Crime Prevention Research: How Can It Be Shared Across Language Barriers?

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Abstract

This is the first of two papers addressing language barriers in criminological discourse. The present paper rehearses arguments for comparative criminological research and identifies the administrative processes of journals leading to acceptance or rejection role of language as a contributory factor acting against the interests of those lacking fluency in a journal's specified language of submission. Revisions of the common editorial practices of peer-reviewed journals are suggested. The potential contribution of machine translation is discussed.

Keywords

Comparative criminology, crime victimisation, machine translation, back translation, criminological linguistics

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The term 'othering' is a fashionable but nonetheless useful term denoting the process whereby individuals or groups are explicitly or implicitly thought of and dealt with as falling outside a favoured in-group. The term is used most frequently where the in-group is characterised by gender, race, sexual orientation or political affiliation. The process can be malicious or unthinking. This paper contends that social science scholars fluent in languages other than those of most of the published literature are 'othered' by the editorial procedures of peer reviewed journals. The paper sets out to identify simple means whereby cross-language enhancement of the published literature could be achieved. The focus and examples come from the literature on

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crime prevention and community safety, designated ‘crime science’ in the interests of brevity. This is not to suggest that the approach advocated is needed more in the study of crime than is the case for other subject areas, simply that this is where the experience of the authors lies.

Language Communities as Enclaves

Linguistic othering takes many forms. Action against speakers of unfavoured languages can extend from execution,[2] expulsion from a country (Crosby 2017), specifying permitted languages of instruction, to minor demotivating expressions of language preference.[3] Shell (2001) documents how such linguistic discrimination provides a justification for conflict. Even dialect or pronunciation of particular words can serve to ‘other’ people by revealing social class (see for example Ross 1954). The tactic of social exclusion by choice of dialect words is known as a shibboleth.[4] In the biblical Book of Judges Chapter 12, a battle between two semitic tribes ended with the defeated army retreating across the River Jordan. They were waylaid by the victors and asked to say the word *shibboleth*. The dialect of the defeated tribe had no *sh* sound, so they pronounced the word with an *s,* were thereby unmasked and slaughtered.

Immigrant experiences can be analysed linguistically (see for example Bell (1995), Dancyger (2010), Giguere, Labonde and Lou (2010)). Corradi (2017) defines linguistic colonialism as the process whereby a colonial power imposes its habits of thought and culture on a colony, for example by specifying the language of instruction in schools and the language to be used in courts of law or places of worship. She coins an arresting metaphor, that every language has a corresponding library, with the books arranged in a unique classification system based on culturally distinctive perceived relationships between concepts. The notion of different libraries for different languages captures the mechanism of human socialisation by exposure to different repositories of experience. We will return to the complexities of varied language-cognition links as barriers to cross-language comprehension. For the moment we simply point to one example of the ‘different libraries’ metaphor in the study of crime. Entering the phrases ‘criminal linguistics’ or ‘criminological linguistics’ as a search term, Google asks whether we mean ‘forensic linguistics’. Searching descriptions of university courses in forensic linguistics makes it clear that such courses are exclusively concerned with the uses of linguistics in criminal justice settings. So, linguistics has a shelf in the criminal justice ‘library’ but not in the crime science ‘library’.

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[2] https://www.gotquestions.org/shibboleth.html

[3] One of the writers, aged ten, was withdrawn by his school head from a public speaking event because, she explained, she did not like his regional accent. The incident occurred sixty-eight years ago but remains fresh in the memory.

[4] http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~kemmer/Words/shibboleth

'Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced'.[5] Because we have lived with linguistic othering in the literature of crime for so long, we seem inured to its malign consequences.

In this paper, the writers are concerned with facilitation of the attempt to communicate research and theory in crime science across language barriers. It may be instanced by the story of the most substantial effort to craft a world language. Esperanto[6] was the brainchild of ophthalmologist and humanitarian Dr. L.L.Zamenhof, a Jew brought up in the Russian Empire of the nineteenth century, a cultural setting characterised by fierce ethnic and religious conflict. Zamenhof's belief that a common language could transcend ethnic and religious rivalries is reflected in the semantic roots of the word Esperanto in words for hope (for example in the French 'espoir' and Italian 'speranza'). After the bloodbath of the First World War, there was an attempt (vetoed by France) to make Esperanto the official language of the League of Nations. The rise of fascism led to the vilification of Esperanto as a manifestation of the claimed Jewish effort at world domination, a sentiment to be found in Mein Kampf.

