Contrastive corpus analysis of cross-linguistic asymmetries in concessive conditionals

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1. Introduction

This paper aims at describing the use of *wh*-items in universal concessive conditionals in English and French. It will do so on the basis of several corpora, including a parallel corpus of translated text.

Wh-items are nonspecific indefinite items which are used in interrogatives, free relatives, concessive conditionals and other free choice contexts. These items typically tend to form morphological paradigms, as in English where most items are written with initial '*wh*', hence the name *wh*-items. In French most items are written with initial *qu-*. Consequently, these items are referred in French as '*qu-*'. The following examples illustrate some of the various uses of *wh*-items in English and in French:

(1)   **<u>Who</u>** is responsible for purchase of equipment, etc? (BNC, B2M)

(2)   **<u>Whoever</u>** 's running the course needs to fill in this particular form. (BNC, G4X)

(3)   He won't have a go if you have a bad game, but he expects everyone to give their all. If he feels someone is not applying themselves 100 per cent, he won't spare reputations or ego --; **<u>whoever</u>** you are. (BNC, HTY)

(4)   How did Andropulos or **<u>whoever</u>** know when, and from where, that bomber was leaving? (BNC, CKC)

(5)   **Qui** viendra donc se plaindre, depuis la terrasse ensoleillée du huitième étage de l'Hôtel

Bernini [...] de passer trois jours à Rome, même avec son pire ennemi ? (Le Monde, 20

octobre 2006)

[Who will complain on the sunny terrace on the eighth floor of Hotel Bernini that he has to

spend three days in Rome, even with his worst ennemy ?]

(6)   **Qui** dort dîne. (Le Monde, 27 septembre 2007, p. 36)

[Who sleeps, dines]

(7)   "Il a été reconnu coupable. Cela prouve que le système fonctionne, **qui que** vous soyez", a

commenté pour Reuters Pat McQuaid, président de l'Union cycliste internationale. (Le

Monde, 21 septembre 2007, p. 19)

["He's been found guilty. That proves that the system works, whoever you are", Pat

McQuaid, president of the Union cycliste internationale, said to Reuters.]

(8)   "Je n'ai jamais cherché à nuire à **qui que ce soit**, j'invente rien, je ne peux rien ajouter."

[I have never sought to harm anyone, that is the truth, I've got nothing to add.]

As examples (1) and (4) show, *wh*-items appear as independent morphemes in interrogative

clauses . In free relatives they can be supplemented with an additional *ever* in English, as in (2). In

the other two uses, additional items are required in both languages. English resorts to the same

item as the one used in free relatives. French makes use of different items depending on the nature

of the *wh*-.

Examples (3) and (7) are both illustrations of the subordinate clauses that will be at the heart of this

paper. Following a well established tradition since Haspelmath & König (1998) (H&K), I will call

them universal concessive conditionals (henceforth UCC), even though I have reasons to believe

that the name is based on two misunderstandings (see further). The semantics of these clauses will

be discussed in detail in Section 2. At this stage, it suffices to say that UCCs declare a specific category of items irrelevant for the realization of a the content of the main clause. In (3), for instance, 'who you are' is irrelevant to being a possible victim of the person referred to by 'he'. UCCs are an interesting context to study the semantic properties of *wh*-items, because not all *wh*-items appear to be equally suited to be used in UCCs. Several restrictions are reported in the litterature (Quirk et al 1985; Declerck 1991; Huddleston & Pullum 2002; Morel 1996; Grevisse & Goosse 2008), but hardly any credible explanation is offered. In addition, there are substantial differences between languages with respect to these restrictions. In English, UCCs can host all *wh*-items with the exception of *why* (Quirk et al 1985; Declerck 1991; Huddleston & Pullum 2002). In French, on the other hand, only a small set of items is reported to be allowed, including the equivalents of *who* ('*qui*'), *what* ('*quoi*'), *which* ('quel') and *where* ('*où*'). German seems to have one of the most liberal UCCs, since even the equivalent of *why* ('*warum*') is marginally used in UCCs.

Since no actual corpus research has been performed on the compatibilities between *wh*-items and UCCs, they allow a corpus linguist to delve eagerly into virtually unexplored terrain. The contrasts that exist between languages are *gefundenes fressen* for contrastive linguists, as they may inform them of unsuspected and deep-rooted differences in the semantic structure of languages (*wh*-items are among the most fundamental and diachronically stable items in any particular language). Finally, they offer translation theorists a different perspective on how translators deal with lexical gaps. As the use of *wh*-items is diversely restricted in different languages, translators have to come up with creative solutions to compensate for the absence of particular items. Their choices can reveal basic semantic properties of structures and items.

The corpora used for this paper are the following:

- the BYU-BNC, the online available version of the British National Corpus (100 million words). For some of the searches only the 'Newspaper' section was consulted;

- Le Monde via LexisNexis. Searches were restricted to 2005, 2006 and 2007 (approximately 63 million words);

- the JRC Acquis Communautaire Corpus. A paralell corpus of original texts with their translations in 21 languages. The JRC AC essentially is a legal and administrative corpus of texts produced by the institutions of the European Union. Its total size is approximately 636 million words. The size of the English part is approximately 34.5 million words. Searches were restricted to the most recent part of the corpus (2000-2006), totalling around 26.5 million words. Most of the recent texts are originally written in English and translated in the other languages.

The paper will be structured as follows: Section 2 discusses the semantic properties of UCCs; Section 3 gives an overview of the semantic properties of *wh*-items in English and in French, discussing similarities and differences on the basis of a number of independently defined categories. Section 4 presents more detailed information on the use of *wh*-items in UCCs on the basis of grammars and linguistic research, on the one hand, and of monolingual corpus data, on the other. Section 5 presents the translation data and Section 6 makes room for some conclusions.

2. Semantics of UCCs

As their name suggests, UCCs have a special relation with their main clauses. According to H&K, a UCC is a conditional clause because it refers to a set of protases which all entail the apodosis expressed in the main clause. As such they can be rephrased as a disjunction of conditional clauses:

If {*a* or *b* or *c* or *d* ...} then *q*

UCC are however also concessive clauses because they express "an unfavorable circumstance" (Haspelmath & König 1998: 567) for the realization of the apodosis and because the apodosis is necessarily true.

The first misunderstanding concerns the conditional component of the UCC. It seems indeed contradictory to both state that the protasis expresses an unfavorable circumstance for the realization of the apodosis and that it entails the apodosis, as a conditional clause would do. In fact, what a sentence with a UCC means, is that the protasis does not entail that the apodosis is not true, which is linguistically different from saying that the protasis entails that the apodosis is true. UCCs are conditional only with respect to their own truth value: as conditionals, their content is presented as possible, not as true. All well considered, it would in fact be more appropriate to call these clauses conditional concessives, as the concessive component seems to be predominant. The translation data in Section 5 will confirm this view.

