

THREE TRANSLATION MODEL APPROACHES

TREI MODELE DE ABORDARE A UNEI TRADUCERI

Laura-Rebeca STIEGELBAUER

“Vasile Goldiș” Western University of Arad
Faculty of Social Sciences, Humanities and Physical Education and Sports
laurarebeca.ps@gmail.com

Narcisa SCHWARZ

“Vasile Goldiș” Western University of Arad
Faculty of Social Sciences, Humanities and Physical Education and Sports
narcisa_schwarz@yahoo.com

Diana-Bianca HUSAR

“Vasile Goldiș” Western University of Arad
Faculty of Social Sciences, Humanities and Physical Education and Sports

Abstract

This paper provides an overview of theoretical keys and operational concepts of a translation and focuses on the translation process, making reference to three different models of description. The concern for the translation field has experienced a remarkable development over the world after the second half of the twentieth century for at least three important reasons: historical, theoretical and pragmatic. This paper intends to analyse and find the best translation model, which can be approached in order for the translation to be as close to the source text as possible.

Rezumat

Această lucrare oferă o privire de ansamblu asupra teoriei și conceptelor operaționale ale traducerii și se concentrează pe procedeul de traducere, făcând referire la trei modele diferite de traducere. S-a observat o dezvoltare remarcabilă peste tot în lume a domeniului traductologiei în a doua jumătate a secolului douăzeci din cel puțin trei perspective: istorică, teoretică și pragmatică. Această lucrare intenționează să analizeze și să găsească cel mai bun model de abordare a unei traduceri astfel încât să fie cât mai aproape de textul sursă.

Keywords: translation, source text, model of translation, deverbalization

Cuvinte cheie: traducere, textul sursă, model de traducere, de-verbalizare

Introduction

The study of the translation process represents the basis of many theoretical paper-works signed by “classical” theorists (Nida, Steiner, Dancette, Ladmiral, and Seleskovitch), etc. and by researchers who honor an empirical approach – experimental (Dancette, Menard).

The translation process is generally defined as a totality of activities/steps, which collaborate to create an organization of the global translation. Daniel Gouadec calls this concept “the execution path of a translation service.” Some authors (Dancette and Menard, 1996: 139-156) give to the translation process a narrower meaning: the mental progress made by the translator when transferring a message from a source language to a target language.

By Eugene Nida (1975: 91), the translation process is broken down into three stages: the syntactic and semantic analysis which takes into account the entire text, transfer and restructuring that aims to make the pragmatic features, generic and stylistic of the source text depending on the receipt of the text in the target language.

Moreover, in the vision of Mr. Lederer (1994: 9), the translation process implies to understand the original text, to make this "deverbalization" – a concept that puts the translator to operate mostly on the basis of the content ("sense") of the source text stripped of its linguistic form, and express in another language by understanding the ideas and the feelings.

To designate the translational approach, R. Bell (1991: 57) uses a metaphor to evoke the image of a cube of ice, which is melted and then refrozen with the aim of suggesting the three intellectual steps used during the translation process, ranging the translation activity in the trilogy: "reading-comprehension-writing".

Models related to the translation process

We have chosen to wear the reflection on some theoretical approaches about texts analysis models in translation, and in particularly about three models: the *interpretive* model, based on the interpretive theory of translation (or theory of meaning) developed by Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer (1985, 1994, 2001), the *functional* model, called *Model for Translation-Oriented Text Analysis*, concept created by Christiane Nord (1991), based on discourse analysis and theory of *skopos*, and the *didactic* model, adapted to the context, proposed by Françoise Grellet (1991).

According to Laramée and Vallée (1991), the term "model" is used for "any conceptual representation or explanation of a phenomenon", knowing that the main difference between the models for the translation process lies in the acceptance of term "translation", we decided to present in the following pages the characteristics of the different models mentioned above, and the opinions of the theories followers which are the basis of these three models used during the process of translation.

The interpretive model of translation

The Interpretive Theory of Translation known as the "Theory of Sense" was developed by the researchers (interpreters and translators) Danica Seleskovitch and Marianne Lederer trained at the École Supérieure d'Interprètes ET de Traducteurs (ESIT - Higher School of Interpreters and Translators) at the University of Paris III – the so-called Paris School.

The interpretative model comes from a theory called "Interpretive Theory of Translation" or "Theory of meaning" designed by Marianne Lederer and Danica Seleskovitch. The epistemological status of the interpretive theory is outlined by Lederer and Seleskovitch (2001: 6), which incorporate this theory into a general theoretical language discipline: "The interpretive theory [...] is a Theory of meaning because it explains the phenomenon of translation and reveals, through him, the essential aspects of the functioning of language."

Roda P. Roberts, one of the followers of the comparative stylistics of Vinay and Darbelnet, recognizes the important role of the theory of Lederer and Seleskovitch and their merits and argues that "by analysing the meaning of the message, we can say that their theoretical contribution is undeniable."

