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Vyjadřování všeobecného lidského konatele v angličtině a francouzštině

(kontrastivní pohled na francouzské *on*)

The General Human Agent in English and in French

(A Contrastive View of the French *on*)

DIPLOMOVÁ PRÁCE

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Děkuji PhDr. Markétě Malé, Ph.D. za podporu, cenné rady a za nápady, zasílané až z daleké Anglie.

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Abstrakt

Předmětem této diplomové práce je zkoumání anglických překladových ekvivalentů francouzského zájmena *on*. Toto „osobní neurčité zájmeno“ je ve francouzském jazyce typickým prostředkem vyjadřování všeobecného lidského konatele. Na rozdíl od francouzštiny nemá angličtina pro tento účel žádný speciální prostředek. Musí si vystačit s jazykovými prostředky, pro něž vyjadřování všeobecného lidského konatele není funkcí primární. Tyto anglické prostředky jsou explicitní či implicitní; popsány byly např. Duškovou (Dušková 1999) a Kratochvílovou (Kratochvílová 2007). Krátká studie anglických překladových ekvivalentů generického *on* byla součástí Tláskalovy práce (Tláskal 2004). Zájmeno *on* však není vždy jen generické; jeho reference může být též neurčitá či určitá. Tato práce zkoumá anglické koreláty všech tří typů *on*, shromáždila tedy překladové protějšky i jiných jeho užití než jen generických. Studie analyzuje 200 francouzských vět obsahujících zájmeno *on* a jejich anglické překladové protějšky. Materiál byl excerpován ze 4 francouzských románů a jejich překladů do angličtiny. Těchto 200 příkladů je rozděleno do 4 skupin podle typu reference, kterou má v nich obsažené *on*: generickou, neurčitou, určitou, či nejednoznačnou. Anglické protějšky jsou zkoumány pro každou ze skupin zvlášť. Překladové koreláty jsme rozdělili do 3 tříd: substantivní fráze, implikované ekvivalenty a ostatní odchylné ekvivalenty. Jejich jednotlivé příklady jsou analyzovány z hlediska referenčního záběru, frekvence užití, sémantiky, stylistických vlastností atd. Při zkoumání vět obsahujících *on* a jejich anglických protějšků se přihlíží též k modalitě, záporu a užití slovesných časů. Hlavním cílem práce je prokázat užitečnost kontrastivních studií. Věříme, že porovnáním dvou jazyků lze odhalit i takové prostředky a strategie, které by při studii pouze jednoho jazyka mohly být opomenuty.

Abstract

The subject of this thesis is the analysis of English translation equivalents of the French pronoun *on*. This ‘personal indefinite pronoun’ is the typical means of expressing the general human agent in the French language. Unlike French, English does not have any special device for this purpose. It must employ linguistic devices which have other primary functions than the expression of the general human agent. These devices are explicit or implicit; they were described, for example, by Dušková (Dušková 1999) and Kratochvílová (Kratochvílová 2007). A short study of English translation equivalents of generic *on* was part of Tláskal’s paper (Tláskal 2004). However, the pronoun *on* is not always generic; its reference can also

be indefinite or definite. Since this thesis studies the English counterparts of all three types of *on*, translation devices were also collected of uses other than generic. This study analyses 200 sentences including the French *on* and their translation counterparts. The material was excerpted from 4 French novels and their translations into English. The 200 examples are divided into 4 groups according to the type of reference their *on* has: generic, indefinite, definite, or ambiguous. For each group, the English counterparts are studied. They are divided into 3 classes: NP-equivalents, implied equivalents, and other divergent equivalents. Analysis is carried out of individual instances in respect to their scope of reference, frequency of employment, semantics, stylistic features, etc. Modality, negation and the use of verbal tenses in *on*-sentences and in their English counterparts are also considered. The main aim of the thesis is to demonstrate the usefulness of contrastive studies. We believe that a comparison of two languages can reveal devices and strategies which a study of a single language might overlook.

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Abbreviations

Abs.	Absolute number
CGEL	A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language
HP	Huddleston & Pullum
NP	Noun phrase

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1. Introduction

This thesis will study the French ‘personal indefinite’ pronoun *on* and its English translation counterparts. Our original motivation was the fact that whereas *on* is the typical device of expressing the general human agent in French, English has no special device for this purpose and it would therefore be interesting to find out and analyse what compensation strategies it employs when faced with the need of translating an *on*-sentence. However, the reference to the general human agent is only one of the functions of *on*. The human agent to whom it refers can also be specific. This is why in our study of English translation counterparts of *on*-sentences, we will not only find devices expressing the general human agent, but also devices with definite reference. The excerpted data will then be quantitatively and ‘qualitatively’ analysed. As a result of this analysis, it should be possible to draw conclusions about what linguistic means are used for translating *on*-sentences into English.

After this brief introduction, the etymology, the morphosyntactic qualities of *on*, as well as its referential potential, will be described in the Theoretical background. It will be clarified what is meant by the term ‘general human agent’ in this thesis. The chapter will also list the possible explicit and implicit devices for the rendition of *on*-sentences into the English language mentioned by theoretical literature.

The Material and Method chapter will describe how our list of examples was compiled and what methodology was used to analyse the excerpted data. Our classification and terminology will be explained.

The chapter called Analysis will deal with the description of individual instances of English counterparts of *on*. Typical as well as exceptional cases will be studied. We will proceed from translations of generic *on* to those of indefinite, definite and ambiguous *on*. The quantitative results of the excerption will be shown in tables. The order in which individual equivalents will be mentioned will follow the frequency of their employment in the excerpted material. Modality, negation and the use of verbal tenses in the examples will be considered at the end of the chapter.

The results will be elaborated and commented on in Conclusion. Possible explanations of certain phenomena will be suggested.

References and Sample sources will include the bibliography of the theoretical literature referred to in this paper and of the novels from which examples were excerpted.

In the Resumé, the aim of the thesis, its theoretical basis, methodology and results will be recapitulated in the Czech language.

The complete list of examples with which we worked is to be found in the Appendix.

2. Theoretical background

2.1 Pronoun *on* in the French language

2.1.1 The origin of the present pronoun *on* goes back to the Latin noun *homo*, meaning *person*. Old French had two nominal cases, *cas sujet* and *cas régime*, largely comparable to the nominative and the accusative. Whereas the Latin accusative *hominem* has resulted into the present-day French noun *homme* (*person*), the French nominative was for the first time recorded in 842 under the form of *om*, the current *on* being in use since the twelfth century (Robert, 1985). Progressively, *on* had lost its original noun value and has become a pronoun. However, its etymological background is still perceptible in some of its present morphology and semantics.

2.1.2 In present-day French, *on* is a pronoun, yet there is the possibility to employ it with the definite article: *On regrette tous quelque chose que l'on a fait ou que l'on aurait du faire*. This use is to be found especially in the written language. Although it is considered today mostly as a euphonic means of avoiding hiatus or a clash of consonants, the definite article used to carry a certain semantic feature in the past. According to Le Grand Robert, *l'on* was common until the end of the seventeenth century with the meaning of “the man in general, the people” (Robert, 1985).

The morphosyntactic behaviour of *on* is typical of a generic pronoun in the sense of German *man*. Its syntactic function is always that of the subject. Being a clitic pronoun, *on* cannot be stressed prosodically, there are restrictions on its position in relation to the verb, it cannot have modifiers or be focalised by means of a cleft sentence. Its other morphosyntactic properties depend on the type of reference it has in individual contexts.

2.1.3 Reference of *on*

The delimitation of the reference of *on* is very complicated. Its referential potential is so complex that some authors (Gjesdal, Blanche-Benveniste) have actually expressed their surprise about the general ability of the French speaking public to discern the various types of reference - often completely opposite - from one another in different contexts, and to make use of the pronoun in such an efficient way that *on* has become one of the most frequent elements in spoken French (Blanche-Benveniste, 2003: 44). Many studies have been published analysing all the possible interpretations of *on*, but all of them agree that certain uses are undecipherable and remain ambiguous. For the purposes of this thesis, Blanche-

Benveniste 2003 and Gjesdal 2009 were consulted, in addition to several French dictionaries and grammars (Le Grand Robert 1985, Riegel, Pellat & Rioul 1994, Girodet 1981, Grevisse & Goosse 2008).

Interpretative operations need to be performed in order to identify the referent of *on*. As Gjesdal (Gjesdal 2009) claims, the reference of *on* is ascertained on the basis of context factors and the inherent features of the pronoun. Since the discourse environment is always different, let us examine the inherent qualities of *on*.

The most typical and problematic feature of *on* is its dual character. It behaves as an indefinite pronoun, but it also has many qualities of personal pronouns. Since it is so hard to separate these from one another, it has become common for the dictionaries to define *on* as ‘a personal indefinite pronoun’. The many meanings that *on* can acquire can be divided into two main groups: marking either generic or non-generic reference. What they share is the feature /human/, always present in the semantic delimitation of the referent of *on*. However, it is due to this duality of *on* that in different contexts it can denote the widest possible range of humans – from the whole mankind to a single person.

2.1.3.1 Potential types of reference of *on*

For this analysis, we will use our own classification and terminology. It was heavily inspired by Ramat & Sansò 2007 and Siewierska 2008, but simplified and adapted for our specific needs.¹

2.1.3.1.1 Generic *on*

Based on the etymology of *on*, this is the oldest use. Its reference cannot be provided by the situation or the context. Constructions with generic reference express “law-like propositions” (Siewierska, 2008: 9) with no temporal restrictions. Generic *on* usually refers to people in general, but some referential restrictions are allowed, usually of a locative character. The semantics of the reference is always plural. The speaker is not necessarily included in the reference.

¹ Siewierska calls ‘impersonals’ what we call ‘indefinites’. Their characteristics being the same, we use quotations from her study for describing ‘indefinites’, even though she in fact employs the term ‘impersonals’.

2.1.3.1.2 Indefinite *on*

Indefinite constructions express propositions which apply to some unspecified individual or set of individuals (Siewierska, 2008: 9). Indefinite *on* typically stands for the members of various groups, organisations, or institutions. The agents are involved in specific actions taking place in a specified spatiotemporal setting. The semantics of the reference can be plural or singular. Indefinite *on* roughly corresponds to *someone* in assertive and to *anyone* in non-assertive contexts. Indefinite reference “is incompatible with the inclusion of the speaker” (Siewierska, 2008: 10).

2.1.3.1.3 Definite *on*

The pronoun *on* ceases to fulfil its usual role of “hiding” the referent. In this case, the referent is known to the speaker and identifiable for the addressee due to deixis, anaphora or cataphora. In other words, definite reference stems from situational or textual uniqueness. *On*, though a ‘vague subject’, stands for a specific human agent. According to Dubois, *on* can replace any personal pronoun (Dubois, 1965: 188). This means that definite *on* can refer to:

1. the speaker (*je, nous*)
2. the addressee (*tu, vous*)
3. “the third party” (*il, elle, ils, elles*)

On is usually employed stylistically instead of these personal pronouns in order to express very varied emotions (modesty, discretion, prudence, condescension, etc.). These stylistic employments of definite *on* are to be encountered both in literary and spoken language, in narrations and in dialogues (Robert, 1985). We can see from the list above that all the basic personal pronouns having a referential definite value are substitutable by *on* whenever the speaker feels the need to do so. This makes the discourse less rigid and creates new pragmatic effects, yet at the same time, makes it sometimes impossible to determine the actual referent with absolute certainty.

Out of all the personal pronouns substitutable for definite *on*, *nous* is by far the most prevalent. *On* and *nous* have a special relationship, which has recently resulted into a virtual one-sided equivalence. This means that whenever *nous* is employed, it is theoretically replaceable with *on*. In addition to that, this possible replacement is becoming more and more common and brings less and less stylistic depreciation to the discourse, especially in spoken

French. Yet the equivalence is not applicable in both directions because whereas *nous* is always speaker-inclusive, *on* has much more liberty. It can include or exclude both the speaker and the addressee, without any formal indication whatsoever (Blanche-Benveniste, 2003: 54-55).

2.1.3.2 Despite the great semantic complexity of *on*, there are some formal and syntactic factors which can contribute to the disambiguation of the referent.

Firstly, even though *on* is not marked for gender, person, or number and is always connected with a 3rd person singular verb, its referential definite value sometimes reveals itself. In those cases, the subject complement adjective or past participle agree in gender and in number with the implied referent of *on*: *Quand on est amoureuse, on veut faire plaisir à l'autre pour lui plaire* (Baranová, 2002: 101). If the subject complement is a noun, it also has a concord with the referent of the *on* subject: *On est amis, de bons amis*. (Baranová, 2002: 101). Moreover, the possessive pronouns referring to *on* correspond to those of the person implied (e.g. *notre, nos*). In contrast, when the value of *on* is indefinite or generic, all the co-referential expressions are in 3rd person singular masculine.

Secondly, the verbal tense in a sentence with *on* subject can provide a clue. According to Gjesdal, the present tense is generally seen as an indicator of indefinite value, whereas the future and past tenses usually point to the interpretation of *on* as personal. The same author also mentions the supportive role of the verb's semantics with respect to the interpretation. This is, nevertheless, "a parameter very much dependent on the discourse type" (Gjesdal, 2009: 58).

2.1.3.3 As has already been mentioned, the seme /human/ is present in all the types of *on* employment. To this, Gjesdal adds two additional inherent features: /indefinite/ and /agent/ (Gjesdal, 2009: 79). Because of the terminology applied in this thesis, where 'indefinite' stands for one of the three possible types of reference of *on*, it seems more felicitous to call, for our purposes, the first one /vague/ rather than /indefinite/. The /agent/ seme is related to the fact that *on* is always the subject of the sentence, and it always refers to the person performing the action or undergoing the state of the finite verb.

2.1.3.4 The general human agent

As has been shown, the French personal indefinite pronoun *on* has a very wide range of possible referents. It is generally accepted that some of them express the ‘general human agent’. However, despite the frequent employment of this term in linguistic literature, it still remains somewhat unclear to what degree the reference must be general in order to be still considered an instance of ‘general human agent’. Following the description in the papers of Czech authors (Dušková 1999, Tláskal 2004, Ulmanová 1990, Kratochvílová 2007), we have decided to apply the term ‘general human agent’ to the generic and indefinite cases of *on* employment.

2.2 The options of rendering *on*-sentences into the English language

In this section, we will mention the devices described in the theoretical literature we consulted (cf. References).

2.2.1 *On* referring to the general human agent

Whereas in French, the *on*-construction is the most typical device of expressing the general human agent, there is no specialised means in present-day English serving this purpose. The situation used to be different. Strang (1970) mentions the survival into late Middle English of a universally accepted indefinite pronoun *me*, corresponding to “they, one, people”. In its earlier form, this had had a distinct phonological shape (*man*), but throughout Middle English it appeared in the weak form *me*, which was identical with the weak form of the oblique case of the first person singular pronoun. This clash seems to be responsible for its subsequent loss. “All speakers are conscious of the gap it has left, but they have not, in the whole New English period, come to any settled usage by way of replacement” (Strang, 1970: 199). Although in present-day English, there is the generic pronoun *one*, it is stylistically restricted, and thus cannot be comparable to the highly neutral French *on*.

This means that for the expression of the general human agent, English must employ a series of other devices which all have different primary functions that influence the final semantic effect. These devices refer to the general human agent explicitly or implicitly. What follows is a summary of the devices of which English makes use mentioned in theoretical literature.

2.2.1.1 Explicit devices for referring to the general human agent

2.2.1.1.1 Generic *one*

Generic *one* must be distinguished from the numeral and substitute (proform) *one*. It is neutral with respect to gender, person and number (it requires concord with 3rd person singular verb). In contrast with the other types of *one*, generic *one* has the genitive form *one's*, reflexive form *oneself* and objective form *one*. In Scottish and American English, *his*, *himself*, and *him* are preferred for coreferential uses. Compare *One must be careful about one's investments* with *One must be careful about his investments* (CGEL, 1985: 388). However, concern over sexual bias has caused American English in effect to move towards the adoption of the British English pattern (CGEL, 1985: 388). Generic *one* shares certain syntactic features with the French *on*: it does not accept determiners or modifiers and it cannot function as an anaphor to another noun phrase. It is found in assertive contexts. Although having the meaning of “people in general”, it often has a particular reference to the speaker: *I like to dress nicely. It gives one confidence* (CGEL, 1985: 387). An example of an even less general reference is to be found in Huddleston & Pullum: *One suddenly realised that one was being followed*. (HP, 2002: 427). In this example, *one* has a clearly definite reference and therefore does not express the general human agent. This usage, the ‘disguised first person’, is associated with upper-class British English and, according to Huddleston & Pullum, “is regarded by many other speakers as pretentious” (HP, 2002: 427). Stylistically, generic *one* has a higher status than generic *you*. With reference to the general human agent, it is mostly employed in written, intellectual, or scientific texts. Since generic reference is its primary function, *one* does not have personal overtones when used generically as the following pronouns do.

2.2.1.1.2 Plural forms of personal pronouns

In their primary function, *you* and *we* are used deictically and *they* anaphorically. However, as Quirk et al. note, all plural forms of personal pronouns can function generically, referring to “people in general” (CGEL, 1985: 353). These pronouns are not interchangeable. They differ in the range of reference, and their respective distribution is dependent upon and limited by various stylistic and semantic aspects (Kratohvílová, 2007: 2). Generic personal pronouns cannot be modified or stressed by means of *also*, *even*, *just*, or *only*. These would make them lose their general reference (Dušková, 2003: 396).

2.2.1.1.2.1 Generic *you*

The generic use of this pronoun stems from its primary deictic function. Its reference always includes the addressee. Accordingly, *you* cannot be used except when there is a possibility of applying what is said to the hearer or reader. In speaking of remote past, it would be impossible to translate *on a vu* by *you have seen* (Jespersen, 1949: 153). Yet the addressee can be a part of a larger group whose size can vary freely. Naturally, when *you* is used to refer to all humanity, the 1st and the 3rd persons are implied. There nevertheless remains a hint of the primary 2nd person function, which is why even generic *you* could not very well be used with *ought to* or *should*: *You ought never to be cruel to animals* would be felt as too personal (Jespersen, 1949: 154). However, despite this connection between the deictic and generic use of *you*, a general statement involving generic *you* need not apply in fact to the addressee: for example *You have to avoid that sort of thing when you're eight months pregnant* could be addressed to a man (HP, 2002: 1468).

According to Poldauf, generic *you* is the most frequent means of general human agent expression in colloquial English (Poldauf, 1972: 122). Jespersen adds that although distinctly colloquial in tone, it is very frequent in literature, also outside of conversations (Jespersen, 1949: 153).

Due to its generic value, it usually occurs with the simple present tense and it is always replaceable by generic *one*, although their stylistic effects are usually different.² These two pronouns sometimes even corefer in one discourse in order to avoid repetition: *It's very clear what your true opinion of me is. It's like the way some men look at one. Patting you on the head if you show signs of being bright, and picking you up and putting you down in their way* (Dušková, 1999: 44).

2.2.1.1.2.2 Generic *we*

Generic *we* shares some properties with generic *you*: most commonly, it comes with the simple present tense and is replaceable by generic *one*. Reference to the speaker is present in all types of *we*. Definite *we* can be inclusive or exclusive. Inclusive *we* includes the addressee in the reference while exclusive *we* does not. Compare *We have a lot to talk about, you and I* (CGEL, 1985: 355) with *Will you stay here while we go for a policeman?* (CGEL, 1985: 1466). In contrast, generic *we* is always inclusive, and besides the speaker and the addressee,

² *You* is commonly used as a less formal variant of *one* (HP, 2002: 1467).

it can refer to “third parties” as well, up to comprising the whole mankind. This is why, potentially, *we* has the widest meaning of the three plural personal pronouns used generically (CGEL, 1985: 354). Being inclusive to such a degree, generic *we* is typical of formal, scientific style, especially in writing. Its reference can be so broad that the agent almost disappears, which is the goal in this functional style. Quirk et al. also mention a special type of generic *we* use, the ‘rhetorical *we*’. It expresses the collective sense of “the nation, the party” (CGEL, 1985: 350).

2.2.1.1.2.3 Generic *they*

Like generic *you*, generic *they* is mostly informal, colloquial. It cannot stand in object position; it is for the most part restricted to the nominative form (HP, 2002: 1472). From its primary anaphoric function as a 3rd person plural pronoun, it retains the quality of not referring to either the speaker or the addressee. Consequently, it tends to designate “the mysterious forces which appear to control the ordinary citizen’s life: the authorities, the media, the government, etc. *I see they’re raising the bus fares again. Whatever will they be doing next?*” (CGEL, 1985: 354). This use is called ‘institutional *they*’ by Huddleston & Pullum (HP, 2002: 1471). According to Dušková, *they* refers, in its most general use, to people in general³, or more specifically, to a group of people determined locally, temporally or otherwise by the context. Explicit or implicit local or other specification was found with *they* in two thirds of her examples (Dušková, 1999: 46-47). Sometimes it is this specification that distinguishes generic *they* from the anaphoric or deictic *they*. Compare *They make quite a thing of Christmas abroad*, where *they* is generic, with *They make quite a thing of Christmas*, which refers to specific people identified anaphorically or deictically (Dušková, 2003: 396).

2.2.1.1.3 Nouns

When the noun denoting the general human agent is singular, it is formally characterised by the generic indefinite article. When it is plural, it has zero article (Dušková, 1999: 50). Here is a list of the most common nouns (in singular) expressing the general human agent: *a man, a fellow/a fella* (colloquial), *a body* (especially frequent in Scottish and American English), *a person* (most frequent in the mouth of a woman), *an individual, a woman, a girl, a*

³ “*They* in reference to people in general occurs most commonly in *they say*. A less common variant is *they tell me*. Another verb recurrently found with general *they* is *call*.” (Dušková, 1999:46)

chap (in a more or less vulgar or slangy speech) (Jespersen, 1949: 157-161), *a guy* (in American English) (Ulmanová, 1990: 12).

These nouns occur with a generic meaning also in plural. *People* is probably the most frequent.

It is clear that since they all have their own, though vague, semantics, they are not interchangeable. They must correspond to the context both semantically and stylistically (from the point of view of region and expressiveness).

There are restrictions on the nouns expressing the general human agent: As in the case of generic pronouns, general reference appears to be incompatible with restrictive or emphatic adverbs like *only*, *even*, *also*. Any attribute appears to bring about the loss of generality. The only type of specification that a sentence with a generic noun tolerates is a local adverbial: *Why do people cry at weddings?* (Dušková, 1999: 50).

2.2.1.2 Implicit devices for referring to the general human agent⁴

2.2.1.2.1 Passive voice

Being a means of deagentisation, passive constructions without expressed agent ('short passives') are perfectly suited for expressing the general human agent. Agentless passives are frequent: according to Quirk et al., approximately four out of five English passive sentences have no expressed agent (CGEL, 1985: 164). The functional style of the discourse is very relevant for the frequency of use of a passive construction: whereas in academic prose, passives account for c. 25% of all finite verbs, it is only c. 2% in conversation (Biber et al., 1999: 476). In a more colloquial style, the general human agent tends to be expressed by generic *they* rather than by means of passive voice (Ulmanová, 1990: 13). Dušková points out that apart from the limited range of generic pronouns in English, the factors contributing to the use of the passive are the functional sentence perspective and the intrusive effect of the introduction of an additional participant of the verbal action, necessary as the subject in the active (Dušková, 1999: 166).

2.2.1.2.2 There-constructions

These can be existential, existential-locative, or actional. In all of them, *there* anticipates the notional subject in postverbal position (expressed by a noun, a gerund, or a nominal

⁴ If the general human agent is referred to by means other than the subject, we talk about its *signalisation* (Tláškal, 2004: 390).

expression). Especially the actional type, with the dynamic character of its noun in the notional subject, makes it easy to omit the agent and to refer to the general human agent implicitly: *There was no riding or shooting or anything of that kind*. The general agent is also implied by means of a negative *there*-construction with an infinitive as the notional subject, which additionally expresses modality: *There's nowhere to go* (intrinsic modality, possibility) (Dušková, 2003: 354-355).

2.2.1.2.3 Constructions with extraposed subject and anticipatory *it*

The anticipatory grammatical subject *it* anticipates the notional subject (an infinitive, gerund or a dependent clause). There is often a modal meaning in these constructions. *It was necessary to hold on tight* (intrinsic modality, necessity) (Dušková, 2003: 376).

2.2.1.2.4 Constructions with empty *it* subject

On est un peu seul dans le désert is translated as *It is a little lonely in the desert* (Tláskal, 2004: 379). This device serves to a complete elimination of the formal representation of the human agent from the discourse. Ulmanová (Ulmanová 1990) calls this process 'depersonalisation'. Nevertheless, there still remains the implicit semantic /human/ feature in the sentence (Tláskal, 2004: 380).

2.2.1.2.5 Inanimate subject

Tláskal mentions this marginal device where the type of the subject is changed and in contrast to the French human agent, there appears the inanimate, involuntary causer (force) filling this position. *On se console toujours* becomes *Time soothes all sorrows* (Tláskal, 2004: 379). The presence of the human agent is only implicit in the translation. Although the general meaning of the sentence is preserved, the connotations of the translation differ from the original even more than in the type with empty *it* construction.

2.2.2 Definite *on*

Secondary literature does not present any list of possible explicit or implicit means of expressing definite reference. This would be impossible considering the almost infinite number of potential referents.

3. Material and Method

3.1 Material

3.1.1 Sources

The material for our excerption was drawn from four novels. Since the paper was originally intended to include both English and Czech translations of French *on*-sentences, the only option was to excerpt the examples manually from printed books. At the time of the excerption (October 2009), there was no electronic corpus available to us which would contain all three languages with French as the source.

