in are the factors that help determine the degree of prominence of the prefixed word and of the actual prefix. These concern duration, both of the prefix itself, and of its duration relative to the entire word; relative intensity levels, and pitch levels and movement.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to insist that *un-* is a separable prefix in English, implying on the semantic level that it is attached to an independent base (the only exception being *uncouth*), unlike a number of French translations which use inseparable prefixes. In phonological terms, this is significant, as we do not expect *un-* to lose full vowel quality and it is potentially stressed. As regards stress, both the pronouncing dictionaries consulted (Jones 2011, Wells 2008) imply great variation (Hanote and Videau 2012). Whether it be in the primary pronunciation or in possible variants, *un-* may or may not have lexically marked secondary stress. Dictionaries, however, never give primary stress on *un-* and rarely give no stress at all.

## 2.1 Classification in terms of (un)expected

The events referred to by these participles can be considered from various temporal viewpoints which enable us to propose a classification of the utterances in terms of (un)expectedness.

The unexpected implies an *a posteriori* or *backward-looking* perspective relative to the effective event. The expected may either imply that the (non-)event is envisaged *a posteriori* or *a priori*.<sup>3</sup> This leads us to propose the classification in Figure 1, inspired from Larreya's (2002) study on modal auxiliaries in the preterite form.



**Figure 1:** Classification in terms of (un)expected

<sup>2</sup>It is to be noted that all 50 occurrences are read in the *librivox* recording, but only 38 are read in the Gonzalez recording (the original shorter version).

<sup>3</sup>One good example of *a priori* or *forward-looking* perspective is (5a) (*in answer to a prayer, it might remain unchanged*), in which the modal auxiliary *might* refers to the future.

More precisely, the unexpected implies a preconstructed causal link between a past situation and an envisaged consequence in a subsequent situation, which is compared *a posteriori* to the actual state of affairs. The expression of the unexpected therefore involves three situations which are located relative to one another. Preconstruction is a mental process consisting in envisaging a possible event. A preconstruct may not be what occurred before in the left-hand context but rather a consequence which is expected/predicted to happen in the second part of the utterance, which is either confirmed or proved wrong.

The preconstruct can either concern an expected or normal value or the prediction of an event. Here, we can make a parallel with the modal system of English, one purpose of which is to predict or favour future events. Deschamps and Dufaye (2004:125–126) consider that epistemic modality is based on the compatibility between a state of affairs and a future event from a qualitative point of view but also on a more existential, quantitative component consisting in considering the chances of validation of an event, that is whether an event will take place or not. The qualitative component can be reinforced by valuation, that is considering an event as desirable or not.

In the case of a preconstructed qualitative value, we notice that Oscar Wilde makes unexpected statements from an ethical point of view, for example presenting an undesirable quality as desirable or vice versa, as in (1).

- (1) a. You know I am not a champion of marriage. The real drawback to marriage is that it makes one **unselfish**. And **unselfish** people are colourless.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 85)
- b. Le seul véritable inconvénient du mariage, c'est qu'il vous rend altruiste. Les gens altruistes sont ternes sans personnalité. (Crevier trans., p. 127)
- c. La véritable faiblesse du mariage, c'est qu'il vous empêche d'être égoïste. Sans égoïsme, les gens sont incolores. (Gattégno trans., p. 157)

We also find unexpected lexical choices from an aesthetic perspective, with systematic references to purity, as in (2), where Oscar Wilde departs from positive adjectives by using the infrequent adjective *unclean*:

- (2) a. Beneath its purple pall, the face painted on the canvas could grow bestial, sodden, **unclean**.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 136)
- b. Là, derrière son drap mortuaire violet, le visage peint sur la toile pourrait devenir, bestial, abruti, sale. (Crevier trans., p. 181)
- c. Sous son drap pourpre, le visage peint sur la toile pouvait bien devenir bestial, bouffi, immonde. (Gattégno trans., p. 229)

*Un-* therefore indicates a gap between two opposite values that coexist. This gap can be created in several different ways: either the effective value is the direct opposite of the expected value in a dual opposition without any gradient between the two and the key question is that of their existence (the quantitative component of Deschamps and Dufaye 2004), or the value is constructed with intermediate degrees and gradability, as with temperatures between hot and cold and the central question is a qualitative one (in the sense of Deschamps and Dufaye 2004), that of the exact

degree. Alternatively, a boundary is created between the two opposite values without them being delineated by a gradient. That is the case in (2), where *unclean* reads like an unexpected understatement at the end of a crescendo and cannot be premodified by *very*.<sup>4</sup>

All these configurations can be accounted for thanks to the topological concept of notional domain, established within the *Théorie des opérations énonciatives* by Culioli (1990:70):

- (1) [The notional domain] has an **interior** ... This open area is **centered**, for it contains an organizing centre (prototype) which acts as an **attracting centre** (whence ‘absolute’ values, or the so-called high degree in exclamatory modality, e.g. *how beautiful!*; *some car!*; *C’est quelque chose!*, etc.). It can also be represented as comprising a **gradient** (from centre outward).
- (2) It has an **exterior**. If interior values are informally glossed as ‘truly *p*’, ‘truly representative of *p*’ ... , external values can be described as ‘truly non-*p*’ ‘totally different from *p*’ ‘having no common property, not even the slightest, with *p*’.
- (3) If we are compelled (or if we choose) to discern an occurrence  $x_m$  from an occurrence  $x_n$  of a notion *p*, i.e. if the two occurrences are inhomogeneous and evince altered quality states of a certain property *p*, then we set up a divide so that we get on the one side, an open area (whether it be the interior or the exterior) and, on the other side, a boundary area ... . In other words, we get, on the one hand, ‘not truly *p*’, on the other hand, ‘not truly *non p*’.

In the case of (b<sub>1</sub>) of our classification (see Figure 1), where expectations are confirmed, *un-* prefixed words refer to the negative value the exterior (E) which is confirmed. In the case of (b<sub>2</sub>), where expectations are proved wrong, the base of the prefixed word refers to the interior (I) and the prefix indicates a move from I to E.

As said before, the speaker also adds a subjective value judgment to the values he/she considers, either positive or negative, as in (1) with *colourless*. Besides, Oscar Wilde also aims to surprise his readers with unexpected indifference, hence the absence of normal value judgments, as in (2).

This study first examines the ungradable use of adjectives.

### 3. THE UNGRADABLE USE OF ADJECTIVES IN ENGLISH

The ungradable use of adjectives often establishes a contrast between two opposite values.