The second misunderstanding concerns the quantification involved in UCCs. H&K assume that *wh*-items in UCCs function as variables and that they are quantified over by the morphemes they combine with. In English, quantification is ensured by *ever*; in French it is realized through a combination of the alleged subordinator *que* and the subjunctive mood of the subordinate verb. According to H&K, the quantification involved is universal quantification, as also suggested by the term 'universal concessive conditional'. However, the grammaticalization records in many languages show that UCCs arise from structures involving expressions of irrelevance or willing (Haspelmath & König 1998; Leuschner 2006), which are conceptually related to free choice quantification and not to universal quantification.

Accordingly, the starting point of the analyses in this paper will be that a UCC is basically a concessive clause whose truth value is undetermined. It contains a *wh*-item functioning as a

variable for free choice quantification. To complete the semantic description, I will assume that UCCs involve some sort of scalar implicature. The concessive meaning of UCCs is indeed difficult to account for if no scalar component is assumed. Remember that in H&K's analysis, for a subordinate clause to be concessive, it has to refer to a circumstance that is unfavorable for the realization of the content of the main clause. In the case of UCCs, the presence of a free-choice item causes the subordinate clause to denote a randomly chosen circumstance. However, there is no obvious reason why a randomly chosen circumstance would be particularly unfavorable for the realization of the main clause's content. For instance, going back to example (3), what is claimed about the person referred to as 'he' is not so much that he will not spare the reputation or ego of any randomly chosen individual, but rather that he will not do so even when dealing with very important people (in this particular case, football players):

(3)   He won't have a go if you have a bad game, but he expects everyone to give their all. If he

        feels someone is not applying themselves 100 per cent, he won't spare reputations or ego --;

        whoever you are. (BNC, HTY)

Cases like this implicate a scale of values that contrast with the content of the main clause: some people are more likely to be spared than others, especially if they are important. The UCC focuses the end point of that scale, i.e. those who are most likely to be spared, so as to sharpen the contrast with the content of the main clause. This contrast underpins the concessive relationship.

In sum, concessiveness, free choice and scalarity are the main ingredients of UCCs. As I will show in Section 4, scalarity can even be held accountable for some restrictions on the use of *wh*-items in these contexts.

3. Semantics of *wh*-items

All known languages have paradigms of indefinite items that can be used in interrogative clauses.

As pointed out, in most Indo-European languages these items are also used in (free) relatives, UCCs and other free-choice contexts. In quite a number of non-Indo-European languages, interrogative indefinites coincide with ordinary indefinites. This is for instance the case in Korean and Japanese (see for instance Cheng 1997).

Wh-paradigms are usually composed of a limited number of items which denote basic semantic categories such as referents: 'human' (*who*), 'non-human' (*what*); 'predicates' (*what* + V); features of referents or events: 'identification' (*which, what*), 'nature' (*what* (*kind of*)) 'place' (*where*), 'time' (*when*), 'manner' (*how*), 'reason-cause' (*why, how come*),'purpose' (*why, what for*) 'amount-number' (*how much, many*) and 'extent' (*how*). Obviously, most of these meanings can also be expressed by a composite form, called periphrastic here, involving the 'identification' item and a specific noun referring to time, place, etc., as in *what time, what place, what way, what reason,...* In this paper, periphrastic forms will be considered to be instances of the 'identification' category and not of the different other semantic categories they would belong to according to the meaning expressed by the head.

In many languages the paradigm of *wh*-elements tends to be organised roughly along the same lines. Usually there are between four and seven elements covering the major semantic categories. As the number of semantic categories exceeds the number of available items, some of the items are used for more than one category. In English this is particularly the case of *how* and *what*. In a small number of cases, semantic categories are expressed by more than one element. This is the case of the *why-how come* pair in English, although there are admittedly subtle differences in use (cf. Collins 1991).

Languages differ only moderately with regard to the precise form-function correspondences. The general picture is one of great symmetry: in English and French, for instance (Table 1), there is a

fairly straightforward relationship between the individual items of both languages in most cases.

	EN	FR
human	who	qui
non-human	what	que, quoi
predicate	what + V	que, quoi + V
identification	which (one) / what	(le)quel
nature	what (kind of), who	que, quoi ... comme, qui
place	where	où
time	when	quand
manner	how	comment
reason	why, how come	pourquoi, comment se fait-il
purpose	why, what for	pourquoi, pour quoi
amount, number	how much/many	combien
extent	how (much)	combien

Table 1. Semantic categories and *wh*-items in English and French

Some asymmetry can be observed in the "identification", "amount, number" and "extent"

categories:

- in French, the 'amount, number' and 'extent' categories make use of a separate item

   combien, whereas in English the "manner" item *how* is used for 'extent', sometimes in

combination with *much* (*how bad is his condition?*[1] *how much do you really love her?*),

and *how much* or *how many* are used for number and amount;

- *what* can be used as an interrogative determiner in English indicating identification, but its French non-human equivalents *que* and *quoi* cannot. Instead, French consistently uses the equivalent of *which* (*quel*)[2].

The similarity of both paradigms precludes any explanation of cross-linguistic differences in the context of UCCs in terms of paradigmatic differences between the languages involved.

In semantic theory, with the possible exception of *why*, wh-items are believed to be variables, which means that their interpretation partly depends on the kind of quantifier they appear with, much like indefinite expressions. This is certainly the case with adverbial quantifiers, such as *usually, mostly*, as shown by Berman 1994; however, when it comes to combining them with ordinary quantifiers, all logic seems to disappear. The universal quantifier *all*, for instance, can only be combined with *who* and *what* (the latter only in American English). The free-choice quantifier *any* can only be combined with *where* and *how*. The French free-choice quantifier *n'importe*, on the other hand, combines with all *wh*-items, except *pourquoi*. This is hardly the kind of distribution one would expect when dealing with variables. *Wh*-items should therefore not be considered on the same footing as the variables used in logical formulae. They have semantic

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[1] It should be noted, however, that French would not even use *combien* in this particular case. For some yet unexplained reason, there is no way in French to ask for the extent of some property. An approximative translation of this example would be: *dans quel état il est?* ('in what state is he?').

[2] There are other minor differences which have not been listed here, because they concern specific individual uses. English *how* used in *how far*, for instance, has *où* as its French counterpart as part of *jusqu'où* (*how far will he go : jusqu'où ira-t-il*).

properties of their own, which make them more or less suitable for specific contexts.

4. *Wh*-items in UCCs

4.1. English

Grammars of English are consistent in what they consider to be the *wh*-items that can be found in

UCCs. Quirk et al. 1985; Declerck 1991; Huddleston & Pullum 2002 all contend that all *wh*-items

are used in UCCs, except the causal item *why*, a view which is shared by the linguistic litterature

(cf. Tsai 1999). The examples that are quoted usually illustrate only the most typical meanings of

the items involved: 'manner' for *how,* 'non-human referent' for *what*, etc. For a number of

categories mentioned in Table 1, there is no information. Some corpus research is therefore needed

to fill in the gaps.

