



# **TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT**

Past and present

**Juliane House**



# TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

Translation quality assessment has become one of the key issues in translation studies. This comprehensive and up-to-date treatment of translation evaluation makes explicit the grounds of judging the worth of a translation and emphasizes that translation is, at its core, a linguistic operation.

Written by the author of the world's best known model of translation quality assessment, Juliane House, this book provides an overview of relevant contemporary interdisciplinary research on translation, intercultural communication and globalization, and corpus and psycho- and neuro-linguistic studies. House acknowledges the importance of the socio-cultural and situational contexts in which texts are embedded, and which need to be analysed when they are transferred through space and time in acts of translation, at the same time highlighting the linguistic nature of translation.

The text includes a newly revised and presented model of translation quality assessment which, like its predecessors, relies on detailed textual and culturally informed contextual analysis and comparison. The test cases also show that there are two steps in translation evaluation: firstly, analysis, description and explanation; secondly, judgements of value, socio-cultural relevance and appropriateness. The second is futile without the first: to judge is easy, to understand less so.

*Translation Quality Assessment* is an invaluable resource for students and researchers of translation studies and intercultural communication, as well as for professional translators.

**Juliane House** is Emeritus Professor of Applied Linguistics, University of Hamburg, Director of Programs in Arts and Sciences at Hellenic American University, Athens, and President of the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Communication. Her key titles include *Translation Quality Assessment: A Model Revisited* (1997), *Translation* (2009), *Translational Action and Intercultural Communication* (2009) and *Translation: A Multidisciplinary Approach* (2014).

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*Juliane House*

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# 1

## TRANSLATION THEORY AND TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

In this introductory chapter I will briefly explain what I take translation to be, and also introduce topics that will be treated in more detail in the following chapters.

Translation is both a cognitive procedure which occurs in a human being's, the translator's, head, and a social, cross-linguistic and cross-cultural practice. Any valid theory of translation must embrace these two aspects. To do this, a multidisciplinary approach to translation theory integrating these aspects in a plausible manner is needed. Further, a theory of translation is not possible without a reflection on the role of one of its core concepts: equivalence in translation. And looking at equivalence leads directly into a discussion of how one would go about assessing the quality of a translation. Translation quality assessment can thus be said to be at the heart of any theory of translation.

This book is a new treatment of translation quality assessment designed to update my two previous versions of a model for translation quality assessment (House 1977, 1997). Since to my knowledge this model is today still the only fully worked out, research-based, theoretically informed and interdisciplinary conceived approach to translation quality assessment of its kind, I believe it is now time to present an updated version of the model – particularly in view of the enormous growth and spread of translation studies in recent decades, as well as a soaring interest in translation quality assessment in the translation profession and the translation industry.

While this volume includes a detailed description of my own work in the fields of cross-cultural and intercultural research, and translation evaluation over the past 40 years, I will also provide a review of a number of interesting and relevant approaches, detailing their relative merits and limitations. I will look both into past attempts at evaluating translations and into a number of present day research strands that might prove useful for validating judgements about the

## **2 Translation theory and translation quality assessment**

worth of a translation, among them work on contrastive pragmatics and intercultural communication, corpus studies and psycho-neuro- and cognitive linguistic research. I will argue for the necessity in translation studies of a multidisciplinary view of translation that combines traditional linguistically informed and text-based views of translation with views that emphasize the context of translation in its widest sense taking account of power relations, conflict situations, ethical issues and the human beings involved in acts of translation, i.e. authors, translators, readers, and so on (see my recent edited volume, House 2014).

In recent decades, we have witnessed a rather one-sided shift in the field of translation studies towards viewing translation as a predominantly social, cultural, political, ethical and ideology-dominated affair. While such concerns are of course necessary and valuable, one should not forget that translation is, at its core, a linguistic act. So while on the whole maintaining a stance which is as fair, balanced and non-biased as possible, I will try in this book to emphasize the importance of detailed textual analysis and comparison, since this is the strength of my model of translation quality assessment. And in my view translation quality assessment means both retrospectively assessing the worth of a translation and prospectively ensuring the quality in the production of a translation.

### **What is translation?**

Translation can be defined as the result of a linguistic-textual operation in which a text in one language is re-contextualized in another language. As a linguistic-textual operation, translation is, however, subject to, and substantially influenced by, a variety of extra-linguistic factors and conditions. It is this interaction between ‘inner’ linguistic-textual and ‘outer’ extra-linguistic, contextual factors that makes translation such a complex phenomenon. Some of the interacting factors we need to consider when looking at translation are:

- the structural characteristics, the expressive potential and the constraints of the two languages involved in translation;
- the extra-linguistic world which is ‘cut up’ in different ways by source and target languages;
- the source text with its linguistic-stylistic-aesthetic features that belong to the norms of usage holding in the source lingua-cultural community;
- the linguistic-stylistic-aesthetic norms of the target lingua-cultural community;
- the target language norms internalized by the translator;
- intertextuality governing the totality of the text in the target culture;
- traditions, principles, histories and ideologies of translation holding in the target lingua-cultural community;
- the translational ‘brief’ given to the translator by the person(s) or institution commissioning the translation;

- the translator's workplace conditions;
- the translator's knowledge, expertise, ethical stance and attitudinal profiles as well as her subjective theory of translation;
- the translation receptors' knowledge, expertise, ethical stance and attitudinal profiles of the translator as well as their subjective theories of translation.

So while translation is, as stated above, at its core a linguistic-textual operation, a multitude of other conditioning and constraining factors also routinely impinge on its processes, performance and of course on translation quality. However, it is well nigh impossible for any practicable model of translation quality assessment to take into account all of these factors, much less so in an essentially text-based model such as my own. So, I would maintain that despite the multiple conditioning of translation and the resulting complexity, one may still, as a common core, retain the minimal definition of translation as a replacement of an original text in one language with a text in another language. When using the term 'replacement', one may assume, rather negatively, that any translated text is in principle 'second-best', i.e. a substitute for the 'real thing'. Viewed this way, translation is by definition a secondary act of communication. Normally, a communicative event happens only once. In translation, this communicative event is reduplicated for persons or groups otherwise prevented from appreciating the original communicative event. More positively, however, translation can be seen as enabling – often for the first time – original access to a different world of knowledge, to different traditions and ideas that would otherwise have been locked away behind a language barrier. From this perspective, translation has often been described as a builder of bridges, an extender of horizons, providing recipients with an important service and enabling them to move beyond the borders of the world staked out by their own language. It is through translation that lingua-cultural barriers can be overcome. So translation is one of the most important mediators between societies and cultures. But despite all these assets, it remains a fact that translation only gives readers access to a message which already exists. This inherently 'derived nature' of translation also means that, in translation, there is always both an orientation backwards to the existing previous message of the original text and an orientation forwards towards how texts in a corresponding genre are composed in the target language. This type of 'double-bind' relationship is a basic characteristic of translation which should not be forgotten.

## Translation as intercultural communication and social action

As mentioned above, translation is not only a linguistic act, it is also an act of communication across cultures. This was recognized in the sixties by one of the grand figures of translation theory: Eugene Nida. Nida (1964) saw translation as one of the major means of constructing representations of other cultures. He clearly recognized that translation always involves both different languages and

#### **4 Translation theory and translation quality assessment**

different cultures simply because the two cannot be neatly separated. Language is culturally embedded: it serves to express and shape cultural reality, and the meanings of linguistic units can only be understood when considered together with the cultural contexts in which they arise, and in which they are used. In translation, therefore, not only two languages but also two cultures invariably come into contact. In this sense, then, translation is a form of intercultural communication. Over and above recognizing the importance of the two larger macro-cultural frameworks, however, the translator must of course also consider the more immediate ‘context of situation’. This more local situational context has to do with questions about who wrote the text, when, why, for whom, and who is now reading it, and for what purpose, etc. These questions, in turn, are reflected in how a text is written, interpreted, read and used. The context of situation is itself embedded in the larger socio-cultural world as it is depicted in the text and in the real world.

The inherently reflective nature of translational action reveals itself in a translator’s focus on the situatedness of a text, and his or her recognition of the intimate interconnectedness of text and context. As texts travel across time, space and different orders of indexicality in translation, they must be re-contextualized. Exploring text in context is thus the only way of exploring text for the purposes of translation as re-contextualization (see House 2006a). Recently, such re-contextualization in translation has involved contexts characterized by radically unequal power relations between individuals, groups, languages and literatures. In these cases, translators are asked to play an important role in analysing, questioning or resisting existing power structures (see Baker and Pérez-González 2011: 44). In these contexts, translations do not only function as conflict mediating and resolving actions but rather as spaces where tensions are signalled and power struggles are played out. An extreme case of such tensions is the positioning of translators in zones of war. In such a context, translation scholars have recently looked at the impact the performance of translators has had on the different parties in war zones, whether and how translators align themselves with their employers or openly refuse to do so, and how personally involved they become in situations of conflict and violence (see the work by Baker 2006; Maier 2007; Inghilleri 2009).

In the wake of rapid technological advances and the need to spread information quickly and efficiently through instant mediation, translation has substantially grown in importance in the globalized, de-territorialized space. While this trend is certainly financially advantageous for the translating profession, there has also been criticism of the instantaneous flow of information, and its reliance on English in its role of a global lingua franca in many influential domains of contemporary life. The impact of English as a lingua franca has recently been explored in corpus-based investigation of translation as a site of language contact in a globalized world (cf. Kranich *et al.* 2012; House 2013b).

Another recent development of looking at translation as a socio-cultural phenomenon is the concern with questions of ethics in translation (see e.g. Goodwin 2010; Baker and Maier 2011). This concern goes hand in hand with the

increased visibility of translators through their involvement in violent conflicts and various activist translator groups, activist centres and sites and the concomitant broader awareness of the role of translators in making transparent human rights issues and the suppression of minorities.

### Translation as a cognitive process

Apart from the social contextual approach to translation, there is another important new trend which looks at translation as a cognitive process. Cognitive aspects of translation and in particular the process of translation in the translator's mind have been investigated for over 30 years, with a recent upsurge of interest in issues relating to translation as a cognitive process (cf. Shreve and Angelone 2011; O'Brien 2011; Ehrensberger-Dow *et al.* 2013). This increase in interest in 'what goes on in translators' heads' owes much to the availability of modern technology, to continuously improving instruments and methods for the empirical investigation of particular aspects of a translator's performance such as keystroke logging, eye-tracking or screen recording as well as various neuropsychological techniques. As O'Brien (2013: 6) has rightly pointed out, translation process research has heavily 'borrowed' from a number of disciplines: linguistics, psychology, cognitive science, neuroscience, reading and writing research and language technology. The influence of these disciplines and their particular research directions and methodologies on translation studies is at the present time something of a one-way affair, but given time, a reciprocal interdisciplinarity may well come into being, with the result that translation studies will be not only a borrower but also a lender.

Over and above a concern with new technological and experimental means of tapping the cognitive process of translation, a new combination of a theory of translation and of a neuro-functional theory of bilingualism has also recently been suggested (House 2013a). This new linguistic-cognitive orientation in translation studies emerges from a critical assessment of the validity and reliability of introspective and retrospective thinking aloud studies (cf. also Jääskeläinen 2011), and of various behavioural experiments and the usefulness and relevance of recent bilingual neuro-imaging studies.

Taken together, translation needs to be looked at from two perspectives: a social perspective, which takes account of the macro- and micro-contextual constraints that impinge on translation and the translator, and a cognitive perspective, which focuses on the 'internal' way a translator goes about his or her task of translating. Both are complementary, and both can be split up into different domains and fields of inquiry.

### Translation and equivalence

As stated above, equivalence is both a core concept in translation theory, and the conceptual basis of translation quality assessment. However, strange as this may

## **6 Translation theory and translation quality assessment**

seem, equivalence has also been one of the most controversial issues in recent decades. Thus we find translation scholars who see equivalence as an important concept, for instance Jakobson (1966), with his early pronouncement of the importance of ‘equivalence in difference’ and Nida (1964), with his suggestions of ‘different kinds of equivalence’; Catford (1965); House (1977, 1997); Neubert (1970, 1985); Pym (1995); and see Koller (1995, 2011). But there are very vocal others who consider equivalence rather unnecessary, for instance Hatim and Mason (1990) and Reiss and Vermeer (1984), or reject it completely (Vermeer 1984; Snell-Hornby 1988; Prunč 2007). More recently, equivalence has been denied any value in translation theory (Munday 2012: 77), or even denied any legitimate status (Baker 2011: 5). Further, and rather oddly, equivalence is sometimes linked to subjectivity in evaluation by the analyst, e.g. by Munday (2012: 68).

How did this happen? I think it is mainly due to many authors simply consciously or unconsciously misunderstanding what the concept implies. If we consider its Latin origin, we can clearly see that equivalence means ‘of equal value’ and that it is not at all about sameness or, worse still, identity, but about approximately equal value despite some unavoidable difference – a difference, we might add, that stems from the (banal) fact that languages are different.

In acknowledging this obvious fact, Jakobson (1966), as mentioned above, rightly spoke of ‘equivalence in difference’. Wrongly and rather dangerously paving the way for later misunderstandings, however, the German translation scholar Wilss (1982: 137–38) suggested a little later that equivalence really derives from mathematics. Another German translation scholar, Snell-Hornby, picked this up and spoke of equivalence implying an ‘illusion of symmetry between languages’ (1988: 22), which for anybody familiar with translation is downright nonsense.

As early as 1965, Catford stated that translation equivalence is essentially situational. More communicatively oriented, Nida (1964) spoke of ‘dynamic equivalence’ as an ‘equivalence of effect’ to be achieved by translations that can be said to be the closest natural equivalent to the source-language message.

A little later the eminent Leipzig school translation scholar Neubert (1970) suggested that translation equivalence is a ‘semiotic category’ that comprises a syntactic, a semantic and a pragmatic component. He believed that these components are hierarchically related, with semantic equivalence taking priority over syntactic equivalence, and pragmatic equivalence governing and modifying both syntactic and semantic equivalence. The importance of the pragmatic component for translation equivalence is later also reflected in the fact that Neubert (1985) attributes prime importance to the text as the level at which equivalence relations can be best diagnosed.

In discussing the fate of the concept of equivalence, mention must also be made of Leipzig school translation scholar Kade. Kade (1968) set up a simple translational equivalence typology between source text and target text. He distinguished between four different equivalence types: total equivalence (e.g. proper names); facultative equivalence, where there are many different correspondences at the level of expression but a 1:1 correspondence at the level of

content (example: German *schreien*; English ‘shout, scream’); approximative equivalence, where we find a 1:1 correspondence on the expressive level and partial correspondence on the content level (example: English ‘turtle, tortoise’; German *Schildkröte*); and zero equivalence, where there is a 1:0 correspondence at both the level of expression and the level of content (example: *Sashimi*).

According to Kade, the selection of potential equivalents depends not only on the (situational and cultural) context but also on a host of different factors, such as text type (genre), purpose or function of the translation and the nature of the envisaged addressees. Many translation scholars today agree that equivalence is to be understood as an approximative concept (cf. e.g. Schreiber 1993) – necessarily so because of the enormous complexity of any translational act. As mentioned above, translation is always subject to grammatical, lexical-semantic, terminological-phraseological and genre- and register-related constraints as well as extra-textual, contextual and situational constraints.

A recent consideration of equivalence stems from Pym (2010). Pym suggested the existence of two basic types of equivalence: natural equivalence, existing independently of the translator’s actions, and directional equivalence, i.e. equivalence from the source language to the target language. Pym believes that directional equivalence emerges from a translator’s personal textual decisions. How the existence of these two types of equivalence and indeed the difference between the two can be empirically tested remains however an open question. As stated above, equivalence has to do with the extent to which the translator manages to negotiate the linguistic and contextual conditions and constraints which underlie and complicate any act of translation.

