

## **The Development of Translation Studies as a Discipline – From linguistics to cognition**

### **Introduction**

We are reading repeatedly in many articles that Translation Studies (TS), i.e. research regarding the transference of texts into another language, were not yet a fully fledged discipline of its own. However, this opinion gets weaker the more publications are coming out in this area. No longer are studies on translation and interpreting only an appendix of language learning, rather they have grown into a special discipline. This is particularly true, if we don't define a discipline by the application of only one method of research, a so-called research paradigm. In TS a great variety of approaches and methods is visible, and they all are valid as they contribute to a better understanding of the complex problematic linked to translation.

Whereas no unique research paradigm is yet given for TS, the subject of the studies is clear: translating written texts or interpreting spoken messages. But here, again, there is a variety of research objects: translation as a product (the finished translation to be compared with the source text), translation as a process (analyzing strategies of translation), and translation in its function (questioning the translational environment). TS as a field of scholarly activities has already been defined by Holmes (1988).

The methodology applied is also very varied. In applied TS the focus is on translator training, and the discussion concerns translational tools, pedagogical means and translation criticism. More theoretically oriented approaches in TS apply descriptive analysis in order to find out translation universals, such as explicitation, or the interlinguistic relationship between languages. Lexicology and corpus studies fall into this field. Empirical studies also look at the influences of translation in the target language with its literary system, as well as on the ideological implications of the translators' work. And process-oriented studies apply introspection to question the thinking of the translator as a person and try to analyze cognitive strategies. There is more than one definition of the concept of translation.

### **Metaphors of translation**

A whole variety of metaphors have been created to give a hint of what "translation" is:

- *Translatio* – (from Latin) something is carried by boat from one shore to the other where it arrives in a strange environment
- *Navigation* – it must be clear, where the journey is going, who will be the receivers of the message
- *Transfer* – translation is an interlingual transaction, the information content of a text shall be transported unaltered
- *Language contact* – contrastive translation procedures lead from one language to another one, as two languages are correlated in translation
- *New clothes* – ideas receive new clothes when translated
- *Automatism* – the text is split into sentences, saved in the Translation Memory and after alignment is automatically rearranged for a target text
- *Dragoman* – interpreting is a continuation of communication with other linguistic means
- *Succession* – the translator has to put on the author's shoes and follow him everywhere, shadowing like a slave
- *Mimesis* – the target of translating is a congenial image of the original text

- *Empathy* – this requires improvisation, invention, openness, initiative, creativity
- *Growth* – in the intensive work on the text, the translator comes to an ever deeper understanding of the original and hence to ever better formulations
- *Sportive achievement* – the translator's effort to ever better and higher individual achievements requests admiration, but in the end it remains enigmatic
- *Top of an iceberg* – in translation you have to find out what is in the depth, in between the lines of text
- *Interpretation* – the translation is the result of an individual interpretation by the translating person
- *Failed authorship* – translators are writers who have nothing to say by themselves, the congenial plagiarists
- *Creative writing* – in translation something new is created
- *Rupture* – translation breaks up the old structure to say something anew
- *Bridging* – translating creates a link between different worlds. One should know how to build such a bridge
- *Expert activity* – the factors of translation, such as sender, translator and recipient, have to be observed
- *Medicine* – translations also have effects. Translation is a responsible service for mankind
- *Manipulation* – Translators are always traitors because they modify something in the texts
- *Power relationship* – translation is a social instrument of power wanting to dominate meaning
- *Cannibalism* – the subjective opinion of the translator is prevalent. Deconstructing the original text, he creates something new proper to himself
- *Ethical action* – translators should enhance the critical potential of any text in their translation. Then translation becomes an anti-colonial act
- *Translation* – is itself a metaphor. Strange identities are constructed by translation.

All these metaphors contain an aspect of the complex affair of translation, and many of them reflect in specific translation theories.

### **Historical epochs of translation**

In talking on this topic we must first determine what we mean with „translation theories“. A theory is a model for describing an activity or an object in order to understand better its real substance or structure. A theory of translation may be a reflection on one's practice of translating, or it may be a model to direct the translation procedure for didactic purposes or in a professional situation. Several theories have been developed (Stolze 2008), however sometimes the same things were repeated with different terminology.

The German word *dolmetschen* (interpreting) originates as *talami* in the second millennium before Christ, in a Western Asiatic language, then came to Northern Turkish as *tilmac'* with the meaning of a “mediator between parties who speak different languages”. Through an ancient Hungarian language the word came into German as *tolmetsche* in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Still at the time of Martin Luther, in 1530, the word's meaning is “written translation”, and only today *dolmetschen* is interpreting, in the form of conference interpreting and liaison interpreting.

The earliest translations reach back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium B.C. with old Babylonian inscriptions of religious content. The translation of literature has been for centuries the most important group of texts translated (Delisle/Woodsworth 1995). The political and social significance of translators is shown in the Relief of an Interpreter from an Egyptian grave (Rijksmuseum of Outheden, Leiden/Netherlands). It shows the social status of the interpreter in form of two persons, one listening to the message and the other talking to the foreigners.