The BNC provides examples of the following categories:

human: (9)   Anti-fascists argued that **whoever** was to blame for the violence, the

                         police and courts treated them more harshly, and the National

                         Council for Civil Liberties certainly produced reliable testimony to

                         back up those claims. (BNC CS6)

non-human   (10)   But **whatever** the papers think, and **whatever** the English

                         management says, there has never been any trouble between us and

                         the English players. (BNC CH7)

predicate   (11)   But **whatever** happens we're providing a platform for the season

                         that is exciting. (BNC CH3)

identification   (12)   Now that Lamb has blown the whole affair into the open, Sir Colin

                         must see the cheats are exposed and the door slammed forever on

the ball doctors, **whichever** country they belong to. (BNC CH3)

nature   (13)   **Whatever kind** of music we are writing, we must move forward

with the most essential factor (usually melody) for at least an

adequate distance before turning back to consider the rest. (BNC

GVJ)

(14)   He won't have a go if you have a bad game, but he expects everyone

to give their all. If he feels someone is not applying themselves 100

per cent, he won't spare reputations or ego --; **whoever** you are.

(BNC, HTY)

place   (15)   "**Wherever** Steve went Sarah would find him. It was embarrasing"

(BNC CH1)

time   (16)   Under this head belongs every form of words by which, in speaking

of a proposed measure of relief, an intimation is given that the time

at which the proposal is made, **whenever** it may be, is too early for

the purpose. (BNC EEC)

manner   (17)   It is excellent **however** you use it, but rather than fiddling with small

mince pies, my great aunts from Norfolk Island made huge

double-crusted pies, the pineapple layered between home-made

mince meat, rich with rum and spices. (BNC AHK)

reason   *whyever, *however come

purpose   *whyever, *whatever for

amount, number   (18)   **However many** women he took to himself, they were not Beth.

(BNC FPK)

extent

(19) That means shifting the patients around **<u>however</u>** sick they are.

(BNC CH1)

(20) I was so downhearted and at such a low ebb because he made it

painfully clear I didn't figure in that great club's **<u>future</u>** , **<u>however</u>**

much I loved the place. (BNC CH3)

All categories are represented, except 'reason' and 'purpose'. As pointed out in the litterature,

there is no instance of *whyever* in a UCC[3], nor of *whatever for* or *however come* in the intended

meanings.

On the web, there is no first-hand example of *whyever*. However, there is a Wiktionary article on

'whyever' which lists three occurrences from different written sources:

(21) Whatever we do, and **whyever** we do it, does not every motive originate in self, and does

not every act proceed out of the individual's instinct for self-fulfilment ? (Wilson Follett

1918. *The Modern Novel: A Study of the Purpose and the Meaning of Fiction*, p. 79)

(22) **Whyever** they began, there was no perceptible wolf at their door. (Steven Polgar 1975**.**

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[3] A number of misspelled interrogative *why ever* can be found, as in the following example:

(i)   " He was such a charming fellow, " said Martin. " And I thought some people might like them. " " But nobody

liked them, " said Clelia. " Nobody at all. " " **<u>Whyever</u>** did you buy it then? " said Clara. " My mother bought

it, " said Clelia. (BNC EFP)

And there is one occurrence of *whyever* used as a free-choice indefinite:

(ii)   SAGITTARIUS (Nov 23 --; Dec 21) On the soccer field of life, Sagittarians are (of course) the centaur

forwards. Not only do you have to be up there, in the thick of the action, the whole time, but you also

specialize in following your balls! This month, though, the sky suggests mental agility is your best asset. Sex:

Whoever … Income: Whenever … Expenditure: However … Creativity: Whatever … Travel: Wherever …

Work: **<u>Whyever</u>** … Opportunity: Forever … Adventure: Whichever … Success: As ever. (BNC ECU)

Population, Ecology, and Social Evolution, p. 74)

(23)   "And **whyever** they were doing it, they were the ones responsible for what happened to her

and all of the rest of my friends in the first place." (David Weber, Linda Evans 2006**.** *Hell's*

Gate)

Despite these three examples, it is fair to say that the views expressed in the litterature are

confirmed by the observed facts: *whyever* is practically banned from UCCs. This is not only the

case in English, but can be observed in French and Spanish as well. In German and Dutch, causal

items are occasionally found in UCCs, but their use is marginal compared to other items (cf.

Defrancq & Leuschner in preparation). In Defrancq & Leuschner (in preparation), it is also

suggested that the incompatibility between causal items and UCCs is due to the scalar component

of the concessive semantics.

This is not to say that the concepts of cause and purpose cannot be expressed in the context of a

UCC. The BNC provides quite a number of examples where they are, but in all these cases a

periphrastic form is used involving nouns such as *reason, cause, purpose*, as in the following

examples:

(24)   In taking this position, the bishops were also following the lead of Pope John Paul II who,

on his visit to Ireland in 1979 had argued: "Divorce, for **whatever reason** it is introduced,

inevitably becomes easier and easier to obtain and it gradually comes to be accepted as a

normal part of life" (1979). (BNC A07)

(25)   But **whatever purpose** your music has been commissioned for, it is typical that the

company who commissions the piece obtains the copyright to it as well. (BNC C9J)

Speakers can also resort to expressions of irrelevance, which are natural producers of new

concessive clauses (cf. Thompson & Longacre 1985; Leuschner 2006). In English, *matter* can be used with a negation to form a clause very similar to a UCC:

(26)   I was a gambler on a winning streak: it didn't **matter what** number I placed my bet on, it

always came up a winner. (BNC, ASV)

In this case, *why* seems to be allowed, as the following example, taken from the BNC, shows:

(27)   Article 2 (h) of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties provides that "A third State

means a State not a party to a treaty." It does not **matter why** a State has failed to become

a party to a treaty, or whether it is eligible to become a party and intends at some time to do

so. (BNC, EF3)

Admittedly, the punctuation of both examples is different. In the first case, the use of a comma between the clause with the expression of irrelevance and the clause with which it is associated suggests that they both belong to the same utterance and that their relationship can be seen as one in which the *matter*-clause is a dependent clause, as UCCs normally are. In the second case, on the other hand, the puncutation clearly marks the *matter*-clause as an independent clause. The difference could be significant: if causal items, such as *why* are really incompatible with the context of a UCC, as suggested by cross-linguistic evidence, then it should not come as a surprise that causal items are not admitted in grammaticalized instances of *matter*-clauses, as these resemble UCCs most.