#### 3.1 Cases of dual opposition: Frequent positive adjectives in translation

In example (1), the adjective *unselfish* is quite unexpected; the expected ethical value for the addressee is of course *selfish*. This type of unexpected occurrence is characteristic of the corpus and establishes a contrast between two opposite values. The

<sup>4</sup>Ratié (1987:226) gives a reverse example, which could be analyzed as “created gradability”: unlike *clean*, the stem *American* is ungradable. However, *un-American* is gradable: *He is somewhat un-American*. Tournier (1988:53) compares *un-British* to *non-British* in the same way.

translations are both positive: we have *altruiste* for Crevier, and the constructed *empêche d'être égoïste* for Gattégno. We have a similar example in (3) with the unexpected causal link (*un*)civilized/pleasure which is also translated with a positive adjective, *barbare* by Gattégno.

- (3) a. Believe me, **no civilized man** ever regrets a pleasure, and **no uncivilized man** ever knows what a pleasure is. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 90)
- b. Croyez moi, un homme civilisé ne regrette jamais le plaisir. Un homme non civilisé, lui, ne sait pas ce que c'est. (Crevier trans., p. 132)
- c. Croyez moi, il n'est pas d'homme civilisé qui regrette jamais un plaisir, ni de barbare qui puisse jamais se douter de ce qu'est un plaisir. (Gattégno trans., p. 164)

In terms of the prosodic analysis, we must take into account the function of the adjective/participle as predicate or as attributive adjective because their acoustic characteristics are expected to be different. The predicate is potentially the nucleus of the tone unit so the primary stressed syllable of the base will be associated with pitch movement, possibly with greater duration, and these correlates are reliable indicators of prominence. For attributive adjectives, these are generally not the nucleus, and they may also be subject to stress shift, so it is more difficult to interpret acoustic correlates.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, in (2), as the adjective *unselfish* first occurs in nuclear position, the internal stress hierarchy of the word can be analyzed without ambiguity. There is clear prominence on the base. For the second occurrence of the same example, however, *unselfish* is in attributive position. Indeed, the acoustic correlates appear to be either identical or with a little more prominence on the prefix, but we cannot draw any reliable conclusions from this as the unit is not in nuclear position.<sup>6</sup>

In the first instance (Figure 2), we may conclude that it is the whole word, *unselfish*, which is in focus, because there is prominence on the base, which carries the pitch movement — here a fall — associated with the nucleus. The prefix *un-* is a separable prefix as it is attached to a semantically independent base<sup>8</sup> (unlike a number of French translations which have the inseparable prefix *in-*; see section 5.3.1.), and in English, this type of prefix generally retains full vowel quality and is potentially stressed. This is why the notion of prominence is central to our analyses.

We are trying to determine whether or not there is any correlation between degrees of prominence of the prefix and the base depending on the various modes of construction of otherness and the different translations of the original text. Let us

<sup>5</sup>It was also important to assess the impact of speaker variability as the two recordings were very different: the Gonzalez recording was read by just one narrator where the *LibriVox* recording was acted out by people playing the different characters, plus a narrator. Certain stylistic characteristics have been taken into account for our conclusions.

<sup>6</sup>The internal stress hierarchy for the adjective in *unselfish people* may be affected here by stress shift as it is the initial element in a noun phrase (Adj. + Noun). If stress shift occurs, the prefix will be perceived as more prominent than the base which loses prominence in intermediate position in the unit because the following noun carries most prominence. This occurs for rhythmic reasons and is not necessarily connected to any special interpretation.

<sup>8</sup>There is just one exception: *uncouth*.

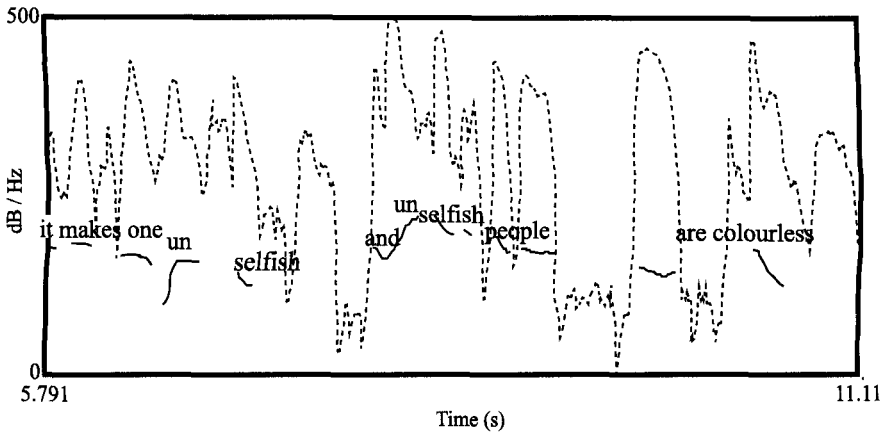


Figure 2: Gonzalez recording of Ex. (1)<sup>7</sup>

consider the case where the prefix *un-* is in direct opposition to its complementary affirmative value, as in (4) and (5), which are forward-looking examples, that is to say they contain modal auxiliaries that refer to the future and leave the choice between I and E undecided.

- (4) a. The picture, **changed or unchanged**, *would* be to him the visible emblem of conscience. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 105)
- b. Le tableau, qu'il changeât ou non, serait pour lui l'emblème visible de sa conscience. (Crevier trans., p. 146)
- c. Le portrait, altéré ou non, serait pour lui l'emblème visible de sa conscience. (Gattégno trans., p. 183)

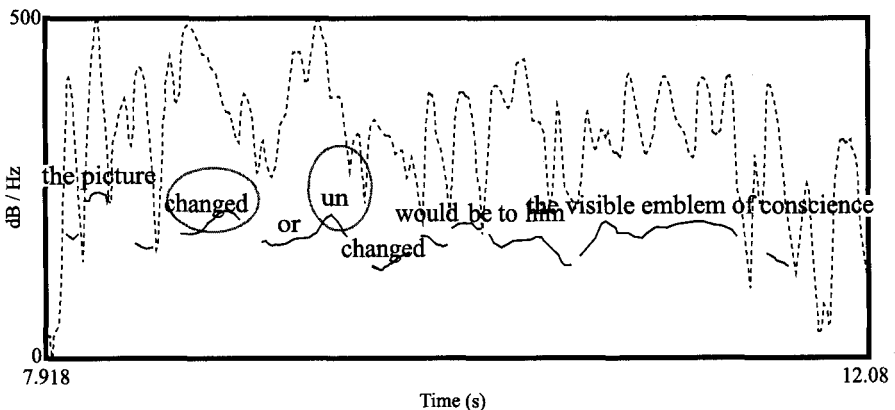


Figure 3: Gonzalez recording of Ex. (4)

In Figure 3, we have a value and its opposite, with no possible intermediate value. The opposition is reflected both in the translation choice (a positive adjective is coordinated with the negative word *non* as opposed to using any lexical or constructed equivalent), and in the oral realization. Indeed, we have the characteristics

generally associated with special focus (Hanote and Videau 2012 as well as Moore 2012): high pitch level, high intensity on the prefix (which is at the same level as on *changed* in the first tone unit), contrasting with low levels on the base of *unchanged*, which implies that it is *un-* which is the nucleus, rather than the base *changed*. Here, we may conclude that there is a clear correlation between the acoustic characteristics associated with special focus and the translations which underpin the absence of choice. Similarly, in (5), we have both *changed* and *unchanged* in the utterance, so both the affirmative value and its complementary ungradable value.