Observers cannot long remain unaware of the presence of ethnic and religious enclaves in cities with which they are familiar, and the tensions which often attend that reality. There is a very extensive literature on what has come to be known as Immigrant Enclave Theory, which teases out the economic, religious and familial dynamics whereby enclaves come to exist and endure (see for example Pamuk 2004; Kandylis et al. 2012).

Language is central to the processes identified by Immigrant Enclave Theory as creating and sustaining enclaves. Hostility between contiguous immigrant enclaves, and between such enclaves and the host community have been manifest, via differences in religious faith, by intolerance of specific crime types (for instance prostitution, see Hubbard 1998). Police engagement is greatly complicated by language-constrained interaction. Practical obstacles to translation facilities for crime witnesses and victims who are not fluent in English are substantial[7] and little studied.

Enclaves may be thought of as social arrangements whereby the patterns of contact between individuals are shaped by a shared attribute or attributes. Such attributes can be physical propinquity (making for spatial enclaves), political affiliation, profession or religion. It perhaps takes an effort of imagination to recognise both shared language and social science disciplines as virtual enclaves. It is becoming less difficult as virtual enclaves emerge based on selective exposure to news

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[5] The origin if this remark is usually attributed to James Baldwin, but is disputed.

[6] https://owlcation.com/humanities/The-Wonderful-Horrible-History-of-Esperanto-the-Universal-Language

[7] DIRECTIVE 2010/64/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 October 2010 on the right to interpretation and translation in criminal proceedings.

sources and social media platforms threaten to disrupt democratic processes (see Westerwick et al. 2020).

Enclave-defining attributes can be nested. Thus, for example, crime scientists, having been trained in discipline silos called university departments, engage primarily with other crime scientists, especially with those who share their language. This is reflected in the literature of the discipline, its patterns of collaboration and citation.

Cross-cultural crime science is largely synonymous with cross-language crime science. That sub-discipline is poorly developed (see Hayward and Ilan 2018). Leavitt (1990) bewails the stunted development of cross-cultural research on crime issues *'While the advantages and need for cross-cultural analysis have been extolled since the writings of Emile Durkheim, the appearance and recognition of this comparative approach has been slow in coming'* (p5).

An important discussion about internationalisation of academic discourse has been recently undertaken in the *European Journal on Criminal Policy and Research.* Comprising *an* article and a number of commentaries, it shows quite how Anglocentric and, in particular, US/UK-centric, are academic publications in criminology (Faraldo-Cabana and Lamela, 2021). This situation will lead, arguably has already led, to crime science becoming fragmented along lines of both language and substance. The separation according to language is self-evident. Separation according to substance occurs when topics become fashionable in journals with a particular language of submission. The discipline is made more segmented by journals implying a national target audience (*British Journal of Criminology; Australian and New Zealand Journal of Criminology*) rather than a topic of global relevance (*Policing; Crime Prevention and Community Safety*). Just as the definition of a species is of individuals capable of breeding to produce offspring that are themselves fertile, so the definition of a properly cross-language crime science is its capacity to yield novel analyses and insights, (their fertile offspring, to strain the species metaphor). Critics will argue that societies' disparate legal and penal histories render a cross-language rapprochement of crime science unrealistic. On the contrary, it is the pattern of similarities *and contrasts* in understanding crime and its control which make the enterprise worthwhile. An instance of the advantages of a cross-language approach may be found in the understanding of the 'global' crime drop of recent decades. Perhaps the most remarkable fact about crime trends in the last thirty years is that its volume (with the exception of fraud and online crime) has fallen dramatically and in lockstep across many of the countries with data adequate to test the trend. The problem is that almost all these countries are Anglophone or in Western Europe, where fluency in English is the rule rather than the exception. Until the crime trend inflection point was found in all countries to be around 1995, US scholars sought causes exclusively in US data. Somewhat tardily, it was realised that the same trend appeared elsewhere. The explanations posited by US scholars were discarded as the crime drop appeared in countries with contrasting criminal justice

systems (see Tonry, 2014, Ignatans and Matthews, 2017), meaning that whatever was causing the drop had nothing to do with distinctive features of US criminal justice. Something important happened in the mid-1990s which led to a massive reduction in crime across many countries. If we were sure about what was the active ingredient in the change process, that would represent a major potential advance in crime control. If only we had published data and analysis, however imperfect, from scholars in many other countries and working in different languages, the puzzle of the crime drop could probably have been solved.