The most important and comprehensive account of equivalence stems from Koller (2011). He distinguishes five frames of reference to define translation equivalence: denotative equivalence, connotative equivalence, text-normative equivalence, pragmatic equivalence and formal-aesthetic equivalence. Koller suggests that translators need to set up a hierarchy of those equivalences and they must make a choice for each individual translational case, taking due account of the complex enveloping context. This is a daunting task, but it is also an eminently important one, because as Krein-Kühle has recently argued, any ‘theoretical contextualized account of the nature, conditions and constraints defining equivalence remains a central task of our discipline in order to make our research results more robust, comparable, and amenable to generalization and intersubjective verification’ (Klein-Kühle 2014).

One step in this direction can be seen in my own work, which encapsulates an approach linking the enveloping context accessed through a multidimensional grid of parameters with the lexical and structural choices represented in the textual material (see [Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6](#) and [7](#)). Before moving on to a description of my own work, however, I will first, in [Chapter 2](#), give an overview of different approaches to translation theory and quality assessment.

# 2

## DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO TRANSLATION THEORY AND TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

I will use three basic criteria with which to systematize this overview of different approaches. They will serve as the basis of a meta-analysis of approaches, and help examine whether and how the approaches to be discussed below are able to account for, and formulate rigorous statements about, the following issues:

- the relationship between the original text and its translation;
- the relationship between the original text (or features of it) and how it is perceived by the author, the translator and the recipient(s);
- the consequences which views about these relationships have when one wants to distinguish a translation from other types of multilingual text production.

Using these criteria, and including a discussion of cases where there seems to be no original text at all, I will review several translation theories preliminarily grouped as follows: subjective, hermeneutic approaches; descriptive norm-based approaches; post-structuralist and postmodern approaches and text- and discourse-based approaches.

In the following I will review a number of different approaches to evaluating translations with a view to whether and how they can satisfy the three criteria formulated above.

### **Psycho-social approaches**

#### ***Mentalist views***

Mentalist views are reflected in the century-old subjective, intuitive and anecdotal judgements of mostly lay persons who talk about ‘how good or how

bad one finds a translation'. In the majority of cases, these judgements are based on simple impressions and feelings, and as such they are prone to lead to global, undifferentiated valuations like the following: 'The translation doesn't capture the spirit of the original', 'The tone of the original is somehow lost in the translation', or, more positively, 'This translation is as good as or even better than the original.' Often such vague and common-place statements about the quality of a translation are linked to the person of the translator, whose personality is supposed to be similar to that of the author and the potential reader. Thus Savory writes: 'The most satisfying translations are made by those whose personalities are in tune with those of the writers and those of the readers' (1963: 154). Examples of vague 'principles' which a translation of optimal quality should heed are also listed by Savory (1968: 50). Among pairs of contradictory statements are the following: 'a translation must give the words of the original' and 'a translation must give the ideas of the original'; 'a translation should read like an original work' and 'a translation should read like a translation'; 'a translation should reflect the style of the original' and 'a translation should reflect the style of the translator', and so on.

One may think that such pronouncements made quite a long time ago are outdated by now, with translation studies having come of age, serious scientific approaches now characterizing the discipline. However, in recent times, too, this type of vague comment has been replayed by scholars of the so-called neo-hermeneutic school of translation who believe in the legitimacy of subjective interpretations of the worth of a translation (cf. e.g. Stolze 2003, 2011 or Prunč 2007). Propagators of this expressly anti-positivist approach base their thinking on Friedrich Schleiermacher (1813/1977), Hans-Georg Gadamer (1960) and George Steiner (1975), who all placed 'understanding' of a text and the individuals doing the understanding in a central position. Gadamer (1960: 289) talks about a 'melting of horizons' in an individual understander, meaning that what one already knows merges with newly incoming knowledge to be understood in a text. Translation in the hermeneutic paradigm looks at the relation between the translator and his texts, at what is his own and what is new and strange. This should enhance translators' reflexion on their understanding of the text and empower them to justify their own translational strategies. Subjectivity is a centrally important category, so the translator's personal life experiences and habits are given pride of place. Historicity is another important notion in the hermeneutic tradition, which means that the meaning of texts cannot be described completely objectively, rather they undergo a dynamic development. Translational equivalence is rejected outright; any translation is always no more and no less than a kind of '*hermeneutischer Entwurf*' (a 'hermeneutic draft') (Paepcke *et al.* 1986: 86). George Steiner speaks of the basic indeterminacy of translations, claiming that what we are dealing with in translation 'is not a science, but an exact art' (1975: 295). In his chapter on the 'hermeneutic motion' (1975: 29–413), Steiner describes the imperfectness of any translation, which is a result of the fact that understanding is always partial.

## **10 Different approaches**

Hermeneutic translation scholars believe that the quality of a translated text is intimately linked to the translator, whose interpretation of the original and whose moves towards an ‘optimal translation’ are seen as rooted in intuition, empathy and interpretative experience and knowledge. Translating is here regarded as an individual creative act, in the process of which the ‘meaning’ of a text is also ‘created’ anew. There is no meaning in the text itself, the meaning is in the ‘eye of the beholder’.

Most mentalist approaches to translation evaluation emphasize the belief that the quality of a translation depends largely on the translator’s subjective decisions, which in turn are based on his experience. With respect to the three criteria listed above, it is obvious that the subjective, neo-hermeneutic approach to translation evaluation can only shed light on what occurs between the translator and (features of) the original text, as it represents a selective view of translation focusing on the translator’s processes of interpretation. The original text, the relation between original and translation and the expectations of target text readers are not given the attention they deserve, and the problem of distinguishing between a translation and various types of versions and adaptations is also ignored.

## **Response-based approaches**

In stark contrast to followers of the above subjective-hermeneutic approach to translation quality assessment, proponents of response-based approaches believe in more reliable ways of judging translations. There are at least three variants of response-based approaches that are particularly relevant for translation quality assessment. I will discuss them in turn.

### ***Behaviouristic views***

This tradition was influenced by American behaviourism, and it is associated with Nida’s (1964; Nida and Taber 1969) seminal work on translation (see also Chapter 1). He suggested several behavioural tests to enable translation evaluators to formulate more ‘objective’ statements about the quality of a translation. The tests used broad criteria such as ‘intelligibility’ and ‘informativeness’, and they were based on the belief that a ‘good’ translation is one leading to ‘equivalence of response’, a criterion linked to Nida’s famous principle of ‘dynamic equivalence’, i.e. that the manner in which the receptors of a translation respond to the translation should be equivalent to the manner in which the source text’s receptors respond to the source text. In the heyday of behaviourism, several imaginative tests were suggested, such as reading aloud techniques, and various cloze and rating tasks, all of which took observable responses to a translation as measuring its quality. However, in hindsight, it is safe to say that these tests ultimately failed because they were unable to capture something as intricate and complex as the ‘overall quality of

a translation'. Even if one accepted the assumption that a translation of optimal quality should elicit an equivalent response, one would still be left with the awkward question of whether it is possible to operationalize such 'grand' concepts as 'intelligibility' or 'informativeness' and proceed to measure an 'equivalent response'. If this were not possible – which indeed turned out to be the case – it would be futile to pose such behavioural criteria in the first place. Further, the source text is largely ignored in such tests, which implies that nothing can be said about the relationship between the original and texts resulting from different textual operations.

### ***Functionalistic, 'skopos'-related views***

In the 1980s, following the 'pragmatic turn' in linguistics, the functionalist paradigm shifted the focus of translation studies towards a consideration of the extralinguistic setting of translation. As briefly mentioned above, functionalist or *skopos*-oriented approaches to translation either downplayed 'equivalence' to a special form of 'adequacy' (Reiss and Vermeer 1984: 13–40) or completely abandoned it (Vermeer 1984). The *skopos* or purpose is the most important factor in translation, the original text being downgraded to a mere 'offer of information' and the translator often seen as a type of 'co-author'. The assumption in the *skopos*-oriented approach to translation is that special kinds of translation such as those which I have called overt versions are the rule rather than an exception. This means that in my opinion *skopos* theory is not very useful for translation quality assessment. Although the notion of function is very important in this functionalistic approach, it is never made appropriately explicit let alone operationalized, so one can only hypothesize that 'function' is here conceived as referring to the real-world effect of a text, i.e. an extralinguistically derived entity. And exactly how the global *skopos* of a text is realized *linguistically*, and how one can determine whether a given translation fulfils its *skopos*, remains rather unclear. Given the crucial role assigned to the 'purpose' of a translation and the concomitant reduction of the original to a mere 'offer of information', which the translator is licensed to manipulate as she sees fit, one can also see the closeness of this approach to the mentalistic approach described above, where it is also the case that the translator is given responsibility over how he or she manages the translational task. What is ignored here is the crucial fact that a translation is never an 'independent' but always a 'dependent', derived text. By its very nature, a translation is simultaneously bound to its original *and* the presuppositions governing its reception in the target lingua-cultural environment. To stress only the latter factor is unwarranted because it prevents one from determining when a text is no longer a translation but a text derived from different textual operations. With regard to the three criteria, it is thus with reference to the issue of distinguishing a translation from other forms of text that the functionalistic approach is inadequate.

## **Text and discourse-oriented approaches**

The approaches which can be placed in the category ‘text and discourse-based approaches’ are descriptive translation studies, postmodernist and deconstructionist views, as well as linguistically-oriented approaches to translation quality assessment. They will now be briefly discussed.

### ***Descriptive translation studies***

Descriptive approaches to (mostly) literary translation extend the notion of translation even further to include ‘assumed translations’ (Toury 1995: 31). Equivalence is here regarded as ‘of little importance in itself’ (Toury 1995: 86) or is assumed to exist *per definitionem*. Although Toury (1995 and 2012) emphasizes the importance of empirical investigation in translation studies and the analysis of the macro-context of culture, we are still left with a far too broadly conceived view of what a translation is, which makes it impossible to establish whether a text is a translation or not and to clearly define criteria for translation quality assessment. In the descriptive-historical approach, a translation is evaluated predominantly in terms of its forms and functions inside the system of the receiving culture. The original is therefore of subordinate importance. The focus in descriptive translation studies is on ‘actual translations’, i.e. those which are, in the context of the receiving culture, regarded *prima facie* as translations. Translations are seen as cultural facts, as ‘facts of the culture which hosts them’ (Toury 2012: 24), and translation activities are both norm-governed and seen as having cultural significance. The procedure followed in this paradigm is a retrospective one, from the translation to the original text. The concept of equivalence is explicitly retained, but it does not refer to a one-to-one relationship between original and translation text, rather to sets of relationships that characterize translations under a specified constellation of circumstances. Translation equivalence is thus never a relationship between source and target text, but a ‘functional-relational notion’ – a number of relationships established as distinguishing appropriate modes of translation performance for the particular culture in which the translation must operate. Toury claims to have introduced an essential change to the equivalence discussion in translation studies ‘from an ahistorical, largely prescriptive concept to a historical one’ (2012: 61). Over and above the assumed multiplicity of norms, their basic variability and instability is also a mainstay of this approach. The characteristic features of a translation are ‘neutrally described’ according to how these features are perceived by native culture members. They are not ‘prescriptively pre-judged’ in their correspondence to, or deviation from, features of the original text. However, if one wants to evaluate a particular translation, which is never an independent, new text in a new culture alone, but is related to something that ‘was there before’, then such a view of translation and translation evaluation seems

strangely skewed. With respect to the three criteria, this theory is clearly deficient with regard to illuminating the relationship between source and translation texts.

Descriptive translation studies share with the *skopos* approach the emphasis on the appropriateness of a translation in the target culture, the relative insignificance of the original text and the disregard for setting off translations from other forms of text (re)production. Together with some early corpus-based approaches to translation which state that ‘the move away from source texts and equivalence is instrumental in preparing the ground for corpus work’ (Baker 1993: 237) and an increased focus on the socio-cultural context at large, both the *skopos* and the descriptive translation approach may have done great damage to the discipline’s view of ‘equivalence’, a fact that is all the more deplorable since from an applied point of view equivalence has remained crucial, in particular when ‘seen against the background of the increasingly stringent national and international quality requirements to be met by the translation product’ (Klein-Kühle 2014: 21).

### ***Philosophical and socio-cultural, socio-political approaches***

Proponents of these approaches such as, for instance, Venuti (1995), attempt to critically investigate translations from a philosophical and socio-political stance in order to reveal unequal power relations, injustices and different kinds of manipulations in the textual material. In a plea for making translations and translators more ‘visible’, adherents of this approach focus on the ‘hidden persuaders’ in texts whose ulterior, often power-related motives are to be brought into the open. Emphasis is also placed on which texts are chosen for translation and why, and exactly how and why an original text is skewed and twisted in favour of powerful ideologies, reflecting certain group and individual interests. However, one may hold against such a predominant interest in ‘external pressures’ on originals and translation that translation is after all a *linguistic* procedure, however conditioned this procedure may be through ideological shifts and skews. Before adopting a critical stance emphasizing the importance of a macro-perspective, one needs to seriously engage in a micro-perspective, i.e. conduct detailed, theoretically informed analyses of the linguistic forms and their functions in the texts at hand.

Translation scholars in the field of post-colonialism (cf. e.g. Robinson 1997) are particularly interested in how the translation of texts can be seen as a socio-political act, and how interventions in acts of translation can contribute to a more ethical practice in producing and reading translations. The critical stance taken in this approach and its emphasis on the socio-cultural context in which any act of translation takes place often abstracts from or passes over the fact that translation is also an act of linguistic transfer.

Deconstructionist and post-structural approaches can be characterized as throwing into question basic concepts in translation such as ‘meaning’, and other basic notions involving language, texts and communication that have so far been

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taken tacitly for granted. These approaches also look at how texts, when examined closely, undermine supposedly fixed assumptions and reveal internal contradictions. One of the leading figures of the deconstruction movement is Jacques Derrida (cf. e.g. 1985), whose term *differance* is supposed to indicate that meaning is always unstable, processual, deferred, lacking any stable linguistic identity. In Derrida's opinion, for instance, a commentary is also a translation.

With respect to the three criteria (relationship between original and translation, between (features of) the texts and human agents, and delimitation of translation and other textual operations), the critical, postmodern approaches are most relevant in their attempts to find answers to the first, and also to the second. However, no answers are sought for the question of when a text is a translation, and when a text belongs to a different textual operation. Here the boundaries become deliberately blurred.

### **Linguistically oriented approaches**

Seminal early work is by Nida (1964), Catford (1965), the many contributions of the Leipzig school of translation studies (e.g. Neubert 1985) and Koller's (2011) comprehensive presentation, discussion and critique of the discipline. In more recent times many more linguistically oriented works on translation evaluation have appeared, e.g. by Baker (1992/2011), Hatim and Mason (1997), Erich Steiner (1998), Munday and Hatim (2004), Teich (2004) and Munday (2008). They all widened the scope of translation studies to include speech act theory, discourse analysis, pragmalinguistics and sociopragmatics.

Linguistic approaches attempt to explicate the relationship between the text or features of it and how these are perceived by authors, translators and readers, but they differ in their capacity to provide detailed procedures for analysis and evaluation. Most promising are approaches which take account of the interconnectedness of context and text, because the inextricable link between language and the real world is definitive in meaning making and in translation. Such a view of translation as re-contextualization is the line taken in the linguistic model of translation evaluation by House (1977, 1997, 2009), to be described in its different versions in the chapters which follow.

### **Some specific proposals for translation quality assessment**

As opposed to the above discussion, which focused on a number of general approaches to translation, this chapter will now concentrate on several recent proposals specifically related to translation quality assessment in order to see how they fare vis-à-vis the three criteria posed at the beginning of this chapter concerning the relevance of any approach to translation evaluation.