- (5) a. It had **changed** in answer to a prayer; perhaps *in answer to a prayer it might remain unchanged*.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 120)
- b. qui sait s'il ne demeurerait pas tel quel en réponse à une prière.  
(Crevier trans., p. 162)
- c. peut-être pourrait-il rester, en réponse à une autre prière.  
(Gattégno trans., p. 204)

Not only is there a contrast between the envisaged change and the *unchanged* state of the portrait but this unchanged state is also actually desired: the corpus is not rich enough in forward-looking examples to draw any conclusions but this valuation is reflected in the acoustic characteristics which we hear in both recordings (see Figures 3 and 4).

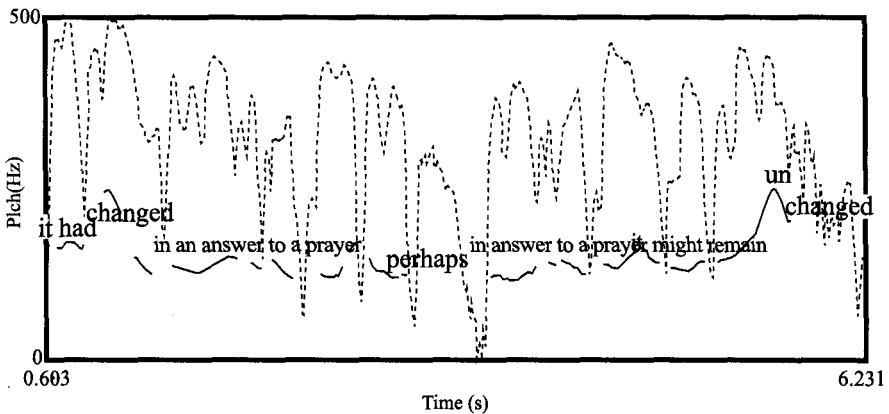


Figure 4: Gonzalez recording of Ex. (5)

The prefix is produced with high pitch and relatively high intensity with respect to the base, as in (6).

- (6) a. He had uttered a mad *wish* that he himself *might remain* young, and the portrait grew old; that his own beauty might be **untarnished**.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 103)
- b. Il avait formulé le vœu insensé ... que sa beauté à lui demeurât intacte.  
(Crevier trans., p. 145)
- c. Il avait exprimé un vœu insensé; ... que sa beauté à lui échappât à toute flétrissure.  
(Gattégno trans., p. 181)

We also have dual opposition in unexpected generic assertions. Refer back to example (3), where there is a clear correlation between acoustic characteristics, with prominence on the prefix, and translation choices: either *non* placed before the positive adjective in French or a positive adjective *barbare*. This adjective is positive from a formal point of view but negative in terms of the value judgment conveyed. However, in other cases where the opposition is less explicit but still marked by positive antonyms, as in the contents of (7) and (8), it is the base rather than the prefix which is prominent and we find positive equivalents in translation.<sup>9</sup> Example (7) is a generic assertion:

- (7) a. You became to me the *visible* incarnation of that **unseen** ideal whose memory haunts us artists like an exquisite dream. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 128)  
 b. Tu es devenu pour moi l'incarnation visible de l'idéal invisible dont le souvenir mous hante, nous les artistes. (Crevier trans., p. 171)  
 c. Tu es devenu pour moi l'incarnation visible de cet idéal caché dont le souvenir mous hante, nous autres artistes. (Gattégno trans., p. 217)
- (8) a. Summer followed summer, and the yellow *jonquils bloomed and died many times*, and nights of horror repeated the story of their shame, but he was **unchanged**. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 153)  
 b. mais lui, il restait identique à lui-même. (Crevier trans., p. 198)  
 c. Mais lui restait inchangé. (Gattégno trans., p. 252)

So far, we have studied cases of opposition between two antonyms. We will now examine the reinforcement of an adjective by a negated antonym.

### 3.2 Cases of tautology and reinforcement

These reinforcements occur especially in attributive position.

#### 3.2.1 Attributive position

Participles in attributive position often express a predictable quality because, in this text, they are either preceded by positive adjectives or followed by positive nouns (from both formal and semantic viewpoints) which both refer to a type, or normal expected value. The positive valuation expressed by the positive word (*pure*, *purity*) is reinforced by the negative prefixed antonym such as *unadulterated* or *unstained*.

- (9) a. You don't know what an existence they lead down there. It is *pure unadulterated* country life. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 195)  
 b. Si vous saviez la vie qu'ils mènent là-bas. La vie rurale à l'état pur. (Crevier trans., p. 240)  
 c. Vous n'imaginez pas l'existence qu'ils mènent là-bas. C'est la vie à la campagne pure et sans mélange. (Gattégno trans., p. 307)

<sup>9</sup>In (8b), as in (5b) (*tel quel*), the translation uses a marker of identification, *identique à lui-même*, because of the absence of change. We will argue in section 5.3.3. that the French prefix *in-* also expresses the absence of change.