The novels with which we worked are Alain Robbe-Grillet's *Les Gommages* and its translation into English by Richard Howard, Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's *Terre des hommes* and its translation into English by Lewis Galantière, André Malraux's *La Condition humaine* and its translation into English by Alastair Macdonald, and Albert Camus's *La peste* and its translation into English by Stuart Gilbert. The books are not contemporary⁵, but no copies of newer works were to be found at the time in Prague libraries in all three languages. Nevertheless, our secondary sources do not suggest any significant change in the ways of translating the general human agent into English since the time of their publication. Therefore we hope that this fact will have no effect on the reliability of the results of this study.

Later on, it was decided that Czech counterparts would not be studied in this paper; the already excerpted material for French and English nevertheless remained. 200 examples will be analysed in this study, which were collected by starting on the first page of each French title, noting the first 50 sentences including *on* and then searching for their counterparts in the respective English translations. Sometimes it happened that the *on*-sentence or a whole section of the text of which it was a part had not been translated at all. These cases could naturally not be considered as valid examples and thus were ignored.

3.1.2 The list of examples

3.1.2.1 Definition of 'example'

After careful consideration, we decided to consider as one example each French sentence which included *on* and the English language counterpart of this sentence. The definition of the

⁵ Dates of first publications in French: Robbe-Grillet 1953, Saint-Exupéry 1939, Malraux 1933, Camus 1947

basic example unit being a sentence was, nevertheless, not sufficient in a number of exceptional cases. Special rules were applied for these:

a) There were more *on*-phrases in the French sentence.

Since there was no sentence where the references of multiple *on* would be different, everything depended on the English translation.

When each of the *on*-phrases was translated with a different device, they were divided into separate examples.

(1) Vielle confiance : sinon, **on se demande** (...) (137_FR:AM,48)
Implicit confidence – always have had. Can't see (...) (137_EN:AM,50)

(2) (...) comment **on ferait**. (138_FR:AM,48)
(...) how it could have been managed otherwise. (138_EN:AM,50)

When each of them was translated in the same way, they were handled as one example.

(3) **Peut-être méprise-t-on** beaucoup celui qu'**on tue**. (143_FR:AM,54)
One may feel great contempt for the man one kills. (143_EN:AM,57)

Instances where the first counterpart of *on* was later referred to anaphorically within one sentence were also accepted as a single example.

(4) **On est** tellement **libre** quand **on bêche!** (91_FR:ASE,48)
A man is free when he is using a spade. (91_EN:ASE,61)

This was the case even when only the first *on* in the sentence had an explicit English counterpart and the others were only implied. It was their mutual coreference that was considered, not their form.

(5) La promenade dominicale s'arrête au Boulevard Circulaire: **on débouche** sur le boulevard par l'avenue Christian-Charles, et **on le suit** le long du canal jusqu'à la Laiterie Nouvelle ou jusqu'au pont Gutenberg, rarement plus bas. (6_FR:ARG,19)
The Sunday walk stops at the Boulevard Circulaire: one comes out into the parkway along the Avenue Christian-Charles, then follows it along the canal to the New Dairy or to the Gutenberg Bridge, rarely below. (6_EN:ARG,15)

- (6) Voici que brusquement, ce monde calme, si uni, si simple, que **l'on découvre quand on émerge** des nuages, prenait pour moi une valeur inconnue. (54_FR:ASE,13)
*And suddenly that tranquil cloud-world, that world so harmless and simple that **one sees below on rising** out of the clouds, took on in my eyes a new quality.*
(54_EN:ASE,14)

b) There was a series of *on*-phrases in a number of sentences which immediately followed one another.

When all these *on*-phrases had the same reference in the original and were also translated as coreferent, we considered them to form a single, yet large, example.

The individual forms were various: the English counterpart of *on* could be repeated in all the sentences under the same form,

- (7) Autour de la table **on reprend**, après des années de silence, ces conversations interrompues, **on se renoue** aux vieux souvenirs. Puis **l'on repart**. (69_FR:ASE,34)
*Round the table in the evening, at Casablanca, at Dakar, at Buenos Aires, **we take up** conversations interrupted by years of silence, **we resume** friendships to the accompaniment of buried memories. And then **we are off again**.* (69_EN:ASE,44)

or there could be a translation later referred to anaphorically.

- (8) **On chemine** longtemps côte à côte, enfermé dans son propre silence, ou bien l'on échange des mots qui ne transportent rien. Mais voici l'heure du danger. Alors **on s'épaule** l'un à l'autre. **On découvre** que l'on appartient à la même communauté. **On s'élargit** par la découverte d'autres consciences. **On se regarde** avec un grand sourire. **On est semblable à** ce prisonnier délivré qui s'émerveille de l'immensité de la mer. (74_FR:ASE,37)
***Men travel** side by side for years, each locked up in his own silence or exchanging those words which carry no freight – till danger comes. Then **they stand** shoulder to shoulder. **They discover** that they belong to the same family. **They wax and bloom** in the recognition of fellow beings. **They look at one another** and smile. **They are like the prisoner set free** who marvels at the immensity of the sea.* (74_EN:ASE,47)

3.1.2.2 The final form of the list of examples

Once the boundaries of individual examples were set, there came the question of deciding whether or not to keep them in the representative excerption list. In order to have at least some material for analysis, only those cases could stay whose translations maintained more or less the same meaning as was conveyed by the original *on*-phrases. The equivalence or inequivalence of the meaning of the *on*-phrase was, however, often hard to determine, and the result was that we could never be absolutely sure whether a translation with a form different from the original also conveyed a different meaning or not.

The clause including *on* often had no other purpose than to modalise the rest of the sentence in one way or another. One of the types of modalisation was what we call ‘subjectivisation’ (cf. 4.2.1.1). Even though important for the meaning, subjectivisation was in some cases completely overlooked by the translators.

- (9) C’est un paysage romantique représentant une nuit d’orage: un éclair illumine les ruines d’une tour; à son pied **on distingue** deux hommes couchés, endormis malgré le vacarme; ou bien foudroyés? (FR:ARG,24)

It is a romantic landscape representing a stormy night: a flash of lightning illuminates the ruins of a tower; at its foot two men are lying, asleep despite the thunder or else struck by lightning? (EN:ARG,20)

- (10) Il vit, en face de lui, se resserrer, de minute en minute, les queues de tornades, comme **on voit** se bâtir un mur (...) (FR:ASE,23)

Straight ahead of him were the tails of tornadoes rising minute by minute gradually higher, rising as a wall is built (...) (EN:ASE,26)

This type of case could not be included in the excerption simply because it did not render the *on*-phrase at all.

No equivalent of the French *on*-phrase was proposed by the translator in some modalising clauses which did not express subjectivisation. These cases could not stay in the excerption list either.

- (11) Du moment que notre ville favorise justement les habitudes, **on peut dire que** tout est pour le mieux. (FR:AC,13)

And since habits are precisely what our town encourages, all is for the best.

(EN:AC,72)

Within the first 50 *on* in *Les Gommès*, there were two cases of repetition, meaning that one *on*-sentence occurred twice and the other four times, with so little difference between each other that they were irrelevant. These cases were

(12) **On ne meurt pas** si vite d'une petite blessure au bras. (14_FR:ARG,27)

You don't die so fast from a flesh wound in the arm. (14_EN:ARG,22)

and

(13) **On dirait qu'il** va neiger. (18_FR:ARG,29)

It looks as though it were going to snow. (18_EN:ARG,25)

Since the originals were almost and the translations absolutely identical, these repetitions were deleted from the excerption list, i.e. finally, each of them only occurred once in our selection.

3.1.2.3 Example codes

After the list of 200 samples was complete, each of them was given a number. The number of the example resulted from its position within the first 50 *on*-sentences excerpted from the particular book. Examples 1-50 come from Robbe-Grillet, 51-100 from Saint-Exupéry, 101-150 from Malraux, and 151-200 come from Camus.⁶ This number is the first part of the example's code.⁷ Each example consisting of a fragment of a French novel's text and its English equivalent, 'FR' and 'EN' were employed to indicate the language of the particular half of example as well as the language of the novel from which it had been excerpted. The last section of the code includes the initials of the author⁸ and the number of the page from which the example came. The code is indicated in round brackets at the end of the particular half of example. Therefore (155_FR:AC,11) stands for an example which is to be found in the Appendix under number 155, and which was excerpted from page 11 of the French version of Albert Camus's novel. (155_EN:AC,71) was taken from page 71 of the English translation of the same book.

⁶ In the Appendix, the list of examples is numbered according to this system.

⁷ The illustrative examples in the thesis are numbered according to the order they are mentioned. This order is expressed by a number in the format of (x). This numbering is independent from the numbering within the codes. The code numbering serves for the particular example to be quickly findable in the Appendix when needed.

⁸ ARG – Alain Robbe-Grillet, ASE – Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, AM – André Malraux, AC – Albert Camus.

3.2 Method

3.2.1 Method of analysis

It has already been pointed out in Theoretical background that the French *on* has three possible types of reference: generic, indefinite, and definite. Since our study is based on 200 further unclassified examples of *on*, we encountered all of them.

The type of reference of *on* was sometimes very hard to determine. For each example, we consulted the characteristics of individual types mentioned in the Potential types of reference of *on* (cf. 2.1.3.1). The factors that we considered the most were the context, the possible paraphrases of *on* and the verbal tense of the sentence. In some cases, the Czech translations (available to us as a result of our original intention to include them into the study) provided a clue.⁹ However, as it is always the case with *on*, certain employments could not be disambiguated.

In order to stay as clear as possible, we decided to take each type of reference separately, gather the examples which express the particular reference, and then see what linguistic devices English employed to translate them. We will thus proceed from the reference of the original to the form of its translation. Analysis of special cases (ambiguous reference of *on*, different reference of the agent in French and in English) will be presented as well.

Apart from the devices of rendering the general human agent in English mentioned in the secondary literature (cf. 2.2.1 and References), the contrastive approach adopted in the present study made it possible to identify some alternative means as well. Moreover, the translation counterparts of definite *on* were noted and analysed. In the last section of the Analysis chapter, the most interesting cases found in our excerpted material of modality, negation and verbal tense employment will be singled out and studied.

3.2.1.1 Based on the collected data, we established a classification of the English equivalents of the French *on*-phrases¹⁰:

⁹ We tried not to consider the English translations since their type of reference did not always correspond with the original.

¹⁰ For better orientation in the classification, its schematic representation is on page 27.

3.2.1.1.1 NP-equivalents

The reference to the agent is explicit. There is a noun phrase in the English sentence which overtly corresponds to the French pronoun *on*. *On* is in fact an NP, its English counterparts are either pronouns or noun-headed NPs. Unlike *on*, these are not restricted to the position of the subject. They can also function as a determiner, an object or a prepositional complement.

3.2.1.1.2 Implied equivalents

The agent is not overtly expressed, it is only implied. The agent is not explicitly realised because it is unknown, not important, or easily inferable from the context. ‘Short passives’ are the most typical device of implicit reference. In addition to them, non-finite constructions, qualifying copular predications, *there*-constructions, nominalisations, adjectivisations, 2nd person imperatives, and ellipses of subject in active clauses were found in our excerpt.

3.2.1.1.3 Other divergent equivalents

Under this term, cases were classed which could not be subsumed under NP-equivalents or under implied equivalents.¹¹ After careful consideration, we realised that they had more in common than it had seemed at first sight. We divided them into two types.

a) Change of perspective

We have subsumed under this label those cases where in the French original, the sentence had an *on* subject and the verb came with an object. In the English translation, this object, direct or indirect, became the subject of the sentence, leaving the agent of the action unexpressed. There was, however, no passive construction, even though the character of the modification resembled it to a great extent. Yet in these cases, the original verb was not kept and just passivised; here the translator came with a new verb expressing the desired meaning. (The original and the new verb were often conversion predicates.) The new verb was in active voice and usually intransitive. It is important to keep in mind that although the perspective changed due to the modification of the original syntactic structure of the sentence, the semantic roles remained the same as in French.

¹¹ Although the agent is not overtly expressed in this type, we decided not to include it under implied equivalents. Whereas all the types of the implied equivalents are generally accepted grammatical phenomena, the description and terminology of other divergent equivalents is entirely of our own invention. Their characteristics are less clearly determined than those of implied equivalents.

b) Modal constructions

These are the original *on*-sentences with a modal meaning which, when rendered into English, changed their syntactic structure. The modality was maintained also in the translation, but was expressed by different means than in French. No further generalisation is possible, the realisations of modality varied from case to case.

3.2.1.2 Schematic representation of our classification of English counterparts of *on*

(with the listing of all types of equivalents found in the excerpt)

1. NP-equivalents

- Pronouns (*one, I, we, you, he, she, they, everyone, someone, who*)
- Noun-headed NPs (*people, a man, men, these men, the man, a pilot, the people in it, life, his superiors*)

2. Implied equivalents

- Passive voice with unexpressed agent
- Non-finite constructions (*infinitive, passive infinitive, past participle, perfect participle*)
- Qualifying copular predication
- *There*-construction
- 2nd person imperative
- Nominalisation
- Adjectivisation
- Ellipsis of subject in active clause

3. Other divergent equivalents

- Change of perspective
- Modal construction

4. Analysis

Our analysis will be divided according to the type of reference of the pronoun *on* in the French part of the example. This is not the only available division or procedure, yet we have decided for this method in order to stress the referential variability of *on*.

As has been pointed out earlier, the French pronoun *on* can stand for three types of reference: generic, indefinite, and definite. In this chapter, we will thus divide the excerpts into three groups according to the reference of their *on*-phrase, and observe what linguistic means the translators employed in order to render the French originals into English.

Type of reference	Abs.	%
Generic	128	64.00
Indefinite	45	22.50
Definite	23	11.50
Ambiguous: generic or definite	3	1.50
Ambiguous: generic or indefinite	1	0.50
Total	200	100.00

Table 1. Reference of *on*

Type of equivalents	Abs.	%
NP-equivalents	110	55.00
Implied equivalents	68	34.00
Other divergent equivalents	22	11.00
Total	200	100.00

Table 2. English translations of *on*

The listings of the English versions will be ordered as well: according to their earlier definitions, there will be separate analyses of NP-equivalents, implied equivalents, and other divergent equivalents. The order of analysis will depend on their respective frequencies within the particular referential types, i.e. those that were used the most will be described

before the ones with lower occurrence.¹² Individual instances of equivalents within these classes will then be mentioned, following the same ordering pattern.

Case	Abs.	%
The same reference	181	90.50
Different reference	19	9.50
Total	200	100.00

Table 3. Reference of the agent in French and in English

The reference of the translated sentence usually corresponded to the reference of the original. For the classes of implied and other divergent equivalents, the types of reference in the two languages were assumed to correspond since there was no way to determine them with certainty. However, in 19 cases overall, there was a change. With a single possible exception (example 70_EN:ASE,44, where the translation *one* is ambiguous – it could be understood either as definite or as generic), all the changes made by the translators went in the direction of narrowing the reference. The individual examples of the narrowing will be pointed out and described in appropriate places.

When listing the translation equivalents found, we will also focus on the way of referring to the particular agent again within one example. Within the group of NP-equivalents, examples were found of repetition of the same counterpart, of a personal pronoun used anaphorically, of nominalisation, ellipsis of the subject, and of avoidance of the second mention of the agent altogether. In the analysis, they will be illustrated and commented on.

In section 4.1, typical as well as special examples will be mentioned of the English renditions of the French *on*-sentences. Analysis of chosen examples will follow in section 4.2, which will illustrate how the translators dealt with additional modal and negative meanings. There will also be a short commentary on the verbal tenses in some of the examples.

¹² This is why in the Indefinite *on* section, implied equivalents are studied earlier than NP-equivalents. With 23 instances, they outnumbered the usually more frequent NP-equivalents, which only had 16 instances here.

4.1 Translation equivalents of *on*-sentences

4.1.1 Generic *on*

Type of equivalents	Abs.	%
NP-equivalents	74	57.81
Implied equivalents	40	31.25
Other divergent equivalents	14	10.93
Total	128	100.00

Table 4a. Generic *on* – English translations

Type of equivalents	Equivalent	Abs.	%
NP-equivalents	<i>one</i>	18	24.32
	<i>you</i>	16	21.62
	<i>we</i>	11	14.86
	<i>people</i>	8	10.81
	<i>he</i>	5	6.75
	<i>I</i>	3	4.05
	<i>a man</i>	3	4.05
	<i>men</i>	2	2.70
	<i>they</i>	2	2.70
	<i>everyone</i>	1	1.35
	<i>a pilot</i>	1	1.35
	<i>these men</i>	1	1.35
	<i>the people in it</i>	1	1.35
	<i>who</i>	1	1.35
	<i>life</i>	1	1.35
	Total	74	100.00
Implied equivalents	Passive	20	50.00
	Qualifying copular predication	5	12.50

	<i>There</i> -construction	3	7.50
	Past participle	2	5.00
	Passive infinitive	2	5.00
	Nominalisation	2	5.00
	Adjectivisation	2	5.00
	Ellipsis of subject	1	2.50
	Imperative of 2 nd person	1	2.50
	Infinitive	1	2.50
	Perfect participle	1	2.50
	Total	40	100.00
Other divergent equivalents	Change of perspective	9	64.28
	Modal construction	5	35.71
	Total	14	100.00

Table 4b. Generic *on* – English translations – Detailed summary

On was generic in 64% of the excerpts. The prevalence of this type is not surprising, given the historical origin of *on* as a means for the expression of the “genuine” general human agent. Its English counterparts are, in decreasing order according to their frequency:

4.1.1.1 NP-equivalents

4.1.1.1.1 One

Generic *one* clearly takes advantage of the fact that its generic function does not need to compete with a personal one. It has been said above that with reference to the general human agent, it is mostly employed in written or intellectual texts. The material for our excerption was drawn from novels, making it written and often intellectual, especially in the parts where either the author or one of the characters ponders the general character and conditions of human life. In such moments, the employment of generic *one* is stylistically appropriate, even though it has a higher status than the alternative generic *you*.

- (14) C’est sentir, en posant **sa** pierre, que **l’on contribue** à bâtir le monde. (88_FR:ASE,48)
*It is to feel, when setting **one’s** stone, that **one is contributing** to the building of the world.* (88_EN:ASE,60)

(15) La terre est lisse, les pentes sont faibles, et **l'on oublie** leur origine. (96_FR:ASE,57)
*The earth is smooth, the slopes are gentle; **one forgets** the travail that gave them birth.*
(96_EN:ASE,100)

(16) Ces gens-là, en février, étaient deux ou trois mille si **l'on compte** les communistes... ils sont sans doute un peu plus nombreux maintenant. (150_FR:AM,72)
*In February there must have been two or three thousand of those enthusiasts, if **one includes** the Communists. There are probably a few more of them now.*
(150_EN:AM,76)

The generic nature of *one* in the next example is demonstrated by the special genitive form *one's*.

(17) **Sa vie** aussi, **on l'entend** avec la gorge, et celle des autres ? (141_FR:AM,49)
***The sound of one's life, too, comes to one** through the throat; and other people's?*
(141_EN:AM,52)

The negative value of generic *one*, i.e. *no one*, will be discussed later together with the rest of the question of negated *on*-sentences.

As for the multiple reference to generic *one* within one example, there have been found examples of its repetition,

(18) **Peut-être méprise-t-on** beaucoup celui qu'**on tue**. (143_FR:AM,54)
***One may feel great contempt** for the man **one kills**.* (143_EN:AM,57)
as well as of anaphoric *he* replacing it.

(19) **Il est rare que l'on reconnaisse** sa propre voix, voyez-vous, lorsqu'**on l'entend** pour la première fois. (106_FR:AM,19)
***Hardly any one recognizes** his own voice, you know, when **he hears** it for the first time.*
(106_EN:AM,17)

We consider the following case as an instance of avoiding the second reference to the agent.

(20) **On n'oublie pas** ce qu'**on veut**. (134_FR:AM,47)
***One's memories are not so easily expelled**.* (134_EN:AM,49)

The French sentence has two clauses and there is *on* in both of them. It says: "One does not forget what one wants." The English version, in contrast, refers to the first agent by means of

the possessive determiner *one*'s and it ignores the second French clause completely, not rendering it even under a different syntactic form.

The idea of unfulfilled desire is thus merely implied in English (we usually only expel things which we do not want to keep).

4.1.1.1.2 You

Generic *you*, commonly used as a less formal variant of *one* (HP, 2002: 1467), was the second most employed device among the NP-equivalents to translate generic *on*. Even though Jespersen sees it as distinctly colloquial in tone, he claims generic *you* to be very frequent in literature, also outside of conversations (Jespersen, 1949: 153). The high occurrence in our excerpted material agrees with his judgement.

- (21) **On rencontre** des courants descendants au-dessus de nuages qui paraissent stables, pour la simple raison qu'à la même altitude ils se recomposent indéfiniment. (79_FR:ASE,40-41)

When you get up above the clouds you run into those down currents that seem to be perfectly stationary for the simple reason that in that very high altitude they never stop flowing. (79_EN:ASE,52)

- (22) Cette cité sans pittoresque, sans végétation et sans âme finit par sembler reposante, **on s'y endort** enfin. (169_FR:AC,13)

Treeless, glamourless, soulless, the town of Oran ends by seeming restful and, after a while, you go complacently to sleep there. (169_EN:AC,72)

These uses of *you* are theoretically replaceable by generic *one*. Most frequently, it comes with the simple present tense, as do other statements which include the general human agent. When used generically, *you* usually preserves a hint of the deictic 2nd person pronoun. However, sometimes the "modification" into a generic pronoun is so deep that its reference is not even applicable to the addressee.

- (23) Dans la ville même, **on les rencontra**it par petits tas, sur les paliers ou dans les cours. (185_FR:AC,22)

Even in the busy heart of the town you found them piled in little heaps on landings and in backyards. (185_EN:AC,78)

In this example, the simple past tense embeds the action into a specific temporal and geographical setting. It is, however, impossible for all the addressees (the author is

commenting on the general situation, speaking to all the readers at the moment) to have fulfilled the action as presented here. The deictic function being thus annulled, the reference cannot be other than generic even though the verb is in past tense.

It seems that generic *you* is never anaphorically referred to by a personal pronoun. It has been suggested in the Theoretical background that generic *you* can sometimes corefer with generic *one* in order to avoid repetition (Dušková, 1999: 44). However, in our excerpt, whenever *on* was repeated in the original and it was translated by means of *you*, this *you* was repeated in English as well. The following is a rather extreme example, judging by its length and the number of *you* repetitions. In addition, the coreferential reflexive *yourself* and possessive *your* are to be found here.

- (24) **On cabre** pour sauver **son** altitude, l'avion perd sa vitesse et devient mou : **on s'enfonce** toujours. **On rend la main**, craignant maintenant d'avoir trop cabré, **on se laisse dériver** sur la droite ou sur la gauche pour s'adosser à la crête favorable, celle qui reçoit les vents comme un tremplin, mais **l'on s'enfonce** encore. C'est le ciel entier qui semble descendre. **On se sent** pris, alors, dans une sorte d'accident cosmique. Il n'est plus de refuge. **On tente** en vain le demi-tour pour rejoindre, en arrière, les zones où l'air vous soutenait, solide et plein comme un pilier. Mais il n'est plus de pilier. Tout ce décompose, **et l'on glisse** dans un délabrement universel vers le nuage qui monte mollement, se hausse jusqu'à vous, et vous absorbe. (78_FR:ASE,40-41)
- You jockey to hold your altitude: the ship loses speed and goes mushy. And still you sink. So you give it up, afraid that you may have jockeyed too much; and you let yourself drift to right or left, striving to put at your back a favorable peak, that is, a peak off which the winds rebound as off a springboard. And yet you go sinking. The whole sky seems to be coming down on you. You begin to feel like the victim of some cosmic accident. You cannot land anywhere, and you try in vain to turn round and fly back into those zones where the air as dense and solid as a pillar, had held you up. That pillar has melted away. Everything here is rotten and you slither about in a sort of universal decomposition while the cloud-bank rises apathetically, reaches your level, and swallows you up. (78_EN:ASE,51)*

4.1.1.1.3 We

Due to the possible extent of the reference of generic *we*, it is typical of formal, scientific style where the “disappearance” of the agent is welcome. Yet from the high frequency of its use in our excerption, we can see that it is a prolific device in fiction, too.

The following *we* are all replaceable by generic *one*. That can serve as a proof of their reference to the general human agent.

(25) Mais **on n’a pas l’habitude**, voyez-vous, de s’entendre soi-même... (107_FR:AM,19)

You see, we just aren’t used to hearing our own voices... (107_EN:AM,17)

(26) **On peut déplorer** sans doute ce parti pris et y soupçonner la sécheresse du coeur.

(199_FR:AC,29)

Obviously we may deplore this curious kink in his character and suspect in him a lack of proper feeling. (199_EN:AC,83)

(27) **On y trouve** la description détaillée des deux lions de bronze qui ornent la mairie (...)

(200_FR:AC,29)

We find in them a minute description of the two bronze lions adorning the Town Hall (...) (200_EN:AC,84)

In two cases, the generic reference of the French original was not maintained in the translation: the reference narrowed a great deal - *we* became definite, with referents identifiable from the situation.

(28) **On trouve**, à l’aube, de petits bistrots qui s’ouvrent déjà... (63_FR:ASE,25)

We would go to a little pub already open despite the early hour. (63_EN:ASE,29)

(29) Si **on lui parlait** de son courage, Guillaumet hausserait les épaules. (85_FR:ASE,47)

If we were to talk to him about his courage, Guillaumet would shrug his shoulders.