Those strangers were not accepted as equal to the Egyptians, so they are very small. And even the interpreter who understands their strange language and renders the service is of small size, in reaction to the noble who gives an order.

For centuries the interpreters and translators were viewed with suspicion, they were not allowed to act in their own discretion, they should never change a piece in a text. It is only today that we see the translators' work as an important part within the framework of international communication, rather than as a minor, suspect service. And it needs high qualification. So in the course of time also an awareness of the problem of translation has developed.

The first historically tangible époque of translation is the Greek-Roman antiquity. But the ancient practice of translation was totally different from the modern one. The talk is of Latin translations from Greek classic works, beginning in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C. with the Latin translation of Homer's *Odyssey*. The purpose was to make Latin a language capable for literature by means of obtaining the Greek literary forms through translation. The translators transformed and enlarged the originals and really competed with them.

In classical times translators began to reflect on their work. Cicero established the rule to translate *non ut interpretes sed ut orator*, that means you should not repeat the exact order of the words literally but rather speak effectively for your audience. He developed rules, for example: when a correspondent word was lacking they created a neologism, they overtook the Greek compounds. Greek names of gods were replaced by Latin ones. Sometimes the Greek foreign lexeme was integrated into the Latin language, and sometimes they used several Latin words to paraphrase one Greek word. All this enriched the Latin language.

A new idea on translation came through the Christian époque when the bible was translated into Latin by Hieronymus in the 4<sup>th</sup> century. He focused on the authority of texts saying that in the Holy Scriptures even the word order is a mystery and shall not be changed in any way. But in all other texts he used – like Cicero – to translate one sense by another sense. The meticulous work of bible translators to imitate the original text then also created the linguistic instruments for precise translations of other worldly scripture. They found translation procedures to be executed for centuries. The ancient translator was faced by similar translation problems as the modern translator: there are lexical lacunae, semantic ambiguities, divergent language systems, untranslatable idiomatic terms, metaphors, metric verses, text parts difficult to understand, and so on.

### **True or free translation**

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century important impulses for translation came from Martin Luther in his German translation of the bible. In his thesis on translation "Sendbrief vom Dolmetschen" (1530) he chooses the method of the *free translation* in order to confer the message in a powerful way, even for the holy text. He creates the term *verdeutschen* (adapting), that means to speak German so that people may understand. Such a translation is of course "free", it may transform the original at a certain point, like Cicero had done. On the other hand there are "true" translations formally oriented at the original's word structure, and this is then *verfremdend* (foreignizing), it makes the text "strange" for the target reader.

This tension between the two methods of "free translation" and "true translation" immediately created the need for clear rules of translation. For centuries the struggle between these two methods characterized the theoretical debate. Theory was deducted from practice as its foundation and motivation. The comments on translations document the translator's difficulties, but that is not yet a real translation theory. Numerous examples keep repeating the old alternative of true or free translation, and in language courses in school till today the students are taught to translate "as literally as possible and as free as necessary" (Newmark 1988). But this is a circle.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the theoretical discussion got new impetus. Until that time only the translation of the Holy Scriptures and of classic literature had been considered a difficult work worth a theoretical consideration. The simple translations of correspondence or of technical and commercial texts in international communication were not subject of theoretical reflection. The rule was always to make audible the author's voice, that is to follow the ideal of a philologically "true translation". The German romanticism had formulated a certain understanding of the "spirit of a language": A classic text, a piece of art, is the external appearance of a nation's spirit. A word is the sign of a concept, and in all languages the concepts are different. Then indeed translation is not really possible, it remains a void attempt. You could only "move the reader towards the author", what makes translations somewhat a strange experience.

### **Translation impossible**

The idea of a language being the expression of a nation's spirit is later taken up by Whorf and Sapir who studied Indian languages (Whorf 1963), and by Weisgerber who wrote about the "strength of the German language". Comparisons between different languages focus on the so-called "characteristic" words which are untranslatable, for example *gemütlich*, *witzig*, *Innerlichkeit*, *Weltschmerz*, *Gestalt*; *esprit*, *génie*, *savoir vivre*, *charme*; *gentleman*, *fairness* and others. Or they mention word fields in which a word has different meanings in different languages, see for instance color scales or school marks.

Thinking and speaking is seen identical, and thus translation of a language is not possible, since you cannot transfer the original meaning into another world of thinking. This conception was particularly forced by the poet Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) who in his reflection on translations looked at the mysterious, the untranslatable parts in a text. He says that a piece of art is totally independent from the reception: "No poem is aimed for the reader, no picture is for the viewer, no symphony is for the audience." There is only the author's volition to express. So the form is more important than the content, and Benjamin calls for translations that imitate the form of the original. But that is an utopia.