- (10) a. Even the *common uneducated* audience of the pit and gallery lost their interest in the play. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 96)  
 b. Même le public du parterre et du poulailler, grossier et inculte, se désintéressa de la pièce. (Crevier trans., p. 137)  
 c. Même les spectateurs ordinaires et incultes du parterre et des galeries perdirent tout intérêt pour la pièce. (Gattégno trans., p. 171)
- (11) a. The sullen murmur of the bees shouldering their way through the *long unmown* grass (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 7)  
 b. Le morne bourdonnement des abeilles se frayant un chemin à travers les hautes herbes folles (Crevier trans., p. 43)  
 c. Le murmure obstiné des abeilles cheminant lourdement parmi les hautes herbes qu'on n'avait pas encore tondues (Gattégno trans., p. 51)
- (12) a. those *curious unpictured* sins whose very mystery lent them their subtlety and their charm. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 137)  
 b. ces curieux péchés sans contours auxquels leur mystère même conférait charme et subtilité (Crevier trans., p. 181)  
 c. ces mystérieux péchés inimaginables, dont la subtilité et le charme reposent sur leur mystère même (Gattégno trans., p. 230)
- (13) a. the face of the man he had sought to kill had all the bloom of boyhood, all the *unstained purity* of youth. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 211)  
 b. le visage de celui qu'il avait voulu tuer était dans la fleur de la jeunesse dont il avait toute la pureté immaculée (Crevier trans., p. 258)  
 c. le visage de l'homme qu'il avait voulu tuer avait toute la fraîcheur de l'adolescence, toute la pureté immaculée de la jeunesse (Gattégno trans., p. 329)
- (14) a. He felt a wild longing for the *unstained purity* of his boyhood— (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 243)  
 b. Il avait la nostalgie de la pureté sans tache de sa vie de jeune garçon (Crevier trans., p. 291)  
 c. Il éprouvait un désir fou de retrouver la pureté immaculée de son enfance (Gattégno trans., p. 372)
- (15) a. he had prayed that the portrait should bear the burden of his days, and he *keep the unsullied splendour* of eternal youth! (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 244)  
 b. tandis que lui conserverait intacte la splendeur de l'éternelle jeunesse! (Crevier trans., p. 292)  
 c. tandis que lui conserverait éternellement intact l'éclat de la jeunesse! (Gattégno trans., p. 372)

Examples (9) to (15) can be summarized in Table 1, in which the two synonyms being juxtaposed are in bold characters.

The examples in Table 1 lead us to consider that the author, in his aesthetic approach, constantly tries to find the proper word or the right definition to express the exact quality involved. The adjectives used therefore take on an almost metalinguistic

**Table 1:** Translations of attributive sequences

Ex.	English text			Crevier trans.	Gattégno trans.
(2)	bestial	sodden	<b>unclean</b>	Le visage pourrait devenir, bestial, abruti, sale.	Le visage pouvait bien devenir bestial, bouffi, immonde.
(9)	<i>pure</i>	<b>unadulterated</b>	country life	La vie rurale à l'état pur	la vie à la campagne pure et sans mélange
(10)	the <i>common</i>	<b>uneducated</b>	audience	le public du parterre et du poulailler, grossier et inculte	les spectateurs ordinaires et incultes
(11)	the <i>long</i>	<b>unmown</b>	grass	les hautes herbes folles	les hautes herbes qu'on n'avait pas encore tondues
(12)	those <i>curious</i>	<b>unpictured</b>	sins	ces curieux péchés sans contours	ces mystérieux péchés inimaginables
(13)	all the	<b>unstained</b>	<i>purity of youth</i>	tout la pureté immaculée	Toute la pureté immaculée de la jeunesse
(14)	<i>the</i>	<b>unstained</b>	<i>purity of his boyhood</i>	la pureté sans tache de sa vie de jeune garçon	la pureté immaculée de son enfance
(15)	the	<b>unsullied</b>	<i>splendour of eternal youth</i>	lui conserverait intacte la splendeur de l'éternelle jeunesse!	lui conserverait éternellement intact l'éclat de la jeunesse!

dimension and are an attempt to link description and value judgment. Here also, the frequent expression of high degree in these cases of tautology can be accounted for thanks to the theoretical concept of notional domain, as we have seen in Culioli (1990:70).

Our contention is that reference to the attractor results from a dual movement from I to E and back. This reference to the attracting centre, or attractor, is often rendered in French by *sans* + *NOUN* or adjectives with inseparable prefixes. *Sans* + *NOUN* appears as one translation out of two for three examples: (9), (12), and (14). We will argue that these translations involve a single operation that we will expand on in section 5.2.1, that of *constructed negation*. Culioli (1990:95) gives the well-known example of the etymology of *not* in English: it comes from *ne* + *ā* + *wiht*, that is *not a bit* or *not in the slightest*, in which the slightest occurrence is negated.

As far as our corpus is concerned, a stain is the minimal occurrence of dirt (13)–(14). This minimal occurrence corresponds to the last point on the gradient of E.<sup>10</sup> This last point being negated, one returns to I. This operation also applies to our own translations: it would be easy to add *aucun*, as in (9c). Example (14b) is a little more awkward, because it is tautological but also because of the medial position of the prepositional phrase in the sentence.

On the whole, the attributive function of the words is maintained in French, with synthetic solutions that are also adopted because the attributive forms specify or intensify an attributive adjective or even two. More analytical solutions, such as Gattégno's (11), are rare: it contains a relative clause and the negation *pas*, which appear only once.

### 3.2.2 *Predicative position*

As the preceding examples are in attributive position, it is difficult to draw reliable conclusions as regards their acoustic correlates: in attributive position, relative prominence between the primary stressed base and potential secondary stress on the prefix is not a significant issue because the word is not the nucleus. Therefore, the difference between primary and secondary stress is unclear. In these cases, we see the stylistic differences between the two recordings. Gonzalez prefers not to make the prefix prominent at all, where *librivox* favours a double fall on the prefix and on the base. Moreover, in some cases, there is clearly a stress shift effect, destressing the primary stress of the base.

However, it is easier to analyze the adjectives and participles in predicative position in (16) and (17) (which is a quotation from *Romeo and Juliet*, II.ii). In these cases of tautology, we note that the base is prominent; the word as a whole is in focus, which seems to be the case when there is no dual opposition:

- (16) a. It was the girl's fault, not his. He had dreamed of her as a great artist, had given his love to her because he had thought her great. Then she had disappointed him. She had been *shallow* and **unworthy**. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 104)
- b. Elle l'avait ensuite déçu. Elle avait été superficielle et insipide. (Crevier trans., p. 145)
- c. Puis elle l'avait déçu. Elle s'était montrée superficielle, sans valeur. (Gattégno trans., p. 182)
- (17) a. I have no joy of this contract to-night: It is too *rash*, too **unadvised**, too *sudden*; (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 96)
- b. Je ne puis me réjouir du serment de ce sou. Il est trop brusque, trop irréfléchi, trop soudain (Crevier trans., p. 137)
- c. Le serment cette nuit ne me fait nulle joie; Il est trop prompt, trop irréfléchi, trop soudain (Gattégno trans., p. 171)

<sup>10</sup>It is possible to distinguish *unstained* from *stainless* on the basis that *unstained* expresses a state that only applies for a certain timespan, while *stainless* expresses a permanent property. This temporality is particularly relevant in the case of *The Picture of Dorian Gray*.