(85_EN:ASE,59)

No anaphora was present among the excerpts, only repetition.

(30) **Ne serait-on** jamais **jaloux** que de ce qu’**on suppose** que suppose l’autre?

(133_FR:AM,47)

Are we always only jealous of what we imagine the other person is thinking?

(133_EN:AM,48)

The next example is an illustration of how possessive determination is formed in sentences with the general human agent. Whereas French *on* is typically referred to as *son, sa, ses* as

possessive *determiner* and as *le sien, la sienne, les siens* when standing alone, English respects the generic *we* and employs its possessive forms. Its generic value is not lost even when *our* is emphasised with *own*.

(31) « **On entend** la voix des autres avec ses oreilles, la sienne avec la gorge. »

(140_FR:AM,49)

“**We hear** other people’s voices with our ears, our own through our throat.”

(140_EN:AM,52)

4.1.1.1.4 People

In our excerption, *people*, this plural noun with zero article, was the most frequent noun used to translate generic *on*. It was employed to refer either to the humanity in general,

(32) Ce n’est pas pour quelqu’un qu’**on va** au bain. (131_FR:AM,46)

People don’t go to penal servitude for the sake of a human relationship.

(131_EN:AM,47)

or to a certain part of the humanity, which was either explicitly specified,

(33) A Oran comme ailleurs, faute de temps et de réflexion, **on est bien obligé de s’aimer** sans le savoir. (161_FR:AC,12)

At Oran, as elsewhere, for lack of time and thinking, **people have to love each other** without knowing much about it. (161_EN:AC,72)

or just implied as in the following examples, in both of which the reference is to the inhabitants of the particular towns.

(34) C’est là **qu’on va** d’habitude. (43_FR:ARG,55)

People usually go there. (43_EN:ARG,50)

(35) Jusqu’alors, **on s’était** seulement **plaint** d’un accident un peu répugnant. **On s’apercevait** maintenant que ce phénomène dont on ne pouvait encore ni préciser l’ampleur ni déceler l’origine avait quelque chose de menaçant. (188_FR:AC,22)

Hitherto people had merely grumbled at a stupid, rather obnoxious visitation; **they now realized** that this strange phenomenon, whose scope could not be measured and whose origins escaped detection, had something vaguely menacing about it. (188_EN:AC,79)

We can thus see that in most cases, the noun *people* is specified locally, explicitly or implicitly.

Example (35) is also an illustration of anaphoric *they* referring to *people* in the second clause.

No repetition of the noun within an example has been found.

4.1.1.1.5 He

Five sentences with generic *on* in the original were translated by means of *he*. This group, nevertheless, represents a special case. No *he* in our excerpt can be described as having generic function. Narrowing of the original generic reference to the definite type took place in all the examples.

(36) Violente envie, soudain, d'essayer quand même; d'ouvrir un peu plus, juste un peu; seulement pour savoir **juqu'où l'on a le droit d'aller**. (11_FR:ARG,22)

*Violent desire, suddenly, to try all the same; to push it open a little farther, only a little; just to see **how far he can go***. (11_EN:ARG,18)

(37) Sur le disque de signalisation où deux enfants, le cartable en bandoulière, se tiennent par la main, **on voit** les restes d'un papillon, collé à l'envers et arraché.

(47_FR:ARG,58)

*On the school sign showing two children carrying schoolbooks over their shoulders and holding hands, **he can see** the remains of a butterfly pasted on upside down and torn off*. (47_EN:ARG,54)

The remaining three instances are of the same type. In all of them, the French author was describing in 'er-form' a situation in which a male character played a significant role. Yet the author, within this context, wrote a sentence with general value, a sentence which was not only true for the male character, but for anybody, should he have found himself in the same position. The translators, by narrowing the agent to a single definite man, made the utterance less generic than had been intended.

In addition, all instances of *he* occurred in sentences carrying a modal meaning. Modality will be discussed later in this chapter.

4.1.1.1.6 I

The translations of generic *on* with *I* have the same characteristics as those with *he*, i.e. all the generic instances became definite. Together with the narrowing of the reference came also a sense of subjectivity, much greater than in the original text.

(38) C'est par deux ou trois qu'**on** les **trouve** maintenant. (179_FR:AC,20)

I keep finding 'em by twos and threes. (179_EN:AC,77)

4.1.1.1.7 A man

This is one of the most common nouns expressing the general human agent. Being singular, it has the generic indefinite article. It occurred three times.

(39) « Dans la neige, me disais-tu, **on perd** tout instinct de conservation. »

(80_FR:ASE,43)

“Amid snow,” you told me, “a man loses his instinct of self-preservation.”

(80_EN:ASE,54-55)

It was never repeated in our excerpted material, but one of the examples showed anaphoric *he* standing for it in the next clause.

(40) **On est** tellement **libre** quand **on bêche**! (91_FR:ASE,48)

A man is free when he is using a spade. (91_EN:ASE,61)

4.1.1.1.8 Men

It would have been possible to class *men* under *a man* because the only difference between them is their number. However, we have decided to separate them, on the basis of their being anaphorically replaced with different pronouns (*he* versus *they*).

(41) **On chemine** longtemps côte à côte, enfermé dans son propre silence, ou bien

l'on échange des mots qui ne transportent rien. Mais voici l'heure du danger.

Alors **on s'épaule** l'un à l'autre. **On découvre** que l'on appartient à la même

communauté. **On s'élargit** par la découverte d'autres consciences. **On se regarde** avec

un grand sourire. **On est semblable à** ce prisonnier délivré qui s'émerveille de

l'immensité de la mer. (74_FR:ASE,37)

Men travel side by side for years, each locked up in his own silence or exchanging

*those words which carry no freight – till danger comes. Then **they stand** shoulder to shoulder. **They discover** that they belong to the same family. **They wax and bloom** in the recognition of fellow beings. **They look at one another** and smile. **They are like** the prisoner set free who marvels at the immensity of the sea. (74_EN:ASE,47)*

The next example shows what we have not yet seen in this study.

- (42) Ainsi la joie de vivre se ramassait-elle pour moi dans cette première gorgée parfumée et brûlante, dans ce mélange de lait, de café et de blé, par où **l'on communit** avec les pâturages calmes, les plantations exotiques et les moissons, par où **l'on communit** avec toute la terre. (65_FR:ASE,25-26)

*The joy of living, I say, was summed up for me in the remembered sensation of that first burning and aromatic swallow, that mixture of milk and coffee and bread by which **men hold communion** with tranquil pastures, exotic plantations, and golden harvests, **communion** with the earth. (65_EN:ASE,29)*

The translator used *men* for the first mention, whereas the second coreferential subject (together with the finite verb) is elided. It is, however, clear from the preceding context that *men* is implied again.

4.1.1.1.9 They

Generic *on* was translated by means of generic *they* only twice. Both instances represent the most common use of generic *they*, i.e. *they say*.

- (43) - Mais oui, **on dit!** D'ailleurs **on** le **dit** de tous les gynécologues dans ce pays, ou à peu près. (23_FR:ARG,34)

*“Of course, **they say!** Besides, **they say** it about every gynecologist in the country, or just about.” (23_EN:ARG,29)*

- (44) Mais il a poussé un gémissement drôle, et même sinistre, **on peut le dire**. (191_FR:AC,24)

*Only, then I heard a funny sort of groan; it made my blood run cold, **as they say**.* (191_EN:AC,80)

Moreover, in example (43), *they* is implicitly locally specified, which is a typical feature of generic *they*: it is very probable that those who judge the gynecologists of the country are those who live there, not the foreigners.

As for example (44), there is intrinsic modality expressing possibility in the French version *on peut le dire* (*one can say that*), but English has none. This is mostly due to the fact that the translation is not absolutely faithful: in French, the speaker comments by means of this style disjunct on the adjective he used in order to describe the situation. This adjective seems appropriate to him, which is why *one can say that*. English, on the other hand, comments with *as they say* on the idiomatic character of the expression *it made my blood run cold*, but not on the appropriateness of its use within the context. Hence the different modalities.

4.1.1.1.10 Everyone

This indefinite universal pronoun was employed once. It does not entirely correspond to generic *on*. Unlike *on*, *everyone* focuses the attention on every single member of the community, making the reference somewhat less vague or general. In addition to that, *everyone* does not allow exceptions, thus rendering the statement more universal or absolute than the original.

(45) C'est-à-dire qu'**on s'y ennuie** et qu'**on s'y applique** à prendre des habitudes.

(156_FR:AC,12)

*The truth is that **everyone is bored**, and **devotes himself to** cultivating habits.*

(156_EN:AC,71)

In our example, *everyone* is later referred to by means of the anaphoric reflexive *himself*.

4.1.1.1.11 A pilot

We have another case of narrowing the reference here.

(46) Je me souviens aussi de l'une de ces heures où **l'on franchit** les lisières du monde réel

(...) (61_FR:ASE,23)

*I remember, for my part, another of those hours in which **a pilot** finds suddenly that he **has slipped beyond** the confines of this world. (61_EN:ASE,26)*

Even though the author talks mainly about pilots in his book, by using *on*, he wanted to convey the generic nature of the experience described. This translation narrows the meaning in a significant way, because not only pilots can slip beyond the confines of this world, but also the passengers – in other words, practically anybody.

4.1.1.12 These men

The generic value is clearly lost here, *these men* has definite reference, the referents being identifiable from the textual environment. The original meaning has been significantly changed by this referential narrowing.

- (47) **On oublie** que la vie, ici comme ailleurs, est un luxe, et qu'il est nulle part de terre bien profonde sous le pas des hommes. (100_FR:ASE,58)

These men live heedless of the fact that, here as elsewhere, life is a luxury; and that nowhere on the globe is the soil really rich beneath the feet of men. (100_EN:ASE,102)

4.1.1.13 The people in it

- (48) Une manière commode de faire la connaissance d'une ville est de chercher comment **on y travaille**, comment **on y aime** et comment **on y meurt**. (155_FR:AC,11)

*Perhaps the easiest way of making a town's acquaintance is to ascertain how **the people in it work**, how **they love**, and how **they die**.* (155_EN:AC,71)

The reference of *on* in the original is certainly generic: *on* is semantically plural, the sentence expresses a law-like, atemporal proposition, and the only restriction is of a locative character.

Unlike in the case of generic *people* with zero article, the definite article and the postmodification by a prepositional phrase with locative meaning in *the people in it* clearly suggest that we are again dealing with narrowing of the reference to the definite value. Nevertheless, the overall meaning does not seem to have changed significantly. The location of the action is specified even in the French statement by means of the adverbial of place *y* (*there*), and the significance of the word *people* is generic enough for it to maintain a hint of that value even when made definite.

4.1.1.14 Who

This unusual translation by means of an interrogative pronoun stems from the fact of the original declarative sentence's becoming an interrogative one.

- (49) **On ne sait** comment, **on ne sait** pourquoi ce passager visite ces jardins préparés, habitables pour un temps si court, une époque géologique, un jour béni parmi les jours. (98_FR:ASE,57)

Who knows how, or why, man visits these gardens ready to hand, habitable for so short a time – a geologic age – for a single day blessed among days? (98_EN:ASE,100-101)

In French, the idea of uncertainty which the sentence carries is expressed by negation of the finite verb *savoir* which makes part of the predicative pair together with the generic *on* subject; in English, the uncertainty is implied by the rhetorical wh-question. “The positive question is equivalent to a statement in which the wh-element is replaced by a negative element” (CGEL, 1985: 826). *Who knows* thus corresponds to *Nobody knows*, which, expressing universal negation, has a stronger effect than the negation of the generic *on*.

The genericity of the whole English sentence is also supported by the generic *man*. On the other hand, *man* with its reference to the whole species (Dušková, 2003: 64) has a significantly broader reference than its French counterpart, the definite *ce passager*.

4.1.1.1.15 Life

This is a very unusual counterpart of generic *on*. We consider its reference to be generic because *life* clearly implies *human life*, or, in other words, *the life of a general human agent*.

(50) La vieille paysanne, ainsi, ne rejoint son dieu qu’à travers une image peinte, une médaille naïve, un chapelet: il faut que **l’on** nous **parle** un simple langage pour se faire entendre de nous. (64_FR:ASE,25)

*Even as an old peasant woman recognizes her God in a painted image in a childish medal, in a chaplet, so **life would speak** to us in its humblest language in order that we understand.* (64_EN:ASE,29)

It must, however, be pointed out that even though the generic reference of the original has been maintained, the whole translation is not very faithful and it does not convey the same meanings as the original does. The intrinsic modality expressing necessity, present in the French sentence with *il faut que* is lost. In addition, instead of a generic agent followed by a verb in present subjunctive (but only because it is required by the preceding superordinate clause with modal meaning), there is the generic noun *life* in English followed by *would speak to us* – a verbal form which, since there was no clue to be found in the textual environment suggesting otherwise, was finally identified as present conditional. It remains unclear why the translator felt the need to remove the idea of a necessary action and replace it with a hypothetical one. Suffice it to say that the translation of the whole book by Saint-Exupéry was overall the least faithful of the four translations we used for the purposes of material excerption.

4.1.1.2 Implied equivalents

4.1.1.2.1 Passive

Passive constructions with unexpressed agent being very frequent in English, it is not surprising that the group of implied agents abounds with translations of generic *on* by means of passive voice. From forty equivalents of *on* which belong to this class, twenty are passives. They are to be found both in authorial narrations and in conversations.

(51) Les hommes et les femmes, ou bien se dévorent rapidement dans ce qu'**on appelle** l'acte d'amour, ou bien s'engagent dans une longue habitude à deux. (160_FR:AC,12)
*The men and women consume each other rapidly in what is **called** "the act of love", or else settle down to a mild habit of conjugality. (160_EN:AC,72)*

(52) Pourquoi **ne commande-t-on pas** cette barrière automatiquement, depuis l'autre bout? (46_FR:ARG,58)

*Why **isn't** that barrier **controlled** automatically, from the other end? (46_EN:ARG,54)*

The following example is interesting for its tense.

(53) Le docteur lui serra la main et lui dit qu'il y aurait un curieux reportage à faire sur la quantité de rats morts qu'**on trouvait** dans la ville en ce moment. (178_FR:AC,19)
*When shaking hands with him, Rieux suggested that if he was out for curious "stories" for his paper, he might say something about the extraordinary number of dead rats that **were being found** in the town just now. (178_EN:AC,77)*

The French imperfect tense is skilfully mirrored in the English past progressive passive, which makes the reader focus on the process rather than on the result. This is rather unusual for a telic verb such as *find*. In this case, however, it is the repetitiveness of the individual findings which is being pointed out, which makes the employment of the progressive not only possible, but also appropriate.

The example below is a nice illustration of the great extent to which English is nominal, in the sense that it makes a frequent use of verbonominal predications where a verbal one could be used.

(54) Elles joignent ce village à cet autre village, car de l'un à l'autre **on se marie**. (93_FR:ASE,55)

*They join village to village, for between villages **marriages are made**. (93_EN:ASE,98)*

The verb in this type of construction is so semantically vague that, in active clause, it only serves as the copula between the subject and the semantically rich direct object. In short passive, the original subject expressing the agent is unexpressed, the meaningful object becomes the subject and the finite verb takes up the passive form in the appropriate tense.

4.1.1.2.2 Qualifying copular predication

In the original, *on* has the semantic role of the experiencer. With copular predications, the experiencer could be expressed by means of a prepositional phrase or an adverbial, yet it is not necessary. The option not to express the experiencer makes these constructions suitable for translating sentences with generic *on*. In addition, because of the end-weight principle, all our copular predications have their notional subject extraposed and anticipated by anticipatory *it*. In our excerpt, five examples have been found of qualifying copular predications. In three cases, the notional subject was an infinitive,

(55) Mais **on le trahirait** aussi **en célébrant** sa modestie. (86_FR:ASE,47)

But it would be just as false to extol his modesty. (86_EN:ASE,59)

and two had for the notional subject a nominal content clause: one was dependent declarative,

(56) « **On voit bien qu’il** ne connaît pas ce dont il parle », tenta de penser Tchen ; mais Gisors avait touché juste. (142_FR:AM,53)

“It’s clear that he doesn’t know what he’s talking about,” Chen forced himself to think.

But Gisors’ trust had gone home. (142_EN:AM,56)

and the other was a dependent interrogative (wh-question) clause.

(57) **On comprendra ce qu’il** peut y avoir d’inconfortable dans la mort, même moderne, lorsqu’elle survient ainsi dans un lieu sec. (165_FR:AC,13)

It will then be obvious what discomfort attends death, even modern death, when it waylays you under such conditions in a dry place. (165_EN:AC,72)

4.1.1.2.3 There-construction

There were three constructions with *there* as the grammatical subject among the translations of generic *on*. Each of them represents a different type.

There was the existential construction,

(58) **On veut confondre** de tels hommes avec les toréadors ou les joueurs. (89_FR:ASE,48)

There is a tendency to class such men with toreadors and gamblers. (89_EN:ASE,60)

in which the genericity applies twice: in the *there is* arrangement and in the use of the infinitive in postmodification in order to avoid the explicit reference to the agent once again. We should also note the elegant manner of rendering the original intrinsic modality of volition realised by the modal verb *vouloir* (*want*). Although there is no modal verb in the translation, the translator chose the noun *tendency*, with a meaning which carries the overtones of volition or inclination towards something. Therefore the modality is not lost, just expressed differently.

In the excerpted material, there was also an instance of the existential-locative construction.

(59) **On le subit avec surprise** dans ce paysage désaffecté (...) (94_FR:ASE,56)

There is something surprising in the tranquillity of this deserted landscape (...)

(94_EN:ASE,99-100)

The adjective *surprising* evaluates *the tranquillity of this deserted landscape*. *The tranquillity* is, due to the character of the construction, presented as the adjunct of place. The construction has allowed hiding the experiencer of the emotion of surprise, who in French is expressed with *on*.

Finally, there was the actional type,

(60) **On demandait** des mesures radicales (...) (189_FR:AC,23)

There was a demand for drastic measures (...) (189_EN:AC,79)

in which the agent is hidden and the action is expressed by means of the actional, deverbal noun *demand*.

4.1.1.2.4 Past participle

In both instances found in our excerption, the past participle has a passive meaning (with the agent unexpressed), and has the syntactic function of modification.

In one case, it is used as a premodifier,

- (61) Leur présence arrachait Tchen à sa terrible solitude, doucement, comme **une plante que l'on tire de la terre** où ses racines les plus fines la retiennent encore. (102_FR:AM,17)
*Their presence was breaking down Chen's ghastly feeling of isolation. It yielded gently, like **an uprooted plant** which still clings to the ground with a few slender threads.*
(102_EN:AM,14)

whereas in the other,

- (62) Le printemps s'annonce seulement par la qualité de l'air ou par les corbeilles de fleurs que des petits vendeurs ramènent des banlieues; c'est **un printemps qu'on vend** sur les marchés. (153_FR:AC,11)
*All that tells you of spring's coming is the feel of the air, or the baskets of flowers brought in from the suburbs by hawkers; it's **a spring cried** in the market-places.*
(153_EN:AC,71)

it is in postposition to its head noun since it is further developed by the adjunct of place *in the market-places*, and also since it would have been impossible to put the verb *cry* in past participle before the noun for structural reasons.

4.1.1.2.5 Passive infinitive

Having the passive meaning with the agent unexpressed, the passive infinitive serves the translator in the same way as the finite passive construction. Yet its syntactic behaviour is infinitival. In the following case, for instance, it has become a syntactic noun, allowing it to fill the position of the subject complement.

- (63) Mais Cottard dit, au milieu de ses larmes, qu'il ne recommencerait pas, que c'était seulement un moment d'affolement et qu'il désirait seulement **qu'on lui laissât la paix**. (193_FR:AC,25)
*Cottard assured him tearfully that there wasn't the least risk of that; he'd had a sort of crazy fit, but it had passed and all he wanted now was **to be left in peace**.*
(193_EN:AC,81)

4.1.1.2.6 Nominalisation

The option of avoiding the reference to the generic agent by employing a deverbal noun instead of expressing the action by means of a verb was made use of twice in our material.

(64) Il n'est pas nécessaire, en conséquence, de préciser la façon dont **on s'aime** chez nous.
(159_FR:AC,12)

*Hence I see no need to dwell on the manner of **loving** in our town.* (159_EN:AC,72)

We consider *loving* to be a noun and not a gerund, because a gerund would have maintained its verbal characteristics, i.e. its valency. In this case, neither the experiencer nor the object of *loving* are expressed, making the word more nominal in our eyes than is a gerund.

4.1.1.2.7 Adjectivisation

In the two examples of adjectivisation in our excerpt, the adjective is the complement of the noun which in the French original functioned as the direct object of the action with generic agent.

Here, the adjective is subject complement,

(65) Du moins, **on ne connaît pas** chez nous le désordre. (168_FR:AC,13)

*But, at least, social unrest is quite **unknown** amongst us.* (168_EN:AC,72)

and here, it becomes object complement.

(66) Il semble que le travail des ingénieurs, des dessinateurs, des calculateurs du bureau d'études ne soit ainsi en apparence, que de polir et d'effacer, d'alléger ce raccord, d'équilibrer cette aile, **jusqu'à ce qu'on ne la remarque plus** (...) (92_FR:ASE,51)

*In this spirit do engineers, physicists concerned with thermodynamics, and the swarm of preoccupied draughtsmen tackle their work. In appearance, but only in appearance, they seem to be polishing surfaces and refining away angles, easing this joint or stabilizing that wing, **rendering these parts invisible** (...) (92_EN:ASE,66-67)*

The French grammatical negation, carried by the finite verb in the original, is in English expressed lexically by the negative prefix *in-* of the adjective *invisible*. The hint of intrinsic modality (possibility), carried by the semantics of the verb *remarquer* (*notice*) because it is a verb of sensory perception, is mirrored in the *-ible* suffix.

4.1.1.2.8 Ellipsis of subject

The ellipsis of subject in an active clause occurred once.

(67) Vielle confiance : sinon, **on se demande** (...) (137_FR:AM,48)

*Implicit confidence – always have had. **Can't see** (...) (137_EN:AM,50)*

It is interesting that when considering the English version alone, one cannot specify any type of reference it implies. It is not clear from the context; the ellipsis must therefore be situational. However, nothing points to the fact that this would be direct speech, which eliminates the most probable option that the elided subject is the speaker himself. To conclude, rather than genericity, uncertainty and vagueness of the agent are delivered.

4.1.1.2.9 2nd person imperative

It is a primary characteristic of the 2nd person imperative construction that the subject, and therefore the agent of the desired action, is not expressed. This makes the 2nd person imperatives convenient for agent implication.

(68) **Qu'on pense** alors à celui qui va mourir (...) (164_FR:AC,13)

Think what it must be for a dying man (...) (164_EN:AC,72)

The fact that the French 3rd person imperative (where the 3rd person is generic *on*) is translated by the English 2nd person imperative does not necessarily mean that reference has been altered. If we consider the inferable *you* in the English version to be generic, the scopes of reference are identical in both languages.

4.1.1.2.10 Infinitive

The active infinitive was only found once as a means of general human agent implication.

(69) Les femmes, je sais **ce qu'on en fait**, quand elles veulent continuer à vous posséder : **on vit** avec elles. (144_FR:AM,54)

I know how to treat women when they develop proprietary ideas: live with them.

(144_EN:AM,57)

The second infinitive in the sentence is employed as the appositive specification of the first infinitive. The agent implied is, equally to French, clearly generic; or more specifically, generic for the male part of the mankind.

4.1.1.2.11 Perfect participle

Since the perfect participle has a limited range of employment - describing actions completed before the action of the finite verb - it is not very frequent. In our excerpt, there was one example of perfect participle translating generic *on*.

(70) Il est vain, si l'**on plante** un chêne, d'espérer s'abriter bientôt sous son feuillage.

(72_FR:ASE,35)

*It is idle, **having planted** an acorn in the morning, to expect that afternoon to sit in the shade of the oak.* (72_EN:ASE,45)

The implied agent of the action expressed by means of a participle is recovered on the basis of coreference with the superordinate clause subject. Here, however, the superordinate verb is non-finite (infinitive); the agent of “planting” has thus to be identified with the unexpressed agent of the infinitival predication. In this case, the one who expects is the general human agent.

4.1.1.3 Other divergent equivalents

4.1.1.3.1 Change of perspective

The following are prototypical examples of change of perspective, with the French direct object becoming the subject in the English sentence.

(71) Le bouton se trouve à l'entrée, contre le chambranle; il faut appuyer vers le mur, dans l'autre sens **on allume deux ampoules de plus**. (13_FR:ARG,25)

*The switch is against the door jamb; you have to push it toward the wall, if you push it in the other direction **two more bulbs go on**.* (13_EN:ARG,21)

(72) Un intense désir de le revoir le bouleversa – **celui qu'on a** de revoir une dernière fois ses morts. (145_FR:AM,56)

*He was seized with an overwhelming desire to see him again – like **the desire that comes to look yet once more upon the dead**.* (145_EN:AM,59)

We can see that prototypically, as a result of the transformations described above, the subject of the English clause is an inanimate object or entity, which is in contrast to the generic human subject in French. Unlike in French, the subject in English does not express a wilful agent of the action.

Even in the following example, where the subject exceptionally is a human being, he has the semantic function of the recipient and not of the agent.

(73) (...) et il ne savait même pas si **on pouvait l'appeler du dehors**, puisqu'il n'y avait pas eu de coup de téléphone depuis le vendredi... (17_FR:ARG,28)

(...) *and he did not even know if **he could receive outside calls**, since the phone had not rung since Friday...* (17_EN:ARG,24)

The example below should not deceive us by the fact that the English predication is passive.