Interestingly enough, this focusing on the form is later taken up in a postmodern theory of literary translation, i. e. deconstruction, initiated by Jacques Derrida (2007) and the American Paul De Man. They say that every reading of a text gives a new, a different understanding. The meaning of words is floating, is "undecidable", and therefore you can never fix a "real" meaning of a text. There cannot be a model translation. In traditional literary analysis the sense of texts was often deduced from the supposed "author's intention". Now this intention or clear understanding is "deconstructed" with reference to certain words. The translator concentrates on single words that may indeed be understood in a different way by every reader and thus change the meaning of the text.

For a theory of translation this is rather problematic. The scholars focus of the differences between the languages and the untranslatable remainder in translations. On the other hand, translations have ever been accomplished and cannot be totally impossible.

### **Language as a means of communication**

There is a different approach to the question of translation when you see the language not as the expression of one's spirit but as a means of communication. This conception was initiated in the time of Rationalism where the reason of man was taken as the source of knowledge. The way of reasoning is the same in all people, and the different languages serve to express their thoughts.

Language is a universal instrument of the reason, and therefore it is also seen as a reasonable structure. In mediaeval times Latin had been given the status of a universal language, first in the ecclesiastic circles, then among scholars and scientists. The philosopher Descartes worked on the project of a synthetic world language.

The logical analysis of language as a semiotic system brought up modern linguistics in our century. As a systematic description of languages it gains its subject only indirectly, as an abstract from the empirical utterances. Ferdinand de Saussure's *Cours de linguistique générale* (1916) was very important in this context. He distinguished two levels of analysis: the subject of linguistics is the language system (*langue*) as an inventory of words and grammatical rules for their interconnection, and it may vary from the real speech, the *parole*. Words are signs in relationship to objects in the real world. They have a significant form, a *signifiant/signifier* – and a content, a meaning, a *signifié/referent*. The unity cannot be dissolved, this would destroy the character of the linguistic sign. These signs are arbitrary, not induced by the real object. So the denomination of the *sun*, for instance, is different in all languages.

The concept of general logical forms at the basis of all languages led to the Universals Analysis. Grammar universals are case-number, time, subject-object, singular-plural etc. Phonology is studying the phonetic part of the languages. All this is analyzed and compared in the different languages.

Then of course one may also look for semantic universals, and categories like *organic - inorganic, masculine-feminine, dimensionality, vertical-horizontal* etc. were found. Structural Semantics analyze the meaning of words by distinctive features which e.g. differentiate the instruments to sit down: *chair, seat, sofa*, or adjectives of *temperature, colors* and so on.

You may see here a direct link to the construction of terminology, as Georges Mounin (1963) did. He discussed the consequences of the Universals theory with regard to the possibility of translation. In the area of science he sees the absolute translatability in view of objects of universal validity. Scientific and technical translation should be accomplished automatically, when terminology follows the principle: “only one word for one object”. Translation, then, is to find the meaning of the source language sign and then search for the target language sign of the same meaning: L1 sign > meaning > L2 sign.

Here we have a first theoretical model of translation showing the basic components of the transfer. The same meaning is the reference point, the *tertium comparationis* between the source and the target language. This universal category of the same meaning is the guarantee for the possibility of translation. Today, corpus studies are analyzing the translational reaction to source language structures (Halliday 2004).

In the sense of Rationalism and Universals' theory, Linguistics treated only scientific texts. All literature with its subjective features was expressly excluded from linguistic discussion. The initiative for scientific analysis came from the research for Machine Translation right after World War II. The Theory of translation was used as a supply discipline for the target of formalizing language in a way to make texts translatable by computers. Though the target of Fully Automatic High Quality Translation is not yet reached even today, many useful applications have since been introduced and masses of texts are translated automatically.

In this theoretical framework the Leipzig School (Otto Kade, Albrecht Neubert, Gert Jäger) defined the "Science of Translation" as a part of linguistics and called it "Translationslinguistik". Translation was defined as a special form of "communication" following the model: S → encoding → message → decoding → R. Translation is now a special case of that model: there must be a code-switching in between sender and receiver who speak different codes. So the translator or the computer is the "code-switcher", the message shall remain identical.

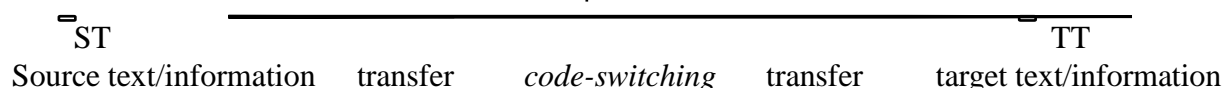
But this creates the "basic problem of translation", the search for equivalents. As the Romans already had realized, there are differences between the languages.

### **Translation as an interlingual transfer**

The task of the linguistic science of translation is defined as the description of the relationships of equivalence between languages on the system level (*langue*). And Otto Kade

stressed four kinds of "potential equivalents", such as *one-to-one (total equivalent)*, *one-to-many (facultative equivalence)*, *one to-part (approximate equivalent)*, *one-to-zero (non-equivalence) or gap* (Koller 1992:229). This definition regards individual words and is later fulfilled by Contrastive Linguistics and Lexicography.