In these contexts of reinforcement, whether in attributive or predicative position, the most frequent translation is with adjectives with the French inseparable prefix *in-*. This is due to the fact that an attributive adjective expresses a permanent and subjective property. As predicative adjectives often express a value judgment, they are more likely to be gradable.

#### 4. GRADABLE ADJECTIVES IN ENGLISH

Gradable adjectives obviously express valuation, namely a positive or negative value judgment after an unexpected event which is to the disadvantage of the speaker, as in (18) and (19). The speaker expected the reverse value I but has to state E.

##### 4.1 Premodifiers in the English text

This passage from I to E is underscored by the use of premodifiers that express high degree and rule out the possibility of a boundary between the two. Example (17) contains *too*; *how* is used in (18) and (19).

- (18) a. “Oh, Jim!” said Sibyl, laughing, “**how unkind** of you!”  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 73)
- b. – Oh, Jim! dit Sibyl en riant, tu n’es vraiment pas gentil (Crevier trans., p. 113)
- c. que tu es méchant (Gattégno trans., p. 141)
- (19) a. “**How horribly unjust** of you!” cried Lord Henry. “Yes; horribly unjust of you. I make a great difference between people.” (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 14)
- b. – Vous êtes terriblement injuste! s’écria Lord Henry . . . . (Crevier trans., p. 51)
- c. “Vous êtes terriblement injuste!” s’écria Lord Henry. (Gattégno trans., p. 61)

In (20), we have a highly paradoxical generic assertion where Oscar Wilde qualifies good poets as *unpoetical*, which does indeed seem to be contradictory. Here, he reinforces the assertion of the unexpected value for the addressee with a superlative, which implies gradability for the adjective.

- (20) a. A great poet, a really great **poet**, is the most **unpoetical** of all creatures.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 65)
- b. Un grand poète, un vrai grand poète, est l’être le moins poétique qui soit.  
(Crevier trans., p. 105)
- c. Un grand poète, un poète réellement grand, est l’être le moins poétique qui soit.  
(Gattégno trans., p. 132)

However, in these cases, we can find nongradable intensifiers:

- (21) a. Good artists exist simply in what they make, and consequently are **perfectly uninteresting** in what they are.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 65)
- b. Les bons artistes . . . sont, par conséquent, parfaitement inintéressants en eux-mêmes.  
(Crevier trans., p. 105)
- c. Les bons artistes . . . sont en conséquence totalement inintéressants dans ce qu’ils sont.  
(Gattégno trans., p. 132)

- (22) a. anybody can be good in the country. There are no temptations there. That is the reason why people who live out of town are so *absolutely uncivilized*.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 232)
- b. les gens qui ne vivent pas en ville ne sont absolument pas civilisés.  
(Crevier trans., p. 280)
- c. qui vivent loin des villes sont si radicalement barbares. (Gattégno trans., p. 357)

Interestingly, in both (21) and (22),<sup>11</sup> the prefix is clearly prominent and so we have the same acoustic characteristics as those which are associated with special focus in cases of dual opposition for *ungradable* adjectives, as in (3), (4), and (5). This tends to confirm our analysis of these adjectives as ungradable despite the presence of the intensifier which potentially suggests that the adjective is gradable but which in fact just serves a rhetorical purpose as in the reinforced tautological constructions analyzed in section 3.2. The prominence of the prefix also tends to reflect the speaker's negative judgment of the value he asserts.

#### 4.2 Adjectives as understatements and frequent gradability in translation

By contrast, adjectives in *un-* are also used as understatements to alleviate this subjective reaction, as in (23) and (24). The position adopted on the notional domain is that of the boundary between I and E:

- (23) a. You really must not allow yourself to become sunburnt. It would be **unbecoming**.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 29)
- b. Cela ne vous siérait pas. (Crevier trans., p. 66)
- c. Ce serait peu seyant. (Gattégno trans., p. 80)
- (24) a. "I *don't wish* to be **unkind**, but I can't see you again. You have disappointed me."  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 101)
- b. Je ne voudrais pas être désagréable mais je ne pourrai plus vous revoir.  
(Crevier trans., p. 142)
- c. je ne veux pas être cruel, mais je ne vous reverrai plus. (Gattégno trans., p. 178)

In both cases, the translations feature a gradable adjective in French, as in (23), with *peu* and (24), with *mal*. The prefix does not have acoustic prominence and so the whole word is in focus.

### 5. PARTICIPLES OR "UN-PASSIVE" CONSTRUCTIONS

Contrary to adjectives, participles are mostly ungradable and convey valuation less often, which is also due to the fact that many examples in the corpus express unexpected indifference.

<sup>11</sup>For (22), the Gonzalez recording omits *absolutely*, and we have clear prominence on the base, as for other contexts without dual opposition. For the *librivox* recording, there is a double pitch movement on both prefix and base.

## 5.1 Ungradability

Only one example in the corpus contains an explicitly ungradable participle due to the presence of *quite* but ungradable premodifiers could easily be added to many examples.

- (25) a. He held the light up again to the canvas and examined it. The surface seemed to be **quite undisturbed** and as he had left it. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 75)
- b. La surface paraissait absolument intacte et telle qu'il l'avait laissée.  
(Crevier trans., p. 220)
- c. La surface semblait être restée telle qu'il l'avait laissée, absolument intacte.  
(Gattégno trans., p. 281)

The ungradability of the participles can be explained by:

- the gradability of their nonprefixed base (*changed, disturbed*);
- their expression of the unexpected;
- the fact that participles refer to an expected event whereas adjectives express the absence of an expected property, even if the prefixed forms studied express the otherness of a change of state, that is no change at all, hence the possibility to express permanent properties in translations, as we will see in 5.2.2.

In the next part, we will concentrate on the translations and oral realizations of the past participles that imply an *a posteriori* perspective. We will focus on the case where participles express the unexpected, namely (b2) in Figure 1. They appear mainly in predicative position in “*un-passive constructions*” (Bourdin 2003:104). These constructions express the speaker’s surprise at the unexpected end result. The negation of a preestablished, or preconstructed causal link may trigger a value judgment on his/her part. Example (26) clearly illustrates what Oscar Wilde sets out to achieve in his clearly ironic vision of aesthetics in terms of unexpected indifference.