(74) (...) « Rue de Brabant » **lit-on** sur la plaque bleue. (37_FR:ARG,47)

(...) *“Rue de Brabant” is **written** on the blue plaque.* (37_EN:ARG,43)

We can see that *is written* is not a passivisation of the French active verb. It is the logical semantic counterpart of the French *lit-on* (*one reads*). Both the sentences describe the same content, but each from a different perspective, the French from the perspective of the reader, and the English from the perspective of the inscription.

The following is an example of the subject in English being formed from the original French indirect object.

(75) « **On en parle** encore trois ans après ! » (114_FR:AM,27)

*Still a **subject of conversation** three years later.* (114_EN:AM,26)

Even though there is ellipsis of subject and of the verbal part of the verbonominal predication, the subject - anaphorical *it* - is easily inferable.

Let us proceed to the three most special cases. They do not entirely correspond to the definition of this type of equivalents, but since they still involve change of perspective, the decision has been made to include them under the same label as the prototypical examples.

(76) Le moteur tourne rond, mais **l'on s'enfoncé**. (77_FR:ASE,40)

*The engines run on, but **the ship seems to be sinking**.* (77_EN:ASE,51)

The ship is not really the object of the French clause. There is in fact no object, the verb *s'enfoncer* being pronominal intransitive. Moreover, its meaning is the same as the meaning of its English equivalent *sink*. As we have seen, it is rather unusual in this type of generic *on* translation to keep the same verb in the translation. The change of perspective is thus reduced to the fact that the originally generic human subject *on* became the inanimate subject *the ship*. This was possible because logically, when the pilot and the passengers are sinking, they are sinking while being in a ship. And vice versa, when the ship is sinking, it is implied that its occupants are doing likewise.

(77) Il y a des appels, surtout quand **on est si près de la mort** (c'est de celle des autres que j'ai l'habitude, Kyo...) qui n'ont rien à voir avec l'amour. (132_FR:AM,46)

*There are some things people ask of one, above all when **death is as near** as this (it's*

other people's death that I've had to face till now, Kyo...) which have no connexion with love. (132_EN:AM,48)

There is also no object in the French clause. Its syntactic pattern is S-V-AdvPlace. The adverbial consists of the multi-word spatial preposition *près de* and its complement, the noun *la mort*. This noun shifts to the subject position in English.

(78) Les désirs des plus jeunes dépassent pas les associations de boulomanes, les banquets des amicales et les cercles où **l'on joue gros jeu** sur le hasard des cartes.

(157_FR:AC,12)

*The passions of the young are violent and short-lived; the vices of older men seldom range beyond an addiction to games of bowls, to banquets and "socials", or clubs where **large sums change hands** on the fall of a card.* (157_EN:AC,71)

Here, we have the direct object in French *gros jeu* (*big game*), which, however, does not become the subject of the English clause in its original form. The translator went a step further and transformed *big game* into *large sums*, which are not *played*, but they *change hands*. The overall meaning has been maintained though.

4.1.1.3.2 Modal construction

Although modality will be discussed more thoroughly in the final section of this chapter, we cannot ignore it here since it is the feature that all the five cases belonging to the group of modal constructions share. To sum up, these French sentences with generic *on* subject all have an additional modal meaning, which is maintained in the English translations, but differently expressed.

Four of the five examples found express the epistemic modality of judgement or prediction. The source of the modality was the speaker because it was he or she who made the evaluation.

Three times, the French sentence included the opinion phraseme *on dirait que* in the appropriate verbal tense, followed by a nominal content clause. Although translated by two different translators, their English counterparts were always clauses with the syntactic pattern of S-Vcop-Cs, where the subject complement was expressed with a clause of comparison introduced by the conjunction *as if / as though*. Since they expressed comparison with an imaginary, unreal action, they had the preterite in one case and the subjunctive in the two remaining cases because their finite verb was *be*.

(79) **On dirait qu’il avait appris déjà la réussite du coup.** (30_FR:ARG,39)
It was as if he had already heard about the success of the job. (30_EN:ARG,34)

(80) **On dirait qu’il va neiger.** (18_FR:ARG,29)
It looks as though it were going to snow. (18_EN:ARG,25)

The next example also expresses the epistemic modality of judgement, which is in accordance with Malá’s claim that the primary semantic function of *look* “consists in epistemic modification” (Malá, 2010: 184).

(81) Les miettes éparses, les deux bouchons, le petit morceau de bois noirci: **on dirait à présent comme** une figure humaine, avec le bout de pelure d’orange qui fait la bouche. (29_FR:ARG,37)

The scattered fragments, the two corks, the little piece of blackened wood: now they look like a human face, with the bit of orange peel for the mouth. (29_EN:ARG,32)

The only difference from the preceding cases is that here the subject complement is not expressed clausally, but by means of the preposition of manner *like* and its substantival complement, which is a construction fully mirroring the French expression.

The example standing apart includes the epistemic modality of certainty.

(82) **Qu’on ne s’imagine pas qu’il va s’en plaindre.** (27_FR:ARG,37)
He is certainly not going to complain. (27_EN:ARG,32)

The certainty is conveyed clausally in French. The main clause is in 3rd person (*on*) imperative, which, because it is negated, expresses prohibition: “no one should think” what is said in the following nominal content clause. English, on the contrary, employs a simple sentence, where the modal meaning is expressed with the truth value disjunct *certainly*.

4.1.2 Indefinite *on*

Type of equivalents	Abs.	%
Implied equivalents	23	51.11
NP-equivalents	16	35.55
Other divergent equivalents	6	13.33
Total	45	100.00

Table 5a. Indefinite *on* – English translations

Type of equivalents	Equivalent	Abs.	%
Implied equivalents	Passive	20	86.95
	Passive infinitive	1	4.34
	Past participle	1	4.34
	<i>There</i> -construction	1	4.34
	Total	23	100.00
NP-equivalents	<i>they</i>	8	50.00
	<i>someone</i>	3	18.75
	<i>people</i>	1	6.25
	<i>one</i>	1	6.25
	<i>his superiors</i>	1	6.25
	<i>she</i>	1	6.25
	<i>we</i>	1	6.25
	Total	16	100.00
Other divergent equivalents	Change of perspective	6	100.00
	Total	6	100.00

Table 5b. Indefinite *on* – English translations – Detailed summary

4.1.2.1 Implied equivalents

4.1.2.1.1 Passive

Among the implied counterparts of indefinite *on*, passive constructions are clearly the most popular. Out of 23 members of this group (which is a number greater than the number of NP-equivalents), there are 20 passives.

(83) **On ouvert.** (110_FR:AM,23)

The door was opened. (110_EN:AM,21)

- (84) Mercier, le directeur, en avait entendu parler et, dans son service même, installé non loin des quais, **on en avait découvert** une cinquantaine. (180_FR:AC,21)
*Yes, Mercier knew all about it; in fact, fifty rats **had been found** in his offices, which were near the harbour. (180_EN:AC,77-78)*
- (85) J'ai lu, autrefois, Guillaumet, un récit où **l'on célébrait** ton aventure, et j'ai un vieux compte à régler avec cette image infidèle. **On t'y voyait**, lançant des boutades de « gavroche », comme si le courage consistait à s'abaisser à des railleries de collégien, au coeur des pires dangers et à l'heure de la mort. (75_FR:ASE,38)
*I once read, Guillaumet, a tale in which your adventure **was celebrated**. I have an old score to settle with the infidel who wrote it. **You were described** as abounding in the witty sallies of the street arab, as if courage consisted in demeaning oneself to schoolboy banter in the midst of danger and the hour of death. (75_EN:ASE,49)*

4.1.2.1.2 Passive infinitive

The single occurrence of the passive infinitive is due to its condensation effect. Had the translator not used the passive infinitive, but a passive finite construction, the clause would have split into two - the main clause and a nominal content clause.

- (86) Kyo avait demandé **qu'on le portât** de 2 000 à 5 000, la direction militaire y était parvenue dans le mois. (109_FR:AM,22)
*Kyo had asked for the numbers **to be raised** from two thousand to five, and it had taken the military staff less than a month to do so. (109_EN:AM,20)*

The subject of the passive infinitive is indicated by the prepositional phrase *for the numbers*. It is, however, not the agent, but the patient of the action. The agent is not expressed, only implied.

4.1.2.1.3 Past participle

- (87) L'éclairage de nos escales n'était pas encore réalisé, et sur les terrains d'arrivée, par nuit noire **on alignait** en face de Mermoz la maigre illumination de trois **feux** d'essence. (68_FR:ASE,32)
*The lightning of our airports had not yet been worked out. Hovering in the pitch black night, Mermoz would land by the faint glimmer of three gasoline **flares lined up** at one end of the field. (68_EN:ASE,41)*

This past participle has a passive meaning, which makes it suitable for rendering indefinite *on* into English without having to express the agent overtly. It functions as postmodification to *three gasoline flares* and it is developed by an adjunct of place.

4.1.2.1.4 *There*-construction

There is not the verb *be* in this case, which is by far the most frequent in *there*-constructions, but the verb of appearance on scene *come*.

(88) **On sonna** de nouveau. (136_FR:AM,48)

There came another ring. (136_EN:AM,50)

Unlike in existential and existential-locative constructions, where *there* is the constitutive part of the sentence type, the only role of *there* in the *there*-construction with a verb other than *be* is to allow the notional subject to stand in the postverbal (rhematic) position (Dušková, 2003: 395). *There*-constructions with verbs different from *be* only occur in stylistically higher contexts (Dušková, 2003: 395). Literary style being considered as high, it is not surprising that we found this construction in one of our four novels.

The act of ringing is realised by a verb in French and by a deverbal noun in English. The nominalisation of *ring* renders it possible to describe a single occurrence of the verbal action. If the translator had used the past simple tense (e.g. *they rang again*), the actual number of rings would have been ambiguous.

Had the sentence been constructed otherwise, for instance *Another ring came*, it would have belonged to the group of other divergent equivalents, namely to the change of perspective. For the purposes of our classification, it was nevertheless decided to give preference to the fact that *there* occurs in the position of the grammatical subject.

4.1.2.2 NP-equivalents

4.1.2.2.1 *They*

It is not surprising that among the translations of indefinite *on*, in which the speaker is never included, the most frequent English NP-equivalent is indefinite *they*. In fact, this pronoun keeps from its primary anaphoric function as a 3rd person plural pronoun the quality of not referring to either the speaker or the addressee. The plural character of *they* does not constitute a problem for the indefinite reference, which has a very vague definition of number – due to its lack of specification, indefinite *on* can include a single referent, as well as a large

group of people. For all these reasons, with 8 occurrences, *they* is the most frequently employed NP-equivalent of indefinite *on* in our excerption.

(89) - **On lui a dit** ce matin que j'étais décédé dans la nuit, qu'il s'agissait d'une de ces blessures bizarres qui n'ont pas l'air graves d'abord mais qui ne pardonnent pas.

(22_FR:ARG,32)

"They told her this morning that I had died during the night, that it was one of those strange wounds which seem harmless at first but end up being fatal." (22_EN:ARG,27)

(90) **On lui confia** un avion qui plafonnait à cinq mille deux cents mètres. (66_FR:ASE,31)

They had given him a plane whose absolute ceiling was sixteen thousand feet (...)

(66_EN:ASE,40)

4.1.2.2.2 Someone

Three cases were found of indefinite *on* being translated as *someone*. The action in all of them is imaginary. Even when there is the epistemic modality of probability in the sentence, its content remains only the speaker's belief and conviction, with no proof of its factuality.

(91) D'ailleurs si le service avait été bien fait, **on serait venu** immédiatement.

(16_FR:ARG,28)

Besides, if the repair service was any good, someone would have come right away.

(92) Il n'y avait pas de rats dans la maison, **il fallait donc qu'on eût apporté** celui-ci du dehors. (173_FR:AC,15)

There "weren't no rats in the building", he repeated, so someone must have brought this one from outside. (173_EN:AC,73)

4.1.2.2.3 People

Only one employment of *people* was found.

(93) Pourquoi est-ce toujours lui **qu'on va chercher** pour des trucs de ce genre-là?

(24_FR:ARG,35)

Why do people always call him in for things like this? (24_EN:ARG,30)

The sentence, in both languages, can at first sight seem generic. However, the agent is well substitutable by "somebody" and the speaker is not included in the action. (Although referred

to by means of *lui / him*, it is the first person (the speaker) who is being meant because the sentence is part of free indirect speech – a representation of the male character’s thoughts.)

4.1.2.2.4 One

There was an instance of translation with *one*.

(94) Pour qu’**on n’en perde pas** un mot, il la détaille comme s’il faisait une dictée.

(4_FR:ARG,17)

*So **no one will miss** a word of it, he enunciates it as if he were giving dictation.*

(4_EN:ARG,13)

The reference is indefinite, not generic, because only a certain, yet unspecified, group of people is included in the action. Moreover, the construction (adverbial clause of purpose) is irrealis, the clause only presents a danger, not a fact.

Negation and specifically the negation of *one* will be discussed further in this chapter.

4.1.2.2.5 His superiors

(95) Un suicide laisse tout de même un cadavre; or voilà que le cadavre s’en va sans crier gare, et **on lui demande en haut lieu** de ne pas s’en mêler. (28_FR:ARG,37)

*A suicide still leaves behind a corpse; and now the corpse is vanishing without a word, and **his superiors are asking** him to keep out of it. (28_EN:ARG,32)*

We have here a case of narrowing of the meaning. In French, the agent was “gently” indicated and uncovered by the adverbial of place *en haut lieu* (*in high places*), pointing to where the action was coming from. However, this was still just a hint, which in no way undermined the desired feeling of uncertainty and indefiniteness. In English, this overtone has disappeared because the agents are clearly stated. The translator made an assumption based on the French adverbial and designated them with a noun phrase. The reference of *his superiors* remains unspecified, yet it is more concrete than in the original.

4.1.2.2.6 She

The following is an interesting instance.

(96) - **On a téléphoné** d’ici. La vieille bonne. (2_FR:ARG,17)

*“**She telephoned** from here.” (2_EN:ARG,13)*

In the original, *on* is clearly indefinite. Yet in the following verbless sentence, the referent is specified. English left out the second sentence and made the agent definite already in the first one. The reference is thus narrowed.

4.1.2.2.7 We

This is another case where the ranges of reference in French and in English do not correspond.

(97) **On prendra livraison** cette nuit, avec l'argent. (121_FR:AM,31)

We'll take delivery tonight, and have the money ready. (121_EN:AM,31)

There is no way to know who specifically the French indefinite *on* designates. Nevertheless, the translator implied from the context that it should be somebody from the speaker's closest environment. His interpretation of this information went too far though. By employing deictic *we*, he included the speaker into the action, which is nothing more than his own assumption. The idea of indefiniteness is lost.

4.1.2.3 Other divergent equivalents

4.1.2.3.1 Change of perspective

All six cases of indefinite *on* being translated by means of other divergent equivalents belong to the category we call change of perspective.

The sentence below is a typical example of this category. The original direct object becomes the subject of the English active clause.

(98) « ...**on a tout su**, tout ce qu'il mijotait comme ça, en se faisant gratter les pieds et lire les chroniques, ivre-noble ! » (118_FR:AM,29)

"...everything came out, all the fantastic ideas he had had, getting people to scratch his feet for him and read him chronicles, when his quarterings went to his head!"

(118_EN:AM,28-29)

(99) Elle se retourna d'un coup : **on venait de sonner**. (135_FR:AM,48)

Suddenly she turned round : the bell had rung. (135_EN:AM,50)

Example (99) is similar to the prototypical example (98). The only difference is that here, the direct object is missing in the French original. It is, however, implied since *sonner* is a direct transitive verb (*sonner la sonnette*). The translator made this unexpressed object the subject of the English version.

It is not only direct objects that can become subjects in translations.

- (100) L'après-midi du même jour, au début de sa consultation, Rieux reçut un jeune homme dont **on lui dit qu'**il était journaliste et qu'il était déjà venu le matin. (177_FR:AC,18)
*Early in the afternoon of that day, when his consultations were beginning, a young man called on Rieux. **The doctor gathered that** he had called before, in the morning, and was a journalist by profession.* (177_EN:AC,76)

In example (100), the subject of the English sentence corresponds to the original indirect object. It is therefore animate and the verb chosen (*gather*) makes it possible to retain also its recipient semantic role. *Gather* together with the French verb *dire* (*tell*) constitute a conversion predicate. The subject and object positions have been interchanged in order to express the same content from the perspective of the other participant (Dušková, 2003: 534). Conversion predicates, expressing the almost same content with a different linguistic form, are often employed in the translations which belong to the group of change of perspective.

The next example is very similar to the last one, also with indirect object in French.

- (101) **On lui avait parlé** en effet **de** cette histoire, mais il ne prêtait pas beaucoup d'attention aux bruits du quartier. (194_FR:AC,25)
*True **he'd heard some talk about** rats, but he never paid much attention to gossip like that.* (194_EN:AC,81)

The only difference is that in example (101), the subject *he* is the experiencer. This stems from the fact that *hear* is a verb of sensory perception. *Parler* (*talk*) and *hear* are conversion predicates, there is the cause-effect semantic relationship between them.

4.1.3 Definite *on*

Type of equivalents	Abs.	%
NP-equivalents	18	78.26
Implied equivalents	3	13.04
Other divergent equivalents	2	8.69
Total	23	100.00

Table 6a. Definite *on* – English translations

Type of equivalents	Equivalent	Abs.	%
NP-equivalents	<i>we</i>	6	33.33
	<i>they</i>	5	27.77
	<i>he</i>	3	16.66
	<i>one</i>	2	11.11
	<i>I</i>	1	5.55
	<i>the man</i>	1	5.55
	Total	18	100.00
Implied equivalents	Passive	2	66.66
	Nominalisation	1	33.33
	Total	3	100.00
Other divergent equivalents	Change of perspective	1	50.00
	Modal construction	1	50.00
	Total	2	100.00

Table 6b. Definite *on* – English translations – Detailed summary

4.1.3.1 NP-equivalents

In contrast with generic and indefinite *on*, the frequencies of the individual NP-equivalents are much more influenced by the storyline of the novels, which is a rather random variable.

4.1.3.1.1 We

Its highest frequency among the NP-counterparts of definite *on* is due to the fact that especially two of the novels (*Terre des hommes*, *La Condition humaine*) describe actions which most of the time take place in a group of men. On many occasions, the narrator (who is also one of the characters) or a character talks about their activities, experiences and memories, using *on*. It has already been mentioned that in contemporary French, definite *on* is becoming increasingly acceptable as a replacement of the deictic pronoun *nous*, at least in

colloquial speech. Its translation by means of definite *we* is then the most logical option. Consequently, there is no loss of genericity involved in the English translation of the definite *on* by *we*.

(102) - Ça va, **on** la connaît, dit Antoine. (3_FR:ARG,17)

“All right, we know that one,” Antoine says. (3_EN:ARG,13)

(103) Jean Tarrou, **qu’on a déjà rencontré** au début de ce récit, s’était fixé à Oran quelques semaines plus tôt et habitait, depuis ce temps, un grand hôtel du centre.

(195_FR:AC,28)

Jean Tarrou, whose acquaintance we have already made, at the beginning of this narrative, had come to Oran some weeks before and was staying in a big hotel in the centre of the town. (195_EN:AC,83)

In both examples, the specificity is drawn from the situation. (In (103), *we* refers to the author and the readers.) The French ‘passé composé’ is mirrored in the English present perfect tense.

Definite *we* cannot be referred to anaphorically. Repetitions were the only means found in the excerpt of referring to *we* for the second time. In example (104), it is repeated three times.

(104) Autour de la table **on reprend**, après des années de silence, ces conversations

interrompues, **on se renoue** aux vieux souvenirs. Puis **l’on repart**. (69_FR:ASE,34)

Round the table in the evening, at Casablanca, at Dakar, at Buenos Aires, we take up conversations interrupted by years of silence, we resume friendships to the accompaniment of buried memories. And then we are off again. (69_EN:ASE,44)

4.1.3.1.2 They

The reason of the high frequency of definite *they* is, as in the case of *we*, mostly the character of the plots, where solitary scenes are rare. Definite *they* occurred five times.

(105) **On n’aura qu’à répondre** que ce n’est pas ici. (26_FR:ARG,36)

They just have to say it’s not this one. (26_EN:ARG,31)

(106) Le sifflet du premier disque couvrit le second; soudain s’arrêta – **on entendit** : *envoyer* – puis reprit. (103_FR:AM,19)

*The scratching of the first record rendered the other one inaudible; suddenly it stopped – and **they heard**: send. Then it went on again. (103_EN:AM,16)*

In the following example, we find the accusative form *them*, which does not exist for generic *they*.

(107) Je surprénais aussi les **confidences que l'on échangeait** à voix basse. (60_FR:ASE,20)
*I heard **them talking to one another** in murmurs and whispers. (60_EN:ASE,23)*

4.1.3.1.3 He

In the novels, there were more references to male characters. All the data collected in this section are very random.

(108) Pourvu qu'il n'aille pas s'offenser de cette intrusion dans ses affaires: il va falloir lui présenter les choses avec adresse; **on risque** sans cela de s'en faire un ennemi, ou en tout cas de perdre son concours, pourtant indispensable. (50_FR:ARG,65)
*Provided he is not offended by such an intervention: Wallas will have to present matters skillfully; otherwise **he risks** turning the man into an enemy or in any case losing his cooperation, which is indispensable. (50_EN:ARG,60)*

In the next example, *he* is in fact *I* – the sentence is part of free indirect speech, expressing the thoughts of the male character.

(109) Par quel biais **pourrait-on revenir** en arrière? (44_FR:ARG,55)
*How **can he manage to get back** where he started? (44_EN:ARG,51)*

4.1.3.1.4 One

It might be surprising at first sight to find out that *one*, this predominantly generic pronoun, was used twice to translate definite *on*. Yet we should not forget that besides generic reference, *one* has other functions as well. The function employed in our instances is the 'disguised 1st person' (Jespersen, 1949: 156). The speaker talks about himself, yet for some reason, he wants to hide that fact, at least to some degree.

We know from the context of example (110) that the author is recalling his own experience.

(110) Et l'**on rendait la main** vers la croûte rocheuse de l'Espagne qui n'offrait guère de refuges. (52_FR:ASE,13)

*And **one would simply throw in one's hand**: there was no hope of refuge on the rocky crust of Spain.* (52_EN:ASE,13)

The second instance of employing *one* is ambiguous as far as its reference is concerned.

(111) Les camarades, la vie peut-être nous en écarte, nous empêche d'y beaucoup penser, mais ils sont quelque part, **on ne sait trop** où, silencieux et oubliés, mais tellement fidèles! (70_FR:ASE,34)

*Life may scatter us and keep us apart; it may prevent us from thinking very often of one another; but we know that our comrades are somewhere "out there" – where, **one can hardly say** – silent, forgotten, but deeply faithful.* (70_EN:ASE,44)

For the reference of *on*, we advocate the definite option because the semantics of the sentence seems to indicate so: it is the speaker who does not know. However, there is no way to see if the translator had understood the sentence in the same way and translated it accordingly. The reference of *one* thus remains ambiguous, it is generic or definite (disguised 1st person).

The French grammatical negation of the finite verb has its counterpart in the English positive verb form with the adjunct of manner *hardly*. This adverb, although not inherently negative, turns over the polarity of the whole sentence from positive to negative. In comparison with French, the intrinsic modality of impossibility was added to the English version, realised by the modal verb *can*.

4.1.3.1.5 I

The case is virtually the same as in example (110), the only difference lying in the fact that whereas in example (110), the first person was disguised under *one*, here it stands uncovered.

(112) Et l'**on survole** une terre désormais muette, ornée de glaciers noirs. (95_FR:ASE,56)

*I **fly over** a world mute and abandoned, strewn with black glaciers.* (95_EN:ASE,100)

4.1.3.1.6 The man

(113) **On ne te connaissait pas**, Guillaumet. (76_FR:ASE,38)

*The man **did not know** you, Guillaumet.* (76_EN:ASE,49)

The reference of *on* is specified textually and the same holds for *the man*. The sentence sums up the preceding discourse and *the man* designates the agent who was only implied before. It was nevertheless inferable, which is why the agent is already known in example (113), hence the definite article.

4.1.3.2 Implied equivalents

4.1.3.2.1 Passive

In the group of definite *on* translations, there are two instances of avoiding explicit reference to the agent by using a short passive construction.

(114) **On les habillera** en ta-la-poins ! (112_FR:AM,26)

They'll be dressed up like monkeys ! (112_EN:AM,24)

(115) Du reste, le narrateur, **qu'on connaîtra** toujours à temps, n'aurait guère de titre à faire valoir dans une entreprise de ce genre (...) (172_FR:AC,14)

In any case the narrator (whose identity will be made known in due course) would have little claim to competence for a task like this (...) (172_EN:AC,73)

Both sentences are in future tense, but this is probably just a coincidence. Generally speaking, it is, however, easier to claim that a specific person or a number of persons will fulfill an action in the future, than to claim so for all the people in the world (in case of the generic human agent). That is why sentences with generic agents tend to occur in present tense, while there are no such temporal restrictions for definite reference.

4.1.3.2.2 Nominalisation

In this class, nominalisation occurred once.

(116) Vous mériteriez **qu'on vous foute à la porte** : la moitié de vos hommes crèvent de complicité ! (149_FR:AM,70)

If you got what you deserved it'd be a kick up the backside: half your men are stinking rotten double-crossers! (149_EN:AM,74)

Overt realisation of the agent is avoided by reducing the original nominal content clause into a noun phrase. The noun is deverbal.