One of the earliest proposals for evaluating translations is by Katharina Reiss (1968, 1971, 1973). Reiss suggests that for determining the quality of a translation it is first of all necessary to determine its function and the text type

of the source text. Following Juan Luis Vives (quoted in Reiss 1971: 140), Reiss claims that different types of texts can be differentiated on the basis of linguistic philosopher and psychologist Karl Bühler's three basic functions of language: *inhaltsbetonte* (content-oriented) texts, e.g. news, scientific-technical texts; *formbetonte* (form-oriented) texts, e.g. poems and many other types of literary texts; and *appellbetonte* (conative) texts, e.g. advertisements and texts of a rhetorical or polemical bent. To cover translations of texts involving media other than print, Reiss also suggests an additional fourth text type: *subsidiäre* (subsidiary) or audiomedial texts, e.g. operas, songs, etc., for which different rules of translation apply if translation adequacy is to be achieved. According to Reiss, it is these text types which have to be kept equivalent in an adequate translation. In the case of content-oriented texts therefore invariance on the content plane is of primary consideration, and with form-oriented texts it is both invariance on the content plane and the expression plane to the greatest possible extent. And in the case of conative or appellative texts, the 'effect' of the source text is to be upheld in the translation above all other features. Finally, an adequate translation of a subsidiary text must keep the adaptation of the 'text' proper to such components as musical rhythm etc. invariant. The determination of the text type presupposes a careful analysis of the source text. It is here that the weakness of these early suggestions becomes apparent: Reiss' ideas of translation evaluation remain programmatic only: she gives no concrete instructions as to how one may go about establishing the function of a text, the textual type, let alone the 'effect' of a text. On a theoretical level, however, the most important point of criticism is the faulty equation between functions of language and functions of texts. This point will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter, where my own model is described.

Other early suggestions of how to go about assessing the quality of a translation stem from Koller (1974) and Wilss (1974). Koller points to the necessity of developing a comprehensive, linguistic model of translation quality assessment. This model should consist of three main phases: 1. source text criticism with a view to ensuring transferability into the target language; 2. translation comparison, where the particular methods of translation used in the production of the given translation text are described; and 3. evaluation of the translation as 'adequate' or 'not adequate' given the particular text-specific features derived in phase 1 and measured against the native speaker's faculty of metalinguistic judgement. Although stimulating and original at the time, Koller's ideas did not, unfortunately, go beyond a very general outline, with no suggestions for operationalization.

Wilss (1974) suggests that for the objectivization of translation quality assessment, the *Gebrauchsnorm* (norm of usage) in a given language community with reference to a given situation should be taken as a yardstick, and like Koller, Wilss also suggests that the native speaker's capacity for metalinguistic judgement is to be the arbiter of this norm of usage. In other words, a translation will be evaluated according to whether or not it is found to be adequate vis-à-vis the

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‘normal’ standard usage of native speakers in a given cultural situational context. However, given the nature of language, there will always be several variants of expression which are legitimately possible and conventionalized in a given situation, and it is left to the translator to choose which of these variants she will actually decide to use. Translation is a reflective and creative process which always leaves the translator some freedom of choice between several approximately equivalent possibilities of realizing situationally appropriate meaning (cf. Levy 1967: 1171). Furthermore, the situation in which a source text was written is by definition unique. This means that the notion of a ‘norm of usage’ that exists in the source culture for a particular unique text is a somewhat optimistic one. Even more optimistic is the idea that a ‘norm of usage’ should exist for this unique text inside the target culture. In addition to the obvious theoretical unsoundness of these suggestions, one should not underestimate the immense difficulty of empirically establishing in the dynamics of real language use what *any* valid norm of usage is.

An interesting approach to translation quality assessment within the tradition of descriptive translation studies is suggested by van den Broeck (1985, 1986). He proposes a tripartite procedure featuring a contrastive-pragmatic analysis of source and translation text which is then taken as the basis for the ensuing critical evaluation of the translation. The contrastive analysis starts with a hypothetical reconstruction of the text-internal relations and functions of the source text, which, following Toury, are labelled ‘adequate translation’ and act as a *tertium comparationis* for the comparison with the target text. In the course of this reconstruction, so-called ‘textemes’ can be identified, which indicate textual functions. The texteme analysis comprises phonic, lexical and syntactic components, language varieties, rhetorical figures, narrative and poetic structures and elements of text conventions (text sequences, punctuation, italicizing, and so on). The elements of the target text are then compared with corresponding elements in the original text. Here van den Broeck directs special attention to so-called shifts (cf. also Blum-Kulka 1986). He distinguishes *obligatory shifts*, i.e. those determined by the rules of the target linguistic and cultural system, and *optional shifts*, i.e. those emanating from the translator’s decisions – a classification later taken up by Pym’s (2010) division of equivalence into natural equivalence and directional equivalence (see Chapter 1). What results is a ‘factual degree of equivalence’ (van den Broeck 1985: 58) between original and translation. Van den Broeck stresses the fact that this type of contrastive analysis of the text structures needs to be embedded into the larger context of the respective target and source culture polysystem. This also involves taking account of the norms of the translator, the translation method and the translation strategies chosen by the translator. Finally, target linguistic textemes are evaluated against their source language equivalents. Van den Broeck’s ideas are particularly relevant for contemporary literary translations. Given his strong reliance on the norms holding in the target and source cultures, the same arguments I presented above with respect to Wilss’ invocation of a generalized norm of usage, hold here too,

and van den Broeck unfortunately did not follow up his proposal with a detailed model of translation quality assessment.

In the context of the *skopos* approach, Amman (1990) adopts a strictly target text oriented perspective on translation quality assessment. She closely follows Reiss and Vermeer (1984: 139), who pronounced that it is first and foremost the translation which needs to be assessed. Only as a secondary step does one need to assess a translation as a translation of a source text. The framework chosen by Amman for her functionalistic translation evaluation consists of five phases: 1. determine the function of the translation; 2. determine the intratextual coherence of the translation; 3. determine the function of the source text; 4. determine the intratextual coherence of the source text; and 5. determine the intertextual coherence between the translation and the source text. The term ‘coherence’ refers here to both content and form, and the relationship between the two. Determining the function of the translation can only be done via the intended addressees. Amman here operates with the notion of a ‘model reader’, defined as a reader who arrives at a certain understanding of the text via a reading strategy. The model reader’s text understanding can be developed on the basis of the so-called ‘Scenes-and-Frames approach’. Scenes are conceived as ideas that develop in a reader’s head on the basis of more or less complex ideas and perceptions, and frames are defined as any perceptible phenomena that carry information (Amman 1990). I can see two major weaknesses which Amman’s approach shares with the functionalistic and hermeneutic approaches described above: 1. the vagueness of the procedure for determining the ‘function’ of source and target texts; and 2. the even greater vagueness concerning what happens in the heads of readers.

Another essentially functionalistic approach to evaluating a translation – but with respect to specialist texts that fulfil the same function in source and target cultures – is the one suggested by Jacqueline D’Hulst (1997). She equates function with ‘text act’, which seems to me to be similar to illocution, and further subdivides this into topic-centred and hierarchical text structure. Text structure relates to text connectivity comprising macro- and micro-units. The author assumes that text structures can be correlated with text acts, such that for example a directive text act correlates with a hierarchical text structure. I do not understand how it is possible to equate text acts and text structures; this goes against anything described in recent decades by speech act theory, discourse analysis, contrastive pragmatics, and text linguistics. No further comments seem necessary at this point.

Another approach to translation quality assessment worth mentioning is proposed by the Canadian scholar Robert Larose (1998). Like the *skopos* theorists, Larose firmly believes that it is the purpose of a translation which is the most important aspect for measuring its quality. And like me (see [Chapter 3](#) for details), he distinguishes textual and extra-textual features. His focus on textual features includes three different levels: a microstructural one that relates to graphic, lexical and syntactic expression forms at sentence and phrase level; a

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macrostructural level that relates to the semantic structure of discourse content, above the level of sentence; and a superstructural level relating to the overall structure including narrative and argumentative structure. Larose focuses on assessing how far the translator's purpose matches the original author's intention – in my opinion a forbiddingly difficult thing to do – and he also includes the translation process in his consideration of translation evaluation. Larose assumes that there are three main stages in the translation process: interpretation (where the translator tries to understand the meanings of the original text), production (where the translator decides on one particular meaning for her translation) and final product, i.e. the translated text. As to the practical operation of Larose's ideas, source and target text are assessed separately with reference to the microstructural, macrostructural and superstructural levels, the latter referring to the overall purpose and the objective of both original author and translator. These different levels are also relevant for deciding how serious a translation error is. Larose emphasizes the context of a translation and a translation evaluation. His approach is interesting in that – unlike, for instance, my own model – it attempts to include professional constraints, such as the concrete working environment in which translators find themselves, and he reflects on what might be done to 'defective' original texts and whether and how the translator can improve them. He also discusses the problems surrounding what I have called 'covert translations'. All this sounds convincing. However, his ideas are not consistently worked out and are thus not detailed and specific enough. Admittedly, it is dauntingly difficult to include in any assessment the complexities of real-world contexts, and in particular the actual working conditions faced by translators. Maybe the aim of uniting product and process evaluation is just too difficult (or impossible?) to reach. So with regret I have to state that this is not at all a meticulously worked out model, and it clearly fails to live up to its aim of being particularly relevant for professional translation.

Another recent approach to translation quality assessment is that of Jamal Al-Qinai (2000). He has set up an 'eclectic' approach to translation quality assessment in which he suggests a comprehensive textual analysis, looking at source and target texts as products. In his eclectic model, Al-Qinai draws on work by Newmark, Hatim and Mason, Erich Steiner and my own model of translation quality assessment, but he does not believe that the concept of equivalence is useful for evaluating translations. However, both pragmatic and syntactic equivalence are taken account of in Al-Qinai's set of seven parameters (he calls them 'parametres'). The genesis of these parameters is unfortunately not explicitly explained anywhere. The parameters are as follows: 1. textual typology (province) and tenor, including linguistic-narrative structure of source and translation texts, and the textual function, i.e. informative, persuasive, didactic, etc.; 2. formal correspondence (i.e. the presentation of the two texts in terms of length, division into paragraphs, punctuation); 3. thematic structure: coherence; 4. cohesion with a focus on the translated text and its adequate sequences of rhetorical strategies and ideas; 5. text-pragmatic equivalence referring to a similar (intended) effect

through the fulfilment of reader expectation; 6. lexical properties (e.g. idioms, collocations, etc. including style shifts); and 7. grammatical/syntactic equivalence relating to word order, voice, agreement, etc. Looking at the model analyses comparing English and Arabic texts, the impression one gets is commensurate with the author's aim for eclecticism, but not only in a positive sense! The systematicity gained from basing translation quality assessment on a particular pragmatic and linguistic theory such as, for example, systemic functional linguistics, is clearly missing here, so the parameters seem a hotchpotch of partially overlapping and/or redundant categories. Al-Qinai's evaluation procedures cannot really be assessed by non-Arabic speakers because he fails to include back translations of the Arabic translations quoted. His final 'holistic view' is also not really an assessment of the quality of the translation he examined. Further, and most critical, the link between text and context is not made explicit anywhere, so we never learn anything about the particulars of the production of the original text. The author also emphasizes that any final judgement of translation quality needs to be based on sample receptors of a translation, on the translation's success in the real world, on how well a translation is in line with the results of relevant market research and on the assessment of selected 'judges' – the latter echoing, of course, Nida's (1964) early ideas of translation tests. Whether such rather grandiose ideas about the 'final judgement' of translation quality pass the test of real world practice remains an open question.

Another recent approach to translation quality assessment is the one set out by Malcolm Williams (2004). He bases his approach on argumentation theory, an idea that is not new and can be found in Sonja Tirkkonen-Condit's excellent early original work on text structure and argumentation theory (1985, 1986). Williams defines argumentation as reasoned discourse which also embraces the techniques of rhetoric in order to persuade an audience. He suggests the following discourse categories as underlying his procedure for translation quality assessment: 1. argument macrostructure; 2. rhetorical topology with five subcategories: organizational schemas, conjunctives, types of argument, figures and narrative strategy. He uses Toulmin's (1958) macrostructure model and its terms, such as, for example, claims/discoveries, grounds, warrants/rules and backings as well as two elements that may additionally be necessary: qualifiers/modalizers and rebuttals/exceptions. The operation of this approach is as follows: first the original text is analysed with reference to its argument schema, arrangements and organizational relation. Secondly, the translation is similarly analysed in order to assess its 'overall coherence' to find out whether the overall arrangement is maintained or appropriately modified and whether there are problems of readability or acceptability in the translation. Thirdly, a comparative assessment is undertaken with reference to the categories mentioned above. Fourthly and finally, an overall argumentation-centred translation evaluation is given. Williams also lists a number of practical standards for a grading scheme: publication standard, information standard, minimum standard, substandard. My criticism of this approach relates to the fact that it may not be the case that

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argument structure is important for all types of texts. Further, argumentation structure as a main criterion for judging translations captures only *one* aspect of a text and should not be exclusively focused on to the detriment of other linguistic and micro-textual considerations.

In this chapter I have critically reviewed a number of approaches to translation theory and translation quality assessment. In the next chapter my own original model of translation quality assessment will be presented in its original version.

# 3

## THE ORIGINAL HOUSE MODEL OF TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT (1977)

### Fundamental concepts

The original House model of translation quality assessment (1977, 2nd ed. 1981) is based on theories of language use. It was designed to provide an analysis of the linguistic-discoursal as well as the situational-cultural particularities of originals and translated texts, a principled comparison of the two texts and an evaluation of their relative match. The model is an eclectic one and is based on pragmatic theory, Hallidayan systemic-functional linguistics, notions developed in the framework of the Prague school of language and linguistics, register theory, stylistics and discourse analysis. The model is also firmly based on the notion of equivalence discussed in [Chapter 1](#). Equivalence, as I stressed above, is the core concept in translation quality assessment. It is also rooted in everyday folk linguistic understanding of translation as something that is a (comparable) ‘reproduction’ of something originally produced in another language – and it is this everyday view of what makes a translation a translation which, in a sense, legitimizes the notion that translation is in a double-bind relationship. Translations are texts which are doubly constrained: on the one hand to their source text and on the other hand to the (potential) recipient’s communicative conditions. This double linkage is the basis of the translational ‘equivalence relation’, i.e. the relation between an original text and its translation, as discussed in [Chapter 2](#) above.

The notion of equivalence is also related to the preservation of ‘meaning’ across two different lingua-cultures. Three aspects of that meaning are particularly relevant for translation: a semantic aspect, a pragmatic aspect and a textual aspect. I will briefly describe them below.

The semantic aspect of meaning consists of the relationship of reference or denotation, that is the relationship of linguistic units or symbols to their referents in some possible world, where possible world means any world the human mind

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is capable of constructing. It is important to emphasize that the nature of the universe (i.e. the subjective interpretation of ‘possible world’) is common to most lingua-cultures, and the referential aspect of meaning is also the one most easily accessible and for which translation equivalence can most readily be seen to be present or absent.

As opposed to the semantic aspect of meaning, where one examines the relationship between sign and designate, between ‘words’ and ‘things’, where elements of sentences as theoretical constructs are construed into propositions, pragmatics looks at the purposes and effects for which a sentence is used and at the real-world conditions and contexts in which a sentence may be appropriately used as an utterance. So pragmatics relates to the correlation between linguistic units and their user(s) in a given communicative situation. Pragmatics is about meaning in speech situations as it is manifest in social acts ‘outside’ sentences, and about the meaning making as a dynamic process where the meaning between speaker and hearer, the context of utterance and the meaning potential of an utterance are negotiated. Pragmatic meaning can also be said to belong to discourse, i.e. the use of utterances in performing social actions.

The distinction between semantic and pragmatic meaning also underlies the theory of speech acts developed initially by Austin (1962) and Searle (1969). Pragmatic meaning is here referred to as the illocutionary force an utterance is said to have, i.e. the particular use of an expression on a specific occasion. The illocutionary force of an utterance is differentiated from its propositional content, i.e. the semantic information which an utterance contains. The illocutionary force of an utterance may often be predicted from grammatical features, e.g. word order, mood of the verb, stress, intonation or the presence of performative verbs. In actual speech situations it is, however, the context which clarifies the illocutionary force of an utterance.