- (26) a. The harsh intervals and shrill discords of barbaric music stirred him at times when Schubert’s grace, and Chopin’s beautiful sorrows, and the mighty harmonies of Beethoven himself, fell **unheeded** on his ear. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 149)
- b. la grâce de Schubert, la belle douleur de Chopin et les harmonies puissantes de Beethoven laissaient son oreille insensible. (Crevier trans., p. 194)
- c. la grâce de Schubert, les belles souffrances de Chopin et les puissantes harmonies de Beethoven lui-même laissaient son oreille insensible.  
(Gattégno trans., p. 247)

## 5.2 *un-passive constructions*

For these participles, we come across translations that refer to negated occurrences of events. However, even if the passive voice is used more frequently in English than in French, this is not enough to explain why analytical translations are used.

### 5.2.1 “Constructed negation” in translation (Culioli 1990:93)

In particular, one choice in translation that is clearly linked to the unexpected is again that of constructed negation: the French expansions with *aucune*, *encore*, and *rien*<sup>12</sup> below clearly mark a mental scanning operation which leads to the negation of the slightest possible occurrence of the event: one dish in a meal for example in (27). Likewise, *encore* in (28) refers to the time span (see Bourdin 2003:110) and *aucun* in (29) negates the potential factors which may trigger the event expressed by the participle. This scanning operation may even go as far as negating any occurrence at all, as we see in the examples.

- (27) a. Plate after plate went away **untasted**. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 196)  
 b. Il ne toucha pas à un plat. (Crevier trans., p. 241)  
 c. Les plats repartirent l'un après l'autre sans qu'il y ait touché. (Gattégno trans., p. 308)
- (28) a. when Isabella was young and Prim **unthought of** (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p.39)  
 b. quand Isabella était jeune et que rien ne laissait encore prévoir Prim (Crevier trans., p. 77)  
 c. quand Isabella était jeune et que rien n'annonçait Prim (Gattégno trans., p. 95)
- (29) a. His night had been **untroubled** by any images of pleasure or of pain. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p.180)  
 b. Aucune image, agréable ou désagréable, n'avait troublé sa nuit. (Crevier trans., p. 225)  
 c. Aucune image, plaisante ou douloureuse, n'avait troublé sa nuit. (Gattégno trans., p. 287)

And indeed, this is reflected in the way (29) is read in the Gonzalez recording where the duration of the prefix is not only exceptionally long (representing over 42% of the whole word, where average duration is below 30%), thereby highlighting the negation but there is also considerable emphasis on the word *any* which is very highly pitched, thus reflecting total negation of all possible occurrences.<sup>13</sup>

Example (30) appears in attributive position and can be related to the cases of tautology examined in section 2.2. The same translation technique is used not only because of the absence of a close equivalent in French<sup>14</sup> but also because the utterance expresses some form of surprise or at least a sharp surprising contrast, and is a case of dramatic irony.

- (30) a. I know now that I was quite right in what I fancied about him. *His life is dreadful*. But you, Dorian, with your pure, bright, innocent face, and your *marvellous untroubled* youth — I can't believe anything against you. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 167)

<sup>12</sup>*Rien* is etymologically related to the Latin word *res* ‘thing’, that is, ‘the slightest thing’.

<sup>13</sup>Similarly, in the expression *not at all*, if the speaker insists on negating the possibility of any occurrence, *all* may be highlighted in acoustic terms.

<sup>14</sup>*Non troublée* would be awkward and *introublée* does not exist.

- b. Mais toi, Dorion, avec ton visage pur, lumineux et innocent, ta magnifique jeunesse que rien ne trouble (Crevier trans., p. 211)
- c. Mais toi, Dorion, avec ton visage éclatant, pur, innocent, et ta prodigieuse jeunesse, que rien n'altère (Gattégno trans., p. 269)

The reader knows how far from the truth this is.

### 5.2.2 Addition of the suffix *-able* in French

The translations above can be considered as analytical both on formal and operational criteria. We argue that other translations, where participles are translated as adjectives with the suffix *-able*, are also analytical in that they also illustrate the operation of constructed negation, although they may look synthetic from a formal perspective: the inseparable prefix *in-* combines with the suffix *-able* to negate the very possibility of an event and the two are inseparable. Of course they tend to express permanent properties. In (5), (26), (31), and (32), they appear in predicative position whereas in (7) and (12), in attributive position.

- (31) a. The only person **unmoved** was the girl herself. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p.96)  
 b. La seule personne qui restât imperturbable était la jeune fille elle-même. (Crevier trans., p. 137)  
 c. La seule personne qui restât impassible était la jeune fille elle-même. (Gattégno trans., p. 172)
- (32) a. walked **unseen** in open field (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 44)  
 b. allait invisible à travers champs (Crevier trans.)  
 c. parcourt, invisible, les prairies découvertes (Gattégno trans.)

Whether in predicative or attributive position, the addition of the suffix *-able* in translation is a case of extrapolation in the sense that while the English participles refer to an isolated event that is not realized, their French equivalents in *-able* express a permanent property of the subject. This extrapolation is connected to the subjective valuation and the expression of high degree that follows the expression of the unexpected and the passage from I to E.

### 5.2.3 Absence of change and synthetic solutions

When the French prefix *in-* is separable, as in (33) and (34), one can argue that the translations refer to non-validated expected events. The absence of change is conducive to strong valuation. The expression of a permanent property of the subject leads to more synthetic solutions in translation, especially the use of the French prefix *in-*.

- (33) a. A cigarette is the perfect type of a perfect pleasure. It is exquisite, and it leaves one **unsatisfied**. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 91)  
 b. elle est délicieuse et vous laisse insatisfait (Crevier trans., p. 133)  
 c. C'est exquis, et cela laisse insatisfait (Gattégno trans., p. 165)

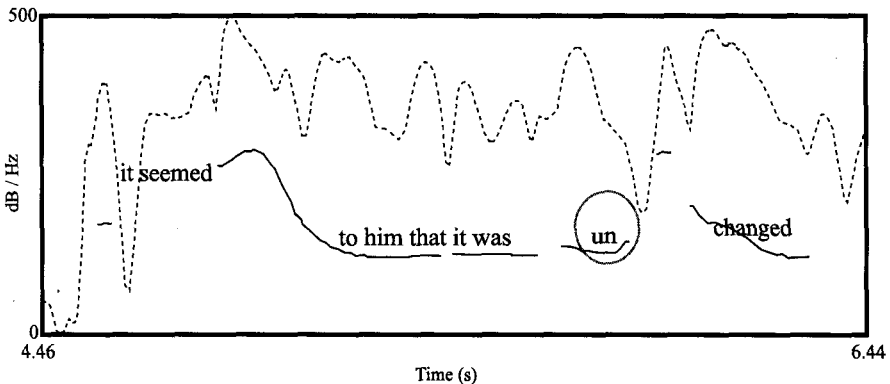


The prefix *un-* in *unsatisfied* is not at all prominent with low pitch and very low relative duration (20% or less). The same correlates can be observed in (34) and simply reflect the absence of change, with no direct opposition.