4.1.3.3 Other divergent equivalents

4.1.3.3.1 Change of perspective

(117) Dépêchez-vous de passer, Monsieur, **on va ouvrir!** lui crie l’homme. (41_FR:ARG,53)

“Hurry up, Monsieur, it’ll be opening!” the man shouts. (41_EN:ARG,49)

This sentence resembles example (99). There is again no direct object overtly expressed in the French version with a transitive verb. The idea of a gate is only implied. English puts this unexpressed object to the subject position, referring to the gate by means of deictic *it*.

4.1.3.3.2 Modal construction

(118) -Bon. **On doit** toujours **venir chercher** les disques cette nuit ? (108_FR:AM,19)

“Right. Is it still the plan to come and fetch them tonight?” (108_EN:AM,17)

The intrinsic modality expressing obligation is present in both versions, in the original due to the modal verb *devoir* and in the translation due to the semantics of the noun *plan*. The syntactic pattern of the English sentence is S-Vcop-Cs. The notional subject, i.e. the infinitival construction *to come and fetch them tonight*, carries the highest communicative dynamism. This notional subject is allowed to be placed at the end of the sentence, in accordance with the end-weight principle, due to its being anticipated by anticipatory *it*.

4.1.4 Ambiguous *on*

Type of equivalents	Abs.	%
NP-equivalents	2	50.00
Implied equivalents	2	50.00
Total	4	100.00

Table 7a. Ambiguous *on* – English translations

Type of equivalents	Equivalent	Abs.	%
NP-equivalents	<i>they</i>	1	50.00
	<i>he</i>	1	50.00
	Total	2	100.00

Implied equivalents	Nominalisation	1	50.00
	Passive	1	50.00
	Total	2	100.00

Table 7b. Ambiguous *on* – English translations – Detailed summary

There are four cases in the excerpted material in which the reference of the French *on*-phrase remains ambiguous even after consultation of the broader context.

In three examples, *on* is either generic, or definite.

In two of them, the translator chose the definite option and translated the sentence accordingly.

(119) Comme **on a la tête solide**, la tentation suffit: le possible reste simplement possible, les sirènes depuis longtemps appellent sans espoir. (5_FR:ARG,19)

*Since **their heads are on their shoulders**, temptation is enough: possibility remains simply possible, the whistles have long blown without hope.* (5_EN:ARG,15)

(120) Ça lui arrive de temps en temps de s'arrêter, **on ne sait pas** bien pourquoi – après un choc quelquefois, pas toujours – et de repartir toute seule ensuite, sans plus de raison. (35_FR:ARG,45)

*It stops every once in a while, **he does not really know** why – sometimes after a shock, not always – and then starts again afterward, all by itself, with no more reason.* (35_EN:ARG,41)

The third case was rendered into English keeping the same ambiguity because of the nominalisation.

(121) **-On en vit** mal... (125_FR:AM,40)

“It is a poor way of living.” (125_EN:AM,40)

In one case, there is no way to decide whether the French *on* is generic, or indefinite. Since in English, the agent is implied by passive voice, the reference stays ambiguous.

(122) **On lui prêtait** la patience des bouddhistes : c'était celle des intoxiqués.

(124_FR:AM,40)

*The Buddhist patience with which **he was credited** was, in fact, the fatalism of a drug-addict.* (124_EN:AM,40)

4.2 Modality, negation, verbal tense

We have decided to include at the end of this chapter a summary of our findings as far as modality, negation and verbal tenses are concerned which occurred in the French sentences with *on* subject and in their translations. This summary has no ambition to serve as a basis for drawing any quantitative conclusions; only those cases will be mentioned which are considered extraordinary or interesting. A number of these have already been discussed in the preceding parts of this chapter. They will not be mentioned here again.

4.2.1 Modality

The modality of a sentence can have a significant effect on the reference of its agent. There is no problem with the genericity of *we* in *We have to die* since the statement expresses necessity or obligation coming from outside. Yet *We would like to go shopping*, with its intrinsic modality of volition sounds a lot less generic because the source of its modality is internal. All the participants of the verbal action would have to share the same emotion, which, although possible, is not very probable.

In our enumeration of the types of modality that we encountered in the excerpt, we will therefore try to determine the source as well as the experiencer of the modality. This, however, will often be impossible because of the generic character of the sentences, as well as because the participants of the verbal action are often only implied.

4.2.1.1 ‘Subjectivisation’

Subjectivisation is the term we apply for a phenomenon that is often present in sentences with generic *on*. The content of the sentence is regarded from a certain angle due to its having been introduced with an *on*-phrase which involved a verb of sensory perception. The point of view is that of the experiencer.

Due to the modal quality of the verbs of sensory perception, which express ability or possibility, the content of the following sentence is modalised even though no modal verb or any modal element is present in either of the versions.

(123) Il entrebâille la porte et passe la tête: dans le matin misérable **on distingue** le lit défait, la chambre en désordre. (1_FR:ARG,14)

He cracks open the door and puts his head inside; in the dim morning light he sees the unmade bed, the room in disorder. (1_EN:ARG,10)

It was more frequent though to find examples where a modal element had been added to the English translation, while there was no formal indication of modality in the French original. This added element expresses the intrinsic modality of possibility. Instances mentioning various human senses were found.

(124) **On voit**, trente mètres plus loin, l'envers de la plaque signalant l'école aux automobiles.
(40_FR:ARG,53)

*Thirty yards farther on **can be seen** the back of the plaque warning drivers of the school crossing.* (40_EN:ARG,49)

(125) Wallas sent le froid sur son visage; ce n'est pas encore l'époque de la glace coupante qui paralyse la face en un masque douloureux, mais **on perçoit** déjà comme un rétrécissement qui commence dans les tissus (...) (45_FR:ARG,56-57)

*Wallas feels the cold on his face; though the season of cutting frost that freezes the face into a painful mask has not yet begun, something like a shrinking **can** already **be felt** in the tissues (...)* (45_EN:ARG,52)

(126) La nuit, dans les couloirs ou les ruelles, **on entendait** distinctement leurs petits cris d'agonie. (183_FR:AC,22)

*At night, in passages and alleys, their shrill little death-cries **could be** clearly **heard**.*
(183_EN:AC,78)

The experiencer of the modality in all the above examples is the general human agent.

4.2.1.2 Possibility

This type of modality was usually carried by modal verbs, both in French and in English.

(127) Par quel biais **pourrait-on revenir** en arrière? (44_FR:ARG,55)

*How **can he manage to get back** where he started?* (44_EN:ARG,51)

The source of the modality in example (127) is the subject of the clause, corresponding to the agent.

Since example (128) is in passive voice in English and the agent is thus only implied, not even the source of the modality is known.

(128) Mais, **on peut** me **remplacer**, maintenant, tu comprends... (123_FR:AM,37)

***I can be replaced**, now, don't you see.* (123_EN:AM,37)

Impossibility is to be found in example (129).

- (129) Pendant l'été, le soleil incendie les maisons trop sèches et couvre les murs d'une cendre grise; **on ne peut plus vivre** alors **que** dans l'ombre des volets clos. (154_FR:AC,11)
During the summer the sun bakes the houses bone-dry, sprinkles our walls with greyish dust, and you have no option but to survive those days of fire indoors, behind closed shutters. (154_EN:AC,71)

In English, the modality is not carried verbally, but lexically. The intrinsic impossibility is expressed due to the semantics of the noun *option* and the fact that it is negated. The source of the modality is unknown.

4.2.1.3 Volition

- (130) Il faut quand même y prendre garde et ne pas trop se pencher, si **l'on veut éviter** leur aspiration... (38_FR:ARG,49)
Still you have to be careful not to lean too far over, if you want to avoid inhaling them... (38_EN:ARG,45)

The source of the volition is the subject with generic reference. Because of this genericity, the idea of volition should be taken with consideration in this case. It would in fact be also possible to claim that the modal meaning is shifting towards intrinsic necessity because the person should not inhale.

4.2.1.4 Necessity

- (131) La cité elle-même, **on doit l'avouer**, est laide. (151_FR:AC,11)
The town itself, let us admit, is ugly. (151_EN:AC,71)

There is intrinsic modality in the French original, carried by a modal verb; the idea of necessity is realised in English by means of change of the sentence modality from a declarative to an imperative sentence with a 1st person plural addressee.

4.2.1.5 Differences between French and English

In one case, the French sentence included the intrinsic modality of necessity, while in English, the translator did not want to stress the need for the action and put it as a simple fact.

- (132) Dans quelques cas, **on fut obligé d'achever** les bêtes, dont l'agonie était trop longue. (182_FR:AC,21)
In some cases the animals were killed to put and end to their agony. (182_EN:AC,78)

The following two examples belong to a type which we find very interesting. The French predication does not have any formal element which would express modality. The sentence is a simple statement of facts. However, since it has the general human agent and the sentence is thus generic, it takes up a slight modal meaning of (im)possibility. If something is done / not done by everyone / anyone, it logically follows that it is possible / impossible. The translators felt this overtone and introduced the modal meaning overtly into their English versions.

(133) **On n'achète pas** l'amitié d'un Mermoz, d'un compagnon que les épreuves vécues ensemble ont lié à nous pour toujours. (73_FR:ASE,35-36)

***One cannot buy** the friendship of a Mermoz, of a companion to whom one is bound forever by ordeals suffered in common. (73_EN:ASE,45)*

(134) Mais **on passe** ses journées sans difficultés aussitôt qu'**on a** des habitudes.

(167_FR:AC,13)

*But **you can get through** the days there without trouble, once **you have formed** habits.*

(167_EN:AC,72)

Finally, examples were found with no discernable modal meaning in the French sentence, but with added modality in the English translation.

(135) (...) mais à l'heure actuelle **on ne sait pas** trop à qui se fier dans cette ville.

(21_FR:ARG,32)

*(...) but at present **you can't** really **know** who's to be trusted in this city.*

(21_EN:ARG,27)

The simple fact in the French original that “one does not know” is translated with the intrinsic modality of impossibility. Either the content is, without a discernable reason, made more serious than the French author intended. Or it was taken into account that since the sentence describes the present moment, a dynamic verb would in English usually be in progressive tense. However, the verb *know* being stative, the present progressive tense is not an option. With verbs of sensory perception, the compensation strategy is to use intrinsic *can* as in *I cannot see you*. The translation of example (135) resembles this strategy to a great extent.

In the next example, the introduction into English of the idea of possibility renders the action less straightforward than it is in French.

(136) Cette ville semble reposer sur un vrai sol que **l'on croit** riche en profondeur comme une terre de Beauce. (99_FR:ASE,58)

*This town seemed to be built upon a true humus, a soil **one might imagine** to be as rich as the wheatlands of the Beauce.* (99_EN:ASE,102)

The last example is a result of a not very faithful translation.

(137) C'est toujours le même pas **que l'on recommence**... (84_FR:ASE,46)

*It is always the same step, but you **have to take it**.* (84_EN:ASE,58)

While French talks about “the same step which one takes again”, the translator, unnecessarily, modalised the action with the overtone of obligation.

4.2.2 Negation

In this section, we will mention those cases where the meanings of the two language versions differ due to their dissimilar treatment of negation.

The most frequent difference was due to the structural divergence of French and English. French often used the negative phrase *ne + verb + que*, which loosely translates to “not + verb + but”. The result, in French, was a negated predication, in other words, a clausal negation. English, not having a structural counterpart of the *ne + verb + que* phrase, found various ways of compensation. Interestingly, unlike in French, the predication was always positive.

Cases were found with positive predication and focusing adjuncts.

(138) Plus au sud, le dimanche, **on ne rencontre** pour ainsi dire **que** les gens du quartier.

(7_FR:ARG,19)

*Farther south, on Sundays, **one meets**, so to speak, **only** neighborhood people.*

(7_EN:ARG,15)

(139) **On n'aura qu'à répondre** que ce n'est pas ici. (26_FR:ARG,36)

***They just have to say** it's not this one. (26_EN:ARG,31)*

In one example, the need for focalisation was satisfied by the noun *extent*, allowing the predication to remain positive.

(140) **On ne possède** d'un être **que ce qu'on change** en lui, dit mon père... (139_FR:AM,49)

***The extent to which** a person belongs to **one is the extent to which one has changed** them, as my father says... (139_EN:AM,51)*

In the example below, the focalisation is achieved by the universal quantifier *all*, postmodified by means of a restrictive adjectival relative clause.

(141) Une crèmerie, une épicerie, une charcuterie, une autre épicerie; **on ne voit** pour le moment **que** leur volet de fer baissé (39_FR:ARG,50)

*A dairy, a grocery store, a delicatessen, another grocery; for the time being **all that can be seen is their lowered iron shutters** (...) (39_EN:ARG,46)*

Such a focusing construction also allowed the element with the highest communicative dynamism (*their lowered iron shutters*) to stand, as the subject complement, in the position at the end of the clause.

Translating generic *on* in negative sentences by means of *no one* resulted into some minor referential changes.

(142) (...) **on ne va pas se promener** un mardi au petit jour, d'ailleurs **on ne se promène pas** dans ce quartier-là. (34_FR:ARG,45)

*(...) **no one goes for a walk** on Tuesdays early in the morning, besides, **no one goes for a walk** in this neighborhood. (34_EN:ARG,41)*

The scope of negation is different in the two languages. In French, it is the verb that is negated. In English, however, the negation moves to the agent, which results into an explicit negation of the general human agent. *No one* is an inherently negative expression, which *on* is not. The closest counterpart to *no one* in French would be *personne*. Consequently, the English sentence is somewhat more intense because not only the generic agent, but each possible agent is negated.

In some rare cases, French allows double negation. Here it is with the negative construction *ne + verb + ni...ni* (*neither...nor*).

(143) Comment faire imaginer, par exemple, une ville sans pigeons, sans arbres et sans jardins, où **l'on ne rencontre ni** battements d'ailes **ni** froissements de feuilles, un lieu neutre pour tout dire? (152_FR:AC,11)

*How conjure up a picture, for instance, of a town without pigeons, without any trees or gardens, where **you never hear** the beat of wings **or** the rustle of leaves – a thoroughly negative place in short? (152_EN:AC,71)*

English used the negative adverbial *never* with a scope extending over the clause, with no further negations being necessary.

4.2.3 Verbal tense

Notice was taken of the correlation between the reference of the French *on*-phrase and its relation to time. We distinguished three possible temporal orientations: present, past, and future. We arranged the examples into these categories according to their meanings, which could be expressed by means of various verbal tenses and moods. Under orientation to the present were classed the present simple, present conditional, and present subjunctive in a nominal content clause. Under orientation to the past, there were the past simple, past conditional, and past subjunctive. Future tense, imperative, present subjunctive in adverbial clauses of purpose, and past tense expressing condition in an adverbial clause of condition were included in the orientation to the future group. These are the results:

	Orientation to the present		Orientation to the past		Orientation to the future		Total	
	Abs.	%	Abs.	%	Abs.	%	Abs.	%
Generic <i>on</i>	105	82.03	16	12.5	6	4.68	128	100
Indefinite <i>on</i>	5	11.11	35	77.77	5	11.11	45	100
Definite <i>on</i>	11	47.82	6	26.08	6	26.08	23	100
Ambiguous <i>on</i> : generic or definite	3	100	0	0	0	0	3	100
Ambiguous <i>on</i> : generic or indefinite	0	0	1	100	0	0	1	100

Table 8. Temporal orientations of the *on*-sentences

These figures confirm and further develop what was suggested in the theoretical part of our study: Sentences with generic agents have a strong tendency to be in present tense. Indefinite *on* refers to agents involved in a specific action, taking place at a specified time. We now see that in 77.8% of the cases, this time was in the past. Last but not least, sentences with definite *on* point more frequently to the present than to the past or future.

Between the verbal tenses of the original and those of the translations, there were not many differences. As far as the verbal mood is concerned, French subjunctive was translated by

means of the English indicative mood (sometimes with an added modal quality), which in the particular cases was the only stylistically adequate option.

As for the difference in tenses, two examples are worth mentioning.

(144) (...) comment **on ferait**. (138_FR:AM,48)

(...) *how it **could have been managed** otherwise*. (138_EN:AM,50)

The present conditional in French points to the present or the future. In English, on the other hand, the past tense of the modal verb, together with the past passive infinitive of the lexical verb, suggest orientation to the past. The main sentences (deleted from the example) are both in present tense. The translator's choice to aim the action to the past remains unexplained.

(145) Mais **on passe** ses journées sans difficultés aussitôt qu'**on a** des habitudes.

(167_FR:AC,13)

*But **you can get through** the days there without trouble, once **you have formed** habits.*

(167_EN:AC,72)

Here, the English adverbial clause of time adds some more meaning to the French original expression. Instead of translating the clause literally as "once you have habits", English makes use of the advantages of the present perfect tense, indicating the completion of the action before the action referred to in the superordinate clause.

5. Conclusion

The French pronoun *on* has a dual character: its reference can be both generic and non-generic; *on* is usually described as ‘an indefinite personal pronoun’. French speakers identify the reference of *on* from context factors and from its inherent features, which are the semes /human/, /agent/, and /vague/. However, it sometimes happens that even this combination does not suffice for a reliable identification of the range of reference of *on*, which then remains ambiguous. *On* is always the subject and is stylistically neutral.

The title of this thesis is “The General Human Agent in English and in French (A Contrastive View of the French *on*)”. However, this title is not absolutely accurate. Since *on* does not refer solely to the general human agent, its other uses were consequently studied as well. For the purposes of this thesis, three types of reference of *on* were established: generic, indefinite, and definite. Only the generic and indefinite types of reference constitute what is designated as ‘the general human agent’. It was claimed at the beginning of the thesis that generic *on* was mainly used in law-like propositions with no temporal restrictions. Indefinite and definite *on*, on the other hand, were supposed to be the agents of specific actions set in a specified time and space. We expected the reference of the *on*-subject to correlate with the verbal tense used in the sentence.

Whereas in French, most general human agents are expressed by means of *on*, there is no device in English comparable to it. This imbalance between the two languages became the motivation for this thesis. We decided to study how English handles this asymmetry when it comes to translating sentences including *on* (*on*-sentences).

The analysis draws on 4 French novels and their translations into English. From each of the French books, 50 samples were excerpted of sentences including *on*. Having found their English counterparts in the translations, the total of 200 examples, each consisting of two parts, were assembled. We are aware that this limited scope of research, as well as the individual styles of the authors and translators, could have affected its results. Nevertheless, we hope that our observations were as accurate as possible and that we have by this thesis established a solid basis for a potential more extensive investigation of the matter in the future.

The examples were first divided into three sections according to the type of reference of their *on*-phrases. 64% had generic, 22.5% indefinite and 11.5% definite reference. Since we

consider generic and indefinite reference as representing ‘the general human agent’, it is possible to say that it was expressed by 86.5% of our material. It has been stated that in some cases, the reference of *on* remains unclear even after consultation of the context. In our study, 2% of the examples had to be classified as ambiguous.

The English equivalents were then studied for each of the four types of *on*. The translations were classed into three major categories: NP-equivalents expressing the agent explicitly, implied equivalents expressing the agent implicitly, and other divergent equivalents which rendered the *on*-sentences into English in specific ways.

The English equivalents of each of the four types of *on* were analysed. Traditional (i.e. those mentioned in theoretical literature) as well as non-traditional devices were found and described. In addition, second references to the agents already mentioned within one example were considered. Types of reference in French and in English were compared: in 9.5%, they were different. 94.7% of these cases represented referential narrowing, which means that in the end, English had much more cases of definite reference to the agents than French did (41 versus 23). The analysis was concluded by studying the examples in terms of modality, negation and verbal tenses.

All 200 examples considered as a whole, 55% of *on*-sentences were translated by means of NP-equivalents, 34% by means of implied equivalents, while other divergent equivalents represented 11% of the translations.

57.8% of the instances with generic *on* were translated explicitly, by means of NP-equivalents. The most frequent were the traditional ones mentioned in the second chapter (*one, you, we, people*). The highest frequency of *one* in a material consisting of literary texts could be surprising because of its formal and intellectual stylistic effects. Nevertheless, the character of our four novels for excerption was exceptionally philosophical, which is the most probable explanation of the popularity of generic *one* for the translations. Almost the same number of occurrences of generic *you* (18 versus 16 instances) has confirmed our original statement supported by the theoretical literature (HP, 2002: 1467) that generic *you* and generic *one* are usually interchangeable if style is not taken into account. When used twice or more in one example, generic *you* was always repeated. The noun *people* was in most cases locally specified, either explicitly or implicitly from the general meaning of the sentence or from the context. Other explicit devices expressing the general human agent (*a man, men, they*) had a relatively low frequency of occurrence. Confirming Dušková’s results (Dušková, 1999: 46),

both instances of generic *they* came with the verb *say*. Generic *on* was also translated by means of *he* and *I*, but in all these instances, the sentences did not maintain the generic value and their reference became definite. They can thus not be included into the list of explicit means of expressing the general human agent. One instance occurred of *everyone, who* and *life*, which all maintain the original genericity. *Everyone*, due to its universal nature, makes the reference less vague than generic *on* because it explicitly refers to every single member of the community. *Who* and *life* are both results of not very faithful translations; they cannot be regarded as new regular alternatives to the traditional explicit devices of expressing the general human agent. One instance was found of *a pilot, these men*, and of *the people in it*. None of them is generic; they represent narrowing of the agent's reference and thus narrowing of the original meaning.

Implied equivalents were used to translate 31.3% of the sentences with generic *on*. A whole half of these was in passive voice. In our excerpt, passive constructions occurred both in descriptions and in conversations, which proved their stylistic flexibility. From the other implicit devices mentioned in theoretical literature, we found qualifying copular predications and *there*-constructions (representing 12.5% and 7.5% respectively of the implied equivalents of generic *on*). The notional subject in qualifying copular predications with anticipatory *it* was three times an infinitive and twice a nominal content clause. No gerund occurred in this position. The three *there*-constructions were each of a different type: existential, existential-locative, and actional. In our material, there was no instance of a construction with empty *it*. It seems that this is due to the fact that this is usually the device for translating idiomatic or phraseological expressions. Since none of them occurred in our limited excerpted material, this translation device was never employed.

None of the following equivalents was described in any secondary source as an alternative device to implicitly express the general human agent. We found 6 instances of non-finite constructions. The particular types were the past and perfect participles and the passive and active infinitives. Together they represent 15% of the implied equivalents of generic *on*. The share of nominalisation and adjectivisation was 10%. The 2nd person imperative and an active sentence with elided subject both occurred once in the excerpt.

Almost 11% of the translations of generic *on* were classed among other divergent equivalents. 64.3% of these were what had been labelled as change of perspective. Most of them included a direct object in the French sentence, transformed into the subject of the

English translation. As a result, the subject of the English counterpart sentence was typically inanimate. The subjects were thus not the wilful agents of the verbal actions. All this resembles Tláskal's class of implicit devices where it is the inanimate causer that becomes the subject of the English sentence (cf. 2.2.1.2.5). However, the subject in one of our examples was human and the inanimate subjects could in most cases not be described as causers of the action. We therefore cannot ascribe the whole group of change of perspective to Tláskal's class, even though they overlap in some points. Three special instances were identified, two of them did not have an explicit object in French, and one did but this object did not become the subject in English. The subjects of the English sentences corresponded to the implicit objects of their French counterparts. As for the modal constructions, there were five of them, all expressing epistemic modality. Coincidentally, the three instances of the French *on dirait que* were all translated as sentences with clauses of comparison introduced by the conjunction *as if/ as though*.

It has already been mentioned that in this thesis, all instances of indefinite *on* use are regarded as expressing the general human agent, even though the range of its reference is more restricted and the agent is "less general than" in the case of generic *on*.

Indefinite *on* was by far most frequently translated into English by means of passive voice. As far as absolute numbers are concerned, with 20 instances of passive voice, the implied equivalents, representing 51.1% of all indefinite *on* translations, exceeded the number of the NP-equivalents, whose share was 35.6%. The rest of the implied equivalents included two non-finite constructions (a passive infinitive and a past participle) and a *there*-construction.

50% of the NP-equivalents were realised by *they*. We may ascribe this high occurrence to the fact that indefinite reference excludes the speaker, which is (together with the exclusion of the addressee) a typical quality of *they*, resulting from its primary function as a 3rd person pronoun. The share of *someone* was 18.8%, which means that it had 3 instances. All were found in sentences expressing not a real, but an imaginary or probable action. There was one instance of 'indefinite *one*'. It did not denote the whole mankind, but only someone from a limited set of people. Moreover, it was used in an irrealis context (an adverbial clause of purpose). The remaining NP-equivalents, i.e. *his superiors*, *she*, and *we* were all employed once and they all caused the original reference to narrow down. In case of *his superiors*, although the reference remained indefinite, it was more specific in English than it was in

French. Yet *she* and *we* had made the indefiniteness disappear because they were both definite.

Other divergent equivalents represented 13.3% of all translations of indefinite *on*. There were no modal constructions; all 6 instances were classed under change of perspective. Subjects in the English sentences had originally been objects in French (expressed or just implied) – either direct or indirect. There were two cases of the subject in English being human, one of them had the semantic function of the recipient and the other was the experiencer.

The English equivalents of definite *on* depended more on the particular referent than on the system and “preferences” of the language itself. Especially the NP-equivalents were employed according to the storyline of the novels. It is important to keep this randomness in mind when consulting the quantitative results. Unlike in the case of generic or indefinite *on*, they would most probably look very different had different sample sources been used.