Since translation handles language in use, considerations of illocutionary force or pragmatic meaning are of great importance for translation. In effect, in translation we do not operate with sentences at all but with utterances, i.e. units of discourse characterized by their use-value in communication. In certain types of translation then, it is both possible and necessary to aim at equivalence of pragmatic meaning at the expense of semantic meaning. Pragmatic meaning overrides semantic meaning in these cases. And we can then consider a translation a primarily pragmatic reconstruction of its original.

The textual aspect of meaning which is to be kept equivalent in translation has already been stressed by Catford (1965). He had recognized early on that translation is also a textual phenomenon. What is a text? A text is any stretch of language in which the individual components relate to one another and form a coherent whole. A text is thus a linkage of sentences into a larger unit. Various relations of co-textual reference take place in the process of text constitution, e.g. theme–rheme sequences, occurrences of pro-forms, substitutions, co-references, ellipses, anaphora. It is these different ways of text constitution which account for the textual meaning that should be kept equivalent in translation.

From these three aspects of meaning regarded as relevant for translation, we can derive a working definition of translation: translation is the replacement of a text in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language. Since, as stated above, equivalence is the fundamental criterion of translation quality, an adequate translation text is a pragmatically and semantically equivalent one. As a first requirement for this equivalence, it is posited that a translation text has a function equivalent to that of its source text. However, as we shall see in [Chapter 5](#), this requirement needs to be further differentiated given the cline between overt and covert translation. Such a use of the concept of function presupposes that there are elements in any text which – given appropriate analytical tools – can reveal that text's function.

The use of the term 'function' needs to be precisely defined, since different language functions can co-exist inside what will here be described as an individual text's function and because language functions have often been correlated with textual types. In the following, various views of 'the functions of language' will be looked at in order to distinguish them from the notion of a text's function, which is crucial for my model.

## **Functions of language are not functions of texts!**

Many different classification schemes for the 'functions of language' have been proposed. I will now briefly review some of the most influential ones.

Based on his work on meaning and the context of situation and culture, Malinowski (1923) classified the functions of language into two basic ones: the pragmatic and the magical or ritual function, the latter being associated with religious and ceremonial activities in the culture. The pragmatic or practical function was further subclassified into active and narrative. It is broad enough to cover what is called the symbolic or representational function in other classificatory systems.

Ogden and Richards, in their classic work *The Meaning of Meaning*, differentiate five functions of language: symbolization of reference, expression of attitude to listener, expression of attitude to referent, promotion of effects intended and support of reference (1946: 227). Having grouped together all functions save the first one, as forming a complex of what they call 'emotive functions' (1946: 229), the authors differentiate two basic functions: the symbolic use of language and the emotive-evocative use of language. In the former, correctness of the symbolization and the truth of the reference are most important; in the emotive-evocative use of language, the character of the attitude aroused in the addressees is of prime importance.

Karl Bühler (1934/1965) made use of a conceptual framework inherited from Plato's distinction of first, second and third person derived from his rhetorical grammar (i.e. the organization of the verbal system of many languages around categories of person, speaker, addressee and everything else). In his 'organon model of language', Bühler distinguished three basic functions: the

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*Darstellungsfunktion* (representational or representative function), linked to objects and relations in the real world and serving to describe extralinguistic reality; the *Ausdrucksfunktion* (emotive-expressive function), which is associated with the speaker/writer of the message; and the *Appellfunktion* (conative function) that focuses on the receiver of the message. According to Bühler, the representational function is the central (unmarked) function present in any message (except in a few interjections), the other two functions being marked functions. As with Ogden and Richards' model, in Bühler's classification we again see a fundamental division into an (absolutely necessary) symbolic, referential function and other additional functions.

One of the most well known classifications of the functions of language can be found in Roman Jakobson's (1960) model. Jakobson starts out from Bühler's model, taking over Bühler's three basic functions and adding three more. His resulting schema of verbal communication is as follows: the addresser sends a message to the addressee; the message requires a context (extralinguistic world) referred to by the addresser, a code at least partially common to addresser and addressee, and a contact, a physical channel or psychological connection between addresser and addressee. From orientations towards addresser, addressee, or context, Jakobson derives the three Bühlerian functions. From an orientation towards contact, Jakobson derives a phatic function – this function is predominant if a message has the predominant purpose of establishing, prolonging or discontinuing communication. When speech is focused on the code, it has a metalingual function. The poetic function in Jakobson's model consists of a focusing on the message for its own sake. However, we can say that even in Jakobson's elaborate six-function model, the basic dichotomy between a basic referential function and all the other 'non-referential' functions still holds.

Dell Hymes (1968) has set up a typology of language functions that is very similar to Jakobson's. However, he adds a new seventh function, the contextual (situational) one, and he states:

The defining characteristic of some speech events may be a balance, harmonious or conflicting, between more than one function. If so, the interpretation of a speech event is far from a matter of assigning it to one of the seven types of function.

(1968: 120)

Karl Popper (1972), in an attempt to justify the existence of his three worlds and especially 'World Three' as the world of 'objective contents of thought' and of 'knowledge without a knowing subject', has postulated a progression from lower to higher functions in the evolution of human language. He distinguishes four functions of language: an expressive function (using language to express internal states of the individual), a signalling function (using language to communicate information about internal states to other individuals), a descriptive function (using language to describe things in the external world) and an argumentative

function (using language to present and evaluate arguments and explanations). In Popper's view, the expressive and signalling functions of language are uppermost in more primitive communicative systems; the descriptive and argumentative functions are those that were responsible for accelerating the evolution of human knowledge.

Halliday (1973; Halliday and Hasan 1989) distinguishes three language functions similar to the Popperian ones – he calls them 'metafunctions of systemic theory': the ideational, the interpersonal and the textual functions. The ideational function is subdivided into two subfunctions: the experiential function, to be thought of as relating to the real world as apprehended in our experience, and the logical function, through which language expresses the fundamental logical relations of the semantic system. Through its ideational function, language manages to convey and interpret experience of the world, in other words, it expresses content. Halliday's ideational function can be said to correspond to Popper's descriptive and argumentative functions. In its interpersonal function, language acts as an expression of a speaker's attitudes and his influence on the attitudes and the behaviour of the addressee(s). Through the interpersonal function, language also serves as a means for conveying the speaker's relationship with his addressee(s), and for expressing social roles including communication roles such as questioner and respondent. Halliday thus seems to have merged Popper's signalling and expressive function in his interpersonal function, and also Bühler's *Ausdruck* and *Appell* functions, collapsing the speaker and hearer ends of the communication cycle.

Through the textual function, language makes links with itself and with the situation: the construction of a text becomes possible because of this linkage. It is really a kind of 'enabling function', a 'resource for ensuring that what is said is relevant and relates to its context' (Halliday 1989: 45). The textual function is, however, of a different status from the two other functions, in that there is no corresponding function in the sense of 'use', and because of this one might argue, as did Leech (1983: 57), that it should not really be called a function at all. Halliday's functional theory thus differs from the other approaches mentioned above, in that only the ideational and the interpersonal functions are comparable to the notion of function used in the other approaches as a basic mode of language in use. Halliday's textual function really relates to a different intra-language level, associated with the internal organization of linguistic items. Viewed in this way, Halliday's model also seems to confirm the basic split of language use into a referential or content-oriented function and a non-referential, interpersonal function.

The fundamental division into a denotative, referential function and an expressive/emotive-conative one is, of course, paralleled by the customary division of meaning into cognitive (or denotative) meaning including concepts which people have with regard to the content of verbal communication, and emotive, connotative meaning covering the emotional reactions which people have with regard to various linguistic forms.

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Let us now look at how language functions have been related to textual functions in the literature on translation. Here textual function has often been equated with one of the above-mentioned language functions (often referred to as the ‘dominant’ one) and textual function was then used as the basis for textual type. Eminent propagators of this view were Reiss (1971) – also referred to above – and Vermeer (1984), who have taken Bühler’s three language functions as determining three different textual types: the referential, the emotive-expressive and the conative-persuasive. Such an equation of language function and textual function/type is, however, overly simplistic: given that language has functions a to n, and that any text is a self-contained instance of language, it should follow that a text will also exhibit functions a to n, and not – as is presupposed by those who set up functional text typologies – that any text will exhibit one of the functions a to n (e.g. the informative text type). I believe that if the notion of functionally based text typology has any empirical validity, it can only be a probabilistic one, as the ground for placing any text inside text type A can only be that this particular text exhibits language function a to a greater extent than it exhibits other language functions. In other words, while some extremes may be readily characterized, there is a cline between such extremes. This simplistic probabilistic text typology based on a predominant language function exhibited in the text is of no use for determining an individual text’s function, let alone for establishing functional equivalence.

### **The design of the original model of translation quality assessment**

In order to characterize the function of an individual text, ‘function’ must, as can be seen from the above, be defined differently from ‘functions of language’. So I define the function of a text simply as the application or use which the text has in the particular context of a situation (Lyons 1969: 434). In establishing the function of an individual text we need to come up with a kind of ‘textual profile’. This profile will be the outcome of a detailed and systematic linguistic-pragmatic analysis of the text in its context of situation. The phrase ‘context of situation’ is critical here and needs further elaboration. Context originally means literally ‘con-text’, i.e. that which is ‘with the text’. And what is ‘with the text’ naturally goes beyond what is said and written: it includes the situation as the context in which a text unfolds and which must be taken into account for the text’s interpretation. The notion of ‘context of situation’ was introduced by the anthropologist Bronislav Malinowski (1923), who in trying to solve his difficulties with translating texts from a culture (the culture of the Trobriand Islands) very different from any Western culture, first suggested the necessity of a concept of text ‘in its living environment’, i.e. the environment enveloping the text, which is essential for any deeper understanding and for interpreting it.

While ‘context of situation’ refers to the immediate environment of a text, we also need the notion of ‘context of culture’, which refers to the larger cultural

background to be taken into account in the interpretation of meaning. These ideas were taken up by John Rupert Firth (1959), who integrated them into his own linguistic theory, in particular into his view of meaning as a function of context. Firth set up a framework for describing the context of situation that contained the participants in the situation, the action of the participants, the effects of the action and other relevant features of the situation. Firth's pioneering work inspired different concepts for describing the context of situation. One of the most well known and influential ones is Dell Hymes' (1968) conception of the 'ethnography of communication'. Hymes considers the following factors for describing a text's embeddedness in the context of situation: the form and content of the message, the setting, the participants, the intent and effect of the communication, the key, the medium, the genre and the norms of interaction. The most important idea here is that 'context of situation' and text should not be viewed as two separate entities.

Hymes' ideas as well as the work by Firth have strongly influenced Halliday, who stated that the context of situation in which the text unfolds

is encapsulated in the text, not in a kind of piecemeal fashion, nor at the other extreme in any mechanical way, but through a systematic relationship between the social environment on the one hand, and the functional organisation of language on the other.

(Halliday 1989: 11)

But how do we get from the context of situation to the text, and vice versa? How can a text be characterized in terms of its context of situation? Or, coming back to my definition above of a textual function as the use a particular text has in its context of situation, precisely how can one go about determining this function? If we stress the fact that any text is embedded in a unique situation, it follows that in order to characterize its textual function, a text must be analysed – at an appropriate level of delicacy – combining intratextual and situational phenomena. For the particular purpose of establishing functional equivalence between an original text and its translation text, the original needs to be analysed first in such a way that the equivalence to be sought for the translation can be stated in detail. Since textual function is defined as the use of a text in a particular situation, each individual text must be referred to the particular situation enveloping it and for this a way must then be found for breaking down the broad notion of 'situation' into manageable parts, i.e. features of the context of situation or 'situational dimensions'.

For my purpose of constructing a model for situational-functional text analysis and assessment of translation, I eclectically adapted and modified Crystal and Davy's (1969) scheme and came up with the following model:

- A Dimensions of language user
  - 1. *Geographical origin*

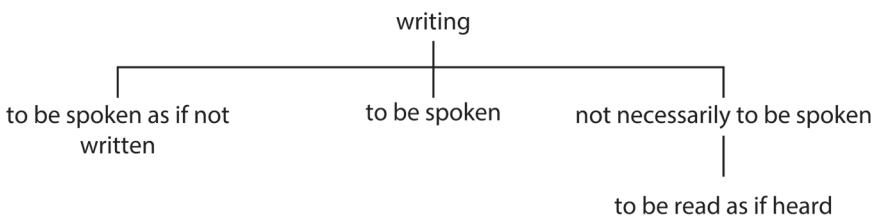
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2. *Social class*
  3. *Time*
- B Dimensions of language use
1. *Medium*: simple/complex
  2. *Participation*: simple/complex
  3. *Social role relationship*
  4. *Social attitude*
  5. *Province*

Section A in this model is self-explanatory; Section B, ‘Dimensions of language use’, however, needs some explanation:

### 1. *Medium: simple/complex*

The category of *complex medium* was subdivided as follows according to the distinctions suggested by Gregory (1967):



**FIGURE 3.1** Different types of writing

Source: Adapted from Gregory 1967: 189

These distinctions between different combinations of spoken and written modes are important because, even if a text is meant to be spoken and is, in fact, at some stage spoken, there is still a difference between genuine spoken language (as in a conversation) and the above mentioned ‘spoken’ subcategories of the written mode. However, my analysis did in fact reveal that even Gregory’s classification is still a relatively unsophisticated analytical tool for the purposes of a delicate stylistic analysis of source and translation texts. Therefore I introduced appropriate refinements in the course of the detailed textual analyses conducted in the original work.

In determining features of the spoken mode in the various manifestations of a *complex medium*, I considered phenomena such as structural simplicity, incompleteness of sentences, specific manner of text constitution, particular theme–rheme sequencing, subjectivity (marked, for instance, through the use of modal particles and gambits) and high redundancy.

## ***2. Participation: simple/complex***

A text may be either a ‘simple’ monologue or dialogue, or a more ‘complex’ mixture involving, in an overt ‘monologue’, various means of indirect participation elicitation and indirect addressee involvement manifest linguistically, for instance, in a characteristic use of pronouns, switches between declarative, imperative and interrogative sentence patterns or the presence of contact parentheses, and exclamations.

## ***3. Social role relationship***

Here I analysed the role relationship between addresser and addressees, which may be either symmetrical (marked by the existence of solidarity or equality) or asymmetrical (marked by the presence of some kind of authority). In considering the addresser’s social role vis-à-vis the addressee(s), account is further taken of the relatively permanent position role (teacher, priest) and the more transient situational role (visitor in a prison, speaker at a given occasion).

## ***4. Social attitude***

Under this dimension I described the degree of social distance or proximity resulting in relative formality or informality. I adopted the distinction between different styles suggested by Joos (1961), which consists of five different styles or levels of formality: frozen, formal, consultative, casual and intimate. In the actual analyses, I provided for the possibility of transitional styles such as, for example, consultative-casual. In Joos’ schema the most neutral style is consultative. It is the norm for conversations or letters between strangers and it is mostly marked negatively, i.e. through the absence of both formal and informal style markers. In using consultative style, the addresser does not assume that he can leave out certain parts of his message – which he might be able to do in a socially closer relationship where much of the message is ‘understood’. In consultative style, the author has to be fairly elaborate in supplying background information. A further characteristic of consultative style is the participation of the addressee(s) – hence the term ‘consultative’ – either directly or implicitly.

Casual style is especially marked by various degrees of implicitness, in which the addresser may indulge because of the level of intimacy between himself and the addressee(s). Background information is not necessary: casual style is used with friends or ‘insiders’ of all kinds with whom the addresser has something to share or desires or imagines that there is something to share. Ellipses, contractions, and the use of lexical items and collocations marked [- formal] are characteristic linguistic markers of casual style.