4.2. French

In French the UCCs described in the litterature take the form of a *wh*-item followed by the complementizer *que* and a verb in the subjunctive, as in example (7), repeated here:

(7)   "Il a été reconnu coupable. Cela prouve que le système fonctionne, **qui que** vous soyez", a

commenté pour Reuters Pat McQuaid, président de l'Union cycliste internationale. (Le

Monde, 21 septembre 2007, p. 19)

Their use is much more restricted in French than in English. Various sources point out that UCCs tend to appear in fixed or semi-fixed expressions, such as *quoi qu'il en soit* ('anyway'), *quoi qu'il dise* ('whatever he says'), etc. (cf. Morel 1996). Their frequency in French is also much lower than in English: French UCCs introduced by *qui que*, for instance, have a frequency of 0.1 per million words, whereas their English *whoever*-counterparts count 2.9 occurrences per million words. Both figures are based on similar genres: the Le Monde newspaper 2005-2007 and the 'Newspaper' section of the BNC. The only really productive UCC seems to be the one with *quel que*, partly because it has to compensate for other *wh*-items that cannot be used in UCCs.

According to various sources, the paradigm of *wh*-items that can be used in UCCs is indeed rather limited (Hadermann 1993; Morel 1996; Grevisse & Goosse 2008). Only *qui* ('who')*, quoi* ('what'), *où* ('where') and *quel* ('which') are reported to lend themselves to such a use. In the latter case, the conjunction *que* is used twice: once attached to *quel* and once after the noun which is determined by *quelque*, the correct form thus being: *quelque* N *que*. However, in most cases this complex form is avoided and replaced by a cleft form based on the ordinary form of the *wh*-item, followed by *que ce soit* N *que* or *que ce soit* N *qui*. In other words, *quelque groupe qu'il rejoigne* as an equivalent of 'whatever group he joins' is much less frequent than *quel que soit le groupe qu'il rejoint*.

Grevisse & Goosse 2008 quote various examples of *comment que* ('however'), but acknowledge that they are rare. They also report that *comme que* ('however') can be found in Swiss French. Morel 1996 contends that even though some grammars quote examples of *quand* ('when'), *comment* ('how) or *combien* ('how much/many') used in UCCs, these are either 'archaic or very colloquial' (Morel 1996: 127). Benzitoun 2006 quotes some web examples of *quand que ce soit*, but used as a free choice indefinite. Finally, Hadermann 1993 suggests that *pourquoi* is also one of

the items that cannot be used in UCCs.

These claims are proven true by corpus research. Distributed over the previously identified semantic categories, the attested forms are the following:

human	(28)	La nazification de l'ennemi, **qui que** soit cet ennemi, semble avoir caractérisé, à très peu d'exceptions près, les modalités du discours des élités d'Israel. (Le Monde, 1 février 2005)
		[The discourse modalities of Israel's elites seem to have been characterized, with few exceptions, by nazification of the enemy, whoever that enemy is.]
non-human	(29)	Ils ont découvert, avec l'hitlérisme, que, **quoi qu**'ils disent, fassent ou rêvent, ils étaient rivés à leur judéité. (Le Monde, 11 novembre 2007, p. 14)
		[They found out under Hitler's regime that whatever they said, did or dreamt, they were riveted to their jewness.]
predicate	(30)	Allant plus loin encore, il se disait soulagé de savoir que, **quoi qu**'il arrive, cet enfant avait un avenir assuré. (Le Monde, 29 mars 2007, p. 33)
		[Going even further, he said he was relieved to see that, whatever happened, this child's future was safe.]
identification	(31)	On peut dire que partout en Afrique noire, à la différence de l'Algérie [sic], les Européens ont " pris le virage " et ont admis - **quelque** préjugé **que** certains puissent conserver au fond d'eux-mêmes - la collaboration avec les Noirs, voire une éventuelle

subordination à ceux-ci. (Le Monde, 11 mai 2007, p. 32)

[It is not false to say that everywhere in Subsaharian Africa, except in Algeria, Europeans have "made the twist" and have accepted cooperation with black people or even to be at their orders, whatever prejudice some may still have deep down.]

(32) L'étude note que " **quel que** soit le groupe ", les résultats des élèves aux tests sont moins bons dès lors qu'ils doivent " mettre en jeu des repères temporels et spatiaux ". (Le Monde, 29 décembre 2007, p. 10)

[The study points out that " whatever group is concerned ", the test results obtained by pupils worsen when they have to use reference points in time and space.]

nature (7) "Il a été reconnu coupable. Cela prouve que le système fonctionne, **qui que** vous soyez", a commenté pour Reuters Pat McQuaid, président de l'Union cycliste internationale. (Le Monde, 21 septembre 2007, p. 19)

["He's been found guilty. That proves that the system works, whoever you are", Pat McQuaid, president of the Union cycliste internationale said to Reuters.]

place (33) Hasard ou maladresse - c'est une question devenue rituelle avec lui -, il commençait souvent l'entretien en néerlandais, d'**où que** vint son intervieweur. (Le Monde, 26 septembre 2007, p. 18)

[Coincidence or clumsiness – an almost ritual question in his case –

he often used to begin the interview in Dutch, wherever the

interviewer came from.]

time	*quand que
manner	*comment que
reason	*pourquoi que, *comment que se fasse-t-il
purpose	*pourquoi que, *pour quoi que
amount, number	*combien que
extent	*combien que

It should be noticed that the 'extent' meaning can be expressed by means of *quelque ... que*, which derives from the 'identification' item. Examples are rare and usually quoted from other, older sources, as in the following case:

 (34)   Ce que signifiait peut-être à sa manière La Rochefoucauld, qui affirmait que " **quelque** rare **que** soit le véritable amour, il l'est encore moins que la véritable amitié ". (Le Monde, 22 juin 2005)

[That is perhaps what La Rochefoucauld meant to say in his own personal way when he stated that however rare real love is, it is less so than real friendship.]

Other adverbs such as *aussi* and *si* and even the preposition *pour* can be used in stead of *quelque* with the same concessive meaning.

Examples of some of the missing categories can be found on the web. Occurrences of *comment que* usually are either uses found in old documents made available through the web or modern uses made possible by analogy:

(35)   Pour ceux qui n'arrivent pas encore à se dire que voler, **quoi** ou **comment que ce soit**, est "mal", passez du temps sur qqchose que vous mettez en vente (www.cuk.ch/articles/2675)

[For those who can still not understand that stealing, whatever it is or however it is done, is "bad", spend some time putting something on sale]

Quand que is surprisingly frequent on the web. In many cases it is used as a free choice indefinite, but there are some genuine UCCs as well, even in contexts without analogy:

(36)   Au cours des quelques derniers mois, il n'avait rien tenté; mais elle était morte de peur qu'il puisse, et il le ferait probablement, retourner à ses vieilles habitudes une fois qu'il pouvait être sûr d'être tranquille. Severus avait purement et simplement refusé de venir chez les Rosiers, mais il lui offrait l'hospitalité-ou plutôt un asile- **quand que** ce soit qu'elle en ait besoin.