As to what can be done to reverse or limit current Anglophone primacy in the crime science literature, simple suggestions are made in what follows. Looking to the longer term, we point to increasingly sophisticated machine translation software that should be brought to bear on the problem of linguistic enclaves within social science. The vision would be that real time machine translation could realise the capacity for human communication unimpeded by language diversity. How challenging this vision is will be made clear below in a discussion of the language-cognition nexus. Briefly to anticipate the challenges, we acknowledge movements in the desired direction. For example, the organisation academia.com offers translated downloads of requested papers. Readers can use Google Translate to convert papers from languages other than their own, once they become aware of the relevance to their work. There remain both demand and supply side obstacles to the linguistic promised land. The demand side issue concerns the ease with which scholars become aware of work published in languages other than their own. The supply side issue is twofold; first how to get work published in peer-reviewed journals when the language in which those journals appears is predominantly English. The second is how to ensure that work as translated is cognitively true to author intentions. The supply side obstacles logically precede demand side issues. One can at least envisage how editorial processes can engage with the supply side. We outline current editorial processes to provide a baseline against which our modest proposals for change can be considered.

Typical Current Editorial Process

This paper suggests possible revisions in the editorial process of scholarly journals on crime science which may go some way to reduce barriers to the publication of work by scholars whose first language is not English.

Among the writers of this paper, only one has English as his first language. He realised very early in his university career that this accident of birth was the linguistic equivalent of winning the lottery. English is becoming the lingua franca of science discourse. This is somewhat mitigated in the physical and biological sciences by the centrality of mathematical exposition of ideas. It is not so mitigated in the social sciences, the set of disciplines in which, it is argued, comprehension of contending and contrasting ideologies, mindsets and methodologies is particularly valuable.

The judgements which underpin this paper are, in summary:

1. That the processes whereby social science research, including research in crime science, comes to be published in or rejected by scholarly journals, privileges submissions in certain languages, notably English.
2. When the bulk of a discipline's literature appears in a few languages, the exchange of data, conclusions and insights comes to be severely limited, tending towards convergence on particular research topics, methods and theory. This occasions a corresponding cross-language divergence. This means that crime prevention policies may be based on data from countries with practices which make the borrowed data irrelevant.
3. Some progress can be made by revision of the machinery of publication in peer-reviewed journals.
4. Advances in machine translation can be brought to bear, which make the problems more tractable.

The initial motivation to write this paper came from personal experience as reviewers of papers submitted to this and other crime science journals. In short, we felt the process leading to publication disadvantaged scholars writing in languages other than their own. The typical process leading to publication or rejection is as follows.

A paper is submitted by its author(s) to the editor or editorial board of the journal in which publication is sought. The paper has to be submitted in a language or languages specified by the journal. The editor sends the submitted paper to reviewers, selected on the basis of their expertise in the topic addressed in the submitted paper. This expertise is reflected in the published work of the reviewer. Insofar as the editorial process favours those fluent in the language of submission, this will determine the composition of the panel of reviewers, leading to reviewers being unrepresentative of those with the necessary expertise. Typically, each submitted paper is sent to two of the journal's panel of reviewers. In the writers' experience, the (unpaid) reviewers carry out their task diligently and strive to make constructive suggestions even when reviewing papers which they recommend that the journal rejects.

The unease of the present writers is of two types. First, how is one to separate judgements of research quality from fluency in the language of submission? In many journals, the format in which reviews are required comprises two free text fields. One is to be read by the authors of the submitted paper. The other free text field is for confidential comments from the reviewer for the journal editor. In addition to the free text fields, there are a number of tick box responses required from the reviewer. One asks for a yes/no response to a question about the quality of the content of the reviewed paper. Another is about the comprehensibility of the submitted paper's language. This poses problems of both logic and process. In logic, how can a meaningful judgement of content be made if the language makes the content verge on the incomprehensible? As to process, a submission judged incomprehensible is likely to be rejected on the basis of language alone, whatever treasures the

substance would reveal. Rejection of valuable research on the basis of poor language skills damages the careers of academics whose success is measured in part by their publication record. It damages the discipline itself by rendering its literature linguistically insular. It also precludes the learning afforded to authors by reviews of their work when there is an issue of language comprehension. The present writers also see it as part of their responsibility to draw the attention of writers of submitted papers to prior work related to the submitted paper. This represents another factor leading to linguistic insularity. If the reviewers are unaware of relevant research in languages other than that of submission, the literature of crime science necessarily becomes less linguistically diverse.