At the surface, translation appeared as an exchange of source language material by target language material (Catford 1965), and thus translation was defined as an "interlingual transfer" of information, requiring a "code-switching process" in the channel of communication, in order to preserve the information unaltered. "Translation is a specific kind of linguistic information processing based on the principle of code-switching. It is basically characterized by the interaction of three communicating partners, the ST author, the translator, and the TT reader" (Wilss 1996:5).



The discipline of Contrastive Linguistics, originally designed for explaining difficulties in learning a foreign language, also influenced Translation Science as it offered the instruments for translation criticism and error analysis (Spillner 1990), and this was mainly based on Comparative Stylistics first developed in France.

Many translation handbooks still today follow this language-pair model, because it is also a useful instrument for translation evaluation in the class room. House (1997) has developed a model of translation quality assessment in the sense of a "scientific translation critique". Its purpose is to measure whether a translation has an (optimal) equivalence relationship to the original on all linguistic levels, regarding words and sentences in terms of their deviation from a literal translation. "Translation is constituted by a „double-binding“ relationship both to its source and to the communicative conditions of the receiving linguaculture, and it is the concept of equivalence which catches this relationship" (House 1997:29).

The problem of information transfer between two languages led to the discipline of *Stylistique comparée* describing the transfer in a particular language pair. There are studies for English-French (Vinay/Darbelnet 1958). Comparing existing translations, they described seven procedures applied by the translators, namely *emprunt*, *calque*, *traduction littérale*, *transposition*, *modulation*, *equivalence*, *adaptation*. The first three are a substitution, while transposition and modulation are a non-literal paraphrasing. These procedures are reactions on the syntactic level to the structure in the source text.

The translation is seen as a series of technical translation procedures which can be applied in translations didactics. This has determined decisively the orientation of translation pedagogics in the sixties. You can determine every deviation from a literal translation by those procedures. The focus in the translation technique is on syntax and sentence level, never on whole texts.

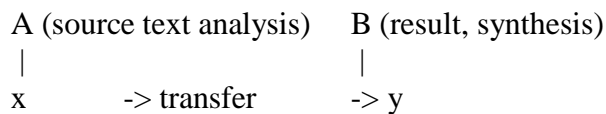
### Functional translation

It became clear rather soon that it is not enough to analyze linguistic structures. In view of practice the relationship between the original and the translation in its content and effect are more important. This was the experience of the early bible translators in Christian mission. They wanted to preach the Gospel in many languages without changing its content, but then they met various cultural understanding barriers. In order to set a scholarly base for bible translation Eugene A. Nida (1964) developed his "Science of Translating".

He stated that it is most important that the message be understood. He shifts focus from formal equivalence, i.e. verse to verse, sentence to sentence, concept to concept, over to "dynamic equivalence" that "aims at complete naturalness of expression, and tries to relate

the receptor to modes of behavior relevant within the context of his own culture.” This idea reminds us of Luther's method of “verdeutschen”.

Nida calls for a three-phase method: an analysis of the sentences into kernels, their transfer, and the reconstruction of the translation, according to stylistic aspects.



Example: in the Bible we often find difficult phrases like *The will of God*, what actually means *God wants*, in comparison to *the peace of God*, which does not mean a "peaceful God" but rather "God creates peace". Such analysis led in the sixties to new bible translations focusing on the function of conveying the message of faith comprehensibly, that were meant to appeal to people of different cultures and to the modern young in the Western world. The reduction into kernels is useful for the translation into languages and dialects of small distribution, as they often have a totally different grammar structure.

Nida's “dynamic equivalence” gave new impact to German translation studies. It initiated a big discussion of the term “Äquivalenz”. Werner Koller (1992) determines “equivalence” as the relationship between a whole text and its translation. However, this relationship must be further determined, as a text contains several dimensions. He states five reference points for equivalence: (1) the *denotative e.* refers to the extralingual facts, they should be maintained; (2) the *connotative e.* refers to stylistic, dialectal, sociolectal and other connotations; (3) the *textnormative e.* refers to standards of the respective text genre; (4) *pragmatic e.* refers to the adaptation to the understanding conditions of the target readers; (5) the *aesthetic e.* refers to aesthetic aspects of individual style. In translation evaluation each time the equivalence of the translation in one of those points only may be assessed. Koller sees it as the task of translation science to determine descriptively some factors of equivalence in the single points, with regard to a language pair. Expressly he denies any normative rules for translation.

The problem of the term “equivalence” is that its meaning in English and in German is not completely identical. In German other words appeared like *Angemessenheit*, *Adäquatheit*, *Gleichwertigkeit*, *Übereinstimmung*, *Korrespondenz*, *sinngemäße Entsprechung*, *Wirkungsgleichheit* etc. Also it has various meanings in the theories of different authors. As a general conclusion, however, we can say that *equivalence* is a term of static, retrospective evaluation. A translation “is equivalent” in a certain point, or even totally, but we cannot say “I will translate equivalently”. There are no benchmarks of how to reach that. Also this kind of equivalence discussion in the early 1970s still centered a lot around the word and sentence level.