In the vision of the followers of the interpretative model, the translation process has three stages: "understanding, deverbalization and re-expression of the meaning" of the text / speech with the precision that the translator must adapt to the knowledge of the target audience.

For a better understanding of the translation process, according to the interpretative model, Marianne Lederer (2001: 19) states that "translating is not transcode but understand and express meaning."

According to Mounin (1974: 294), the meaning is obtained by all abstract meanings while the meaning refers to a concrete particular statement, depending on the context and circumstances.

Following the diagram of the translation process proposed by Lederer (understanding -

deverbalization - re-expression), the receiver of the message must have extra-linguistic and language skills, and a "cognitive baggage" that encompasses the knowledge of the world of the translator, the seizure of context and understanding the "mean" of the author.

According to Lederer (1994: 212), cognitive supplements are "under factoring, notional and emotional, cognitive and cognitive baggage context that combines the linguistic meanings of speeches and texts to form meaning. They are also essential to the interpretation of the audio system or graphic. "

For Seleskovitch (1984: 311), the translation process requires an intermediate step, the deverbalization, using the references of linguistic signs which represent the internal world and the reality perception which represents the external world.

We can understand this reality, in the current communication when we forget the words used by the speaker but we keep in mind what we have understood by using our language skills and extra-linguistic knowledge.

Deverbalization allows then the re-expression of the message in another language, in a naturally way and adapted to the needs of the receiver of the message. The fact that different languages have different structures, requires a translation based on the meaning expressed by equivalence.

Lederer (1997: 130) states that "matches are approximate only and should not be used automatically by the equity segments of text." According to Jean Delisle (1980: 85), the translation approach consists of three steps: "understanding, reformulation and justification." He appreciates the followers of the interpretative model by arguing that through this model, the act of translation became known as an "act of intelligence" and a "cognitive process".

The interpretive theory developed in the 80s by Marianne Lederer and Danica Seleskovitch inspired many translation specialists: Jean Delisle, *L'Analyse du discours comme méthode de traduction* (1980), Amparo Hurtado Albir, *The notion of fidelity in translation* (1990), Jean Delisle, *La traduction raisonnée* (1993), Elisabeth Lavault, *Fonctions de la traduction en didactique de langues* (1998), Jeanne Dancette, *Parcours de traduction* (1998).

The interpretive theory was originally a method of translation of pragmatic texts of general interest for translator's apprentices, prepared by Jean Delisle (1980).

Hence, following the interpretive approach, the translation process involves three steps (understanding - deverbalization - re-expression) representing the successive result of a single action of the mind and of two basic actions: the seizure and return to the meaning.

The functional model

The Functional School developed another important trend that influenced the understanding of the process of translation. This current comes from the functional model of description of the translation process theorized by researchers as Juliane House or Reiß and Vermeer (focusing on the types of texts: "operative", "expressive" and "informative").

The concepts of the Functional School are based on various theories, such as communication (Gutt, 1991), Social Action (Holz-Mänttari, 1984) or on the theory of the function of texts (Nord, 1991).

Translation strategies are determined by the function and the purpose assigned by the initiator or by the beneficiary of the translation text. (cf. Stefanink, 2000: 24, Dimitriu, 2002: 55-59).

Our choice fell on The Translation Model ("looping model") proposed by Christiane Nord, presented in her book *Text in Analysis in Translation* (1991: 30).

To reveal all the important elements and to achieve its communicative objective, the model of Nord allows us to analyse and re-analyse as needed to deepen or adjust the analysis.

Translation is considered an act of communication, where the translator's role is to interpret the source text and translate it into a new version for a new target.

Thus, the analysis takes place in two stages: the skopos analysis of the target text ("target text

skopos") and the analysis of the source text.

According to Guidère (2008: 72), the *skopos theory* is in the same epistemological framework that the action-theory of translation, because it is particularly interested in pragmatic texts and their functions in the target culture. According to Christiane Nord (1997: 140), the general theory *skopos* should be supplemented by a new concept, "*the loyalty*" in translation.

In contrast with faithfulness, *loyalty* is exercised with respect towards the people, also with respect for the author and represents the result of negotiation among the author, the receiver, the person who asked for the translation, and the translator.

The first analysis that the translator has to perform is to analyse the function of the target text that consists in presenting the factors to ensure the receipt of the translated text by a target audience, in a given situation, called SITT ("target situation").

The second analysis is that of the source text, performed in two stages (see North 1991: 33): in the first stage, the translator must be aware of the hardware compatibility of the source text with the requirements contained in the instructions translation; in the second stage, the translator will engage into a detailed analysis with the aim of understanding the source text while paying special attention to restore the function of the target text.

Dancette and Menard (1996: 139-156) emphasize the "non-linearity of the translation process in the timeline," a point of view shared by Christiane Nord for whom the two steps of the translation process, understanding and deverbalization organize themselves in a loop process ("looping model").