(http://www.fanfiction.net/s/1227698/16/LOracleDeLaSybilleLivre2_Le_Cr_ne_et_les_Serpents)

[During the last couple of months, he hadn't made any attempt ; but she was terrified that he would fall back into old habits, and he probably would, once he was sure to be left alone. Severus had simply refused to go at the Rosiers' place, but he offered her hospitality – or was it an asylum – whenever it was she needed one.]

Finally, there are some examples of *combien que*, but they all come from old documents made available through the web. No examples of other disallowed *wh*-items were found.

French speakers have two alternatives for the disallowed combinations. Morel 1996 reports that French possesses periphrastic forms, such as *à quelque moment que, de quelque façon que, pour quelque cause que*. However, these have not been found in the corpus. What the corpus did provide, was a number of periphrastic forms with the item *quel* in a clefted structure:

(37)   Selon ce dispositif, **quel que** soit le **moment** où l'assuré sortira de son contrat, les frais ne devront pas être supérieurs à 5 % du montant qu'il percevra. (Le Monde, 4 octobre 2005)

[According to this provision, whenever the insurance taker comes to be released from his or her contract, the costs should not exceed 5% of the sum he or she will receive.]

(38) « **Quelle que** soit la **façon** dont on la présente, la pause décidée par M. Barroso est rassurante, car elle montre que la libéralisation à tout crin n'est plus possible », dit un responsable bruxellois. (Le Monde 3 février 2005)

[However it is presented, the break decided on by M. Barroso is reassuring, because it shows that ruthless liberalization is no longer possible, a Bruxelles based official says.]

(39) **Quelles que** soient les **raisons**, ces mesures donnent une idée de l'absurdité qui régit la vie économique [...] (Le Monde, 9 octobre 2007, p. 2)

[Whatever may be the reasons behind them, these measures give an idea of the absurdity of the economic system]

(40) Kokopelli milite pour la création d'un fichier de variétés que chacun pourrait enrichir et utiliser à sa guise, **quel que** soit son **objectif**. (Le Monde, 3 janvier 2007, p. 7)

[Kokopelli promotes the creation of a file of species everyone can use and contribute to, whatever their objectives.]

(41) En France par exemple, la différence de prix entre le générique et le médicament premier est de 40 % **quel que** soit le **nombre** de produits en compétition. (Le Monde, 25 octobre 2007, p. 18)

[In France, for instance, the price difference between generic brand medication and name brand medication amounts to 40%, however many products compete.]

On the other hand, French also has expressions of irrelevance that can be used as concessive-like clauses. In previous work (Defrancq 2005), I have pointed out that *peu importe* can introduce

clauses with a concessive meaning and the punctuation of a dependent clause[4], as in the following example:

(42)   C'est la seule famille que je connaissais. **Peu importe ce qu**'elle pouvait me faire, c'est la

seule famille que je connaissais ", répète-t-elle. (Le Monde, 22 octobre 2006, p. 4)

[It's the only family I knew. No matter what they did to me, it's the only family I knew.]

Some of the *wh*-items that are disallowed in UCCs can be used in combination with an expression of irrelevance. However, the punctuation is always that of an independent clause, suggesting a less grammaticalized kind of relationship:

(43)   En revanche, il faut bloquer sur le «oui» tous ceux qui sont contre la Turquie en Europe.

Peu importe comment l'on obtient ces «oui». (Le Monde, 11 février 2005)

[On the other hand, we have to make sure that those who are opposed to Turkey being part

of the European Union stick with the "yes". No matter how we persuade them to vote

"yes".]

(The concessive relationship between the two clauses becomes clear when the preceding context is taken into account: just before this utterance, the author of the example, Nicolas Sarkozy, is reported to be criticized for his half-hearted campaign in favor of the "yes" in the French referendum on the European Constitutional Treaty. Obviously, a half-hearted campaign makes it likely that voters abandon the yes camp, and that Sarkozy is held responsible for it. Therefore, 'peu importe comment' has to be interpreted as referring to the end point of a scale, i.e. the campaign most likely to lose the yes camp voters; Sarkozy's campaign in other words. To this Sarkozy objects that voters will stay in the yes camp if they are sure that this does not imply that Turkey

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[4] It should be noticed that *ce que* is considered an allomorph of *quoi* ('what') in the context of an embedded interrogative.

becomes a member of the European Union.)

(44)   Nicolas Sarkozy est la démonstration vivante que la notion de congé est essentiellement

         psychologique. Etre en vacances ne suppose pas de vivre vraiment des vacances, mais

         simplement de partir et de revenir. Peu importe où, **peu importe combien** de temps... (Le

         Monde, 15 mai 2007, p. 2)

         [Nicolas Sarkozy is living proof of the fact that holidays essentially are a psychological

         concept. To be on holiday does not imply that one really experiences a holiday, but merely

         that one leaves and comes back. No matter where, no matter for how long...]

There are no examples of *quand* or *pourquoi* in the range of newspapers that constitue the corpus I

used. Extending the search to all Le Monde newspapers from 2001 to 2007 provided one example

of *peu importe quand*:

(45)   **Peu importe quand** la cassette fut enregistrée, et remise au correspondant à Kaboul

         d'Al-Jazira. Elle était à l'évidence programmée pour être diffusée quelques heures après le

         début des bombardements, alors que les télévisions du monde passeraient en boucle de la

         neige verte qui ne montrerait rien. (Le Monde, 15 octobre 2001)

         [It does not matter when the tape was recorded and handed over to the Al-Jazeera

         correspondent in Kaboul. It was obviously programmed to be broadcast few hours after the

         bombings started at a time when broadcast companies all over the world would show over

         and over again this green snow that would not tell anything.]

The absence of *peu importe pourquoi*[5] could suggest that this kind of clause is more

grammaticalized as a UCC in French than in English, even in cases with strong punctuation.

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[5] *Peu importe pourquoi* can be found on the web, but it is either used as a free choice indefinite or in a series of

different *wh*-items, in which case its appearance is probably motivated by analogy (cf. Defrancq 2006).

Genuine UCCs indeed resist causal items. If French does not allow causal items to be combined with a particular expression of irrelevance, but English does, it is possible that the French cases are closer to the genuine UCCs than the English ones.