The consultative and the casual style levels, which are both colloquial styles, are used to deal with public information. By contrast, intimate style excludes

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such public information; it is the language used between people who are personally very close to each other, with a maximum of shared background information being available. Its major feature is referred to as ‘extraction’ by Joos, i.e. an extreme type of ellipsis. Formal style deviates from consultative style in that addressee participation is to a large degree omitted. Formal texts are well structured, elaborate, logically sequenced, and strongly cohesive. They clearly demonstrate advance planning. Frozen style, like intimate style an extreme style, is the most formal, premeditated, often ‘literary’ style. Frozen texts may be consummate products of art meant for the education and edification of the readers, but this style may also be used in business letters, in which the social distance between writer and reader is thus given expression.

### **5. Province**

*Province* is thus very broadly defined, referring not only to the text producer’s occupational and professional activity but also to the field or topic of the text in its widest sense of ‘area of operation’ of the language activity as well as details of the text production, as these can be deduced from the text itself.

Returning now to the earlier discussion of a textual function which is to be kept equivalent in translation, it is posited that the function of a text can be determined by opening up the linguistic material (the text) in terms of the above set of situational constraints. The evidence in the text which characterizes it on any one particular dimension is, of course, itself linguistic evidence. The situational dimensions and their linguistic correlates are then considered to be the means by which the text’s function is realized, i.e. the function of a text is established as a result of an analysis of the text along the eight situational dimensions as outlined above. The basic criterion of functional match for translation equivalence can now be refined: a translation text should not only match its source text in function, but employ equivalent situational-dimensional means to achieve that function, i.e. for a translation of optimal quality it is desirable to have a match between source and translation text along these dimensions which are found – in the course of the analysis – to contribute in a particular way to each of the two functional components of the text: ideational and interpersonal.

By using situational dimensions for opening up the source text, a particular textual profile is obtained for the source text. This profile, which characterizes the function of the text, is then the norm against which the quality of the translation text is to be measured, i.e. a given translation text is analysed using the same dimensional scheme and at the same level of delicacy, and the degree to which its textual profile and function match or do not match the source text’s is the degree to which the translation text is more or less adequate in quality.

This was an outline of the provisional theoretical model, which had, in the original model, the status of a hypothesis to be tested with a corpus of texts.

## Operation of the original model

The following section describes the operation of the model, i.e. the method of analysing and comparing texts by indicating how the various situational dimensions of the model are realized syntactically, lexically and textually. I have here drawn eclectically on a number of concepts deemed useful for establishing linguistic correlates to the situational dimensions. The operation of the model also includes an evaluation scheme for the measurement of matches and mismatches between original and translation.

### Original method of analysing and comparing texts

Starting from the assumption that in order to make qualitative statements about a translation text (TT), TT must be compared with the source text's (ST) textual profile, which determines the norm against which the appropriateness of TT is judged, the first task in my model is a detailed analysis of ST. Using the set of situational dimensions outlined above, it is necessary to establish text-specific linguistic correlates to the situational dimensions.

The grammatical model I have used for the analysis is a Neo-Firthian one. In seeking to extend the descriptive power of the model I also made use of the convention of expressing the components of meaning by means of feature symbols such as [+/- human] and [+/- abstract]. I also made use of rhetorical-stylistic concepts such as alliteration and anacoluthon, concepts from speech act and pragmatic theory and discourse analysis, as well as the concepts of 'foregrounding' and 'automatization' developed by Prague school linguists (see Havranek 1964, who coined the terms). Foregrounding is a linguistic device for making the reader conscious of a particular linguistic form such that the linguistic form itself attracts attention, and is felt to be unusual or 'de-automatized', as is the case, for instance, in alliteration, assonance, onomatopoeia, puns and wordplays. Automatization is the opposite of foregrounding, referring to the conventional, 'normal' uses of the devices of language where the linguistic forms themselves do not attract special attention.

On each of the situational dimensions, I differentiated syntactic, lexical and textual means, although it might not always be the case that all three categories are found to be operative on a particular dimension. As all the texts considered in the analyses were written texts, phonology did not play a role. Important in the conception in this model was the inclusion of textual means, which were not considered in Crystal and Davy's approach, nor were they generally given much attention at the time when I was working on the original model. In fact, one of the more serious objections to the Crystal and Davy approach was that they proceeded rather too atomistically, as they were only concerned with breaking down stretches of language into their constituent linguistic elements without seeking to establish the meaning construed via different ways of sentence connections, thematic movements,

## **32** The original House model

etc. This objection is not valid for my own approach, as I did take account of textual devices.

I based my treatment of textual means of realizing a particular situational feature eclectically on Enkvist's work on linguistic stylistics (1973), on work done in the Prague school on theme–rheme distribution and on the insightful work on texts in spoken and written language by Söll (1974), as well as on Edmondson's work on discourse analysis (1981). In eclectically adapting strands of the above research, I distinguished three main textual aspects:

### **1. *Theme dynamics***

Theme dynamics charts the various patterns of semantic relationships by which 'themes' recur in texts (e.g. repetition, anaphoric and cataphoric reference, pro-forms, ellipsis, synonymy and near-synonymy) and takes account of 'functional sentence perspective', a concept first used by Mathesius (1971). For my purposes, the notion of functional sentence perspective was rather simplistically interpreted as follows: any utterance consists of two basic parts which differ in the function they have in carrying information: (a) the theme, which refers to facts taken for granted, universally known, or given from the context, and which therefore do not, or only marginally, contribute to the new information conveyed by the total utterance; (b) the rheme, containing the main 'new' information conveyed by the utterance. Word order is the primary formal means of realizing the theme–rheme distribution: in 'normal', unmarked speech, the theme precedes the rheme (Mathesius' 'objective position'); in emotive speech, however, the rheme precedes the theme ('subjective position').

### **2. *Clausal linkage***

Clausal linkage is described by a system of basically logical relations between clauses and sentences in a text, e.g. additive, adversative, alternative, causal, explanatory or illative relations.

### **3. *Iconic linkage***

Iconic linkage or structural parallelism occurs when two or more sentences in a text cohere because they are, at the surface level, isomorphic.

Following Söll (1974: 51), I distinguished between two basic types of text constitution which in analogy to a distinction introduced by Pike (1967) are referred to as 'emic' and 'etic' texts. An emic text is one which is solely determined by text-immanent criteria, and an etic text is one which is determined through text-transcending means, i.e. temporal, personal, or local deictics pointing to various features of the situation enveloping the text, the addresser and the addressee(s). I also considered textual features such as the overall logical structure, the presence of narrative or other routine formulae, and the presence or absence of redundancy.

Following the analysis of ST, TT was analysed in the same manner, and the two resulting textual profiles were compared for their relative matching. In the presentation of the results of the analysis of TT, I restricted myself to listing the mismatches along the various dimensions.

## The original evaluation scheme

If a translation text is to fulfil the requirement of a dimensional, and as a result of this, a functional match, then any mismatch along the dimensions is an error. Such dimensional errors were referred to as covertly erroneous errors. These were differentiated from those overtly erroneous errors which resulted either from a mismatch of the denotative meanings of source and translation text elements or from a breach of the target language system. Cases where the denotative meaning of ST items and structures were changed by the translator were further subdivided into omissions, additions, and substitutions consisting of either wrong selections or wrong combinations of elements. Cases of breaches of the target language system were subdivided into cases of ungrammaticality, i.e. clear breaches of the language system, and cases of dubious acceptability, i.e. breaches of the norm of usage which I defined as a bundle of linguistic rules underlying the actual use of language as opposed to the language system, which is concerned with the potentialities of a language.

Both groups of overtly erroneous errors have traditionally been given more attention, whereas covertly erroneous errors, which demand a much more qualitative-descriptive in-depth analysis, have often been neglected. The relative weighting of individual errors both within the two categories and across them is a problem which varies from individual text to individual text.

The final qualitative judgement of a translation text consists of a listing of both covertly and overtly erroneous errors and of a statement of the relative match of the ideational and the interpersonal functional components of the textual function. The notion that a mismatch on a particular situational dimension constitutes a covert error presupposes:

1. that the socio-cultural norms, or more specifically the norm-conditioned expectations generated by the texts, are essentially comparable. Obvious differences in the unique cultural heritage must, of course, be stated explicitly and discussed in each particular text;
2. that the differences between the two languages are such that they can largely be overcome in translation, i.e. basic inter-translatability between the two languages is assumed. Again, exceptional cases such as the non-availability of the German *Du/Sie* distinction in English must be stated explicitly and treated as exceptions;
3. that no special secondary function is added to the translation text, i.e. works translated for special audiences (e.g. classical works ‘translated’ for children) or special purposes (e.g. ‘interlinear translations’, which are designed for a

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clarification of the structural differences between the two languages involved) are explicitly excluded. Such translations are no longer translations but are defined as overt versions of an original text.

Given these three presuppositions, I assumed that the addressees of a translation form a comparable sub-group in the target community to the sub-group formed by the addressees of the source text in the source language community, both being defined as speakers of the contemporary standard language, i.e. that supra-regional variety which is (commonly) used by the educated middle class speaker and which is at the same time accepted by the majority of the whole language community.

Apart from using the objectively fixed set of situational dimensions as a sort of *tertium comparationis*, this method of determining the appropriateness of a TT depends of course on the analyst's intuition and on the intuitive judgements of further judges asked to help substantiate certain points. This approach of relying on the analyst's judgement seemed to be the only feasible method of putting this type of model into practice. This reliance on the analyst's evaluation of a translation does not lead us into the vicinity of the type of neo-hermeneutic approach criticized above, because all the intuitive judgements involved in this method are *argued*, i.e. taken as hypotheses which are being validated as objectively as possible by the reasons given for them. The use of the fixed set of situational dimensions and of authentic texts (rather than pre-fabricated examples), with which the model was tested, clearly adds to making the model more objective.

However, it is of course undeniably true that the decisions about the appropriateness of linguistic elements in any TT must necessarily always contain a subjective and hermeneutic element. Further, it is important to stress again that equivalence relationships between items belonging to two languages be considered non-absolute ones falling on a cline of more or less equivalent with a range of equivalents in both directions running from more or less probable.

In the last analysis, then, translation evaluation – despite the attempt in my model to objectify the process by providing a set of categories – must consequently also be characterized by a necessarily subjective element, because human beings are here important variables. It seems unlikely therefore that translation quality assessment can ever be completely objectified in the manner of the results of natural science subjects. Within the social sciences, the method I developed may be placed among one of the major modes of social scientific inquiry, the case study approach, in which an intensive in-depth examination of the many characteristics of one unit is conducted. Case studies have been used with benefit to supplement traditional experiments involving extensive observation of large samples. The case study method which rests on the recognition of the crucial importance of specifying the complex contextual embeddedness of the phenomenon under study has two general purposes: 1. to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon on hand; and 2.

to develop more general theoretical statements. My work has had the added purpose of verifying a scheme of concepts which I eclectically derived from various approaches reviewed in an attempt to analyse and evaluate original texts and their translations.

# 4

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ORIGINAL HOUSE MODEL

In House (1977/1981) the above model of translation quality assessment was put to an empirical test with a corpus of eight authentic English and German textual pairs. The texts covered a wide range of ‘provinces’: a scientific text, an economic text, a journalistic article and a tourist information brochure made up the set of texts preliminarily classified as highlighting the ideational functional component; an excerpt from a sermon, a political speech, a moral anecdote and a dialogue taken from a comedy primarily classified as highlighting the interpersonal set of texts.

In my original work I had felt it necessary to exclude from the interpersonal category all those texts which may be considered to be predominantly poetic-aesthetic or predominantly ‘form-oriented’, i.e. in which the form of their linguistic units has taken on a special autonomous value, e.g. poems. In a poetic-aesthetic work of art, the usual distinction between form and content (or meaning) no longer holds. In poetry, the form of a linguistic unit cannot be changed without a corresponding change in (semantic, pragmatic and textual) meaning. And since the form cannot be detached from its meaning, this meaning cannot be expressed in any other way: not through paraphrase, explanation or commentary, the borrowing of new words, etc. In poetry the signifiers have an autonomous value and can therefore not be exchanged for the signifiers of another language, although they may in fact express the same signified concept or referent. Since the physical nature of signifiers in one language can never be duplicated in another language, the relations of signifiers to signified, which are no longer arbitrary in a poetic-aesthetic work, cannot be expressed in another language. Jakobson (1966) has made the same point. It culminates in his statement that poetry is by definition untranslatable. Similarly, Nida and Taber (1969: 4) state that ‘anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, unless the form is an essential element of the message.’

Poetic-aesthetic texts are characterized by a maximum of foregrounding; in fact, foregrounding is used for its own sake in such a way that language is then not used to communicate but to foreground the act of expression. True, in many other texts, indeed in some of the texts included in the corpus of my original work, for instance the religious sermon and the political speech, foregrounding also occurs: there are cases of alliteration and wordplays, for example, which are difficult or impossible to translate. However, in these cases, foregrounding is always subordinate to communication. The basic purpose of these non-poetic texts which use foregrounding occasionally is always to draw the addressee's attention more intensely to the subject matter expressed by the foregrounded linguistic item but not to the expression itself. This is the reason for the possibility of translation in cases of non-poetic texts. In a predominantly poetic-aesthetic text, however, the limits of translatability are reached: a TT is then no longer a translation but a kind of creative transposition.

To exemplify the operation of the model, here is a commercial English text and its translation followed by an exemplary analysis.

### **Commercial text (ST English; TT German)**

#### ***Source text***

M. F. Meissner, President, Investors Overseas Services, Letter to Shareholders:

December 27, 1971

- I      1      Dear Shareholder,
- II     1      The Board of Directors of IOS, Ltd. has declared a pro-rata dividend payable on and after December 20, 1971, to all shareholders of record as of the close of business on December 17, 1971.
- 2      The dividend consists of shares of Value Capital Limited, a newly established Bahamian holding company, and will be paid on the basis of one share of Value Capital Limited for each whole ten shares held of IOS, Ltd.
- 3      Of course, each shareholder continues ownership of any share that he now holds of IOS.
- III    1      In organizing Value Capital Limited, IOS contributed to it certain companies including IVM (the Dutch insurance company), IVM Invest Management Company Limited, ILI Luxembourg, ILI Bermuda, IOS Real Estate Holdings, IPI Management Co., and Resources Services Limited, together with certain other contractual rights and assets.
- 2      In return for its contribution, IOS received 6.2 million shares of Value Capital Limited (the total of the issued and outstanding shares

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- of that Company), and, in turn, is distributing to its shareholders all of these shares.
- IV 1 The total stockholders' equity of Value Capital Limited is \$1.3 million.
- 2 Since future earnings of Value Capital Limited will not be controlled by IOS, historical earnings performance would not be indicative of expected future performance.
- V 1 The dividend will be represented by bearer certificates which, as you know, are negotiable instruments.
- 2 That is, they may be traded by anyone in possession of the certificate.
- 3 In order to avoid the possibility of accidental misdirection of your certificates, and to expedite the distribution, your assistance is required.
- 4 We have enclosed a 'Dividend Instruction Form' for your completion; this should be returned in the pre-addressed envelope.
- VI 1 As you will note, we have asked that you designate a bank (or broker) to which your dividend certificates will be sent.
- 2 Your bank (or broker) should indicate its confirmation of your signature by executing the bottom half of the 'Dividend Instruction Form' including its official signature and stamp (or seal).
- VII 1 It is anticipated that your new Company will issue its first report, covering its financial position at May 31, 1972, as soon as possible following that date.
- 2 This report will include full details on the Company's organization, management and plans for future development.
- 3 In the interim period, the 15,000 to 20,000 shareholders of Value Capital Limited can expect that public trading of their shares will develop.
- 4 It is the present intention of Value Capital Limited to secure the listing of its shares on a recognized exchange at the earliest possible time.
- VIII 1 As a result of the dividend by IOS of its complete holdings of Value Capital shares, there remains no equity ownership or control of Value Capital in the hands of IOS.
- 2 Therefore the future market value of Value Capital shares should in no way be related to, or depend upon, the future development of IOS.
- IX 1 The principal reason for the establishment of Value Capital Limited, and the distribution of its ownership to the IOS shareholders, was to permit the continuation and expansion of essential communication with the hundreds of thousands of fund clients.
- 2 Recent Swiss legislation precluded the maintenance of these operations from Switzerland as in the past.