In the opinion of Christiane Nord (1991: 30), the translation is not a linear process that evolves from a starting point S (S = the source text) to a target point T (T = the target text) but a circular process through which the translator carries out back and forth in her reflection and production.

According to Christiane Nord (cited by Superceanu 2004: 25), the translation requires the execution of four consecutive tasks:

1. Analysis of *skopos* target text (new goals, new players);
2. Analysis of source text;
3. Transfer (properly-called translation);
4. The synthesis of the target text.

The execution of the translation delivery represents the result of a good management of the translator's task. We consider that Christiane North *skopos* theory, inspired by the theory of Katharina Reiß, nowadays applies best to the practice of translation for pragmatic texts.

The experimental model

By exceeding the boundaries of translation as a discipline, we will look, in a few lines of explanatory experimental models which according Dancette (1997), can be proved by the theory of language, as the translation, as a language activity, was recognized as "a privileged field of exploration" for psychologists and cognitive scientists (see Danks and Shreve 1997).

The empirical models are developed starting with the 80s and are advanced from the research based on the observation of "mental mechanisms used in the translation process" (Dancette 1998: 63). J. R. Ladmiral (2003: 155-156) argues that scientific translation studies are still in its infancy, because "we do not yet have a synthetic theory, coherent, experimentally validated and adequately insured."

Jeanne Dancette and Nathan Menard (1996: 140) summarize the role of empirical studies and divide the experimental research into qualitative and quantitative. The two are essential to the development of translation. The qualitative research is based on correlation studies, a basic but necessary stage of data collection, followed by the description of the observed phenomena, while quantitative research represent a more advanced stage which is based on observation of the process, a phenomenon taking place in its usual framework or in an experimental setting.

In the first category should be included the study of Bélanger (1992) on the cohesion in

translation. We can notice as well the important longitudinal study of J. Dancette (1995), which designed the analysis of correlations between the results of four tests (for 20 Masters Students in translation studies) organized to verify the linguistic and thematic knowledge acquired by the students, the understanding of the text and the semantic appropriateness of their translations. J. Dancette exposes in his book *Parcours de traduction* (1998) the results of its study: "semantic adequacy depends on the degree of understanding of the translator of the Source Text."

In the second category of quantitative studies, we have noticed two German researchers, Lörcher (1987) and Krings (1986), who based their studies on psycholinguistics and cognitive psychology (psychological conditions of creativity - Kussmaul, 1995).

In the field of translation, researcher's studies had multiple objectives. One of the first goals was to build an analytical model based on the decomposition of intellectual operations that defined the translation process (Dechert and Sandrock, 1986 Krings, 1986 Lörcher 1991).

Advancing in the psychological and cognitive dimension of the process, the evolution led to an analysis of the circumstances of the implementation of the process from the conditions necessary or sufficient for a good course.

In the experimental study, Dancette (1995) tried to objectify the process of understanding in order to access the meaning, process prior to translation, and it showed that the understanding represents the result of an intersection of two types of knowledge: language skills and subject knowledge.

Still remaining in the field of translation studies, we can mention the technique of "thinking aloud", a method borrowed from psychology, based on the verbalization of protocols, called "method-aloud" ("think-aloud protocol" or "TAP's").

This method of thinking aloud, consists to ask the translator to express aloud whatever comes to his mind at the time of the execution of his task (emotional reactions, satisfaction or frustration expressions) and the insights concerning the operations he has to perform and its reasoning. Researchers are trying, through this method to find out what is happening "in the head" of the translator when s/he performs the work.

Another method used by some translators is that of recording video, which provides information on the techniques used by the translator. Séguinot (1989) used the video recording to the workplace of the translator to observe the strategies implemented by one: reading text, production of the target text, translation fidelity. The conclusion drawn by Séguinot (1989: 36) at the end of his experiment is that the translator begins with a general understanding of the source text, and then makes a transfer of meaning using words in the target language, and finally he arrives to the stage of re-expression.

The data collected through empirical approaches, such as those of verbalization protocols, are very rich. Their accumulation represents the basis of the research. This exploitation is only the beginning.

Conclusion

According to our experience it is very difficult to say that one model is better than another one, or that a translator is better to use only one model. After a more detailed analysis of the translations we made along the years we reached the conclusion that we opted more often for a translation model that combines interpretative model (based on the seizure and return of meaning, analysis and re-expression of contextual meaning) and the functional model (oriented towards the Source Text analysis, the function of the source text, the characteristics of the target text and the translation situation). We have rarely opted only for one model. Following the interpretative model, we usually focused our attention to make sense in the target text. In order to capture and return the message of the source text properly and adequately, we took into account the linguistic, textual and cultural dimension of the text.

Furthermore, regarding the application of the functional model, we analysed the *skopos* of our translation, its aim, and its purpose. Consequently, we believe this combined approach is an appropriate model for the translation of a text because it covers both the seizure and return of

meaning based on the origin, but also the analysis of the situation translation production.

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