4.3. Summary

Putting the two languages side by side, the following picture emerges: *wh*-items representing the categories 'human referent', 'non-human referent', 'predicate', 'identification', 'nature' and 'place' can be used in UCCs in both languages. Neither of both languages admits *wh*-items representing 'cause' or 'purpose'. As for the other items, English allows them to be used, but French does not. Both languages offer alternative structures for the disallowed items. Periphrastic forms of UCCs with generic head nouns are available, but in French they only appear in clefted structures. Expressions of irrelevance constitute a less grammaticalized alternative in both languages. Many of the items that are disallowed in UCCs do combine with those expressions, with the notable exception of the French causal item *pourquoi*. Schematically, the different possibilities can be represented as follows:

	English	French
human	UCC	UCC
non-human	UCC	UCC
predicate	UCC	UCC
identification	UCC	UCC
nature	UCC	UCC
place	UCC	UCC
time	UCC	?UCC (exc. generic noun)

		> irrelevance
manner	UCC	*UCC (exc. generic noun) > irrelevance
reason	*UCC (exc. generic noun) > irrelevance	*UCC (exc. generic noun) *irrelevance
purpose	*UCC (exc. generic noun) > irrelevance	*UCC (exc. generic noun) *irrelevance
amount, number	UCC	*UCC (exc. generic noun) > irrelevance
extent	UCC	UCC (other *wh-*)

Table 2. Concessive structures using a *wh-* in English and French

It is a basic assumption in contrastive linguistics that contrasts – paradigmatic asymmetries we may call them - of this kind can and will have effects on the process of second language acquisition and translation. Languages with paradigmatic deficits typically suffer from overgeneralization: language learners fill in the gaps by generalizing the rules that apply in the existing cases. Translators, on the other hand, are forced to find viable alternatives for the absent items, respecting at the same time as much as possible the semantic integrity of the source text.

In Section 5, I will examine how translators deal with the differences between English and French with respect to the use of the *wh-*paradigm in UCCs. As the paradigmatic gaps concern French, I will mainly focus on translations from English into French. Obviously, the cases that will be of most interest are those where a contrast exists between the two languages and where, consequently, a problem needs to be solved by the translator. Some solutions to ungrammatical UCCs have been suggested in this section on the basis of monolingual corpora. Parallel data will show if these solutions are taken up by translators or not.

5. Parallel data

As pointed out before, the parallel data are extracted from the JRC Acquis Communautaire Corpus. The JRC AC is a corpus of administrative and legal texts from the EU institutions, translated in all the official languages of the European Union (minus 1). The text genre is of course very specific, which could raise problems with respect to the representativeness of the results, but the huge amount of texts it contains makes it one of the largest parallel corpora in the world, especially when taking into account the number of languages concerned. In addition, legal and administrative texts are likely to present the kind of complicated reasoning and universal claims that underpin the use of concessive clauses. The quality of the texts is unequal, as quite some original texts in the EU are drafted by non-native speakers of the language involved. Even native British drafters are quite often accused of producing a kind of Eurospeak that is considered awkward in the UK.

5.1. English orginals

The part of the corpus that was consulted covers the most recent material. It contains texts from 2000 to 2006 and comprises 26.5 million words. Most of the texts are originally drafted in English and then translated into the 21 other languages. For the purposes of this paper, every occurrence of a UCC in a text translated into English was eliminated, as the main concern of the research is to check how translators deal with items that exist in English, but not in French. An important number of duplicates had to be eliminated as well: legal and administrative texts have a strong propensity to repeating whole stretches of text. A total of 418 occurrences of UCCs was found. Their distribution over the different cases is shown in Table 3 (as in the previous tables, the examples of *whatever* and *whichever* used as determiners of head nouns such as *moment, reason,* etc. are grouped and not assigned to the semantic categories their head noun could belong to):

		in UCC
human	whoever	6
non-human	whatever	8
predicate	whatever	5
identification	whichever	11
	whatever	229
nature	whatever	55
	whoever	0
place	wherever	44
time	whenever	2
manner	however	19
reason	whyever	0
	however come	0
purpose	whyever	0
	whatever for	0
amount, number	however much/many	1
extent	however (much)	38
total		418

Table 3. Distribution of *wh*-items over semantic categories in UCCs in JRC-AC English

The best represented category is the 'identification' category. Categories corresponding to

predicate or argument expressions are rare: there are only 6 examples of *whoever*, 2 of which are in

fact introduced by the archaic sounding *whomsoever*:

(46)   The AMM, its property and assets, wherever located and by **whomsoever** held, shall enjoy

immunity from every form of legal process. (jrc22005A1029_01-en)

6 examples on a corpus of 26.5 million words corresponds to a frequency of 0.2 occurrences per million words. This is about fifteen times lower than the frequency of *whoever* in UCCs in the Newspaper section of the BNC, which was 2.9 occurrences per million words (see section 4.1.).

Only 8 examples present *whatever* in an argument position of a verb. 7 of these examples are nearly identical: they illustrate a combination of *whatever* with the verb *call*:

(47)   [...] "university" means any type of higher education institution, according to national legislation or practice, which offers qualifications or diplomas at that level, **whatever** such establishments may be called in the Member States; [...]. (jrc32000D0253-en)

Of the other categories, only 'place', 'manner' and 'extent' are well represented. As expected, no occurrences were found of the items expressing 'reason' and 'purpose', these concepts being expressed by means of a periphrastic form involving *whatever*, as in the following examples:

(48)   The activities comprise in particular:

- organising, offering for sale and selling, outright or on commission, single or collective items (transport, board, lodging, excursions, etc.) for a journey or stay, **whatever the reasons** for travelling (Article 2(B)(a)) (jrc32005L0036-en)

(49)   **Whatever the purpose** of the measure may be, state aid is determined on the basis of effects and not objectives. (jrc32006D0748-en)

Only very few examples were found of the items expressing 'time' and 'number/amount'.

For most of the categories, there is a transfer towards other expressions, in particular expressions involving *whatever*, such as 'whatever means' (in stead of 'however'), 'whatever date' (in stead of 'whenever'), 'whatever number/amount' (in stead of 'however much'):

(50)   Each Member State shall take the necessary measures to ensure that the following conduct

is punishable:

(a) any fraudulent making or altering of currency, **whatever means** are employed;
(jrc32000F0383-en)

(51)   The obligation laid down in (a) shall apply to all relevant acts in force at any given moment,
whatever their **date** of adoption. (jrc22005D0092-en)

(52)   **Whatever** their nitrogen **content**, all solutions of UAN are considered to have the same
basic physical and chemical characteristics and therefore constitute a single product for the
purpose of this investigation.(jrc32000R1995)

5.2. French translations

The French translation data are presented in Table 4:

		in UCC
human	qui que	0
non-human	quoi que	0
predicate	quoi que	0
identification	quelque N que	9
	quel que soit N qu	280
nature	quelque N que	0
	quel que soit N qu	48
	qui que	0
place	où que	15
time	quand que	0
manner	comment que	0

reason	pourquoi que	0
	comment qu'il se fasse	0
purpose	pourquoi que	0
	pour quoi que	0
amount, number	combien que	0
extent	combien que	0
	quelque A que	0
total		352

Table 4. Distribution of *wh*-items over semantic categories in UCCs in JRC-AC French translations

The total number of examples is lower than the number in the English data because 66 occurrences of *wh*-items in UCCs were translated using a structure without a UCC. The first thing that strikes when looking at the frequencies is the fact that, except for the 'identification' category, all the frequencies are considerably lower than the corresponding frequencies in Table 3. The frequency of the 'identification' category, on the other hand, is considerably higher in French than in English. This means that in the translation process, a transfer has taken place from the other categories towards 'identification', because translators used a periphrastic form in stead of a simple *wh*-item. As this does not account for all the discrepancies, a number of occurrences has also been translated using other structures.