- (34) a. He took up from the couch the great purple-and-gold texture that covered it, and, holding it in his hands, passed behind the screen. *Was the face on the canvas viler than before?* It seemed to him that it was **unchanged**, and yet his loathing of it was intensified.  
(Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 134)
- b. Il lui parut inchangé mais lui inspira une répugnance accrue.  
(Crevier trans., p. 178)
- c. Il eut l'impression qu'il n'avait pas changé; et cependant son aversion pour lui s'accrut encore.  
(Gattégno trans., p. 226)

In (34b), Crevier's use of the prefix *in-* in French clearly indicates that the external was the case and remains the case. Moreover, Crevier has a subjective interpretation of (34) which is reflected by his choice of verb: *paraître*. It is possible to argue that *paraître* expresses a clearer value judgment than Gattégno's *avoir l'impression*, which rather expresses probability. These differences in interpretation explain the choice of the more synthetic solution with *paraître*, rather than the more analytical solution in (34c)<sup>15</sup> in the form of a full complement clause.

Both recordings have the same acoustic characteristics corresponding to focus on the whole word. Prominence is clearly on the base where we have a low fall, and the prefix is not prominent, as can be seen in Figure 4, presented earlier.



**Figure 5:** Gonzalez recording of Ex. (34)

In (35), however, there is prominence on the prefix because it is read to convey a somewhat provocative statement, hence the implied opposition between the expected value (*wings will be burnt*) and the event (*the wings are not at all affected*). Perhaps this could be interpreted as a scanning operation too, as in 5.3.1., where degrees of burning/singeing are considered as possible effects of which none is encountered:

<sup>15</sup>This slight difference in meaning is also present in the translations of (25): *paraître* is followed by a synthetic adjective whereas *sembler* conveys probability in (25c).

- (35) a. “That a burnt child loves the fire.”  
 “I am not even singed. My wings are **untouched**.” (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 219)
- b. Je ne suis même pas roussie. Mes ailes sont intactes. (Crevier trans., p. 266)
- c. Je ne suis même pas roussie. Mes ailes sont intactes. (Gattégno trans., p. 340)

These past participles refer to unexpected and uncontrolled events.

### 5.3 Intentionality

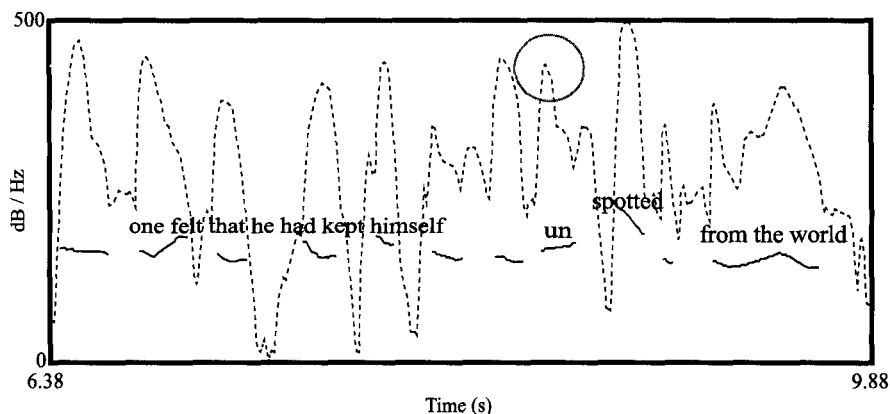
But things are different in (36) and (37), where exactly the same phrase — **unspotted from the world**, occurs in two different parts of the work: in the first part of the novel and again at the end. As both examples express a voluntary effort by the subject, they necessarily entail analytical solutions in translation.

- (36) a. Lord Henry looked at him. Yes, he was certainly wonderfully handsome, with his finely curved scarlet lips, his frank blue eyes, his crisp gold hair. There was something in his face that made one trust him at once. All the candour of youth was there, as well as all youth’s passionate purity. One felt that he had **kept himself unspotted** from the world. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 23)
- b. On sentait qu’il ne s’était pas laissé souiller par le monde. (Crevier trans., p. 60)
- c. On sentait qu’il avait réussi à se préserver des souillures du monde. (Gattégno trans., p. 72)
- (37) a. He had always the look of one who had **kept himself unspotted** from the world. (Wilde, *Dorian Gray*, p. 143)
- b. Il faisait toujours l’effet de s’être gardé intact au contact du monde. (Crevier trans., p. 187)
- c. Il gardait toujours l’apparence d’un homme qui se serait tenu à l’abri des souillures du monde. (Gattégno trans., p. 238)

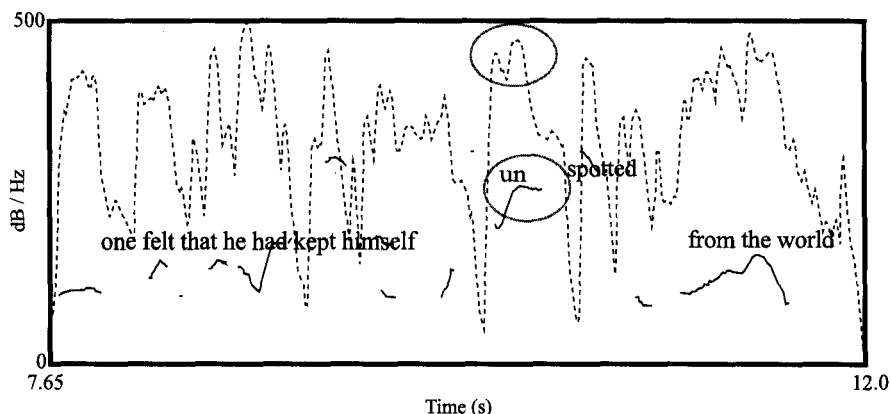
Yet, the different context is very significant as regards interpretation, as the level of true purity is not at all the same. *Dorian Gray*, at the beginning, is truly innocent; at the end, as we know, he is not. This means that we may expect different translations corresponding to the different interpretations and this is indeed what we have. Each translator has a different interpretation of the original text at the beginning, with a more volitional interpretation for Gattégno. But if we compare Gattégno’s two positive equivalents, we could argue that *réussi à se préserver de* (36c) at the beginning is less volitional than *se serait tenu à l’abri de* (37c) used at the end. In (37b), Crevier’s translation uses a negative inseparable prefix which corresponds to a backward-looking perspective that insists on the absence of change and suggests an ironic non-volitional interpretation. And in (37), both translators use pronominal verbs which suggest the potentially volitional aspect of his apparent purity.