There are more subtle interactions between content and language in the review process. Another of the common tick box judgements that reviewers are invited to make concerns a submission's 'importance' or 'likely media interest'. Topics of niche interest in one country or epoch may be of general interest in another. The reviewer is not well placed to know this. The review of policing in pandemics, Laufs and Waseem (2020) shows the overwhelming preponderance of papers on the topic which were published in English. One wonders how many valuable studies of the policing of pandemics and national epidemics in non-Anglophone countries have failed to surmount obstacles to publication by dint of their perceived 'lack of interest'. What is a niche topic is a judgement rather than a fact, and differences in this judgement will result in a journal whose content reflects the interests and priorities of reviewers rather than authors. A journal with an editorial base in the UK, using primarily UK based reviewers, will inevitably end up with content matching current UK interests.

A final unheeded malign feature of the submission process is the relevance of journal impact factors, based on citation statistics. Scholars fluent in the modal language of submission (English) will read and cite papers published in English, thus boosting the impact factor of English language journals, and boosting their impact factor scores, so the most Anglocentric journals become the most prestigious.

Decolonisation

As noted above, the route whereby this paper came to be written was via personal experience as reviewers of papers submitted to peer-reviewed journals by scholars who are not fluent in English. The machinery of publication just felt unfair, and this feeling has increased in the course of writing this paper. In the next section, some suggested remedial changes to the editorial processes of journals are set out. They have no theoretical underpinning. However, it should perhaps be noted that the paper could have been framed in terms of the concept of decolonisation. This is the phenomenon whereby colonised entities proceed towards self-determination. The complexities of the process are usually thought of in terms of (for example) residual land rights of settlers from the colonial power after self-determination has been achieved. The legacy represented by those with such residual rights has occasioned much conflict in Southern Africa and elsewhere. Arguments advanced in this paper

could easily be framed in terms of decolonisation. Land rights and publication opportunities may both be thought of as vestiges of imperial power relations. In his brilliantly-titled book 'Decolonising the Mind' Thiongo puts his finger on the role of language in keeping the mind colonised. He discerns a process of what he terms 'linguistic encirclement'. The image of social science publication outlets 'circling the wagons' against linguistic intruders is arresting. The tone of academic discussions of decolonisation is too often toxic (see Norrie 2022). He writes "*we are seeing the spread of a phenomena known as 'decolonisation'. This is something that has no concrete definition and seeks to rewrite academic curricula as well as reorder the university as an institution, in the name of making them more 'inclusive'. Is this a threat to academic freedom? The answer is 'yes', if it entails pressure on academics by radical activists to conform, overriding their independence in setting their reading lists and writing their lectures*"(p1).

The problem is that decontextualised independence is foolishness. The suggestions made below are future oriented. The aspiration is to achieve a linguistically level playing field.

Modest Proposals

Readers familiar with the work of Jonathan Swift will be aware of the scheme which he set out as a 'Modest Proposal'. Addressing the problems of child abuse and widespread starvation in Ireland, he proposed that children be raised as food animals, slaughtered before adolescence. This would reduce the population, increase the quality of care in childrearing because children would be a source of income when slaughtered, and increase the supply of food nationally. By contrast with Swift's satire, the modest proposals made here seem to the present writers uncontentious, and no children would be harmed by their adoption.

As noted earlier, the problem is initially one of supply rather than demand. The aim is a crime science literature of global relevance and commensurate with presenting and anticipated problems. Maximising the use of such a literature comes later. 'Build it and they will come'. Once an article is published and available in digital form, it can be converted to a language of the consumer's choice.

Suggestion 1.

Authors should be encouraged not to submit their work to journals whose titles imply only national relevance, e.g. the *British Journal of Criminology* can too readily be thought of as the *Journal of British Criminology*. Readers should be aware of the bias towards parochialism implicit in such titles. Open access journals should be preferred if they are not accompanied with paywalls which favour richer nations and institutions.

Suggestion 2.

Journal prestige, and hence attractiveness to intending authors, is currently measured by citations of papers appearing in the journal. We propose that impact

measures should be dispensed with or weighted according to the proportion of citations by authors from countries other than that of a paper's corresponding author. Let's call this an anti-parochial weighting. In this way, both numbers of citations and the international spread of citations would contribute to assessments of a journal's prestige.

Suggestion 3.

Journal editors should be encouraged to recruit editorial board members and panels of reviewers from a wider range of countries and language traditions.

Suggestion 4.