### Text linguistics and translation

In the late seventies linguistics turned to the text level, Text Linguistics was created. Following that, also Translation Studies opened itself to questions of the text. Since Nida, a “text analysis” is considered essential for a translation. The rhematic structure of sentences and texts was analyzed, and then different focusing structures in a language pair with relevance for translation could be discussed. Hönig/Kußmaul (1982) have many examples for that. Discourse markers in texts were analyzed, and this might be also interesting for translations, for instance in translating legal judgments. There are differences in the various cultures.

The communicative situation even determines various text types, and that is of eminent interest for translation. As there is no special text form for every new situation, characteristics of text types must also be discernible internally on the text level. Such characteristics may be described and compared with others in a language pair.

Katharina Reiß (1971) developed a much discussed text typology oriented towards translation. Departing from the three language functions – representation, expression, appeal – she stated three text types – the *informative text type* is fact-oriented like documents, reports, handbooks etc., the *expressive text type* is sender-oriented like literature, the *operative text type* is behavior-oriented like propaganda, advertisements, etc. Each text has a major function, even if the other language functions are not totally lacking. This might determine the method of translation, i.e. more oriented toward the content or towards the original form or towards appealing text elements in the operative text type. This especially is a good model for text evaluation, not so much as a translation strategy.

This orientation towards the structure of texts in their situation opens the view to pragmatic aspects. Austin and Searle (1972) have analyzed speech acts, and this is also important for translation since the translator must recognize the correspondent words like *to warn*, *to baptize*, *to beg*, *to acknowledge*, *to assure*, *to guarantee* etc. in the texts. Again Hönig/Kußmaul (1982:83) stress this pragmatic aspect of translation. The illocutionary effect of an utterance is not often very clear, for instance when it is meant ironically, or when a question in reality is a forced statement. Speech Act Theory is also relevant for legal translation, as the contractual clauses are always verbalized in such speech acts.

The translator shall see any sentence in its function as an utterance, not only as a grammatical sentence. Example: *Ich bin fertig* may have the translation *I've had it!* Or *I have finished (my work)*. At the end of the Olympic games at Innsbruck in 1976 they showed on the screen *Auf Wiedersehen in Lake Placid* and then in English: GOOD BYE IN LAKE PLACID. The translation office had offered a literal translation of the sentence, but not of the utterance: “We'll meet again in Lake Placid” or something like that. Nobody ever protested against this lapse.

### **Descriptive Translation Studies**

All these theories had till now concentrated on general language and technical texts. There is another theory regarding literature texts that was initiated in the Netherlands. It is Descriptive Translation Studies connected with the authors Theo Hermans and Andre Lefevere. Their point is completely descriptive. They do not apply a certain translation theory on the translation of literary texts, but rather they analyze literary translations the way they are given. Thus one may detect the underlying translation procedure, cultural norms and traditions of translating, as well as the impact of translations on the target polysystem. This may also originate interesting results in countries of former colonial regimes. How was the local literature affected by the translation of classic works from the mother land? Also one may analyze the translator's attitude towards his translation, for instance in drama translation, or in gender studies. A special research field in Göttingen established a “cultural history of translations from German classic texts”. In the last instance, this descriptive approach may also generate new ideas for translation theory.

This leads us to a new perspective. Now the analysis of the discipline of Translation Studies as such comes on the agenda. It was James Holmes who has as early as in 1972 presented his ideas on “The Name and Nature of Translation Studies”. This term took prevalence over the previous terms of Translation Science or Translatology. It does not mean the teaching and studying of translation, what would be translation pedagogic or didactics.

Holmes (1988) sees translation Studies as a field of several different study areas, such as theoretical, descriptive and applied. All individual study perspectives may contribute to a general, valid theory of translation, and generate new approaches. So there is no overall theory of translation studies, but they represent a “field of studies”. The descriptive part of it shall analyze the process, product and function of translations, and today this is represented by the Israeli Gideon Toury (1995). Of course this descriptive part is closely linked to those studies of comparative literature.



Taking up the idea of a field, Mary Snell-Hornby (1988) defines translation studies as an “interdiscipline”. She denies the harsh distinction between the various translation procedures, text types, true for free translations etc. Regarding texts she sees a “prototypology”: you cannot clearly distinguish between the texts, they rather move on a scale from technical until literary texts. And therefore we also have to integrate various linguistic disciplines and apply them for the purpose of translation.

Any text includes various *dimensions*, such as syntax, semantics and pragmatics and shifting focuses in metaphors. There are various *perspectives*, such as the viewpoint of the speaker, and of the reader, and their respective intention. All these individual aspects have been analyzed in linguistics and the results may be integrated in translation studies as an interdiscipline.

### **Translation and Action theory**

A totally new vision of translation studies is given by Hans J. Vermeer (1996). He localizes it within the Action theory. Translation theory is part of action theory, and texts and all translations are acts having a certain purpose. That is why this theory is also called “Scopos theory”. The purpose, the scopos, is the decisive factor in translation. This must be determined above all other things, and it determines the structure of the translation. So, one and the same text may be translated in different ways, according to the commission for different addressees.