The share of NP-equivalents within the translations of definite *on* was 78.3%. Such a high percentage is understandable given that the referents are known to both the speaker and the addressee, which makes the use of implicit devices less necessary than in case of a general or unspecified agent. Because two of the novels depicted almost exclusively situations with a number of men present, it is not surprising that deictic *we* was, with 6 instances and 33.3%, the most frequent NP-equivalent in this class. Although referred to several times within one example, it was always repeated, which is the consequence of its deictic function. It would not even be possible to refer to it anaphorically. *They* occurred five times, once in the accusative form *them*, demonstrating its definite character (generic *they* has no accusative form). *One* was found twice in this group. In one instance, its reference was ambiguous, but in the other, it clearly functioned as the ‘disguised 1st person’. The reference to the 1st person was not hidden in the one instance of *I*. By means of *the man*, the agent from the preceding sentence was anaphorically referred to again.

Only 13% of definite *on* were translated by means of implied equivalents. There was the passive voice with unexpressed agent in two examples and there was one instance of nominalisation, employed mainly for its sentence-condensation quality.

Other divergent equivalents were used to render definite *on* into English in 8.7% of the cases. There was one instance of change of perspective. Whereas in French, the direct object

was only implied, it became the subject of the English version. In the only case of a modal construction, modality was in English expressed lexically instead of with a modal verb as it was in French.

In 4 examples, the scope of reference of *on* could not be identified with certainty. *On* was either generic or definite in three cases and either generic or indefinite in one case. Considered as a whole, 50% of ambiguous *on* were translated by means of NP-equivalents and the second 50% used implied equivalents.

Both instances of NP-equivalents (*they* and *he*) had had the reference of their agent narrowed down. In other words, the translators did not respect the ambiguity of *on*, decided for one (the definite) option and translated the sentence accordingly.

In contrast to that, the implied equivalents (nominalisation and passive voice) maintained, due to their implicit reference, the ambiguity of the agent.

We also paid attention to the expressions of modality and negation in both the languages, as well as to the verbal tenses they used. At the end of the chapter called Analysis, the most interesting instances were mentioned.

As for modality, we focused on its presence and expression in the excerpts since it is often this factor which decides about the referential scope of the agent. What we encountered most frequently in the excerpt was a phenomenon labelled for our purposes as ‘subjectivisation’. It occurred in sentences with generic *on* and with verbs of sensory perception. Due to the use of these verbs in the main clause, the situation, described in a nominal content dependent clause, was regarded from the perspective of the experiencer of the perception. Even though this experiencer was in all cases the general human agent, the content of the sentence was slightly modalised (verbs of sensory perception have the inherent modal quality of possibility). Apart from these “semantically modal” verbs, the French sentences did not include any formal modal elements. However, in most cases, this element was added to the English version in the form of a modal verb. The modality, which French only implied, was thus explicitly expressed in English.

In some cases, the modality was, in contrast with French, not expressed by means of modal verbs, but it was conveyed in the semantics of certain words, i.e. expressed lexically. Sometimes the modality originally expressed with a modal verb was rendered by means of the whole sentence: it was the sentence modality that changed in the translation.

Instances were found of different modal properties in French and in English. While in one of them, there was modality, there was none in the other. This discrepancy always had an effect on the general “tone” of the sentence: because of the lack / addition of modality, the English translation rendered the content more / less straightforwardly and seriously than had been intended.

Systemic differences between the two languages caused their dissimilar strategies of negation expression in certain instances. In many examples, French expressed clausal negation by means of the phrase “*ne + verb + que*”. English, on the other hand, always translated these sentences using positive predication and a focusing element (an adjunct, a noun with a focalising meaning, a focusing construction). There was also one instance of the very rare double negation in French, which was translated into English using a single negative element, the adjunct of time *never*. Despite these surface differences, the scope of negation in French corresponded to that in English.

The scopes of negation did not correspond in cases where “*on + negated verb*” was translated as “*no one + positive verb*”. The fact that English had moved the negative element from the verb to the agent resulted into its total explicit negation. All possible agents were negated, which made a stronger effect than the French simple negation of the generic agent.

Since it was suggested in theoretical literature that the type of reference strongly correlates with the verbal tense of the sentence, the temporal orientation of each example was noted.¹³ The results confirmed the hypothesis: 82% of generic *on*-sentences were oriented to the present while 77.8% of indefinite *on*-sentences referred to the past.

The verbal tenses and moods usually corresponded in French and in English, with certain exceptions. These were found in cases of the French subjunctive mood, translated in most cases by means of the English indicative. This is a difference stemming from the structural features of the particular languages. Sometimes the change of the verbal tense with respect to the original was part of a less faithful translation.

The results of our analysis have confirmed the theoretical basis stated in Theoretical background. The contrastive approach adopted in the present study also revealed additional English impersonal constructions that appear to be used systematically to render the generic

¹³ The temporal orientation is independent of the actual verbal tense and mood expressing it. It only reflects the meaning.

and indefinite meaning of *on* in English. Moreover, our analysis has pointed out devices employed in English as translation counterparts of definite *on*.

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7. Resumé / Souhrn v českém jazyce

Cílem práce bylo shromáždit a vyhodnotit anglické překladové koreláty francouzského zájmena *on*. Nejčastější funkcí zájmena *on* ve francouzštině je totiž vyjadřování všeobecného lidského konatele, tedy funkce, pro kterou angličtina žádný speciální prostředek nemá a využívá tedy lexikálních a syntaktických prostředků sloužících primárně k jiným účelům. Nicméně francouzské *on* má mezi ostatními zájmeny výjimečné postavení, neboť jeho reference může být dvojitá, generická i specifická. Proto se také ve slovnících a gramatikách většinou nazývá „osobním neurčitým zájmenem“. Tato skutečnost zapříčinila, že ačkoli název této práce je Vyjadřování všeobecného lidského konatele v angličtině a francouzštině, ne vždy mělo excerpované *on* tuto platnost.¹⁴ Aby se předešlo nejasnostem a chybným výsledkům, byly hlavní typy reference zájmena *on* vždy zkoumány odděleně a jasně odlišené jsou i výsledky těchto analýz.

Práce je rozdělena do pěti kapitol. Po stručném úvodu následuje kapitola, která problém nastiňuje z teoretického hlediska a zmiňuje výsledky dosavadního akademického bádání v této oblasti. Nejprve je popsáno zájmeno *on* z hlediska morfologického, syntaktického i stylistického. Poté jsou určeny a stručně charakterizovány potenciální typy jeho reference, kterými jsou reference generická, neurčitá a určitá.¹⁵ Po krátké diskusi o významu termínu všeobecný lidský konatel je stanoveno, že v této práci se za něj považuje referent jak generického, tak neurčitého *on*. Následuje výčet všech explicitních a implicitních prostředků převodu zájmena *on* do anglického jazyka zmiňovaných teoretickou literaturou. Koreláty zjištěné vlastní excerpcí jsou popsány až v praktické části práce.

Třetí kapitola popisuje, jak probíhala excerpce i celá analýza. Bylo analyzováno 200 příkladů francouzských vět s podmětem *on* a jejich anglických překladových korelátů. Tyto věty byly čerpany ze čtyř románů a jejich překladů do angličtiny.¹⁶ Z každého románu, počínaje první stranou textu, bylo excerpováno prvních 50 vět, v nichž se vyskytlo *on*. Poté byly v anglických překladech vyhledány protějšky těchto vět. Při sestavování finálního seznamu příkladů jsme museli čelit mnohým problémům, např. definovat „příklad“ nebo rozhodnout, jak naložit s určitými typy případů. Vše je v kapitole podrobně popsáno.

¹⁴ 11.5% případů mělo referenci jasně určitou a dalších 1.5% kolísalo mezi generickou a určitou referencí, aniž by bylo jednoznačně určitelných.

¹⁵ Reference nejednoznačná byla zahrnuta až do výsledků excerpční analýzy, neboť nepředstavuje základní typ, ale pouze nemožnost adresáta zájmenu jeden z nich jednoznačně přidělit.

¹⁶ Viz Sample sources

V její druhé části je nastíněna klasifikace anglických protějšků francouzského *on* používaná v analytické části práce. Koreláty jsou rozděleny do tří skupin: substantivní fráze (vyjadřující konatele explicitně), implikované ekvivalenty a ostatní odchylné ekvivalenty (prostředky implicitní). Pro každou z těchto skupin jsou vyjmenovány jednotlivé excerpci zjištěné prostředky, které jsou v některých případech ještě dále klasifikovány. Pro lepší čtenářovu orientaci je kapitola zakončena schematickým znázorněním výše vyjmenovaného.

Praktická část práce obsahuje záznam o analýze excerpovaných příkladů. Kvantitativní výsledky jsou znázorněny v tabulkách. Každý typ reference *on* je zkoumán zvlášť a jednotlivé příklady anglických korelátů jsou rozřazeny do výše popsaných tří tříd. Postupuje se podle frekvence daného prostředku, od nejčastějších po ty nejméně užívané. Pozornost je věnována i opakovanému odkazu na již jednou zmíněného konatele uvnitř jediného příkladu. Poslední část práce je věnována těm nejzajímavějším případům modality, záporu a užití slovesných časů nalezených v našem excerptním vzorku.

Výsledky studie jsou rozvedeny v Závěru. V něm se též snažíme najít vysvětlení některých analýzou získaných poznatků.

Zájmeno *on* ve francouzských větách mělo v 64% příkladů generickou, ve 22.5% neurčitou, v 11.5% určitou a v 2% nejednoznačnou referenci. Jelikož jsme již dříve určili jako všeobecného lidského konatele generickou a neurčitou referenci, lze říci, že všeobecný konatel byl vyjádřen 86.5 procenty příkladů. Angličtina původní typy reference nezachovala v 9.5% případů. Kromě jediného příkladu šlo vždy o zúžení generické či neurčité reference na referenci určitou. Konatelé v angličtině měli tedy určitou referenci mnohem častěji, než tomu bylo ve francouzštině (41 versus 23 případů). Pokud jde o anglické protějšky všech 200 francouzských vět s *on*, 55% překladů bylo realizováno substantivními frázemi, 34% jich bylo přeloženo pomocí implikovaných a 11% pomocí ostatních odchylných ekvivalentů.

57.8% překladů generického *on* byly substantivní fráze. Fakt, že nejčastěji se vyskytovaly *one*, *you*, *we* a *people*, potvrdil to, co bylo řečeno v teoretické části práce. Vysoká frekvence stylisticky vyššího *one* v literárních textech by mohla být vysvětlena filozofickým a intelektuálním nádechem většiny románů, se kterými jsme pracovali. Téměř stejný počet užití *one* a *you* (18 a 16) potvrdil původní tvrzení (HP, 2002: 1467), že odhlédne-li se od stylistické stránky, jsou tato dvě zájmena ve funkci vyjadřování všeobecného konatele téměř zaměnitelná. V případě, že bylo v příkladu užití dvakrát a více, bylo generické *you* vždy znovu zopakováno. Substantivum *people* bylo ve většině příkladů lokálně specifikováno, a to

buď explicitně či implicitně z celkového významu věty nebo z kontextu. Ostatní tradiční explicitní prostředky vyjadřování všeobecného konatele (*a man, men, they*) měly relativně nízký počet užití. Zájmeno *they* se v obou příkladech vyskytlo se slovesem *say*, což koresponduje s výsledky Duškové (Dušková, 1999: 46). Překlady pomocí *he* a *I* nikdy nezachovaly generickou referenci a zúžily ji na referenci určitou. Všeobecného konatele tedy tyto prostředky nevyjadřují. Překlad pomocí *everyone* generickou referenci zachoval, avšak tím, že odkazuje ke každému jednotlivému členu komunity, činí celkové vyznění věty naléhavějším, než tomu bylo ve francouzském originále. *Who a life* byly oba použity jednou, a to ve větách, které nebyly přeloženy příliš věrně. Spíše než typickými představiteli všeobecného konatele se tyto prostředky dají nazvat uměleckou licencí. Po jednom užití měly též substantivní fráze *a pilot, these men a the people in it*. Všechny tyto překlady však zúžily referenci konatele na určitou, a proto nemohou být započítány mezi anglické varianty vyjádření všeobecného lidského konatele.

31.3% generických *on* bylo do angličtiny přeloženo pomocí implikovaných ekvivalentů. Celou polovinu z nich tvořily pasivní konstrukce s nevyjádřeným konatelem. Vyskytovaly se jak v popisech, tak v konverzacích, čímž ilustrovaly svou stylistickou flexibilitu. Kvalifikující sponové predikace a konstrukce s *there* představovaly 12.5%, respektive 7.5% implikovaných ekvivalentů generického *on*. Zastoupeny byly všechny tři typy konstrukce s *there*: existenciální, existenciálně-lokativní i dějový. Nebyla nalezena žádná konstrukce s prázdným *it*, což je jeden z možných implicitních korelátů popsanych Tláskalem (Tláskal 2004) a zmíněných v teoretické části.

Žádná teoretická literatura neuváděla následující ekvivalenty, které byly zjištěny v našem materiálu: nefinitní konstrukce (minulé přičestí, přičestí perfekta, pasivní a aktivní infinitiv), nominalizace a adjektivizace. Nefinitní konstrukce představují 15% implikovaných ekvivalentů generického *on*, nominalizace a adjektivizace tvoří dohromady 10%. Tyto prostředky se tedy pro implikování všeobecného konatele ukázaly být velmi oblíbenými a užitečnými. Jedinkrát se objevila také rozkazovací věta s adresátem v 2. osobě a elipsa podmětu v aktivní větě.

Téměř 11% překladů generického *on* jsme zařadili mezi další odchylné ekvivalenty. Z nich 64.3% spadlo do kategorie změny perspektivy, zbytek tvořily modální konstrukce. Ve všech případech změny perspektivy dochází vzhledem k originálu k výraznému posunu úhlu pohledu na popisovanou skutečnost. Syntakticky se tento posun projevuje nejčastěji

posunutím původního předmětu na pozici podmětu věty anglické, nicméně toto pravidlo zdaleka neplatí pro všechny zjištěné případy. Je sice pravda, že většinou spolu se změnou perspektivy dochází i k záměně původního francouzského životného (lidského) podmětu za anglický podmět neživotný, nedá se však říci, že naše kategorie změny podmětu zcela odpovídá Tláskalově (Tláskal 2004) kategorii podmětu s rolí neživého kauzátoru (viz 2.2.1.2.5). Všech 5 případů modálních konstrukcí, tedy takových překladů, kde hlavní změnou oproti originálu bylo vyjádření modálního významu odlišným způsobem při zachování stejného obsahu (a tudíž i konatele), vyjadřovalo modalitu epistemickou.

Neurčité *on* bylo přeloženo častěji implikovanými ekvivalenty (51.1%) než substantivními frázemi (35.6%). Z nich potom naprosto (s 20 příklady z 23) převažovalo pasivum. Tři zbylé případy byly přeloženy pasivním infinitivem, minulým participiem a konstrukcí s *there* obsahující sloveso objevení se na scéně *come*.

Ze substantivních frází byla polovina zastoupena zájmenem *they*. To je pro vyjádření neurčité reference velmi příhodné, neboť do své reference nikdy nezahrnuje mluvčího ani adresáta. Druhým nejčastějším prvkem bylo s 18.8% neurčité zájmeno *someone*. Ve všech třech případech, kdy ho bylo k překladu užito, se nacházelo ve větě vyjadřující nereálný, vymyšlený nebo pouze pravděpodobný děj. V excerpovaném materiálu se též jednou objevilo „neurčité *one*“ označující nikoli jakéhokoli člověka na světě, nýbrž pouze jakéhokoli člověka z omezeného okruhu osob. Ostatní substantivní fráze, tj. *his superiors*, *she* a *we*, byly užity jednou a vždy měly za následek zúžení reference. *His superiors* se sice ještě mezi neurčitými konateli udržela, ale *she* a *we* jsou již jasně určité.

13.3% neurčitých *on* bylo přeloženo ostatními odchylnými ekvivalenty, a sice změnou perspektivy. Ačkoli podmět těchto anglických vět bývá většinou neživotný, ve dvou případech životný (lidský) byl. Původní francouzské přímé i nepřímé, vyjádřené i implikované předměty se staly podměty vět anglických.

Překladové koreláty určitého *on* se odvíjely hlavně od zápletky v románech. Bylo třeba jasně označit daného referenta, takže statistiky o jejich frekvenci jsou dosti nahodilé a je možné, že by byly zcela odlišné, kdyby se materiál k analýze excerpoval z jiného románového žánru či například z knih ženských autorek.

Nejvíce závislé na kontextu románu byly substantivní fráze, které představovaly 78.3% všech překladových protějšků určitého *on*. Toto vysoké číslo je vysvětlitelné tím, že je-li

referent známý jak mluvčímu, tak adresátovi, není již třeba ho skrývat a implikovat. Dva z románů se odehrávaly ve vyloženě mužském prostředí a nejčastěji prezentovaly scény, ve kterých bylo zapojeno více postav současně. Není proto překvapivé, že nejčastějším překladem bylo s 33.3% deiktické *we*, následované deiktickým či anaforickým *they*. To se jednou se vyskytlo v akuzativní formě *them*, jasně svědčící o jeho negenerické referenci. *One* bylo užito dvakrát. Jednou byla jeho reference nejednoznačná, v druhém případě se však nesporně jednalo o „maskovanou 1. osobu“. První osoba nebyla nijak maskována v překladu určitého *on* pomocí *I*, který se vyskytl v jednom příkladu. *The man* posloužilo jako anaforický odkaz na konatele z předchozí věty.

Z implikovaných ekvivalentů byla k překladu určitého *on* použita dvakrát pasivní konstrukce s nevyjádřeným konatelem a jednou nominalizace. Ta v příkladu fungovala i jako větný kondenzátor.

S jednou změnou perspektivy a jednou modální konstrukcí představují ostatní odchylné ekvivalenty 9% korelátů určitého *on*.

Ve 4 případech nebylo možné referenční dosah francouzského *on* jednoznačně určit. Ve dvou případech ponechal překladatel nejednoznačnost tím, že pro převedení do angličtiny užil implikovaný ekvivalent (nominalizaci a pasivní větu). Druhé dva příklady byly přeloženy pomocí *they* a *he*, díky nimž se konatel stal jasně specifickým, a došlo tedy ke konkretizaci reference.

Zkoumána byla též modalita, vyjadřování záporu a užívání slovesných časů ve větách s *on* a v jejich anglických překladech. Na konci čtvrté kapitoly jsou popsány nejzajímavější případy.

Modalita je faktorem, který může v některých nejednoznačných případech rozhodnout o typu reference konatele. Byla jí proto věnována zvláštní pozornost. Ačkoli jsme se ve větách, které ji obsahovaly, vždy snažili určit zdroj modality, často to nebylo možné, neboť konatel byl vyjádřený pouze implicitně.

Nejčastějším typem modalizace v naší excerpci byla tzv. subjektivizace, nacházející se vždy ve větě s generickým *on* a měnící náhled na sdělovaný obsah. Vždy obsahuje sloveso smyslového vnímání, které již samo o sobě vyjadřuje modalitu možnosti. Nejčastějším jevem byla francouzská věta pouze s takovým slovesem, přeložená do angličtiny za pomoci přidaného slovesa modálního. Tím se původní implicitní modalita vyjádřila explicitně.

Zaznamenány byly též příklady, kdy byla modalita ve francouzštině a angličtině realizována odlišnými prostředky: například oproti modálnímu slovesu v originále se v angličtině objevila modalita lexikální, tedy substantivum s „modální“ sémantikou (např. *tendency*). Jindy se překladem změnila modalita intenční.

V některých příkladech se modalita vyskytovala jen v jedné jazykové verzi. Taková odlišnost měla většinou vliv na celkové vyznění obsahu, který byl v překladu podán s větší či menší mírou jednoznačnosti a vážnosti, než jakou původně zamýšlel francouzský autor.

Většina rozdílů mezi našimi dvěma jazyky při vyjadřování záporu byla zapříčiněna jejich odlišnými systémy. Zatímco francouzština vyjadřuje myšlenku popsateľnou jako „nic než X“ negováním slovesa, angličtina pro takový účel systematicky užívá pozitivní predikace s fokalizujícím elementem (příslovečným určením, substantivem s fokalizující sémantikou, fokalizující konstrukcí). V jednom příkladě se objevil pro francouzštinu velmi vzácný dvojitý zápor (*ne + sloveso + ni...ni*). Angličtina neměla jinou možnost než zasadit do své věty pouze jeden záporný prvek, v tomto případě adverbium *never*. Dosah záporu nicméně zůstal stejný jako v originále.

Při překladu generického *on* ve větě se zápornou predikací přenesením záporu ke konateli (v případě užití *no one*) docházelo nejen k přesunu záporu, ale i k nepatrné změně referenčního rámce, a tím i dosahu záporu. Konatel je v anglické verzi popřen absolutně a explicitně, což vyvolává silnější efekt než pouhé popření generického *on*.

Jelikož teoretické zdroje zdůrazňovaly, že všeobecnost konatele ovlivňuje i slovesné časy, se kterými se typicky pojí, sledovali jsme i časovou orientaci excerpovaných vět. Výsledky potvrdily výraznou korelaci (jmenovitě 82%) mezi generičností konatele (generické *on*) a orientací obsahu věty na přítomnost. Naproti tomu neurčitá *on* se v 77.8% případů vyskytovala s predikacemi zaměřenými do minulosti.

Slovesné časy a způsoby si většinou v obou jazycích odpovídaly. Rozdílné byly hlavně tam, kde francouzština užila pro ni typického konjunktivu, který byl do angličtiny přeložen indikativem, neboť užití konjunktivu by bylo na daném místě buď zcela nemožné, nebo alespoň stylisticky nepřiměřené. K rozdílům mezi slovesnými časy docházelo hlavně vlivem příliš volného překladu.

Výsledky naší analýzy potvrdily myšlenky a prohlášení z teoretické části práce. Kontrastivní přístup měl za následek nalezení dalších anglických impersonálních konstrukcí,

kterých se systematicky užívá k překladu generického a neurčitého *on* do angličtiny. Analýzou byly navíc zjištěny anglické překladové koreláty určitého *on*.

Po závěru následuje seznam teoretické literatury, na niž v této práci odkazujeme, a také seznam knih, ze kterých byla provedena excerpce příkladů pro analýzu.

Osmou kapitolu představuje dodatek obsahující seznam 200 excerpovaných dvojic příkladů.

Doufáme, že tato práce prokázala užitečnost kontrastivních jazykových studií. Věříme, že i přes svůj omezený rozsah obohatila některými svými poznatky alespoň do určité míry dosavadní bádání v oblasti vyjadřování všeobecného lidského konatele v anglickém jazyce.