This is the most ambitious of the suggestions made here. Authors recognising that they are not entirely proficient in a journal's required language of submission should submit their paper in the language of submission *and* in their preferred language. Using machine translation to convert the submission language version into the preferred language would enable authorial revision of the submitted language version until it reflects the meaning as captured in the preferred language version. Reviewers should have access to both submitted language and preferred language versions so that they can suggest minor changes which remain true to the intention of the preferred language version while refining the style.

The reasoning behind suggestion 4 differs from that behind the first three and should perhaps be described more fully here. It relates back to the language-cognition nexus mentioned earlier and developed later in the paper.

The approach to the notion that distinctions made in language influence the way the world is structured cognitively that the present writers find most helpful in practical issues of scholarly publication is known as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. In Sapir's words *"Human beings do not live in the objective world alone, nor alone in the world of social activity as ordinarily understood, but are very much at the mercy of the particular language which has become the medium of expression for their society. It is quite an illusion to imagine that one adjusts to reality essentially without the use of language and that language is merely an incidental means of solving specific problems of communication or reflection. …. 'the real world' is to a large extent unconsciously built up on the language habits of the group…We see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation."* (Sapir, 1929, p207).

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis remains contentious. This is largely because the techniques deployed to test it do so with varying degrees of success. The writers align themselves with Hussein's (2012) view *"The fact that language plays a role in shaping our thoughts, in modifying our perception and in creating reality is irrefutable"* (p645). We believe that a strong version of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis will eventually be confirmed by ingenious research designs (and preferably and probably by research teams from a range of linguistic traditions). Whatever its

current academic status, colonial powers, and the writers of dystopias (see Lynskey 2019) have long behaved as though the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis were true, for example by specifying permitted languages of instruction in schools. Writers of dystopias place heavy emphasis on the role of language in ensuring cultural dominance. George Orwell's novel 1984 (Orwell 1949) features Newspeak as one of its weapons in ensuring conformity. More subtly, recent political leaders have used linguistic 'dog whistles' or 'buzzwords' such as 'alternative facts', 'fake news' and 'media witch hunt' to establish an emotive position and head off more nuanced consideration of complex issues (see Rodden 2020). These phenomena are easily framed in the same terms as Sapir and Whorf used for their studies of native American languages.

It was claimed earlier that the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis underpins suggestion 4 for revision of the submission and review process employed by peer-reviewed scholarly journals. The process of toggling between submitted language and preferred language versions of a paper should end up with a version in the submitted language which is true to authors' meaning as expressed in the preferred language version.

Earlier in the paper, reference was made to the possibility that language as used in an academic discipline (such as crime science) has already departed so far from everyday communication that competence in standard English does not enable full comprehension of the nuances in crime science articles written in English. The latter will contain terms of art (to put it politely), or jargon (to put it less politely), i.e. words or phrases properly understood only within a professional context. For example, 'problem-oriented policing' (POP) is well understood by anglophone crime scientists to refer to a policing approach, pioneered by Herman Goldstein and others, which seeks to identify and address factors underpinning recurring calls for service received by the police. For an English speaker, the use of the phrase problem-oriented policing (its abbreviation POP even more so) will yield a host of associated ideas and perspectives denied to speakers of other languages. In a way, this is accounted for when in countries with large minority populations individual police officers who may be able to freely interact in some minority languages are often strategically placed with community policing in mind. Yet, for most part the polices official public-facing correspondence and most trust-building initiatives will be done in countries' official language, further alienating minority groups and diminishing the impact of these attempts to bring the public and the police closer. Schaap (2018) examined such mechanisms and their relative successes in England and Wales, Netherlands and Denmark, discussing the necessity to understand the context and history of the relationship between the public and the police before successes of such initiatives can be judged. Unquestionably, the relationships between the police and minority communities will often be fragile to begin with, and accidental word associations and use of terms that are sensitive to a group of people can undermine the rapport even further.

The adoption of suggestion 4 would identify points at which the 'shorthand' of terms

of art become evident and helps to ensure that a paper's writer and eventual reader have a common sense of what is being communicated, with terms of art being explained.

To illustrate the problem, ten terms with particular meanings within the community safety literature were chosen and translated from English to Russian and back again using Google Translate. The issue is whether terms of art in English survive the process with their meanings recognizable. The results of the exercise are moderately reassuring, and they identify the terms which adoption of suggestion 4 would highlight as needing special attention. Incidentally the writers of this paper who are native Russian speakers have no idea how 'Problem Oriented Policing' ends up as 'Polish problem'.