In translating adequately for the target function you will first of all consider the cultural differences. Translation is also an intercultural (not an interlingual) communication. Also, some literal reformulation might be inadequate for the target language function. The consequence is that a translation must imply transformations of the text structure and of its content with regard to cultural differences. In order to decide on that, the translator as a person must be “bi-cultural”, he or she must know both cultures and feel where there is incongruence.

A didactic application of this functional translation theory is presented by Christiane Nord (1991). Her main point is that in translation pedagogics one must first of all establish a translation commission to determine the function. Then we may add an analysis of the source text and ask which parts of it may be maintained and which must be changed according to functional and cultural preconditions. On the other hand, she also stresses the task of the translator’s loyalty for the source text’s author and his intention. The translation has a double loyalty.

There is a circle: from the determination of the target function you go back to the analysis of the source text and then write a functional translation. Nord discusses several “translation problems”, caused by ST structure, pragmatics, cultural differences and language pair problems. In this connection she develops a scale of easy up to difficult texts which might help translation teachers to structure their lessons.

### **The cultural turn in translation**

Besides the functional approach, that was developed primarily in Germany, there were some post-modern tendencies in the English speaking community of translation scholars. Descriptive analysis focuses on external factors of translation, such as power relationships, censure, ideological interests, purposes of translation, institutional environment of the production of translations. The research object is the reaction of authors, readers and translators to texts from former European colonies and the treatment of their language. The literal translation was gradually seen as a logocentric form of colonialism in European ethnocentrism, what led to a power relation between the original culture and the target culture of the translation.

Cultural aspects were discussed by Venuti (1995) who criticized the work of translators not being visible. European or North American translations had mainly to be easy to read what conceals cultural divergent thinking. Asymmetrical relations between the cultures become visible.

Another area of such post-modern studies striving to make translators more visible instead of just correlating languages or performing a certain function, is feminist translation (v. Flotow 1997). The conditions under which women writers and translators were working in the past are being analyzed. Female writing is thought to be more creative. Changes in translations, in comparison to source texts, are allowed, mainly to make female life more visible. There is also the question of inclusive writing and gender mainstreaming, since in the past masculine words always were considered to include women as well, but they did not mention them expressly.

Finally there is the concept of political ethics by translation. Feminism as a political theory and ideology of emancipation deals with relationships of dominance. While originally some forms of oppression were defined in descriptive analysis, there is now the request of “enlarging translation” (Tymoczko 2006) and promoting “activist translation practices. Translations should intentionally change the text to its growth, in order to help overcoming ethnocentrism and racism, imperialism and cultural narcissism. This would help to develop democratic relationships in the world. The question remains unsolved here, whether the ideological propagation of a translator’s opinion will help to deconstruct power relationships, or whether his attempt to re-present the strange text in a most authentic form would be more helpful to bring it into the target culture.

When we reconsider the different translation theories mentioned till now, we may see a shift of focus from the language system as the expression of a nation's spirit, and as a communicative system of signs with relationships of potential equivalence in the communication channel, over translations in their relationship to other texts, over the structuring of the translation studies discipline as such, up until stressing the important function of a translation and its effects and ideological background.

### **The translating person**

It is only recently that the translator as a historical person who actually performs translation is being considered, with the aim to analyze factors of translation competence. In France there is the translation school of Danica Seleskovitch & Marianne Lederer (1984). They base their concept of translation on the experience of interpreting. The interpreter hears a sequence of the speech, understands it and verbalizes it, totally independent from the word and sentence structure. This procedure is called “deverbalisation”. They expressly oppose the also French ideas of *Stylistique comparée* which compared stylistic forms in a language pair. Rather they state that the translation should grasp sense units and reformulate them freely, thus following the *génie de la langue*, the spirit of the language.

Translation should work in the same way like interpreting: understand and formulate. Regarding the question of understanding they refer to the context and situation. A word or an isolated sentence might be ambiguous when taken alone, but it is easily comprehensible when integrated into its context. After having read a total paragraph, or even better a whole text, its meaning in most cases will be clear. Also, an intelligible source text is usually directed towards the knowledge of the readers and the audience, and of course the translator should have the same knowledge. Deverbalisation is an immediate act of understanding, and in that moment the interpreter also finds the right words. They stress that better translations are found when one deviates from literal translation. In many examples they show this strategy that leads sometimes to totally new sentence structures in the target language.

Since deverbalisation is a spontaneous act of intuition, it may not be guided by linguistic methods. Jean-René Ladmiral (1993) discusses once again the old alternative of true and free

translations. He sees the translator faced by the need to decide: whether to orient the translation at the source, or to orient it at the target readers, *sourciers and ciblistes*. The target-oriented “ciblistes” try to make the message and the author's “spirit” comprehensible, instead of repeating the source text structure.

This idea of spontaneous formulation does not consider the fact, earlier mentioned here, that there is also a purpose, a function of the translation. Such pragmatic aspects must also be introduced into a translation.