8. Appendix

8.1 List of examples

1. Il entrebâille la porte et passe la tête: dans le matin misérable **on distingue** le lit défait, la chambre en désordre. (1_FR:ARG,14)
He cracks open the door and puts his head inside; in the dim morning light he sees the unmade bed, the room in disorder. (1_EN:ARG,10)
2. - **On a téléphoné** d'ici. La vieille bonne. (2_FR:ARG,17)
"She telephoned from here." (2_EN:ARG,13)
3. - Ça va, **on connaît**, dit Antoine. (3_FR:ARG,17)
"All right, we know that one," Antoine says. (3_EN:ARG,13)
4. Pour qu'**on n'en perde pas** un mot, il la détaille comme s'il faisait une dictée. (4_FR:ARG,17)
So no one will miss a word of it, he enunciates it as if he were giving dictation. (4_EN:ARG,13)
5. Comme **on a la tête solide**, la tentation suffit: le possible reste simplement possible, les sirènes depuis longtemps appellent sans espoir. (5_FR:ARG,19)
Since their heads are on their shoulders, temptation is enough: possibility remains simply possible, the whistles have long blown without hope. (5_EN:ARG,15)
6. La promenade dominicale s'arrête au Boulevard Circulaire: **on débouche** sur le boulevard par l'avenue Christian-Charles, et **on le suit** le long du canal jusqu'à la Laiterie Nouvelle ou jusqu'au pont Gutenberg, rarement plus bas. (6_FR:ARG,19)
The Sunday walk stops at the Boulevard Circulaire: one comes out into the parkway along the Avenue Christian-Charles, then follows it along the canal to the New Dairy or to the Gutenberg Bridge, rarely below. (6_EN:ARG,15)
7. Plus au sud, le dimanche, **on ne rencontre** pour ainsi dire **que** les gens du quartier. (7_FR:ARG,19)
Farther south, on Sundays, one meets, so to speak, only neighborhood people. (7_EN:ARG,15)
8. C'est lui **qu'on vient de voir** entrer au Café des Alliés pour demander ce Wallas qui ne s'y trouvait plus. (8_FR:ARG,20)
He is the one who has just been seen going into the Café des Alliés to ask for that Wallas who was no longer there. (8_EN:ARG,16)
9. Sans doute **avait-on coupé** le fil dans l'après-midi. (9_FR:ARG,21)
No doubt the wire had been cut during the afternoon. (9_EN:ARG,17)
10. Dans la nuit **on distingue** juste l'allée plus claire entre les deux plates-bandes et le sommet bien taillé des fusains. (10_FR:ARG,21)
In the darkness, he could just make out the path, paler between the two flower-beds and the well-clipped top of the spindle trees. (10_EN:ARG,17)
11. Violente envie, soudain, d'essayer quand même; d'ouvrir un peu plus, juste un peu; seulement pour savoir **juqu'ou l'on a le droit d'aller**. (11_FR:ARG,22)
Violent desire, suddenly, to try all the same; to push it open a little farther, only a little; just to see how far he can go. (11_EN:ARG,18)

12. **On n'est pas très prudent dans cette maison:** n'importe qui pourrait entrer. (12_FR:ARG,22)
They are not very careful in this house: anyone could come in. (12_EN:ARG,18)
13. Le bouton se trouve à l'entrée, contre le chambranle; il faut appuyer vers le mur, dans l'autre sens **on allume deux ampoules de plus.** (13_FR:ARG,25)
The switch is against the door jamb; you have to push it toward the wall, if you push it in the other direction two more bulbs go on. (13_EN:ARG,21)
14. **On ne meurt pas** si vite d'une petite blessure au bras. (14_FR:ARG,27)
You don't die so fast from a flesh wound in the arm. (14_EN:ARG,22)
15. Et elle avait pris la peine de courir le matin jusqu'à la poste, pour **qu'on vienne arranger** ça, personne n'était venu naturellement. (15_FR:ARG,28)
And she had taken the trouble to go to the office, so someone would come to take care of it; of course no one had come. (15_EN:ARG,24)
16. D'ailleurs si le service avait été bien fait, **on serait venu** immédiatement. (16_FR:ARG,28)
Besides, if the repair service was any good, someone would have come right away. (16_EN:ARG,24)
17. (...) et il ne savait même pas si **on pouvait l'appeler du dehors**, puisqu'il n'y avait pas eu de coup de téléphone depuis le vendredi... (17_FR:ARG,28)
(...) and he did not even know if he could receive outside calls, since the phone had not rung since Friday... (17_EN:ARG,24)
18. **On dirait qu'il va neiger.** (18_FR:ARG,29)
It looks as though it were going to snow. (18_EN:ARG,25)
19. **On aperçoit la grille et la haie** de la maison du coin. (19_FR:ARG,29)
The fence and the hedge of the corner house are in sight. (19_EN:ARG,25)
20. **On ne voit de lui qu'un long manteau** de couleur pisseuse; comme celui du type de ce matin. (20_FR:ARG,30)
All that can be seen of him is a long shabby coat; like the one the man was wearing this morning. (20_EN:ARG,25)
21. (...) mais à l'heure actuelle **on ne sait pas** trop à qui se fier dans cette ville. (21_FR:ARG,32)
(...) but at present you can't really know who's to be trusted in this city. (21_EN:ARG,27)
22. - **On lui a dit** ce matin que j'étais décédé dans la nuit, qu'il s'agissait d'une de ces blessures bizarres qui n'ont pas l'air graves d'abord mais qui ne pardonnent pas. (22_FR:ARG,32)
"They told her this morning that I had died during the night, that it was one of those strange wounds which seem harmless at first but end up being fatal." (22_EN:ARG,27)
23. - Mais oui, **on dit!** D'ailleurs **on le dit** de tous les gynécologues dans ce pays, ou à peu près. (23_FR:ARG,34)
"Of course, they say! Besides, they say it about every gynecologist in the country, or just about." (23_EN:ARG,29)

24. Pourquoi est-ce toujours lui **qu'on va chercher** pour des trucs de ce genre-là?
(24_FR:ARG,35)
*Why do **people** always **call** him in for things like this?* (24_EN:ARG,30)
25. **On ne lui échappe pas si facilement.** (25_FR:ARG,35)
*It's **not so easy to get away** from him.* (25_EN:ARG,30)
26. **On n'aura qu'à répondre** que ce n'est pas ici. (26_FR:ARG,36)
*They **just have to say** it's not this one.* (26_EN:ARG,31)
27. **Qu'on ne s'imagine pas qu'il va s'en plaindre.** (27_FR:ARG,37)
*He is **certainly not going to complain.*** (27_EN:ARG,32)
28. Un suicide laisse tout de même un cadavre; or voilà que le cadavre s'en va sans crier gare, et **on lui demande en haut lieu** de ne pas s'en mêler. (28_FR:ARG,37)
*A suicide still leaves behind a corpse; and now the corpse is vanishing without a word, and **his superiors are asking** him to keep out of it.* (28_EN:ARG,32)
29. Les miettes éparses, les deux bouchons, le petit morceau de bois noirci: **on dirait** à présent **comme** une figure humaine, avec le bout de pelure d'orange qui fait la bouche. (29_FR:ARG,37)
*The scattered fragments, the two corks, the little piece of blackened wood: now **they look like** a human face, with the bit of orange peel for the mouth.* (29_EN:ARG,32)
30. **On dirait qu'il** avait appris déjà la réussite du coup. (30_FR:ARG,39)
*It was **as if** he had already heard about the success of the job.* (30_EN:ARG,34)
31. Allons, il faut d'abord décider comment **l'on va rattraper** le contretemps d'hier. (31_FR:ARG,39)
*All right, first of all he would have to decide how **he was going to make up for** yesterday's bad luck.* (31_EN:ARG,34)
32. Il expliquera que ce n'est pas sa faute, qu'il n'a pas eu le temps, que ça ne s'est pas passé comme **on l'avait prévu.** (32_FR:ARG,39)
*He will explain that it was not his fault, that he did not have time, that it did not work out the way **it had been planned.*** (32_EN:ARG,35)
33. Il marche sur le gazon, pour éviter de faire crisser les graviers de l'allée **qu'on distingue**, plus claire, entre les deux plates-bandes. (33_FR:ARG,40)
*He walks on the lawn to avoid making the gravel crunch on the path, which **he could see** because it was paler than the two flower beds on either side.* (33_EN:ARG,35)
34. (...) **on ne va pas se promener** un mardi au petit jour, d'ailleurs **on ne se promène pas** dans ce quartier-là. (34_FR:ARG,45)
*(...) **no one goes for a walk** on Tuesdays early in the morning, besides, **no one goes for a walk** in this neighborhood.* (34_EN:ARG,41)
35. Ça lui arrive de temps en temps de s'arrêter, **on ne sait pas** bien pourquoi – après un choc quelquefois, pas toujours – et de repartir toute seule ensuite, sans plus de raison. (35_FR:ARG,45)
*It stops every once in a while, **he does not really know** why – sometimes after a shock, not always – and then starts again afterward, all by itself, with no more reason.* (35_EN:ARG,41)
36. Il a dû marcher assez longtemps le long du boulevard mal éclairé, et quand il a trouvé enfin, il a aperçu ce café encore ouvert où **on lui a donné** une chambre, pas très

- confortable évidemment, mais qui lui suffit bien. (36_FR:ARG,47)
*He had to walk a long time along the badly lighted parkway, and once he found it, he noticed this café that was still open, where **they gave** him a room, not very luxurious of course, but good enough. (36_EN:ARG,43)*
37. (...) « Rue de Brabant » **lit-on** sur la plaque bleue. (37_FR:ARG,47)
 (...) “Rue de Brabant” **is written** on the blue plaque. (37_EN:ARG,43)
38. Il faut quand même y prendre garde et ne pas trop se pencher, si **l’on veut éviter** leur aspiration... (38_FR:ARG,49)
*Still you have to be careful not to lean too far over, if **you want to avoid** inhaling them... (38_EN:ARG,45)*
39. Une crèmerie, une épicerie, une charcuterie, une autre épicerie; **on ne voit** pour le moment **que** leur volet de fer baissé (39_FR:ARG,50)
*A dairy, a grocery store, a delicatessen, another grocery; for the time being **all that can be seen is their lowered iron shutters** (...) (39_EN:ARG,46)*
40. **On voit**, trente mètres plus loin, l’envers de la plaque signalant l’école aux automobiles. (40_FR:ARG,53)
*Thirty yards farther on **can be seen** the back of the plaque warning drivers of the school crossing. (40_EN:ARG,49)*
41. Dépêchez-vous de passer, Monsieur, **on va ouvrir!** lui crie l’homme. (41_FR:ARG,53)
*“Hurry up, Monsieur, **it’ll be opening!**” the man shouts. (41_EN:ARG,49)*
42. De même pour le Palais de justice qui, lui **a-t-on dit**, se trouve en face du commissariat général, mais dont le maigre renom artistique ne suffit pas à motiver l’intérêt qu’il semblerait y prendre. (42_FR:ARG,54)
*The same is true for the courthouse which, he **has been told**, is opposite the police station, but whose faint artistic renown is not enough to motivate the interest he would appear to be taking in it. (42_EN:ARG,50)*
43. C’est là **qu’on va** d’habitude. (43_FR:ARG,55)
***People usually go** there. (43_EN:ARG,50)*
44. Par quel biais **pourrait-on revenir** en arrière? (44_FR:ARG,55)
*How **can he manage to get back** where he started? (44_EN:ARG,51)*
45. Wallas sent le froid sur son visage; ce n’est pas encore l’époque de la glace coupante qui paralyse la face en un masque douloureux, mais **on perçoit** déjà comme un rétrécissement qui commence dans les tissus (...) (45_FR:ARG,56-57)
*Wallas feels the cold on his face; though the season of cutting frost that freezes the face into a painful mask has not yet begun, something like a shrinking **can already be felt** in the tissues (...) (45_EN:ARG,52)*
46. Pourquoi **ne commande-t-on pas** cette barrière automatiquement, depuis l’autre bout? (46_FR:ARG,58)
*Why **isn’t that barrier controlled** automatically, from the other end? (46_EN:ARG,54)*
47. Sur le disque de signalisation où deux enfants, le cartable en bandoulière, se tiennent par la main, **on voit** les restes d’un papillon, collé à l’envers et arraché. (47_FR:ARG,58)
On the school sign showing two children carrying schoolbooks over their shoulders and

- holding hands, he can see the remains of a butterfly pasted on upside down and torn off. (47_EN:ARG,54)*
48. **On disait** déjà **qu'**il se méfiait des solutions simples (...) (48_FR:ARG,60)
Already people were saying that he mistrusted easy solutions (...) (48_EN:ARG,56)
49. (...) **on chuchote** maintenant **qu'**il a cessé de croire à l'existence d'une solution quelconque. (49_FR:ARG,61)
(...) now it is whispered that he has ceased to believe in the existence of any solution whatever. (49_EN:ARG,56)
50. Pourvu qu'il n'aille pas s'offenser de cette intrusion dans ses affaires: il va falloir lui présenter les choses avec adresse; **on risque** sans cela de s'en faire un ennemi, ou en tout cas de perdre son concours, pourtant indispensable. (50_FR:ARG,65)
Provided he is not offended by such an intervention: Wallas will have to present matters skillfully; otherwise he risks turning the man into an enemy or in any case losing his cooperation, which is indispensable. (50_EN:ARG,60)
51. A bord des avions découverts, par mauvais temps, **on s'inclinait** hors du pare-brise, pour mieux voir, et les gifles de vent sifflaient longtemps dans les oreilles. (51_FR:ASE,12)
In those days we flew open ships and thrust our heads out round the windshield, in bad weather, to take our bearings: the wind that whistled in our ears was a long time clearing out of our heads. (51_EN:ASE,13)
52. Et **l'on rendait la main** vers la croûte rocheuse de l'Espagne qui n'offrait guère de refuges. (52_FR:ASE,13)
And one would simply throw in one's hand: there was no hope of refuge on the rocky crust of Spain. (52_EN:ASE,13)
53. Aussi nous **interdisait-on**, sous peine des sanctions les plus graves, le survol des mers de nuages au-dessus des zones montagneuses. (53_FR:ASE,13)
Still, the important thing was to avoid a collision with the range; and blind flying through a sea of clouds in the mountain zones was subject to the severest penalties. (53_EN:ASE,14)
54. Voici que brusquement, ce monde calme, si uni, si simple, que **l'on découvre quand on émerge** des nuages, prenait pour moi une valeur inconnue. (54_FR:ASE,13)
And suddenly that tranquil cloud-world, that world so harmless and simple that one sees below on rising out of the clouds, took on in my eyes a new quality. (54_EN:ASE,14)
55. Au dessous ne régnaient, comme **on eût pu le croire**, ni l'agitation des hommes, ni le tumulte, ni le vivant charroi des villes, mais un silence plus absolu encore, une paix plus définitive. (55_FR:ASE,13-14)
Below it reigned not what one might think – not the agitation of men, not the living tumult and bustle of cities, but a silence even more absolute than in the clouds, a peace even more final. (55_EN:ASE,14)
56. Pense alors à tous ceux qui ont connu ça avant toi, et dis-toi simplement: ce que d'autres ont réussi, **on peut** toujours **le réussir**. (56_FR:ASE,15)
When you are, think of those who went through it before you, and say to yourself, "What they could do, I can do." (56_EN:ASE,16)

57. **On me communiquait** les positions de l'ennemi avant la bataille... (57_FR:ASE,17)
To me alone news was being sent of the enemy's position before the hour of battle.
 (57_EN:ASE,18)
58. Il était trois heures du matin quand **on me réveilla**. (58_FR:ASE,17)
It was three in the morning when they woke me. (58_EN:ASE,19)
59. **On y voyait**, sur les flaques d'eau, de grandes palmes de vent courir. (59_FR:ASE,20)
Over the pools of water I could see great palms of wind running. (59_EN:ASE,22)
60. Je surprenais aussi les **confidences que l'on échangeait** à voix basse. (60_FR:ASE,20)
I heard them talking to one another in murmurs and whispers. (60_EN:ASE,23)
61. Je me souviens aussi de l'une de ces heures où **l'on franchit** les lisières du monde réel (...)
 (...) (61_FR:ASE,23)
I remember, for my part, another of those hours in which a pilot finds suddenly that he has slipped beyond the confines of this world. (61_EN:ASE,26)
62. Mais au coeur du danger **on conserve** des soucis d'homme, et j'avais soif, et j'avais faim. (62_FR:ASE,25)
It will seem to you childish; but even in the midst of danger a man retains his human concerns. I was thirsty and I was hungry. (62_EN:ASE,28)
63. **On trouve**, à l'aube, de petits bistrots qui s'ouvrent déjà... (63_FR:ASE,25)
We would go to a little pub already open despite the early hour. (63_EN:ASE,29)
64. La vieille paysanne, ainsi, ne rejoint son dieu qu'à travers une image peinte, une médaille naïve, un chapelet: il faut que **l'on nous parle** un simple langage pour se faire entendre de nous. (64_FR:ASE,25)
Even as an old peasant woman recognizes her God in a painted image in a childish medal, in a chaplet, so life would speak to us in its humblest language in order that we understand. (64_EN:ASE,29)
65. Ainsi la joie de vivre se ramassait-elle pour moi dans cette première gorgée parfumée et brûlante, dans ce mélange de lait, de café et de blé, par où **l'on communit** avec les pâturages calmes, les plantations exotiques et les moissons, par où **l'on communit** avec toute la terre. (65_FR:ASE,25-26)
The joy of living, I say, was summed up for me in the remembered sensation of that first burning and aromatic swallow, that mixture of milk and coffee and bread by which men hold communion with tranquil pastures, exotic plantations, and golden harvests, communion with the earth. (65_EN:ASE,29)
66. **On lui confia** un avion qui plafonnait à cinq mille deux cents mètres. (66_FR:ASE,31)
They had given him a plane whose absolute ceiling was sixteen thousand feet (...)
 (66_EN:ASE,40)
67. Mermoz s'engageait dans ces combats sans rien connaître de l'adversaire, sans savoir si **l'on sort en vie** de telles étreintes. (67_FR:ASE,32)
Mermoz enrolled in this war in complete ignorance of his adversary, with no notion at all of the chances of coming forth alive from battle with this enemy. (67_EN:ASE,40)
68. L'éclairage de nos escales n'était pas encore réalisé, et sur les terrains d'arrivée, par nuit noire **on alignait** en face de Mermoz la maigre illumination de trois **feux** d'essence. (68_FR:ASE,32)
The lightning of our airports had not yet been worked out. Hovering in the pitch black

- night, Mermoz would land by the faint glimmer of three gasoline **flares lined up** at one end of the field. (68_EN:ASE,41)*
69. Autour de la table **on reprend**, après des années de silence, ces conversations interrompues, **on se renoue** aux vieux souvenirs. Puis **l'on repart**. (69_FR:ASE,34)
*Round the table in the evening, at Casablanca, at Dakar, at Buenos Aires, **we take up** conversations interrupted by years of silence, **we resume** friendships to the accompaniment of buried memories. And then **we are off again**. (69_EN:ASE,44)*
70. Les camarades, la vie peut-être nous en écarte, nous empêche d'y beaucoup penser, mais ils sont quelque part, **on ne sait trop** où, silencieux et oubliés, mais tellement fidèles! (70_FR:ASE,34)
*Life may scatter us and keep us apart; it may prevent us from thinking very often of one another; but we know that our comrades are somewhere "out there" – where, **one can hardly say** – silent, forgotten, but deeply faithful. (70_EN:ASE,44)*
71. **On ne se crée point** de vieux camarades. (71_FR:ASE,35)
*Old friends **cannot be created** out of hand. (71_EN:ASE,44)*
72. Il est vain, si **l'on plante** un chêne, d'espérer s'abriter bientôt sous son feuillage. (72_FR:ASE,35)
*It is idle, **having planted** an acorn in the morning, to expect that afternoon to sit in the shade of the oak. (72_EN:ASE,45)*
73. **On n'achète pas** l'amitié d'un Mermoz, d'un compagnon que les épreuves vécues ensemble ont lié à nous pour toujours. (73_FR:ASE,35-36)
***One cannot buy** the friendship of a Mermoz, of a companion to whom one is bound forever by ordeals suffered in common. (73_EN:ASE,45)*
74. **On chemine** longtemps côte à côte, enfermé dans son propre silence, ou bien l'on échange des mots qui ne transportent rien. Mais voici l'heure du danger. Alors **on s'épaule** l'un à l'autre. **On découvre** que l'on appartient à la même communauté. **On s'élargit** par la découverte d'autres consciences. **On se regarde** avec un grand sourire. **On est semblable** à ce prisonnier délivré qui s'émerveille de l'immensité de la mer. (74_FR:ASE,37)
***Men travel** side by side for years, each locked up in his own silence or exchanging those words which carry no freight – till danger comes. Then **they stand** shoulder to shoulder. **They discover** that they belong to the same family. **They wax and bloom** in the recognition of fellow beings. **They look at one another** and smile. **They are like the** prisoner set free who marvels at the immensity of the sea. (74_EN:ASE,47)*
75. J'ai lu, autrefois, Guillaumet, un récit où **l'on célébrait** ton aventure, et j'ai un vieux compte à régler avec cette image infidèle. **On t'y voyait**, lançant des boutades de « gavroche », comme si le courage consistait à s'abaisser à des railleries de collégien, au coeur des pires dangers et à l'heure de la mort. (75_FR:ASE,38)
*I once read, Guillaumet, a tale in which your adventure **was celebrated**. I have an old score to settle with the infidel who wrote it. **You were described** as abounding in the witty sallies of the street arab, as if courage consisted in demeaning oneself to schoolboy banter in the midst of danger and the hour of death. (75_EN:ASE,49)*
76. **On ne te connaissait pas**, Guillaumet. (76_FR:ASE,38)
***The man did not know** you, Guillaumet. (76_EN:ASE,49)*

77. Le moteur tourne rond, mais **l'on s'enfonce**. (77_FR:ASE,40)
*The engines run on, but **the ship seems to be sinking**.* (77_EN:ASE,51)
78. **On cabre** pour sauver son altitude, l'avion perd sa vitesse et devient mou : **on s'enfonce** toujours. **On rend la main**, craignant maintenant d'avoir trop cabré, **on se laisse dériver** sur la droite ou sur la gauche pour s'adosser à la crête favorable, celle qui reçoit les vents comme un tremplin, mais **l'on s'enfonce** encore. C'est le ciel entier qui semble descendre. **On se sent** pris, alors, dans une sorte d'accident cosmique. Il n'est plus de refuge. **On tente** en vain le demi-tour pour rejoindre, en arrière, les zones où l'air vous soutenait, solide et plein comme un pilier. Mais il n'est plus de pilier. Tout ce décompose, **et l'on glisse** dans un délabrement universel vers le nuage qui monte mollement, se hausse jusqu'à vous, et vous absorbe. (78_FR:ASE,40-41)
*You jockey to hold your altitude : the ship loses speed and goes mushy. And still **you sink**. So **you give it up**, afraid that you may have jockeyed too much ; and **you let yourself drift** to right or left, striving to put at your back a favorable peak, that is, a peak off which the winds rebound as off a springboard. And yet **you go sinking**. The whole sky seems to be coming down on you. **You begin to feel like** the victim of some cosmic accident. You cannot land anywhere, and **you try** in vain to turn round and fly back into those zones where the air as dense and solid as a pillar, had held you up. That pillar has melted away. Everything here is rotten and **you slither** about in a sort of universal decomposition while the cloud-bank rises apathetically, reaches your level, and swallows you up. (78_EN:ASE,51)*
79. **On rencontre** des courants descendants au-dessus de nuages qui paraissent stables, pour la simple raison qu'à la même altitude ils se recomposent indéfiniment. (79_FR:ASE,40-41)
*When you get up above the clouds **you run into** those down currents that seem to be perfectly stationary for the simple reason that in that very high altitude they never stop flowing. (79_EN:ASE,52)*
80. « Dans la neige, me disais-tu, **on perd** tout instinct de conservation. » (80_FR:ASE,43)
*"Amid snow," you told me, "**a man loses** his instinct of self-preservation. (80_EN:ASE,54-55)*
81. «Après deux, trois, quatre jours de marche, **on ne souhaite plus que** le sommeil. » (81_FR:ASE,43)
*"After two or three or four days of tramping, **all you think about is** sleep." (81_EN:ASE,54-55)*
82. A peine closes, ces paupières miraculeuses, il n'était plus ni coups, ni chutes, ni muscles déchirés, ni gel brûlant, ni ce poids de la vie à traîner quand **on va** comme un boeuf, et qu'elle se fait plus lourde qu'un char. (82_FR:ASE,44)
*Let drop those miraculous eyelids and there was an end of blows, of stumbling falls, of torn muscles and burning ice, of that burden of life **you were dragging along** like a worn-out ox, a weight heavier than any wain or cart. (82_EN:ASE,56)*
83. Et si je cale mon corps contre la pierre, l'été venu **on le retrouvera**. (83_FR:ASE,45)
*And if I can prop myself up against the rock, **they'll find** me there next summer. (83_EN:ASE,57)*

84. C'est toujours le même pas **que l'on recommence...** (84_FR:ASE,46)
It is always the same step, but you have to take it. (84_EN:ASE,58)
85. Si **on** lui **parlait** de son courage, Guillaumet hausserait les épaules. (85_FR:ASE,47)
If we were to talk to him about his courage, Guillaumet would shrug his shoulders. (85_EN:ASE,59)
86. Mais **on le trahirait** aussi **en célébrant** sa modestie. (86_FR:ASE,47)
But it would be just as false to extol his modesty. (86_EN:ASE,59)
87. Surtout si **on l'observe** avec cette gravité lucide. (87_FR:ASE,47)
Especially if it is scrutinized with Guillaumet's lucid gravity. (87_EN:ASE,59)
88. C'est sentir, en posant **sa** pierre, que **l'on contribue** à bâtir le monde. (88_FR:ASE,48)
It is to feel, when setting one's stone, that one is contributing to the building of the world. (88_EN:ASE,60)
89. **On veut confondre** de tels hommes avec les toréadors ou les joueurs. (89_FR:ASE,48)
There is a tendency to class such men with toreadors and gamblers. (89_EN:ASE,60)
90. **On vante** leur mépris de la mort. (90_FR:ASE,48)
People extol their contempt for death. (90_EN:ASE,60)
91. **On est** tellement **libre** quand **on bêche!** (91_FR:ASE,48)
A man is free when he is using a spade. (91_EN:ASE,61)
92. Il semble que le travail des ingénieurs, des dessinateurs, des calculateurs du bureau d'études ne soit ainsi en apparence, que de polir et d'effacer, d'alléger ce raccord, d'équilibrer cette aile, **jusqu'à ce qu'on ne la remarque plus (...)** (92_FR:ASE,51)
In this spirit do engineers, physicists concerned with thermodynamics, and the swarm of preoccupied draughtsmen tackle their work. In appearance, but only in appearance, they seem to be polishing surfaces and refining away angles, easing this joint or stabilizing that wing, rendering these parts invisible (...) (92_EN:ASE,66-67)
93. Elles joignent ce village à cet autre village, car de l'un à l'autre **on se marie.** (93_FR:ASE,55)
They join village to village, for between villages marriages are made. (93_EN:ASE,98)
94. **On** le **subit avec surprise** dans ce paysage désaffecté (...) (94_FR:ASE,56)
There is something surprising in the tranquillity of this deserted landscape (...) (94_EN:ASE,99-100)
95. Et **l'on survole** une terre désormais muette, ornée de glaciers noirs. (95_FR:ASE,56)
I fly over a world mute and abandoned, strewn with black glaciers. (95_EN:ASE,100)
96. La terre est lisse, les pentes sont faibles, et **l'on oublie** leur origine. (96_FR:ASE,57)
The earth is smooth, the slopes are gentle; one forgets the travail that gave them birth. (96_EN:ASE,100)
97. Si près des coulées noires, **comme on sent bien** le miracle de l'homme ! (97_FR:ASE,57)
So near the black scoria, how thrilling it is to feel the miraculous nature of man! (97_EN:ASE,100)
98. **On ne sait** comment, **on ne sait** pourquoi ce passager visite ces jardins préparés, habitables pour un temps si court, une époque géologique, un jour béni parmi les jours. (98_FR:ASE,57)