Term of Art	*In Translation*
Problem Oriented Policing	Polish problem
Focused Deterrence	Focused Deterrence
Community Sentences	Public proposals
Custodial Sentences	Special sentence
Predictive Patrolling	Forecasting Patrolling
Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design	Crime prevention through environmental design
Victimisation Survey	Victimisation Examination
Neighbourhood Watch	Neighbouring Watch
Near Repeat Victimisation	Almost repeated victimization
Anti-Social Behaviour	Anti-Social Behaviour

The process illustrated above is known as back translation (see for example its use by Taber 2018 in a brilliant and amusing paper on technical writing in chemistry). An Appendix takes the abstract of a paper published in this journal and puts it through the same to-and-from process to get an idea of how adoption of Suggestion 4 might work in practice. Full development of the implications is beyond the scope of a single article. For example, how would the suggested approach help someone searching for literature on a particular topic? How could search terms reliably map onto topic literatures in a range of languages?

Discussion and Conclusions

There are two fundamental issues in the aspiration for a global evidence-based crime science. The first concerns how to organize the processes of publication to maximise comprehensibility and faithfulness to author intentions of published

research across language communities. This was the intended purpose of the present paper. The follow-on paper addresses the second purpose. Put colloquially, the first paper concerns ways to understand each other. The second asks the question ‘What shall we talk about?’

This paper makes four suggestions about revisions in journal processes which may help scholars not fluent in a journal’s specified language of submission. The first three suggestions are relatively cosmetic. The fourth is more radical and has attractions beyond those mentioned to this point. It will be recalled that the fourth suggestion involves a process, (using Google Translate or a similar tool) of back translation from and to the author’s preferred language via the language of submission. The core purpose of this process is to ensure that the version in the language of submission is true to the author’s meaning, and clear in meaning to reviewers. The incidental advantages are that jargon and idioms are avoided or explained. This may be of particular relevance for statistically sophisticated authors who eschew explaining what they are doing and why. For example, back translation to English from Russian of the term ‘hierarchical multilevel modelling’ would find ‘hierarchical layering modeling.’ Our English author, keen to ensure comprehension by Russian colleagues, would hopefully feel obliged to explain exactly what the technique entails. By doing so, less statistically sophisticated English readers would also benefit.

Another incidental benefit of the proposed Suggestion 4 is that it can be used whatever a journal’s language and whatever the preferred language of the author. Finally, it helps people adept in neither the submission language nor the author’s preferred language. The absence of idioms and jargon from the published paper will mean that an interested third language speaker will experience a clearer and simpler product. That is a hypothesis at present but a plausible one, and one whose test is straightforward, given time and opportunity.

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Appendix

The text below shows an abstract of a paper published in this journal by two of the present writers. It shows both the text as it originally appeared and (italicized) the same text having been translated to and from Russian. It is claimed here that the basic meaning of the text is retained, so the process made in suggestion 4 of the text is viable, bit also that the suggested process of toggling between author preferred language and language of submission could with minor changes yield a more nuanced version of the original.

This exploratory paper delves into differences and similarities in the rated seriousness of offences suffered by victims of different national origins. ***This research paper examines differences and similarities in assessing the severity of crimes committed by victims of different national backgrounds.*** The issue is important because a mismatch between police and victim assessments of seriousness is likely to fuel discord. ***This issue is important because the discrepancy between assessments of the seriousness of the actions of the police and the victims can lead to controversy.***

It was found that first-generation immigrants did not differ in their rating of the seriousness of offences against the person from either the indigenous population or according to region of birth. ***It was revealed that immigrants in the first generation did not differ in assessing the severity of offenses against a person either from the indigenous population or by region of birth.*** However, those of Asian origin rated vehicle and property crime they had suffered as more serious than did other groups ***However, people of Asian descent rated the crimes they suffered, like vehicles and property, as more serious than other groups.*** The anticipated higher seriousness rating of offences reported to the police was observed for all groups. ***The expected higher severity rating of offenses reported to the police was observed for all groups.*** People of Asian origin reported to the police a smaller proportion of offences they rated trivial than did people in other groups. ***People of Asian descent reported to the police a lower proportion of offenses they considered minor than members of other groups.***

Analysis of seriousness judgements in victimization surveys represents a much-underused resource for understanding the nexus between public perceptions and criminal justice responses. ***Analysis of judgments of severity in victimization surveys is a grossly underutilized resource for understanding the***

relationship between public opinion and criminal justice response.