Based on Relevance Theory, Ernst August Gutt (2000) developed a general translation theory that integrates the conversational rules of informative, true, relevant and direct speech into one maxim of relevance. The audience is able to understand the “communicator's informative intention”. People intuitively select meaning according to the principle of optimal relevance. Therefore an utterance has to be formulated adequately. However, cognitive propositions are not always identical to the meaning of utterances. A relation of similarity is called interpretive resemblance, and a translation is then an “interlingual interpretive use” of language (Gutt 2000:105). The translation resembles the source text, but the culturally different context and the background is very important. Often, the translator cannot simply use his own cognitive environment when trying to understand the original; rather he has to metarepresent to himself the mutual cognitive environment shared between the original communicator and original audience. Any necessary explanation of foreign elements in the translation would not offend the truth of it.

### **Hermeneutics and translation**

At this point there is the hermeneutic approach to translation. It asks the question, how does the translator think, what are the necessary factors – not of translation, but of translation competence. Hermeneutics considers how comprehension is possible.

The German Protestant theologian and philosopher F. D. E. Schleiermacher (1768-1834) is seen as the father of Hermeneutics as a language philosophy. He had offered new insight as he reflected on the role of language in the interpretation of texts, with a view to Bible translation. He argued that neither the logical inference of Rationalism, nor the individualistic evidence of Idealism in their ahistoric absolutism can be a proof for the certainty of truth in talking about language.

Language includes aspects of both objective features in grammar and lexicon uniting all humans in a speakers’ community, and subjective features because language is also created and evolves by individual utterances within a culture. Both aspects shall never be separated from each other, says Schleiermacher, they are only seen alternately, in a more or less clear emergence, depending on the individual case of reading. On the one hand, any contrastive grammar or stylistics or text analysis will only grasp one half of the language reality, and on the other hand, an individual assurance of having interpreted rightly may be prone to the relativism of a naïve subjectivity.

Hermeneutics distinguishes – from a personalized world view – between objects/facts with their analysis/cognition and human activity with its inner motivation, i.e. between objectivity and subjectivity, analysis and evidence, strategy and impulse, rationale and intuition, inference and impression, proof and argumentation. Schleiermacher stressed that thought and volition do refer to each other in the acting person, but are also ineluctably separate. Any conviction can be contestable.

Schleiermacher calls for a combination of “grammatical analysis” with genre comparison within the language, and a “divinatory understanding” of the individual text as a psychological explication of the passage in its context. The divinatory and the comparative method are closely interlinked, and there is an interplay between rules and intuition. There will be phases of understanding more driven by methodology, and others where intuition is the leading strength.

For the purpose of backing-up one's interpretation of a text to expound its meaning, Schleiermacher established several alternating antinomies of analysis as a method. There is, among others, a circle of comprehension or "interpretive circle" between the whole of the text and the single element in it, or a circle between the constitution and the actual effect of the text, when the author might have had other intentions than are now visible from the written text to the present reader. This methodological approach corresponds to well-known aspects of text analysis via lexis, semantics and pragmatics usually applied for strengthening one's interpretation (Thiselton 2006: 191). But Schleiermacher maintains that there is always an additional aspect of intuition, since understanding is an art. Truth reveals itself intuitively in a person's mind.

The basis for this to happen is an awareness of the topics treated and of the language concerned. Without any uniting bond no understanding will be possible. The art is based on relevant knowledge, since a naïve interpretation cannot be acceptable, e.g. for responsible translation. This means that the translator has to be aware of his personal horizon of experience and knowledge and must open it phenomenologically by learning and entering into unfamiliar horizons, e.g. to foreign cultures and scientific disciplines.

This is the place of the so-called "hermeneutical circle": I will only understand something if I already know a part of it, when there is a common basis. This observation is not trivial because it means that a merely linguistic analysis of a text does not lead to its meaning, just as the pure perception of a strange phenomenon does not result in its adequate interpretation. This does not fence us in, because we may always learn new things and thus transcend the circle first given. That is what happens in understanding: an enlargement of our horizon, and at the same time this prepares the basis for further understanding. The truth of a text thus revealed is historically determined (Thiselton 2006:747). There is no quasi objective, ever unchanged truth in social communities. Truth is only found dialectically, in a discussion process within a group, valid for a certain period of time, ever remaining open for new interpretation.

When we have enlarged our own horizon of knowledge, we will be able to grasp a text's message that was written against another horizon. Hans-Georg Gadamer (1960) speaks of a "fusion of horizons" when comprehension happens. And this process is ever dynamic, as individuals are placed in a historical situation, and their conscience is continuously growing. Fritz Paepcke (1986) first introduced hermeneutical thinking into translation studies, focusing mainly on the aspects of comprehension. The adequate comprehension of a text, i.e. when a fusion of horizons has happened to the translator-reader's satisfaction, will create a cognitive representation of that text's message. And all what is carried in mind can also to some extent be expressed in another language. So the relationship between translation and hermeneutics is evident.