Is there any correlation between the acoustic characteristics of the readings and the interpretation differences which are obvious in the different translations? Consider Figures 6 and 7.

For (36), there is no prominence at all on the prefix in the Gonzalez recording, although there is some (secondary stress) in the *Librivox* recording, hence showing



**Figure 6:** Gonzalez recording of Ex. (36)



**Figure 7:** *Librivox* recording of Ex. (36)

slight differences in interpretation. For Gonzalez, the whole word is in focus whereas in the *Librivox* recording, there does seem to be some underscoring of the negative value of the prefix. On the other hand, in (37), the actual duration of the word is considerably longer than in (36), and in both recordings there is very clear prominence on the prefix.

In this case, we suggest that *un-* is prominent in the second occurrence because at this stage, the hero has lost his innocence and this prominence reflects intentionality. This corroborates what we saw in the translation choices.

## 6. CONCLUSION

What connections can be made between translation choices, interpretation, and context? In utterances where the unexpected is expressed as a dual opposition between a value and its other positive counterpart, there is a direct correlation with certain acoustic characteristics associated with special focus, with clear prominence on the

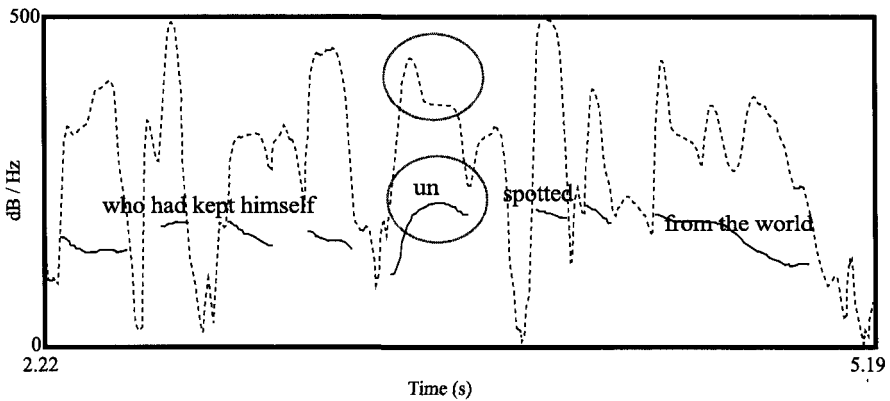


Figure 8: Gonzalez recording of Ex. (37)

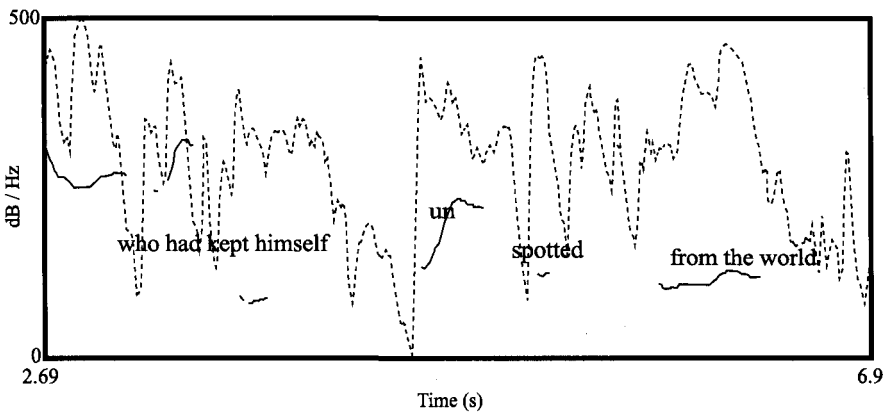


Figure 9: Librivox recording of Ex. (37)

prefix and frequent destressing of the base. Likewise, the translated version uses either *non* or a positive lexical equivalent to reinforce the opposition, as in examples (3) and (4). This occurs with ungradable adjectives in the corpus, where there is a clear distinction between I and E.

Conversely, where there is no explicit opposition, the whole word is in focus so we have prominence on the base but the translation techniques are less marked although the different techniques do reflect the ungradable way adjectives function. For gradable adjectives, there do not appear to be any particular acoustic correlates or translations.

A peculiarity of this corpus is the number of adjectives in *un-* which occur in juxtaposition with another word from the same lexical field, thereby reinforcing the positive value of the word. In this case, surprisingly, we tend to have some prominence on the attributive adjective, be it on the prefix or on the base, although it is in median position between an adjective and a noun. However, this is a tentative conclusion as the word is not the nucleus, so the stress hierarchy is less clear. In these cases, we have seen that analytical solutions in translation involving an operation of “constructed negation” was frequent.

**Table 2:** A summary of the main translation processes

<i>un-</i> translated by ...	Crevier	Gattégno	Comments
adjective with negative separable prefix	20%	22%	over 75% of the examples are translated in the same way by both translators
“constructed negation” ( <i>ne ... pas, rien, sans, toujours ...</i> ) and scanning operation	20%	22%	less than 40% of the examples are translated in the same way by both translators
positive adjective	24%	18%	between 25% and 33% of the examples are translated in the same way by both translators (just 3 correspond)
adjective with negative inseparable prefix	16%	16%	about 50% of the examples are translated in the same way by both translators; where they differ, Gattégno clearly prefers an analytical (constructed) translation unlike Crevier

Finally, where different interpretations seem to be possible, these are reflected in different translations and we can observe different prosodic characteristics. Apparently, intentionality can be correlated to greater prominence of the prefix, the negative value thereby highlighting the unexpected (not realized, not predicted) nature of the event.

These trends do not exclude the fact that translators have specific and personal preferences that are shown in the statistical table below: although we identified about ten translation techniques, 80% of the items resort to just four of these. As we see in Table 2, Crevier tends to favour positive adjectives (24% of all items are translated this way) whereas Gattégno more often uses the process of constructed negation (22% of all items, the same percentage as for transparent translations using a negative separable prefix).

To conclude, in our study we have tried to account for the expression of the unexpected by the prefix *un-*, its translations and oral realizations within Culioli's (1990) *Théorie des Opérations Énonciatives* framework using the notional domain, particularly the construction and negation of the last point on the gradient of the interior I or exterior E in constructions such as *sans + NOUN* or in the combined use of the prefix *in-* and the suffix *-able*.

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