- X 1 Value Capital's client service functions will be conducted from new facilities being established outside of Switzerland.
- 2 The implementation of these client services should result in a residual benefit to the business of the principal operating subsidiaries, IOS Insurance Holdings and Transglobal Financial Services, which are retained by IOS.
- XI 1 Value Capital Limited additionally intends to establish an international insurance operation based upon the three insurance companies which IOS contributed to it.
- 2 Certain of the other Value Capital operations were contributed by IOS in order to provide an immediate income flow to the new Company and thus insure stability throughout its formative phase.
- XII 1 It is expected that the IOS shareholders will realize a greater growth potential through their direct interest in the new Value Capital Limited operations than would have been possible had those operations remained within the IOS group.

XIII 1

Very truly yours,  
Milton M. Meissner  
President

### ***Target text***

M. F. Meissner, President, Investors Overseas Services, Brief an die Aktionäre:

27. Dezember 1971

- I 1 Sehr geehrter Aktionär,
- II 1 Der Verwaltungsrat der IOS, Ltd. hat eine anteilige Dividende beschlossen, die ab 20. Dezember 1971 an alle Aktionäre zur Ausschüttung gelangt, die zum Geschäftsschluß am 17. Dezember 1971 registriert sind.
  - 2 Die Dividende besteht aus Aktien der Value Capital Limited, einer nach dem Recht der Bahamas neugegründeten Gesellschaft.
  - 3 Jeder Aktionär erhält auf je volle zehn Aktien der IOS, Ltd. eine Aktie der Value Capital Limited.
  - 4 Er bleibt natürlich weiterhin Eigentümer aller seiner bisherigen Aktien der IOS, Ltd.
- III 1 Bei der Gründung der Value Capital Limited übertrug die IOS auf diese Gesellschaft bestimmte Gesellschaften, einschließlich der IVM (die niederländische Versicherungsgesellschaft), IVM Invest Management Company Limited, ILI Luxembourg, ILI Bermuda, IOS Real Estate Holdings, IPI Management Co. und Resources Services Limited, sowie bestimmte vertragliche Rechte und Aktiva.

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- 2 Als Gegenleistung erhielt die IOS 6.2 Millionen Aktien der Value Capital Limited (die gesamte Zahl der von dieser Gesellschaft ausgegebenen und in Umlauf gesetzten Aktien), die alle von der IOS an ihre Aktionäre verteilt werden.
- IV 1 Das gesamte Eigenkapital der Value Capital Limited beträgt 1.3 Millionen Dollar.
- 2 Da die IOS keinen Einfluß auf die zukünftige Gewinnentwicklung der Value Capital Limited haben wird, würde die bisherige Ertragsleistung keinen Aufschluß über die Gewinnentwicklung geben.
- V 1 Die Dividende wird durch Inhaberzertifikate verbrieft.
- 2 Diese sind bekanntlich frei begebbare Urkunden, d.h., sie können von jedem veräußert werden, der in ihren Besitz gelangt.
- 3 Um zu vermeiden, daß Ihre Zertifikate versehentlich fehlgeleitet werden und um die Zustellung zu beschleunigen, bitten wir Sie, das beigelegte Dividenden-Zustellungsformular (Dividend Instruction Form) auszufüllen und in dem ebenfalls beigelegten adressierten Umschlag zurückzuschicken.
- VI 1 Wie Sie feststellen werden, haben wir Sie gebeten, eine Bank (oder einen Makler) zu benennen, an den die Aktienzertifikate geschickt werden sollen.
- 2 Sie müssen die Bank (oder einen Makler) bitten, Ihre Unterschrift auf dem Dividenden-Zustellungsformular zu bestätigen.
- 3 Hierfür ist auf dem unteren Teil des Formulars eine Stelle vorgesehen, wo die Betreffenden unterzeichnen und ihren Stempel anbringen.
- VII 1 Den ersten Bericht über ihre Finanzlage zum 31. Mai 1972 wird die Value Capital Limited so bald wie möglich nach dem besagten Datum veröffentlichen.
- 2 Der Bericht wird u.a. über den Aufbau der Gesellschaft, ihre Verwaltung und Entwicklungspläne volle Auskunft geben.
- 3 In der Zwischenzeit können die 15.000 bis 20.000 Aktionäre der Value Capital Limited erwarten, daß sich der öffentliche Handel ihrer Aktien entwickeln wird.
- 4 Die Value Capital Limited beabsichtigt z.Z., die Zulassung ihrer Aktien zum Börsenhandel an einer anerkannten Börse möglichst bald zu erlangen.
- VIII 1 Durch die Dividendenausschüttung begibt sich die IOS aller von ihr gehaltenen Aktien der Value Capital Limited.
- 2 Infolgedessen verfügt sie in Zukunft weder über Anteile am Kapital der Value Capital Limited noch über einen beherrschenden Einfluß auf diese Gesellschaft.

- 3 Irgendein Zusammenhang zwischen der weiteren Entwicklung der IOS und dem künftigen Kurs der Value Capital-Aktien sollte deshalb ausgeschlossen sein.
  - IX 1 Die Aufrechterhaltung und weitere Entwicklung wesentlicher Kommunikationen mit den Hunderttausenden von Kunden waren die Hauptgründe für die Errichtung der Value Capital Limited und für die direkte Beteiligung der IOS-Aktionäre an dieser Gesellschaft.
  - 2 Infolge neuer schweizerischer Gesetzesbestimmung war die Fortführung des bisherigen Betriebes von der Schweiz aus unmöglich geworden.
  - X 1 Die Dienstleistungen der Value Capital Limited für die Kunden werden von neuen Einrichtungen außerhalb der Schweiz erbracht.
  - 2 Aus diesen Dienstleistungen dürften sich für das Geschäft der wichtigsten im Besitz der IOS verbleibenden Tochterbetriebsgesellschaften, IOS Insurance Holdings und Transglobal Financial Services, restliche Gewinne ergeben.
  - XI 1 Ausgehend von den drei Versicherungsgesellschaften, welche die IOS auf die Value Capital Limited übertragen hat, beabsichtigt diese außerdem, ein internationales Versicherungsunternehmen aufzubauen.
  - 2 Gewisse andere Betriebe sind von der IOS auf die Value Capital Limited übertragen worden, um zu gewährleisten, daß die neue Gesellschaft über sofortige Einnahmen verfügt und somit die Stabilität in der Errichtungsperiode gesichert ist.
  - XII 1 Durch ihre direkte Beteiligung an der neugegründeten Value Capital Limited wird sich für die IOS-Aktionäre voraussichtlich ein größeres Wachstumspotential ergeben, als ihnen die auf die neue Gesellschaft übertragenen Unternehmen hätten bieten können, wenn sie in der IOS-Gruppe verblieben wären.
  - XIII 1
- Mit freundlichem Gruß  
Milton F. Meissner  
Präsident

### ***Back translation into English of the German translation***

- I 1 Esteemed Shareholder,
- II 1 The Board of Directors of IOS Ltd. has decided on a pro-rata dividend which will be paid from December 1971 to all shareholders who are registered by close of business on December 17, 1971.
- 2 The dividend consists of shares of Value Capital Limited, an according to the law of the Bahamas newly founded company.

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- 3 Each shareholder receives for each whole ten shares of IOS Ltd. one share of Value Capital Limited.
  - 4 He will of course continue to be owner of all his previous shares of IOS Ltd.
- III 1 During the foundation of Value Capital Limited IOS transferred to this company certain companies including IVM (the Dutch insurance company), IVM Investment Management Company Limited, ILI Luxembourg, ILI Bermuda, IOS Real Estate Holdings, IPI Management Co. and Resources Servicers Limited, as well as certain contractual rights and assets.
- 2 As compensation, IOS received 6.2 million shares of Value Capital Limited (the total of the shares issued and circulated by this company), all of which will be distributed by IOS to its shareholders.
- IV 1 The total equity of Value Capital Limited is \$1.3 million.
- 2 Since IOS will not have any influence on the future developments of earnings of Value Capital Limited, previous earnings performance will not predict the development of earnings.
- V 1 The dividend will be certificated by bearer certificates.
- 2 These are, as is common knowledge, freely negotiable certificates, i.e. they can be traded by anyone who acquires ownership of them.
- 3 In order to avoid that your certificates are accidentally misdirected, and in order to accelerate the distribution, we ask you to fill out the attached Dividend Instruction Form and to return the also attached pre-addressed envelope.
- VI 1 As you will find out, we have asked you to name a bank (or a broker), to which the dividend certificates should be sent.
- 2 You must ask the bank (or the broker) to confirm your signature on the Dividend Instruction Form.
- 3 For this there is on the bottom half of the form a place where the respective persons sign and affix their stamp.
- VII 1 Value Capital Limited will publish the first report on your financial situation as per 31 May 1972 as soon as possible after the said date.
- 2 The report will among other things give full details about the company's organization, its management, and plan for development.
- 3 In the meantime, the 15,000 to 20,000 shareholders of Value Capital Limited can expect that public trading of their shares will develop.
- 4 Value Capital Limited intends at present to gain as soon as possible the listing of their shares on a recognized exchange.
- VIII 1 Through the payment of dividends IOS dispenses with all shares it formerly held of Value Capital Limited.

- 2 As a result of this in future it will neither have a share in the capital of Capital Value Limited nor will it have a controlling influence on this company.
  - 3 Any connection between the further development of IOS and the future market value of Value Capital Shares should therefore be ruled out.

IX 1 The maintenance and further development of essential communication with the hundreds of thousands of customers were the main reasons for the establishment of Value Capital Limited and for the direct involvement of IOS shareholders in this company.

2 Due to new Swiss legislation the continuation of the previous operation from Switzerland was impossible.

X 1 The services of Value Capital Limited for clients will be rendered from new facilities outside Switzerland.

2 From these services remaining profits might result for the most important subsidiary companies that remain in the possession of IOS: IOS Insurance Holdings and Transglobal Financial Services.

XI 1 Based on the three insurance companies which IOS has transferred to Value Capital Limited, the latter additionally intends to set up an international insurance company.

2 Certain other operations were transferred from IOS to Value Capital Limited to guarantee that the new company has immediate income and that therefore the stability of the formative period is secured.

XII 1 Through its direct involvement in the newly founded Value Capital Limited there will presumably occur a bigger growth potential for the IOS shareholders than the companies transferred to the new company could have offered if they had remained in the IOS group.

With best regards  
Milton Meissner  
President

## **Analysis of ST and Statement of Function**

## *Dimensions of language user*

1. Geographical origin: non-marked, standard American English
  2. Social class: non-marked, educated middle class
  3. Time: non-marked, contemporary American English

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### ***Dimensions of language use***

#### ***1. Medium: simple***

*Written to be read*, as realized by the following linguistic means:

##### **Syntactic means**

- (a) Absence of elliptical clauses, contractions, contact parentheses and comment parentheses, and any kind of spoken language signals such as ‘well’, ‘you see’, ‘you know’, etc.;
- (b) placing of expanded subordinate clauses of purpose before the main clause: this is a focusing device typical of the written mode as its use in spoken language is restricted by performance constraints, e.g. V<sub>3</sub>;
- (c) presence of expanded postnominal modification resulting in the separation of the head of the subject noun phrase and the corresponding finite verb. This construction is typical of the written mode as there are performance constraints in spoken language: IX<sub>1</sub>.

##### **Lexical means**

Absence of qualifying modal adverbials, interjections and other subjectivity markers typical of the spoken mode.

##### **Textual means**

- (a) The text is predominantly emic. There are a few pronominal references to the addresser and the addressees; however, the immediate circumstances of the production and reception of the text are clearly irrelevant for the organization of the message. As a result of this, the text is largely determined through text-immanent criteria and is marked by an explicitness and elaborateness typical of the written mode;
- (b) lack of repetitions resulting in a lack of redundancy;
- (c) frequent use of passivization as a typically ‘written’ means of complex syntactic linkage for text-constitutive purposes, i.e. especially for the preservation of the theme–rheme sequence, e.g. II<sub>2</sub>, IV<sub>2</sub>, V<sub>2,4</sub>, X<sub>1</sub>, XI<sub>2</sub>.

#### ***2. Participation: complex***

Monologue with addressees being directly addressed and given instructions. However, the addressees’ potential reactions are *not* being taken into account by the addresser. The addressee-oriented nature of the text is thus limited to the direct address and the request for action. This characterization is manifest in the following linguistic means:

## Syntactic means

- (a) Presence of second person personal and possessive pronouns for direct address: I<sub>1</sub>, V<sub>1,3,4</sub>, VI<sub>1,2</sub>, VII<sub>1</sub>;
- (b) presence of requests put to the addressees through the use of the verb 'require' in the passive, modal auxiliaries of obligation, and the mandative subjunctive in a 'that' clause: V<sub>3,4</sub>, VI<sub>1,2</sub>;
- (c) absence of interrogative sentences. This is indicative of the predominantly monologous character of the text which – with the exception of the participatory devices listed above in (a) and (b) – allows for no direct (even imaginary) participation of the addressees.

### *3. Social role relationship*

- (a) Asymmetrical role relationship: addresser has *de facto* economic authority over the addressees.
- (b) Position/role of addresser: president of an international financing company, of which the addressees are shareholders.
- (c) Situational role of addresser: representative of the interests of the company informing the shareholders about recent developments in the company.

The role relationship as manifest in the text may be detailed in the following way: in the interests of his company (IOS), the president is diplomatically indirect, non-committal and evasive, avoiding any statement of an assumption of direct responsibility for the new VCL-company on the part of IOS. The relationship is an impersonal, distant one: the shareholder is not being approached as an individual but as a *type*, as a member of the class of shareholders. The text's role relationship is further characterized by a deliberate attempt on the part of the addresser to downplay his own and the company's power status and give the addressees the illusion of possessing more influence than they really have. The addresser flatters the addressees and tries to create a feeling of security, loyalty and trust in the well-being of the company. This characterization of the text's role relationship has been derived through an examination of the following linguistic means:

## Syntactic means

- (a) Use of second person singular personal pronoun 'you' and possessive pronoun 'your' in a specific way, i.e. for addressing corporate members, not 'persons' as such (witness the substitution of 'each shareholder' for 'you', e.g. in II<sub>3</sub>): V<sub>1,3,4</sub>, VI<sub>1,2</sub>, VII<sub>1</sub>. Notable is the use of these personal and possessive pronouns in 'flattering contexts' only, i.e. in connection with possible rights, actions, etc. on the part of the addressees;

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- (b) use of the first person plural personal pronoun ‘we’ to refer to the addresser or the company (IOS) or the ‘Board of Directors’, i.e. the addresser avoids referring to himself as an individual (although the letter is personally signed): V<sub>4</sub>, VI<sub>1</sub>;
- (c) frequency of impersonal constructions using impersonal ‘it’ and existential ‘there’ as well as passives: the use of these devices is indicative of a desire on the part of the addresser to be cautious and ‘hedgy’ and to avoid specifying a causer or agent. In using these devices, the addresser also intends to give the addressees the impression that it is not the company that requires them to do something (e.g. fill out a form) but that they are agents of their own free will merely obeying some ulterior abstract necessity: V<sub>3,4</sub>, VI<sub>1</sub>, VII<sub>1,4</sub>, VIII<sub>1</sub>, X<sub>1</sub>, XII<sub>1</sub>;
- (d) preponderance of non-human subject noun phrases, adding to the impersonal character of the text: II<sub>1,2</sub>, III<sub>1,2</sub>, IV<sub>1,2</sub>, V<sub>1,2,3</sub>, VI<sub>2</sub>, VII<sub>2</sub>, etc.;
- (e) use of subjunctive in a ‘that’ clause: VI<sub>1</sub> – ‘asked that you designate’ as opposed to the alternative: ‘asked you to designate’. This is a marked choice in English. The effect of the ‘that’+V subjunctive construction is such that the addressee is *not* the direct recipient of a request or command by the addresser but is left his own free agent. In other words, this structure has the illocutionary force of a suggestion whereas the structure ‘asked you to designate’ would have the illocutionary force of a request in the context of this text.