- Who knows how, or why, man visits these gardens ready to hand, habitable for so short a time – a geologic age – for a single day blessed among days ?* (98_EN:ASE,100-101)
99. Cette ville semble reposer sur un vrai sol que **l'on croit** riche en profondeur comme une terre de Beauce. (99_FR:ASE,58)
*This town seemed to be built upon a true humus, a soil **one might imagine** to be as rich as the wheatlands of the Beauce.* (99_EN:ASE,102)
100. **On oublie** que la vie, ici comme ailleurs, est un luxe, et qu'il est nulle part de terre bien profonde sous le pas des hommes. (100_FR:ASE,58)
These men live heedless of the fact that, here as elsewhere, life is a luxury; and that nowhere on the globe is the soil really rich beneath the feet of men. (100_EN:ASE,102)
101. **-On peut s'arranger** avec des hommes des sections de combat, je pense, dit Kyo. (101_FR:AM,16)
*"I think **we'll be able to fix it up** with one of the Shock Sections," said Kyo.* (101_EN:AM,13)
102. Leur présence arrachait Tchen à sa terrible solitude, doucement, comme **une plante que l'on tire de la terre** où ses racines les plus fines la retiennent encore. (102_FR:AM,17)
*Their presence was breaking down Chen's ghastly feeling of isolation. It yielded gently, like **an uprooted plant** which still clings to the ground with a few slender threads.* (102_EN:AM,14)
103. Le sifflet du premier disque couvrit le second ; soudain s'arrêta – **on entendit** : envoyer – puis reprit. (103_FR:AM,19)
*The scratching of the first record rendered the other one inaudible; suddenly it stopped – and **they heard**: send. Then it went on again.* (103_EN:AM,16)
104. **-Alors, pourquoi l'a-t-on changé?** (104_FR:AM,19)
*"Then why **has it been changed?**"* (104_EN:AM,16)
105. **-On ne l'a pas changé**, dit Lou. (105_FR:AM,19)
*"It **hasn't been changed,**" said Lou.* (105_EN:AM,17)
106. **Il est rare que l'on reconnaisse** sa propre voix, voyez-vous, lorsqu'on l'entend pour la première fois. (106_FR:AM,19)
Hardly any one recognizes his own voice, you know, when he hears it for the first time. (106_EN:AM,17)
107. Mais **on n'a pas l'habitude**, voyez-vous, de s'entendre soi-même... (107_FR:AM,19)
*You see, **we just aren't used to hearing our own voices...*** (107_EN:AM,17)
108. **-Bon. On doit toujours venir chercher** les disques cette nuit ? (108_FR:AM,19)
*"Right. **Is it still the plan to come and fetch them tonight?**"* (108_EN:AM,17)
109. Kyo avait demandé **qu'on le portât** de 2 000 à 5 000, la direction militaire y était parvenue dans le mois. (109_FR:AM,22)
*Kyo had asked for the numbers **to be raised** from two thousand to five, and it had taken the military staff less than a month to do so.* (109_EN:AM,20)
110. **On ouvrit.** (110_FR:AM,23)
*The door **was opened.*** (110_EN:AM,21)
111. **-Sait-on** quand les nôtres seront à Tcheng-Tchéou ? (111_FR:AM,24)
*"**Is it known** when our men reach Cheng Chow?"* (111_EN:AM,22)

112. **On les habillera** en ta-la-poins ! (112_FR:AM,26)
They'll be dressed up like monkeys ! (112_EN:AM,24)
113. « **Qu'on m'habille** en talapoins ces négociants, en léopards, ces militaires (comme lorsqu'ils s'asseyaient sur des bancs fraîchement peints !) » (113_FR:AM,26)
"Let these merchants be clothed as monkeys, and these soldiers in leopard skins (as if they had sat on newly painted benches!)." (113_EN:AM,25)
114. « **On en parle** encore trois ans après ! » (114_FR:AM,27)
Still a subject of conversation three years later. (114_EN:AM,26)
115. « **Alors on déménage** le château (...)» (115_FR:AM,29)
"Then they ransack the castle (...)" (115_EN:AM,28)
116. **On les annonce.** (116_FR:AM,29)
The news of their arrival spreads. (116_EN:AM,28)
117. **On leur a pris** leurs armes. (117_FR:AM,29)
They were relieved of their weapons. (117_EN:AM,28)
118. « **...on a tout su**, tout ce qu'il mijotait comme ça, en se faisant gratter les pieds et lire les chroniques, ivre-noble ! » (118_FR:AM,29)
"...everything came out, all the fantastic ideas he had had, getting people to scratch his feet for him and read him chronicles, when his quarterings went to his head!"
 (118_EN:AM,28-29)
119. « **On lui a obéi : on l'a enterré** sous la chapelle, dans un immense caveau, debout sur son cheval tué, comme Attila... » (119_FR:AM,29)
His instructions were obeyed : he was buried beneath the chapel, in an immense vault, upright upon his horse, killed to keep him company, like Attila's charger.
 (119_EN:AM,29)
120. -Quand Attila est mort, **on l'a dressé sur** son cheval cabré, au-dessus du Danube (...) (120_FR:AM,30)
"When Attila died, they set him on his horse, prancing high above the Danube.
 (120_EN:AM,29)
121. **On prendra livraison** cette nuit, avec l'argent. (121_FR:AM,31)
We'll take delivery tonight, and have the money ready. (121_EN:AM,31)
122. C'est la mitrailleuse qui m'inquiète, si **on n'essaie pas** un peu de tir. (122_FR:AM,34)
It's the machine-guns which I'm worried about, unless we can get a little practice with blank. (122_EN:AM,34)
123. Mais, **on peut me remplacer**, maintenant, tu comprends... (123_FR:AM,37)
I can be replaced, now, don't you see. (123_EN:AM,37)
124. **On lui prêtait** la patience des bouddhistes : c'était celle des intoxiqués. (124_FR:AM,40)
The Buddhist patience with which he was credited was, in fact, the fatalism of a drug-addict. (124_EN:AM,40)
125. **-On en vit** mal... (125_FR:AM,40)
"It is a poor way of living." (125_EN:AM,40)
126. Il boit, mais il était fait pour l'opium : **on se trompe** aussi **de vice**, beaucoup d'hommes ne rencontrent pas celui qui les sauverait. (126_FR:AM,40)
He drinks, but it is opium he was cut out for : one can choose the wrong vice just like

- the wrong anything else : lots of men never pick on the one which would set them right.*
(126_EN:AM,41)
127. **On la forçait** à épouser une brute respectable... (127_FR:AM,42)
She'd been forced into marrying some plausible brute or other. (127_EN:AM,43)
128. **On l'a apportée** avec sa robe rouge de mariée, toute pleine de sang. (128_FR:AM,42)
They brought her in with her red bridal dress all soaked with blood. (128_EN:AM,43)
129. -Plus il y a de blessés, plus l'insurrection approche, plus **on couche**. (129_FR:AM,43)
"The more wounded there are, the nearer we get to the Revolution, the more people sleep with each other." (129_EN:AM,44)
130. -Il a caché ses feuilles dans son tronc pendant le jour, dit-elle, et il les sort cette nuit pendant qu'**on ne le voit pas**. (130_FR:AM,45)
"He's been hiding his leaves in his trunk during the daytime," she said, "and he's bringing them out at night now that no one can see." (130_EN:AM,46)
131. Ce n'est pas pour quelqu'un qu'**on va** au bain. (131_FR:AM,46)
People don't go to penal servitude for the sake of a human relationship.
(131_EN:AM,47)
132. Il y a des appels, surtout quand **on est si près de la mort** (c'est de celle des autres que j'ai l'habitude, Kyo...) qui n'ont rien à voir avec l'amour. (132_FR:AM,46)
There are some things people ask of one, above all when death is as near as this (it's other people's death that I've had to face till now, Kyo...) which have no connexion with love. (132_EN:AM,48)
133. **Ne serait-on** jamais jaloux que de ce qu'**on suppose** que suppose l'autre ?
(133_FR:AM,47)
Are we always only jealous of what we imagine the other person is thinking ?
(133_EN:AM,48)
134. **On n'oublie pas** ce qu'on veut. (134_FR:AM,47)
One's memories are not so easily expelled. (134_EN:AM,49)
135. Elle se retourna d'un coup : **on venait de sonner**. (135_FR:AM,48)
Suddenly she turned round : the bell had rung. (135_EN:AM,50)
136. **On sonna** de nouveau. (136_FR:AM,48)
There came another ring. (136_EN:AM,50)
137. Vielle confiance : sinon, **on se demande** (...) (137_FR:AM,48)
Implicit confidence – always have had. Can't see (...) (137_EN:AM,50)
138. (...) comment **on ferait**. (138_FR:AM,48)
(...) how it could have been managed otherwise. (138_EN:AM,50)
139. **On ne possède** d'un être que ce qu'**on change** en lui, dit mon père... (139_FR:AM,49)
The extent to which a person belongs to one is the extent to which one has changed them, as my father says... (139_EN:AM,51)
140. « **On entend** la voix des autres avec ses oreilles, la sienne avec la gorge. »
(140_FR:AM,49)
"We hear other people's voices with our ears, our own through our throat."
(140_EN:AM,52)

141. **Sa vie aussi, on l'entend** avec la gorge, et celle des autres ? (141_FR:AM,49)
The sound of one's life, too, comes to one through the throat; and other people's?
 (141_EN:AM,52)
142. « **On voit bien qu'**il ne connaît pas ce dont il parle », tenta de penser Tchen ; mais Gisors avait touché juste. (142_FR:AM,53)
"It's clear that he doesn't know what he's talking about," Chen forced himself to think. But Gisors' trust had gone home. (142_EN:AM,56)
143. **Peut-être méprise-t-ong** beaucoup celui qu'**on tue**. (143_FR:AM,54)
One may feel great contempt for the man one kills. (143_EN:AM,57)
144. Les femmes, je sais **ce qu'on en fait**, quand elles veulent continuer à vous posséder : **on vit** avec elles. (144_FR:AM,54)
I know how to treat women when they develop proprietary ideas : live with them.
 (144_EN:AM,57)
145. Un intense désir de le revoir le bouleversa – **celui qu'on a** de revoir une dernière fois ses morts. (145_FR:AM,56)
He was seized with an overwhelming desire to see him again – like the desire that comes to look yet once more upon the dead. (145_EN:AM,59)
146. Mais il éprouvait assez le respect du maître – la seule chose que la Chine lui eût fortement inculquée – pour que, malgré l'amour enseigné, il rencontrât l'angoisse du pasteur et que lui apparût un enfer plus terrible et plus convaincant que celui contre quoi **on avait tenté de le prémunir**. (146_FR:AM,57)
But he felt sufficient reverence for his master – the one respect in which China had deeply influenced him – to perceive the pastor's agony of mind more clearly than the love which he expounded, and to see in it a hell more dreadful and more convincing than the hell against which his suspicions had been aroused. (146_EN:AM,61)
147. Si **l'on tenait**, du bateau, **de** la remonter, Katow pourrait tirer sur ceux qui manoeuvreraient le cordage : sous les poulies, rien ne protégeait. (147_FR:AM,64)
If they tried to pull it up from above, he could fire on those working the tackle ; under the pulleys there, nothing would give any protection. (147_EN:AM,69)
148. **On apportait** le second, dûment ficelé par la tête et par les pieds, surpris pendant son sommeil. (148_FR:AM,66)
The mate was brought in, efficiently trussed, surprised in his sleep. (148_EN:AM,71)
149. Vous mériteriez **qu'on vous foute à la porte** : la moitié de vos hommes crèvent de complicité ! (149_FR:AM,70)
If you got what you deserved it'd be a kick up the backside: half your men are stinking rotten double-crossers! (149_EN:AM,74)
150. Ces gens-là, en février, étaient deux ou trois mille si **l'on compte** les communistes... ils sont sans doute un peu plus nombreux maintenant. (150_FR:AM,72)
In February there must have been two or three thousand of those enthusiasts, if one includes the Communists. There are probably a few more of them now.
 (150_EN:AM,76)
151. La cité elle-même, **on doit l'avouer**, est laide. (151_FR:AC,11)
The town itself, let us admit, is ugly. (151_EN:AC,71)

152. Comment faire imaginer, par exemple, une ville sans pigeons, sans arbres et sans jardins, où **l'on ne rencontre ni** battements d'ailes **ni** froissements de feuilles, un lieu neutre pour tout dire? (152_FR:AC,11)
*How conjure up a picture, for instance, of a town without pigeons, without any trees or gardens, where **you never hear the beat of wings or the rustle of leaves** – a thoroughly negative place in short? (152_EN:AC,71)*
153. Le printemps s'annonce seulement par la qualité de l'air ou par les corbeilles de fleurs que des petits vendeurs ramènent des banlieues; c'est **un printemps qu'on vend** sur les marchés. (153_FR:AC,11)
*All that tells you of spring's coming is the feel of the air, or the baskets of flowers brought in from the suburbs by hawkers; it's **a spring cried** in the market-places. (153_EN:AC,71)*
154. Pendant l'été, le soleil incendie les maisons trop sèches et couvre les murs d'une cendre grise; **on ne peut plus vivre** alors **que** dans l'ombre des volets clos. (154_FR:AC,11)
*During the summer the sun bakes the houses bone-dry, sprinkles our walls with greyish dust, and **you have no option but to survive** those days of fire indoors, behind closed shutters. (154_EN:AC,71)*
155. Une manière commode de faire la connaissance d'une ville est de chercher comment **on y travaille**, comment **on y aime** et comment **on y meurt**. (155_FR:AC,11)
*Perhaps the easiest way of making a town's acquaintance is to ascertain how **the people in it work**, how **they love**, and how **they die**. (155_EN:AC,71)*
156. C'est-à-dire qu'**on s'y ennuie** et qu'**on s'y applique** à prendre des habitudes. (156_FR:AC,12)
*The truth is that **everyone is bored**, and **devotes himself to** cultivating habits. (156_EN:AC,71)*
157. Les désirs des plus jeunes dépassent pas les associations de boulomanes, les banquets des amicales et les cercles où **l'on joue gros jeu** sur le hasard des cartes. (157_FR:AC,12)
*The passions of the young are violent and short-lived; the vices of older men seldom range beyond an addiction to games of bowls, to banquets and "socials", or clubs where **large sums change hands** on the fall of a card. (157_EN:AC,71)*
158. **On dira** sans doute **que** cela n'est pas particulier à notre ville et qu'en somme tous nos contemporains sont ainsi. (158_FR:AC,12)
***It will be said**, no doubt, **that** these habits are not peculiar to our town; really all our contemporaries are much the same. (158_EN:AC,71)*
159. Il n'est pas nécessaire, en conséquence, de préciser la façon dont **on s'aime** chez nous. (159_FR:AC,12)
*Hence I see no need to dwell on the manner of **loving** in our town. (159_EN:AC,72)*
160. Les hommes et les femmes, ou bien se dévorent rapidement dans ce qu'**on appelle** l'acte d'amour, ou bien s'engagent dans une longue habitude à deux. (160_FR:AC,12)
*The men and women consume each other rapidly in what is **called** "the act of love", or else settle down to a mild habit of conjugality. (160_EN:AC,72)*
161. A Oran comme ailleurs, faute de temps et de réflexion, **on est bien** obligé de s'aimer sans le savoir. (161_FR:AC,12)

- At Oran, as elsewhere, for lack of time and thinking, **people have to love each other** without knowing much about it. (161_EN:AC,72)*
162. Ce qui est plus original dans notre ville est la difficulté qu'**on peut** y **trouver** à mourir. (162_FR:AC,12)
 What is more exceptional in our town is the difficulty **one may experience** there in dying. (162_EN:AC,72)
163. Ce n'est jamais agréable d'être malade, mais il y a des villes et des pays qui vous soutiennent dans la maladie, où **l'on peut**, en quelque sorte, **se laisser aller**. (163_FR:AC,12-13)
*Being ill is never agreeable, but there are towns which stand by you, so to speak, when you are sick; in which **you can**, after a fashion, **let yourself go**. (163_EN:AC,72)*
164. **Qu'on pense** alors à celui qui va mourir (...) (164_FR:AC,13)
***Think** what it must be for a dying man (...) (164_EN:AC,72)*
165. **On comprendra** ce qu'il peut y avoir d'inconfortable dans la mort, même moderne, lorsqu'elle survient ainsi dans un lieu sec. (165_FR:AC,13)
***It will then be obvious** what discomfort attends death, even modern death, when it waylays you under such conditions in a dry place. (165_EN:AC,72)*
166. Au demeurant, **on ne doit** rien **exagérer**. (166_FR:AC,13)
*However, **we must not exaggerate**. (166_EN:AC,72)*
167. Mais **on passe** ses journées sans difficultés aussitôt qu'**on a** des habitudes. (167_FR:AC,13)
***But you can get through** the days there without trouble, once **you have formed** habits. (167_EN:AC,72)*
168. Du moins, **on ne connaît pas** chez nous le désordre. (168_FR:AC,13)
*But, at least, social unrest **is quite unknown** amongst us. (168_EN:AC,72)*
169. Cette cité sans pittoresque, sans végétation et sans âme finit par sembler reposante, **on s'y endort** enfin. (169_FR:AC,13)
*Treeless, glamourless, soulless, the town of Oran ends by seeming restful and, after a while, **you go complacently to sleep** there. (169:EN:AC,72)*
170. **On peut** seulement **regretter qu'**elle se soit construite en tournant le dos à cette baie et que, partant, il soit impossible d'apercevoir la mer qu'il faut toujours aller chercher. (170_FR:AC,13)
***All we may regret is** the town's being so disposed that it turns its back on the bay, with the result that it's impossible to see the sea, you always have to go to look for it. (170_EN:AC,72)*
171. Arrivé là, **on admettra** sans peine **que** rien ne pouvait faire espérer à nos concitoyens les incidents qui se produisirent au printemps de cette année-là (...) (171_FR:AC,13)
*Such being the normal life of Oran, **it will be easily understood that** our fellow-citizens had not the faintest reason to apprehend the incidents which took place in the spring of the year in question (...) (171_EN:AC,72-73)*
172. Du reste, le narrateur, **qu'on connaîtra** toujours à temps, n'aurait guère de titre à faire valoir dans une entreprise de ce genre (...) (172_FR:AC,14)
*In any case the narrator (whose identity **will be made known** in due course) would have little claim to competence for a task like this (...) (172_EN:AC,73)*

173. Il n’y avait pas de rats dans la maison, **il fallait donc qu’on eût apporté** celui-ci du dehors. (173_FR:AC,15)
*There “weren’t no rats in the building”, he repeated, so **someone must have brought this one from outside.*** (173_EN:AC,73)
174. **On avait dû les prendre** avec de gros pièges, car ils étaient pleins de sang. (174_FR:AC,16)
*They’d **obviously been caught** in traps with very strong springs as they were bleeding profusely.* (174_EN:AC,74)
175. -Ils sortent, **on en voit** dans toutes les poubelles, c’est la faim! (175_FR:AC,17)
*“Aye, they’re coming out, **you can see** them in the dustbins by dozens. It’s hunger, that’s what it is, driving them out.”* (175_EN:AC,75)
176. M. Othon, long et noir, et qui ressemblait moitié à ce **qu’on appelait autrefois** un homme du monde, moitié à un croque-mort (...) (176_FR:AC,18)
*Tall and dark, M. Othon had something of the air of **what used to be called** “a man of the world”, and something of an undertaker’s mate.* (176_EN:AC,76)
177. L’après-midi du même jour, au début de sa consultation, Rieux reçut un jeune homme dont **on lui dit qu’il** était journaliste et qu’il était déjà venu le matin. (177_FR:AC,18)
*Early in the afternoon of that day, when his consultations were beginning, a young man called on Rieux. **The doctor gathered that** he had called before, in the morning, and was a journalist by profession.* (177_EN:AC,76)
178. Le docteur lui serra la main et lui dit qu’il y aurait un curieux reportage à faire sur la quantité de rats morts **qu’on trouvait** dans la ville en ce moment. (178_FR:AC,19)
*When shaking hands with him, Rieux suggested that if he was out for curious “stories” for his paper, he might say something about the extraordinary number of dead rats that **were being found** in the town just now.* (178_EN:AC,77)
179. C’est par deux ou trois **qu’on les trouve** maintenant. (179_FR:AC,20)
***I keep finding** ’em by twos and threes.* (179_EN:AC,77)
180. Mercier, le directeur, en avait entendu parler et, dans son service même, installé non loin des quais, **on en avait découvert** une cinquantaine. (180_FR:AC,21)
*Yes, Mercier knew all about it; in fact, fifty rats **had been found** in his offices, which were near the harbour.* (180_EN:AC,77-78)
181. Sa femme de ménage venait de lui apprendre qu’**on avait collecté** plusieurs centaines de rats morts dans la grande usine où travaillait son mari. (181_FR:AC,21)
*His charwoman had just told him that several hundred dead rats **had been collected** in the big factory where her husband worked.* (181_EN:AC,78)
182. Dans quelques cas, **on fut obligé d’achever** les bêtes, dont l’agonie était trop longue. (182_FR:AC,21)
*In some cases the animals **were killed** to put an end to their agony.* (182_EN:AC,78)
183. La nuit, dans les couloirs ou les ruelles, **on entendait** distinctement leurs petits cris d’agonie. (183_FR:AC,22)
*At night, in passages and alleys, their shrill little death-cries **could be clearly heard.*** (183_EN:AC,78)
184. Le matin, dans les faubourgs, **on les trouvait** étalés à même le ruisseau, une petite fleur de sang sur le museau pointu (...) (184_FR:AC,22)

- In the mornings the bodies **were found** lining the gutters, each with a gout of blood, like a red flower, on its tapering muzzle (...)* (184_EN:AC,78)
185. Dans la ville même, **on les rencontrait** par petits tas, sur les paliers ou dans les cours. (185_FR:AC,22)
*Even in the busy heart of the town **you found** them piled in little heaps on landings and in backyards.* (185_EN:AC,78)
186. **On eût dit que** la terre même où étaient plantées nos maisons se purgeait de son chargement d’humeurs (...) (186_FR:AC,22)
It was as if the earth on which our houses stood were being purged of its secreted humours (...) (186_EN:AC,78)
187. **Qu’on envisage** seulement la stupéfaction de notre petite ville (...) (187_FR:AC,22)
You must picture the consternation of our little town (...) (187_EN:AC,78-79)
188. Jusqu’alors, **on s’était** seulement **plaint** d’un accident un peu répugnant. **On s’apercevait** maintenant que ce phénomène dont on ne pouvait encore ni préciser l’ampleur ni déceler l’origine avait quelque chose de menaçant. (188_FR:AC,22)
*Hitherto **people had** merely **grumbled** at a stupid, rather obnoxious visitation; **they now realized** that this strange phenomenon, whose scope could not be measured and whose origins escaped detection, had something vaguely menacing about it.* (188_EN:AC,79)
189. **On demandait** des mesures radicales (...) (189_FR:AC,23)
There was a demand for drastic measures (...) (189_EN:AC,79)
190. (...) **on accusait** les autorités, et certains qui avaient des maisons au bord de la mer parlaient déjà de s’y retirer. (190_FR:AC,23)
*(...) the authorities **were accused** of slackness, and people who had houses on the coast spoke of moving there, early in the year though it was.* (190_EN:AC,79)
191. Mais il a poussé un gémissement drôle, et même sinistre, **on peut le dire**. (191_FR:AC,24)
*Only, then I heard a funny sort of groan; it made my blood run cold, **as they say.*** (191_EN:AC,80)
192. **On peut dire que** le docteur est responsable. (192_FR:AC,25)
People could say the doctor was to blame. (192_EN:AC,81)
193. Mais Cottard dit, au milieu de ses larmes, qu’il ne recommencerait pas, que c’était seulement un moment d’affolement et qu’il désirait seulement **qu’on lui laissât la paix**. (193_FR:AC,25)
*Cottard assured him tearfully that there wasn’t the least risk of that; he’d had a sort of crazy fit, but it had passed and all he wanted now was **to be left in peace.*** (193_EN:AC,81)
194. **On lui avait parlé** en effet **de** cette histoire, mais il ne prêtait pas beaucoup d’attention aux bruits du quartier. (194_FR:AC,25)
*True **he’d heard some talk about** rats, but he never paid much attention to gossip like that.* (194_EN:AC,81)
195. Jean Tarrou, **qu’on a déjà rencontré** au début de ce récit, s’était fixé à Oran quelques semaines plus tôt et habitait, depuis ce temps, un grand hôtel du centre. (195_FR:AC,28)
*Jean Tarrou, **whose acquaintance we have already made,** at the beginning of this*

- narrative, had come to Oran some weeks before and was staying in a big hotel in the centre of the town. (195_EN:AC,83)*
196. **On le rencontra** dans tous les endroits publics. (196_FR:AC,28)
He was often to be seen in public (...) (196_EN:AC,83)
197. En fait, la seule **habitude qu'on lui connût** était la fréquentation assidue des danseurs et des musiciens espagnols, assez nombreux dans notre ville. (197_FR:AC,29)
In fact, the only habit he was known to have was that of cultivating the society of the Spanish dancers and musicians who abound in our town. (197_EN:AC,83)
198. A première vue, **on pourrait croire** que Tarrou s'est ingénié à considérer les choses et les être par le gros bout de la lorgnette. (198_FR:AC,29)
(...) and at first sight we might almost imagine that Tarrou had a habit of observing events and people through the wrong end of a telescope. (198_EN:AC,83)
199. **On peut déplorer** sans doute ce parti pris et y soupçonner la sécheresse du coeur. (199_FR:AC,29)
Obviously we may deplore this curious kink in his character and suspect in him a lack of proper feeling. (199_EN:AC,83)
200. **On y trouve** la description détaillée des deux lions de bronze qui ornent la mairie (...) (200_FR:AC,29)
We find in them a minute description of the two bronze lions adorning the Town Hall (...) (200_EN:AC,84)