A closer look on the different translation strategies reveals a number of noticeable facts.

1. *Wh*-items denoting referential entities are mostly translated by means of a periphrastic form in French:

- *whoever* is never translated as *qui que*. Alternative translations include: *quelle que soit la partie* and *quel que soit l'auteur* and *quelque soit le détenteur* (five cases) ; one occurrence is

translated by means of a simple relative clause, abandoning the concessive meaning of the example:

(53a) [...] the Commission shall make arrangements so as to ensure that in the event referred to in paragraph 2 the costs for the following actions are born in appropriate proportions by the competent authorities of Australia or New Zealand, **whoever** has requested the formulation into vaccines of antigens stored in the Community reserves: [...]. (jrc32004D0288-en)

(53b) [...] la Commission prend des dispositions afin de s'assurer que, dans le cas visé au paragraphe 2, le coût des mesures énumérées ci-après soit supporté selon des proportions appropriées par les autorités australiennes ou néo-zélandaises compétentes **qui** ont demandé la formulation de vaccins à partir d'antigènes stockés dans les réserves communautaires: [...] (jrc32004D0288-fr)

There are no instances of the concessive-like irrelevance expression *peu importe*.

- *whatever*, in its autonomous referential use is always translated by means of a periphrastic form:

(47a) [...] "university" means any type of higher education institution, according to national legislation or practice, which offers qualifications or diplomas at that level, **whatever** such establishments may be called in the Member States; [...]. (jrc32000D0253-en)

(47b) [...] "université": tout type d'établissement d'enseignement supérieur, au sens de la réglementation ou de la pratique nationale, qui confère des titres ou des diplômes de ce niveau, **quelle que** soit son **appellation** dans les États membres ; [...] (jrc32000D0253-fr)

When *whatever* is used in a periphrastic form in combination with a noun (with or without a copular verb), the preferred translation is a periphrastic cleft form in French (229 cases):

(54a) A variety shall be regarded as distinct if, **whatever** the origin, artificial or natural, of the initial variation from which it has resulted, it is clearly distinguishable on one or more

important characteristics from any other variety known in the Community.

(jrc32002L0053-en)

(54b)   Une variété est distincte si, **quelle que soit** l'origine, artificielle ou naturelle, de la variation

initiale qui lui a donné naissance, elle se distingue nettement par un ou plusieurs caractères

importants de toute autre variété connue dans la Communauté. (jrc32002L0053-fr)

The same is true of *whichever*, which is always translated by means of a periphrastic cleft (11

cases). Five translations of periphrastic *whatever* lack the cleft, as in the following example:

(55a)   [...] accidental marine pollution risks include releases of harmful substances into the

marine environment, **whatever** their origin, both from ships and from the shoreline or

estuaries, including those linked to the presence of dumped materials, such as munitions,

but excluding authorised discharges and continuous streams of pollution originating from

land-based sources; [...] (jrc32000D2850-en)

(55b)   [...] les risques de pollution marine accidentelle incluent les rejets de substances nocives

dans l'environnement marin de **quelque origine qu'**ils soient, tant en provenance des

navires que du littoral ou des estuaires, y compris ceux liés à la présence de matériaux

immergés, comme les munitions, à l'exclusion des déversements autorisés et des flux

continus de pollution d'origine tellurique; [...] (jrc32000D2850-fr)

Other translations include the universal quantifier *tout* ('all', five cases) and the irrelevance adverb

independamment ('independently', 'regardless', four cases), as illustrated by the following

examples:

(56a)   It shall be possible to leave the wheelhouse safely **whatever** its position.

(jrc52006AG0008-en)

(56b) Il doit être possible de quitter sans danger la timonerie dans **toutes** ses positions.

(jrc52006AG0008-fr)

(57a) **Whatever** the approach adopted, the study would help in the setting of concrete objectives

to be given priority status in the CI and which give the CI itself added value.

(jrc52004SA0004-en)

(57b) **Indépendamment** de l'approche suivie, l'analyse servirait à fixer des objectifs concrets

considérés comme prioritaires pour l'IC et lui donnant une valeur ajoutée.

(jrc52004SA0004-fr)

In these cases the concessive value is lost. Wherever the universal quantifier is used, the translator

inferred the universal quantification from the free choice quantification that was intended. One

other occurrence was translated by means of the complex preposition *en dépit de* ('in spite of'),

focusing the concessive relationship. In four cases, *whatever* remained untranslated. There are no

instances of the concessive-like irrelevance expression *peu importe*.

- *wherever* is translated by *où que* in 15 out of 44 cases only:

(58a) [...] (a) an accident occurring within its territory involving any of the following

installations or in connection with any of the following fields of activity:

- any nuclear reactor, **wherever** located, [...] (jrc22003A0429_01-en)

(58b) [...] a) d'un accident, survenu sur son territoire ou en dehors de celui-ci, dans les

installations ou dans le cadre des activités suivantes:

- tout réacteur nucléaire, **où qu**'il soit implanté, [...] (jrc22003A0429_01-fr)

Most of the examples are translated by means of a clefted periphrastic form (21 cases):

(59a) These people should be guaranteed appropriate assistance, **wherever** they go and whatever the form of transport used, so that they can travel with confidence throughout the European Union. (jrc52005DC0046-en)

(59b) Ces personnes devraient avoir la garantie d'une assistance appropriée, **quel que soit l'endroit** où elles se rendent et le mode de transport utilisé, afin de pouvoir voyager en confiance dans toute l'Union européenne. (jrc52005DC0046-fr)

Two cases lack the cleft, as the one illustrated here:

(60a) The AMM's archives and documents, including multimedia support, either in conventional or in digital form, shall be inviolable at any time, **wherever** they may be. (jrc22005A1029_01-en)

(60b) Les archives et les documents, y compris les supports multimédias, qu'ils se présentent sous forme conventionnelle ou numérique, de la MSA sont inviolables à tout moment et en **quelque lieu qu**'ils se trouvent. (jrc22005A1029_01-fr)

Other translations include the universal place quantifier *partout* ('everywhere', 3 cases) and the irrelevance adverb *indépendamment* ('independently', 'regardless', 2 cases). One case is translated by means of the free choice indefinite *n'importe où* ('anywhere'). No instances have been found of the concessive-like irrelevance expression *peu importe*.

2. As far as predicates and properties are concerned, there is much more variation among the translation strategies.

- *whatever*, in its non-referential autonomous use, only occurs in combination with the verb *happen*. Four of the five cases of *whatever happens* are translated by means of the fixed expression *en tout état de cause* ('in any case'), including the universal quantifier *tout*. In the remaining, a

clefted periphrastic form is used: *quel que soit l'avenir* ('whatever the future'). In its

non-referential use in combination with a noun, some of the previously commented translations

are used: clefted periphrastic forms (48), the universal quantifier *tout* (2) and the irrelevance

adverbe *indépendamment* (5). No examples have been found of the concessive-like irrelevance

expression *peu importe*.