#### **Textual means**

- (a) Deliberate attempt to underplay the role of IOS through putting IOS in non-focused position in prepositional phrases IV<sub>2</sub>, VIII<sub>1,2</sub>, XI<sub>2</sub>;
- (b) deliberate overall organization of the text such that the addressees are first being presented with the change as a *fait accompli* and given its many positive sides, and that they are only later (paragraph IX) being given the reasons (negative ones) for the change.

#### **4. Social attitude**

Consistent with the impersonal, distant relationship as outlined above, the social attitude of the addresser towards his addressees as reflected on the level of style is a *formal* one:

#### **Syntactic means**

- (a) Frequency of complex noun phrases showing both multiple premodification, postmodification and discontinuous modification, which add to the text’s abstractness and impersonality. Examples may be found in nearly every sentence, therefore a specific listing is unnecessary;

- (b) deletion of conjunction ‘if’ plus subject-auxiliary inversion: XII<sub>1</sub> – ‘than would have been possible had those operations ...’;
- (c) completeness of clauses (no elliptical clauses); absence of contractions (cf. 1. Medium);
- (d) frequency of impersonal constructions using ‘it’, ‘there’ and passives; preponderance of [-human] subject noun phrases: use of subjunctive in a ‘that’ clause (for all of which see 3. Social role relationship).

### **Lexical means**

- (a) Presence of words and phrases marked [+formal] due to their restricted use in impersonal – in this case, business – situations, e.g.: II<sub>1</sub> – ‘declared’, ‘payable on and after’, ‘shareholders of record as of the close of’; V<sub>3</sub> – ‘expedite the distribution’; IX<sub>2</sub> – ‘precluded the maintenance of’; XIII<sub>1</sub> – ‘Very truly yours’, a [+formal] letter-closing formula, etc.;
- (b) absence of interjections, qualifying modal adverbials and other subjectivity markers (cf. 1. Medium).

### **Textual means**

Frequent use of passivization as a means of complex syntactic linkage specifically for preserving theme–rheme sequence (cf. 1. Medium).

## *5. Province*

Commercio-financial circular letter issued by the president of an international financing company to the company’s shareholders. In this letter, the shareholders are being informed about changes in the set-up of the company. The preliminary label ‘language of commerce’, with which one usually associates a preciseness in giving data of all kinds, textual cohesion and explicitness, especially explicit allowance for possible alternative interpretations to avoid potential (costly) misunderstandings, can be further explained and justified by examining the use of the following linguistic features in this text:

### **Lexical means**

- (a) Use of precise technical terminology, i.e. special commercio-financial lexical items and collocations, e.g. II<sub>1</sub> – ‘pro-rata’, ‘dividend’; II<sub>2</sub> – ‘holding company’; IV<sub>1</sub> – ‘stockholders’ equity’; IV<sub>2</sub> – ‘historical earnings’, ‘performance’, etc.;
- (b) presence of phrases which precisely define the information given or explicitly state conceivable alternatives: II<sub>1</sub> – ‘on and after December 20, 1971’, ‘to all

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- shareholders of record as of the close of business on December 17, 1971'; VI<sub>1</sub> – ‘a bank (or broker)’; VI<sub>2</sub> – ‘stamp (or seal)’;
- (c) absence of foregrounded words and expressions, and of any kind of figurative language.

#### **Textual means**

Presence of strong textual cohesion due to the employment of several mechanisms of theme-dynamics and clausal linkage:

##### *Theme-dynamics:*

- (a) repetition of lexical items, e.g. II<sub>1,2</sub> – ‘dividend’; II<sub>1,2,3</sub> – ‘share’; III<sub>1,2</sub> – ‘contribute’, ‘contribution’; V<sub>1,2,3</sub> and VI<sub>1</sub> – ‘certificate(s)’, etc.;
- (b) frequency of anaphoric referencing by means of pro-forms for noun phrases, adverbials, predicates, clauses or sentences, e.g. III<sub>2</sub> – ‘in return for its contribution’, ‘in turn’, ‘that Company’, ‘all of these shares’; V<sub>2</sub> – ‘That is’; V<sub>4</sub> – ‘this’, etc.;
- (c) organization of thematic movement in sequences of theme–rheme to ensure given–new ordering, e.g. II<sub>1,2</sub>, V<sub>1,2,3</sub>, V<sub>4</sub>, VI<sub>1,2</sub>, VII<sub>1,2</sub>.

##### *Clausal linkage:*

- (a) achieved through logical connectors: II<sub>3</sub> – ‘of course’; IV<sub>2</sub> – ‘since’; V<sub>2</sub> – ‘That is’; VIII<sub>1</sub> – ‘as a result of’; VIII<sub>2</sub> – ‘therefore’, etc.

#### ***Statement of Function***

The function of the text consisting of the two components – ideational and interpersonal – may be summed up in the following way: the addresser’s intention is (a) to inform the addressees of a collection of facts as precisely and efficiently as possible and to request action; (b) to establish a positive rapport with the addressees, to convince and reassure them of the appropriateness and advantages of certain moves by the company, to give the addressees a feeling of importance and power, and at the same time to always attempt to be indirect and non-committal as to the moves announced and their potential consequences.

This summary statement of the text’s function has been derived by an examination of the ways in which the dimensions are marked in this text, and the manner in which they contribute to the two functional components.

On the dimension ‘Medium’, the *written to be read* mode supports the ideational component of the text’s function by facilitating a condensed, uninterrupted and premeditated information flow unimpeded by any direct presence of the addressees in the act of communication. Similarly, on the dimension

'Participation', the lack of addressee participation, i.e. the infrequency of addressee-involving structures, also acts in support of the ideational component by making for a linear, non-alternating and premeditated organization of the message. However, on the same parameter, the few attempts at involving the addressees by addressing them directly, and by putting requests to them, do support the interpersonal component of the textual function.

On the dimension 'Social role relationship', the impersonality of the relationship reinforces the ideational component by promoting an economical transmission of facts disregarding the social circumstances of addresser and addressee. However, equally strongly supported on this dimension is the interpersonal component: the same linguistic devices which create the impersonality are also used to 'manipulate' the addressees; e.g. the avoidance of a specification of a responsible causer or agent is used to give the addressees the illusion of their obeying an abstract necessity and not the interests of IOS. Further, the attempt at flattering the addressees which we discovered on this dimension also obviously filters into the interpersonal component of the textual function.

The dimension 'Social attitude', which we defined as *formal*, operates in support of the ideational component of the textual function in that the frequency of complex, abstract noun phrases and impersonal structures, and the exclusive presence of complete, well-planned and well-structured sentences provide for an efficiently condensed and objective information flow.

The dimension 'Province', marked by the use of clearly defined, automatized technical terminology, an explicit consideration of alternative interpretations of certain terms, and strong textual cohesion, clearly supports the ideational component of the text's function as well.

## **ST and TT comparison and Statement of Quality**

### ***ST and TT comparison***

Mismatches on the following dimensions have been discovered as a result of the analysis of TT and the comparison of ST and TT:

#### *Participation*

TT lacks the explicit involvement of the addressees in a few instances:

- V<sub>2</sub> – 'as you know' ≠ *bekanntlich* [as is common knowledge];
- VI<sub>1</sub> – 'your dividend certificates' ≠ *die Aktienzertifikate* [the dividend certificates];
- VI<sub>2</sub> – 'Your bank' ≠ *die Bank* [the bank];
- VII<sub>1</sub> – 'your new Company' ≠ *die Value Capital Limited* [Value Capital Limited].

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### Social role relationship

TT is in certain specified instances less reassuring and flattering and less non-committal and diplomatically indirect vis-à-vis IOS' role and responsibility:

IV<sub>2</sub> – TT uses active voice: this has the effect of stressing IOS as *theme*, which is undesirable in this context, because it is thus more strongly suggested that IOS is important with respect to VCL's future earnings. In view of the fate of IOS, this is certainly not reassuring to the addressees.

V<sub>1(2)</sub> – ‘as you know’ ≠ *bekanntlich*: TT is less implicitly flattering to the addressees.

V<sub>3,4(3)</sub> – ‘your assistance is required ... for your completion’ ≠ *bitten wir Sie ... auszufüllen* [we ask you to fill out]: TT is more direct and forceful. ST expresses the action to be done by the addressees more abstractly and indirectly (nominally); the utterance in ST has the illocutionary force of a subtle suggestion, while the utterance in TT has one of a request. ST tries to suggest that it is not the company that wants something done, but that some external necessity suggests a course of action to the addressees.

VI<sub>1</sub> – ‘your dividend certificates’ ≠ *die Aktienzertifikate* [the dividend certificates]: TT does not make an attempt to create in the addressees an idea of their own possessions and is thus less implicitly flattering.

VI<sub>1</sub> – ‘asked that you designate’ ≠ *haben wir Sie gebeten* [we have asked you]: in ST, the addressees are not direct recipients of a request, but are left agents of their own initiative. The utterance has the illocutionary force of a subtle suggestion; TT lacks this nuance and is thus less careful and indirect; the illocutionary force in TT is one of a request.

VI<sub>1</sub> – ‘will be sent’ ≠ *geschickt werden sollen* [should be sent]: in ST, the relative clause is a non-restrictive one, i.e. the sending of the certificates follows automatically from the naming of the bank, and the sending is the company's responsibility. In TT, the relative clause has to be understood as a restrictive one, such that the instruction that the certificates should be sent to the designated bank, is the shareholders' responsibility. Hence ST is more reassuring, while TT undiplomatically throws the onus onto the shareholders.

VI<sub>2</sub> – ‘Your bank (or broker) should indicate’ ≠ *Sie müssen die Bank (oder einen Makler) bitten* [You must ask the bank (or a broker)]: the lack of the possessive pronoun renders the expression in TT less implicitly flattering; also, the illocutionary force of the utterance in TT is, mainly through the use of the modal *müssen* [must], one of an order. The addressees thus appear to be dependent on the addresser. Such an illocutionary force is directly opposed to the cautious and diplomatic tenor in ST.

VII<sub>1</sub> – ‘your new Company’ ≠ *die Value Capital Limited* [Value Capital Limited]: TT is less implicitly flattering, i.e. it fails to suggest that the addressees are ‘owners of the company’.

VII<sub>1</sub> – ST's impersonal 'it' clause, which reinforces the non-committal and detached tenor of the text, is not matched in TT, which features Value Capital Limited as agent. TT gives an impression of greater certainty, which is unwarranted given the evasive, impersonal structure 'it is anticipated' in ST.

VII<sub>4</sub> – 'present intention' ≠ *z.Z.* (*zur Zeit*) [at present]: TT's expression *z.Z.* has the negative connotation of temporariness and fickleness, which is undesirable given the addresser's intention of reassuring his addressees and building up their goodwill.

VIII<sub>1</sub> – ST's impersonal 'there' clause is rendered in TT by a 'personalized' construction featuring IOS as subject-agent.

X<sub>1</sub> – 'new facilities being established' ≠ *von neuen Einrichtungen* [from new facilities]: TT suggests that these facilities are, at the time of utterance, already established. TT loses the 'be'+V-ing connotation of 'being set up right now', a subtle difference, but in TT the addresser again appears to be less non-committal, and carefully evasive.

XI<sub>1</sub> – ST focuses on Value Capital Limited, which is in theme-position; the role of IOS, from whose failures the addressees' attention is to be detracted, is thus underplayed. In TT, Value Capital Limited appears in non-focused position *after* IOS is mentioned.

### *Social attitude*

TT is in very few instances less *formal*, i.e. – consistent with the findings on the dimension 'Social role relationship' – TT appears to be less distant, and more personal and direct:

II<sub>4</sub> – *er bleibt natürlich* [He will of course continue]: in this position, *natürlich* gives the sentence an almost colloquial tone. Initial position of *natürlich* or the use of the [+formal] *selbstverständlich* would have been more suitable.

V<sub>3</sub> – 'your assistance is required' ≠ *bitten wir Sie* [we ask you]: TT is more personal, i.e. less socially distant and formal.

VI<sub>2</sub> – *Sie müssen die Bank ... bitten* [You must ask the bank]: a personalized, informal expression.

VII<sub>1</sub> – ST's impersonal 'it'-clause: 'it is anticipated that' is not matched in formality by TT's more direct, non-impersonal structure.

## 5.2 Implementation of the original House model

### *Province*

TT is, in a few instances, less clear, precise, and less textually cohesive than ST:

VI<sub>2</sub> – *Ihre Unterschrift auf dem Dividenden-Zustellungsformular zu bestätigen* [to confirm your signature on the Dividend Instruction Form]: the prepositional phrase *auf dem* [on the] is ambiguous; it may either be an adjectival or an adverbial phrase of location, i.e. it may qualify either *bestätigen* [confirm] or *Unterschrift* [signature]. Thus TT appears to be less unambiguously clear.

IX<sub>1</sub> – TT does not preserve the theme–rheme sequence as it starts the clause with the rheme, thus losing the textual linkage to the preceding paragraphs.

IX<sub>2</sub> – TT lacks ST’s anaphoric noun phrase ‘these operations’ (a consequence of the different thematic organization of IX<sub>1</sub> in TT).

XI<sub>1</sub> – *beabsichtigt diese* [the latter … intends]: undesirable ambiguity of the anaphoric pronoun *diese*’s [the latter’s] referent.

### *Overtly erroneous errors*

There are two mismatches of the referential meanings of ST and TT items:

II<sub>2</sub> – wrong selection: ‘newly established … holding company’ ≠ *eine nach dem Recht der Bahamas neu-gegründete Gesellschaft* [an according to the law of the Bahamas newly founded company] (*Bahamische Holding Gesellschaft* would have been adequate).

VII<sub>1</sub> – wrong selection: ‘It is anticipated’ ≠ *wird die Value Capital Limited* [Value Capital Limited will]. The choice of the future tense in TT does not express the uncertainty of an anticipation (the adverbial *voraussichtlich* should have been included).

Further, we discovered one breach of the target language system, to be subcategorized as a case of dubious acceptability:

III<sub>2</sub> – *erhielt die IOS 6.2 Millionen Aktien … die alle von der IOS …* [IOS received 6.2 million shares … all of which … by IOS]: this is a confusing and illogical structure because IOS is the subject of the main clause and it appears in a prepositional phrase in a passivized relative clause. Hence passivization serves no real purpose as it does not omit the agent. We claim that this structure is counter-intuitive, and of dubious acceptability. The following similar example seems to confirm our assumption: ‘each of us received \$20 which was spent by each of us on the spot’. This example – and III<sub>2</sub> in the present text – is only acceptable if the agents in the main clause and the passivized relative clause are non-identical.

### ***Statement of Quality***

The comparison of ST and TT along the eight parameters shows that there are mismatches on all dimensions of language use but ‘Medium’; however, by far the greatest number of mismatches occur on the ‘Social role relationship’ parameter, rendering TT in the specified instances less flattering to the addressees, less diplomatically polite and deliberately non-committal, i.e. blunter and more direct. Clearly, the interpersonal component has been altered through these mismatches. The few mismatches on the dimension ‘Participation’ which result in TT’s involving the addressees less directly and explicitly in a few (for the addressees positive) instances also detract from the interpersonal functional component. The few mismatches on ‘Social attitude’ which render TT less *formal* also alter the interpersonal component of the textual function by making TT less socially distant, and carefully polite. The mismatches on ‘Province’, which result in TT being less unambiguously clear and textually cohesive, as well as the three overtly erroneous errors, affect the ideational component of ST’s function by detracting in these few instances from a clear and efficient passing on of information.

From this configuration of mismatches, it becomes clear that, while the ideational component of ST’s function is violated to a minor degree only, ST’s interpersonal functional component is violated to a considerable extent as evidenced by the *pattern* of mismatches along the dimension of ‘Social role relationship’. Thus, we may say that with regard to the addresser’s implicit attempt at giving the addressees a feeling of importance and his desire to be non-committal, indirect, and diplomatic about the consequences of the changes in his company, TT has serious shortcomings which we have specified in detail above.