Outside the German speaking world, the hermeneutical approach is mainly represented by George Steiner. He uses (1975:296-300) a very metaphorical language in describing the "hermeneutic motion" when a translator with an "initiative trust" in the meaningfulness of a text "as a yet untried, unmapped alterity of statement" comes to a "manoeuvre of comprehension explicitly invasive and exhaustive leaving the shell smashed". The sense, in comprehension, is incorporated "in a complete domestication" and "abducted into another language". Steiner's description of the process of understanding neglects the self-critical reflection underlined by Schleiermacher and soon changes into a description of its effects. The assimilation of the foreign sense has an effect both on the translator himself and on the target language which is being transformed by the importation of the strange sense.

This idea gave rise to interpreting translation as a creative act that changes the words and not seldom the original meaning via translation. It has been seen both in literary translation and in postmodern translation theories as the privilege of creativity. Translations are new creations rather than a representation of the text first given in the source language. And easily

this also may lead into an ideological treatment of texts in translation, emphasizing the creative energy of language.

### **The translator's orientation**

The real difficulty in translation, seen from the hermeneutical translator's point of view and not descriptively from the outside, is the problem of formulating. We will have to try several times until we find the adequate words for what we want to say. The wish does not lead in a logically compelling and fully guaranteed way to the respective action, neither does command. The translator will identify with the message understood in empathy, in order to re-express it as if it were his/her own opinion. Translation does not inform about a text, but presents that text in an intelligible way. An authentic text will be created in the other language, for which the translator can accept responsibility.

Translation expresses messages and is not a reaction to language structures nor a linguistic derivation from the source text. Maybe one should better give up the traditional terms of "source" and "target" texts. The message understood from the original – now being cognitively present – finds a new expression in the translation. The usual linguistic approach has always been the analysis of *morphemes – semes – lexemes – in texts – as a genre – situated – in a culture*. This should be reversed. The translator does not analyze linguistic objects, he or she is confronted with *the voice of an author – in a culture – in a discourse field – as texts – with words – carrying sense*.

Translators are individual human beings having gathered their own culture and an awareness of the other culture or scientific domain (through language acquisition, social experience, practical work, travels, specialist studies, learning of facts). Different cultures as systems of knowledge get into contact within the translator's mind, in a "fusion of horizons". In other words: the translator has a share in those cultures or domains and may even be part of both of them, rather than standing *in between* the cultures doing a transfer or working *on* them.

The translators – in an hermeneutical approach – have to critically distinguish between their own opinion and what the text is actually saying. As R. Stolze (2003:244) has shown, translators will – for their orientation – look at the situational background, the discourse field, the conceptual world of key words and the predicative mode of a text, in order to adequately interpret it. In following Schleiermacher's holistic approach one may apply the instruments of Applied Linguistics such as semantics, text linguistics, rhetoric etc. But understanding is not all, formulating is the crucial issue. So the translator will use the available techniques in a holistic view regarding the medium, stylistics, coherence and function to be realized for the translated text in order to formulate adequately. Language proficiency, style awareness and confidence in one's own creativity are decisive. This is what original authors are doing also when they think about their intended addressees. In authors, this process is often unconscious, whereas translators reflect on it critically.

The hermeneutical approach to translation presented here includes the idea that the translational dealing with texts is basically the same for all text genres in literature and in specialist communication – only the required knowledge base and language proficiency is different. For any translating person some literary styles or cultural specificities are as strange as functional styles and technical terms. The relevant knowledge in both areas has to be acquired first and be used in a self-critical manner.

### **Analysis of the cognitive translation process**

In the nineties finally, Cognitive Science had its boom, also with an influence on Translation Studies. So we may envisage an analysis of the cognitive ways of thinking by the translator. There were analyses of "think-aloud protocols": translators had to speak aloud all

their ideas in mind, then one could analyze their ways of inferring (Krings 1988). Maybe this will help to change translation didactics.

Hans G. Hönig (1995) pleads for a conscious reflection of the translator's constructive activity. He mentions that there is an uncontrolled part in our mind, and a controlled one. The problem is that the controlling section, if there are no critical categories or strategies, often revises in a negative way the good spontaneous formulation first found. So we need more confidence in the own capacity.

Psycholinguistic studies analyze intuition and cognition. Kußmaul (2000) finally reflects on the role of creativity that is defined as a structural deviation from the source text. Describing associative processes of thinking, he pleads for a change of perspective in order to find new solutions. His aim is also to explore various aspects of the methodology of translation, with a view on teaching translation. He sees the translator as a conscious, responsible individual. Translation didactics should help to shape a cognitive landscape.

It is obvious that the empirical methodology of research is the adequate means for cognitive analysis. Think-aloud protocols can be combined with questionnaires and introspection, in order to back-up single results. Qualitative, subjective and quantitative, objective data are being combined in triangulation (Hansen 2006:61), in order to support the information collected from introspection, questioning or observation. Key-logging and eye-tracking as an observation method of the translational work is particularly interesting when it offers a comparison between professionals' and students' work. Research in the translation process will gain more impetus in the future, as more and more data are being collected.

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