- *whenever*, which does not has a *wh*-equivalent in French, is twice translated by means of a clefted

periphrastic form (with the nouns *date* 'date' and *moment* 'moment'), as in the following example:

(61a)   However, Article 13 would apply to all batteries that become waste after transposition of

        the Directive, **whenever** they were placed on the market. (jrc52005AG0030-en)

(61b)   Toutefois, l'article 13 s'appliquera à toutes les piles qui deviendront des déchets après la

        transposition de la directive, **quel que soit le moment** où elles ont été mises sur le marché.

        (jrc52005AG0030-fr)

- *however* used as a manner item, which does not has a *wh*-equivalent in French, is usually

translated with a clefted periphrastic form involving a head noun which is semantically similar to

the verb used in combination with *how* (17 cases):

(62a)   [...] bonuses to which policy holders are already either collectively or individually entitled,

        however those bonuses are described - vested, declared or allotted [...].

        (jrc32002L0083-en)

(62b)   [...] des participations aux bénéfices auxquels les assurés ont déjà collectivement ou

        individuellement droit, **quelle que soit la qualification** de ces participations, acquises,

        déclarées, ou allouées [...]. (jrc32002L0083-fr)

Examples of head nouns referring to 'manner' are found in two cases only: *modalités*, as illustrated,

and *titre*:

(63a)   Any compensation, **however** it is assigned, must conform with these provisions.

(jrc52006AE0734-en)

(63b)   Toute compensation, **quelles qu**'en soient les **modalités** d'attribution, doit être conforme à

ces dispositions. (jrc52006AE0734-fr)

In two cases the UCC appear non-clefted. In two more cases the English UCC is left untranslated.

No instances have been found of the concessive-like irrelevance expression *peu importe*.

In the one case where *however* is used as denoting number or amount, a clefted periphrastic form is

used in French:

(64a)   The principle of the common system of VAT entails the application to goods and services

of a general tax on consumption exactly proportional to the price of the goods and services,

however many transactions take place in the production and distribution process before

the stage at which the tax is (jrc32006L0112-en)

(64b)   Le principe du système commun de TVA est d'appliquer aux biens et aux services un impôt

général sur la consommation exactement proportionnel au prix des biens et des services,

quel que soit le nombre des opérations intervenues dans le processus de production et de

distribution antérieur au stade d'imposition (jrc32006L0112-fr)

When *however* denotes 'extent', translations vary widly. Expressing a free choice concessive

meaning with respect to 'extent' appears to be quite a challenge for translators. Not a single

instance has been found of the only *wh*-item French admits in this case, i.e. *quelque* A *que*. The

clefted periphrastic form, which is most frequently used as an alternative for ungrammatical

combinations in French, appears in only six examples out of 38, as illustrated in the following

examples:

(65a) **However** useful biometrics may be for certain purposes, their widespread use will have a major impact on society, and should be subject to a wide and open debate. (jrc52005XX0723_01-en)

(65b) **Quel que soit** l'intérêt de la biométrie à certains égards, son utilisation généralisée aura un impact majeur sur la société et devrait faire l'objet d'un débat large et ouvert. (jrc52005XX0723_01-fr)

There are seven cases in which translators used an adverb (*aussi* 'as'*, tout* 'all'*, si,* 'so') or a preposition (*pour* 'for') in combination with the adjective, which is an accurate translation, even though no *wh*-item is involved:

(66a) All accidents to staff members, whether incurred at work or outside the Institute, **however** trifling they may appear at the time, must be reported immediately by the staff member to the Head of Administration and Personnel, together with the names and addresses of any witnesses. (jrc32005Q0912_01-en)

(66b) Tout accident dont pourrait être victime un agent, soit sur le lieu de son travail, soit en dehors, **aussi** bénin **qu**'il puisse paraître sur le moment, doit être signalé dans les plus brefs délais au chef de l'administration et du personnel par l'intéressé, avec les noms et adresses des témoins éventuels. (jrc32005Q0912_01-fr)

In nearly all other cases, the free-choice meaning is abandoned and only the concessive relationship maintained. Various conjunctions, adverbs and prepositions serve this purpose: *même* ('even'), *même si* ('even if'), *bien que*, *quoique* (both 'although'), *en dépit de*, *malgré* (both 'in spite of'), *cependant* ('however'), *néanmoins* ('nevertheless'). This seems to indicate, contrary to Haspelmath & König's 1998 position recalled in Section 2, that translators sense the UCC more as a concessive than as a conditional clause. In four of these cases, the free-choice component is

replaced by an intensifying item:

(67a)   Moreover, as regards agents of OHIM having contracts of less than three years, it would be

difficult for them to gain access to an invalidity allowance **however** incapacitated they

were, because they could never satisfy the criteri ... (jrcC2006#096#53-en)

(67b)   En outre, il serait difficile pour les agents de l'OHMI ayant des contrats de moins de trois

ans d'accéder à la pension d'invalidité, car, **même <u>très</u>** malades, ils n'atteindraient jamais la

limite prévue par l'article 59, paragraphe 4, du statut. (jrcC2006#096#53-fr)

As intensifying items refer to a scale, this clearly supports the idea that the concessive relationship

found in UCCs involves a scalar component (see Section 2). Finally, one surprising translation was

found, i.e. *y compris* ('including') and two cases remain untranslated. No examples have been

found of the concessive-like irrelevance expression *peu importe*.

5.3. Summary

The data are clearly only partly what they are expected to be. Obviously, the observed differences

described in Table 2 show up in the parallel data: *wh*-items that are disallowed or strongly marked

do not appear in the French translated data. As expected, translators resort very frequently to

periphrastic alternatives. However, they do not resort to using the structure that was shown to be

grammaticalizing into a new type of French UCC (*peu importe...*). Periphrastic alternatives turn

out to be very frequent, even in cases where there is no need for them. This is possibly a case of

explicitation: the periphrastic form is more explicit and precise than the corresponding simple

wh-item. When translators neither opt for the simple *wh*-item nor for a periphrastic alternative,

they usually omit one of the meaning components of the UCC. In most cases, the conditional

component is lost and the concessive component maintained.

6. Conclusion

What this paper intended to show is how a contrastive analysis based on monolingual corpora can provide a framework for the analysis of parallel data. The case analyzed involved universal concessive conditionals. These were shown to offer interesting contrasts between English and French, as some of the French equivalents of *wh*-items that can be used in English cannot be used in French UCCs. The analysis of monolingual corpora showed what alternatives speakers of French and English have in cases where specific *wh*-items cannot be used. The analysis of parallel data confirmed that French translators indeed use one of the alternatives, but that they seem to avoid the other and prefer to resort to unexpected strategies which result in the loss of specific meaning components.

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