# 5

## REFINING THE ORIGINAL MODEL ON THE BASIS OF THE RESULTS OF TEST CASES

### A translation typology

Following empirical work with the original model I proposed a basic division into two major translation types: overt translation and covert translation.

#### **Overt translation**

An *overt* translation is one in which the addressees of the translation text are quite ‘overtly’ not directly addressed: an *overt* translation is not a ‘second original’. In *overt* translation the original is tied in a specific manner to the source language community and its culture, and is often specifically directed at source culture addressees but at the same time points beyond the source language community because it is, independent of its source language origin, also of potential general human interest. Original texts which call for an *overt* translation have an established status in the source language community and potentially in other communities. I divided such texts into two groups:

1. *overt* historically linked source texts, i.e. those tied to a specific occasion in which a precisely specified source language audience is/was being addressed. Examples from the test sample I analysed in the original corpus are a sermon (by Karl Barth given at a Basel prison) and a political speech (given in 1942 by Winston Churchill in Bradford);
2. *overt* timeless source texts, i.e. those transcending as works of art and aesthetic creations a distinct historical meaning while, of course, always necessarily displaying period- and culture-specificity because of the status of the addresser, who is a product of his time and culture. Examples in the test corpus are a moral anecdote (a nineteenth-century *Kalendergeschichte*

(calendar story) by the well-known German author Johann Peter Hebel) and a comedy dialogue (an excerpt from Sean O'Casey's one-act play: *The End of the Beginning*). Both these texts – although timeless and transmitting a general human message – are quite clearly specific to the source culture because they are marked on the language user dimensions and because they have independent status in the language community through belonging to the community's cultural products. Both texts are literary texts setting up a kind of 'fictive reality' which is, in every reception by an individual reader, newly related to the specific historic reality in the concrete situation in which the reader finds himself.

The requirements for this type of translation have led me to an important modification of the original model of translation quality assessment as outlined earlier: any *direct* match of the original function of the source text is not possible in *overt* translation, either because the source text is tied to a specific non-repeatable historic event in the source culture (for example, Karl Barth's sermon or Winston Churchill's speech, both given at a particular time and place to a particular audience) or because of the unique status (as a literary text) that the source text has in the source culture. In the case of texts that are bound to a specific historic occasion, it is quite obvious that a translator cannot set out to match the original function that ST had for the original addressees but that he must try to match what I called a 'second level function', one that recognizes the 'displaced situationality' of the two texts and holds not only for contemporary, educated middle class native speakers of the target lingua-culture but also for their potential counterparts in the source culture, who are not the original addressees.

In cases of *overt* translation a similar second-level function, i.e. a kind of 'topicalization' of the original function, may have to be posited as a criterion for adequate translation. This second-level function is then the function holding for the contemporary standard language speaker of the target culture and frequently also for their potential counterparts in the source culture, who may also not be the original addressees.

In *overt* translation, the source text as a piece of work with a certain status in the source language community is to remain as intact as possible given the necessary transfer and recoding in another language. On the other hand, cases of *overt* translation present difficulties precisely because their status in the socio-cultural context of the source language community, which must be topicalized in the target culture, necessitates major changes. It is this dialectical relationship between preservation and alteration which makes the finding of translation equivalents difficult in cases of *overt* translation.

Texts that are linked to a specific historic occasion in the source language community (such as Churchill's speech and Karl Barth's sermon in the original work's test corpus) can also present such topicalization problems (although they did not present such problems in the original corpus I examined). For instance,

## **56 Refining the original model**

it might well have been the case that Churchill or Karl Barth had spoken a regional dialect of their respective mother tongue. However, in view of the fact that *overt* historically linked texts have the status of a document of a historical event in the source culture, where the culture specificity and uniqueness is more strongly marked than in timeless, fictional texts, it seems to be more appropriate in these cases to abstain from finding approximate equivalents for culture-specific geographical, temporal, or social class markedness on the language user dimensions and to provide explanatory notes to the members of the target culture who are exposed to a translation text.

### **Covert translation**

A *covert* translation is a translation which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture. The translation is *covert* because it is not marked pragmatically as a translation text of a source text but may, conceivably, have been created in its own right. A *covert* translation is thus a translation whose source text is not specifically addressed to a particular source culture audience, i.e. it is not particularly tied to the source language and culture. A source text and its *covert* translation text are pragmatically of equal concern for source and target language addressees. Both are, as it were, equally directly addressed. A source text and its *covert* translation have equivalent purposes, they are based on contemporary, equivalent needs of a comparable audience in the source and target language communities. In the case of *covert* translation texts, it is thus both possible and desirable to keep the function of the source text equivalent in the translation text.

In the sample texts analysed in my original 1977 model of translation quality assessment, a scientific text (an excerpt from a coursebook in mathematics), a tourist information booklet (advertising brochure on Nuremberg), an economic text (a letter written by the president of an international investment company to the shareholders) and a journalistic text (an article on anthropology which appeared in a popular magazine, the (English language) UNESCO *Courier* and the (German language) UNESCO *Kurier*) exemplify the category of source texts that led to a *covert* translation. All these translation texts have direct target language addressees, for whom they are as immediately and ‘originally’ relevant as is the source text for the source language addressees. In the case of the economic text in the test sample for instance, reprinted in [Chapter 4](#), both source and target language addressees are shareholders of the same (internationally operating) investment company, i.e. they differ only accidentally in their respective mother tongues.

While it is thus clear that such texts are not source-culture specific, it is the *covert* type of translation that such texts require which presents more difficulties, and many more subtle, cultural translation problems than those encountered in the case of *overt* translation, where the particular source culture specificity had to be either left intact and presented as a culturally and historically linked monument,

or overtly matched in the target culture setting. If the source text and its translation text are to have equivalent functions, however, which is necessary in a *covert* translation, the translator has to take different cultural presuppositions in the two language communities into account in order to meet the needs of the target language addressees in their cultural setting, and in order to keep the textual function equivalent in source and target cultures. In a *covert* translation, the translator has to make allowances for underlying cultural differences by placing what I call a ‘cultural filter’ between the source text and the translation text. The translator has to view the source text through the eyes of a target culture member.

### Distinguishing between different types of translations and versions

I hypothesized that, in the case of European cultures such as, for example, the German and British English ones, the differences in the socio-cultural norms between the two cultures were not substantial and basically knowable. Existing and verified differences in the socio-cultural norms and presuppositions of cultural knowledge were to be taken care of in *covert* translation through the application of a cultural filter. It then seemed to me reasonable to assume that the contemporary Western European and North American middle class speakers of the respective standard language, closely related through socio-political and economic ties, did not differ in relevant ways concerning, for instance, their reception of a scientific text, a journalistic article, or a commercial circular letter. Unless presuppositions concerning cultural differences were substantiated by ethnographic, socio-cultural and discourse research, it seemed more reasonable in translation to follow an assumption of basic comparability for such closely related cultures as the Western European and North American ones than to take the liberty in translation of changing the source text on the assumption of existing cultural differences. This did not amount to a claim that differences in values and habits, in understanding, emphasizing or disregarding certain emotions or attitudes, etc. did not exist between any two, however closely related, cultures. However, given the goal of achieving functional equivalence in a *covert* translation, assumptions of cultural difference should be carefully examined before any change in the source text is undertaken. In cases of unproven assumptions of cultural difference, the translator might be led to apply a cultural filter whose application, resulting in possibly deliberate mismatches between the source text and the translation text along several situational parameters, would be seen as not justified. In other words, I would then advise a ‘non-risk-taking’ strategy in *covert* translation when applying a cultural filter, i.e. ‘when in doubt, leave it out’, or more respectfully put, the unmarked assumption is one of cultural compatibility, unless there is evidence to the contrary. As will be demonstrated in the next chapter, in the case of the German and Anglophone lingua-cultures, such evidence seems now to be available, which has important consequences for cultural filtering.

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In the original study, such evidence was not yet available and consequently I considered the translation of the commercial letter (see above) as a clear example of unjustified filtering. In this text, the president of Investors Overseas Services (a fraudulent company, as was revealed much later) informs the shareholders about changes in the set-up of the company that will not exactly be to their advantage. Dimensional changes on the dimension ‘Social role relationship’ are responsible for the fact that the English original’s carefully evasive, hedging, and distantly polite tone is changed into a much more direct, blunt, and undiplomatic tone which clearly acts against the textual function, which is characterized in the following way: the addresser’s intention is (a) to inform the addressees of a collection of facts as precisely and efficiently as possible and to request action (ideational functional component), and (b) to establish a positive rapport with the addressees, to convince and reassure them of the appropriateness of certain moves undertaken by the company, to give them a feeling of importance and power and at the same time always to stay indirect and non-committal as to the moves announced and their potential consequences (interpersonal functional component).

In the analysis of this commercial text and its TT, it was found that TT, along the dimension ‘Social role relationship’, does not contribute to the interpersonal functional component in the same manner: for example, ‘as you know’ is translated as *bekanntlich*, which is potentially less flattering to the addressees as it does not address them personally; ‘In order to avoid the possibility of accidental misdirection of your certificates … your assistance is required. We have enclosed a “Dividend Instruction Form” for your completion; this should be returned in the pre-addressed envelope’ is translated as: *Um zu vermeiden, daß Ihre Zertifikate versehentlich fehlgeleitet werden … bitten wir Sie, das beigeigte Dividenden-Zustellungsformular auszufüllen und in dem ebenfalls beigefügten adressierten Umschlag zurückzuschicken.*

In the German translation the writer appears to be much more forceful, active and direct, while the source text expresses the action to be done by the addressees more abstractly and indirectly (nominally). The utterance in the English source text has the illocutionary force of a subtle suggestion, while in the translation text it appears to be a request. The original tries to intimate that it is not the company that wants something done, but that some external necessity proposes a course of action to the shareholders. Similarly the German rendering of ‘Your bank (or broker) should indicate’ as *Sie müssen die Bank (oder einen Makler) bitten* … clearly flouts the interpersonal function of the source text as characterized above: the lack of the possessive pronoun renders the expression in the translation text less implicitly flattering; also, the utterance in the translation is an order mainly through the use of the modal *müssen*, which makes the shareholders appear dependent on the president. Such an illocutionary force is directly opposed to the cautious and diplomatic tenor of the original.

Many similar dimensional differences could be listed, all of which change the social role relationship between addresser and addressees. The point I made in the original study was that an assumption of the German shareholders’ different

expectations with regard to such a letter was unwarranted since it was not substantiated by facts and only acted to perpetuate the clichéd assumption of German addressees' preferring such manifestations of a social role relationship. Following my own and others' contrastive pragmatic research, the model will now have to be revisited in the light of this research.

From the example of the culturally conditioned differences established in the analysis of the commercial text in the previous chapter, and the other analysis conducted with the original model, the following conclusion was drawn: if a *covert* translation, unwarrantedly and in a patterned way, takes account of the target culture group's different presuppositions about the *social role relationship* and *social attitude* of addressees vis-à-vis the addresser in a particular *province*, then such a translation is no longer a translation but will be defined as a *covert version*. A covert version is by definition an inadequate translation because the application of the cultural filter is unjustified.

Thus, in the original analyses, the translation texts of the commercial circular and the journalistic article discussed above were judged as *covert versions* because the translator – in order to preserve the function of the source texts – had applied the cultural filter non-objectively and had consequently undertaken changes along the situational dimensions. Since these changes were at the time not substantiated by research, the translation was judged to be a *covert version* of the source text.

*Covert versions* must be clearly differentiated from *overt versions*, which are produced whenever a special function is overtly added to a TT, for example 1. when a translation is to reach a particular audience. Examples are special editions for a youthful audience with the resultant omissions, additions, simplifications, or different accentuations of certain features of ST etc., or popularizations of specialist works designed for the lay public; and 2. when TT is given a special added purpose. Examples are interlingual versions or 'linguistic translations' or resumés and abstracts, where it is the express purpose of the version producer to pass on only the most essential facts.

In the discussion of different types of translation and the distinction between a translation and a version, it was implicitly assumed that a particular text may be adequately translated in only one particular way. The assumption that a particular text necessitates either an *overt* or a *covert* translation may, however, not hold in every case. Thus any text may, for specific purposes, require an *overt* translation, i.e. it may be viewed as a document which 'has independent status' and exists in its own right: for instance, the commercial circular discussed above may be cited as evidence in a court of law, or its author may, in the course of time, have become a distinguished political or literary figure. In these two instances, the texts would clearly not have an equivalent function in translation, i.e. in both cases an *overt* translation would be appropriate, and it should be evaluated as such.

Further, there may well be source texts for which the choice of *overt* or *covert* translation is a subjective one, e.g. fairy tales may be viewed as folk products of a particular culture, which would predispose a translator to opt for an *overt*

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translation, or as non-culture specific texts, anonymously produced, with the general function of entertaining and educating the young, which would suggest a *covert* translation; or consider the case of the Bible, which may be treated as either a collection of historical literary documents, in which case an *overt* translation would seem to be called for, or as a collection of human truths directly relevant to Everyman, in which case a *covert* translation might seem appropriate.

Moreover, it is obvious that the specific purpose for which a ‘translation’ is required, i.e. the specific brief a translator is given, will determine whether a translation or an *overt* version should be aimed at. In other words, just as the decision as to whether an *overt* or a *covert* translation is appropriate for a particular text may be conditioned by factors such as the changeable status of the text producer, so clearly the initial choice between translating a given source text and producing a version of it cannot be made on the basis of features of the text, but is conditioned by the arbitrarily determined purpose for which the translation or version is required.

The original assumption in the model that a TT, in order to be adequate, should have a function equivalent to the function of its ST had to be refined in the light of the crucial distinction between *overt* and *covert* translations: it is thus only in cases of *covert* translation that it is in fact possible to achieve functional equivalence. This functional equivalence is, however, extremely difficult to achieve because differences in the socio-cultural norms of the two linguacultures have to be taken into account, and a cultural filter must be applied. As became clear from the analyses of the test corpus in the original work, such filtering is crucial whenever the original has a well-marked interpersonal component of the textual function. It is the interpersonal component which presents the most difficult (and interesting) problems of translation equivalence. In the case of the scientific text (taken from a mathematics textbook) the problems were relatively reduced – precisely because the interpersonal component of this text’s function was not strongly marked. In the case of other texts calling for a *covert* translation (the commercial text, the tourist brochure and the journalistic article), however, the matching of the interpersonal component of the textual function (especially on the *social role relationship* dimension) clearly presented the most subtle problems for the translator, who had to apply a cultural filter in his translation. From the viewpoint of the translation evaluator, the lack of objective knowledge about differences in the socio-cultural norms makes it difficult to assess the legitimacy of any changes made as a result of the application of the cultural filter. Empirical cross-cultural pragmatic research is of critical importance here in that it can add to our knowledge of cross-cultural differences.

In the case of *overt* translation only a second level function is achievable. Since in an *overt* translation an ST is, in a way, ‘sacrosanct’ due to its status (as a work of art or a historical document), the translator cannot strive for simple functional equivalence in the target culture, which would involve the undertaking of adjustments of cultural presuppositions. Rather, he has to restrict himself to ‘simply’ transposing ST from the source to the target culture, giving target

culture members the opportunity to have access to the original via the medium of the foreign language. *Overt* translations are more ‘straightforward’ since their STs are taken over unaltered, i.e. are merely transplanted into a new environment with no provisions being made for the TT addressee’s (potentially different) norms of expectation. This can be demonstrated by the fact that in one of the texts of the original corpus, the religious sermon, the two references to local source culture phenomena are best not translated. Their exact source language terms *Fastnacht* and *Mustermesse* can be explained outside the body of the text in a footnote. The source-culture orientation is clearly brought about through this procedure.

The difficulty of evaluation in the case of *overt* translation is also reduced since considerations of cultural filtering can be omitted. The major difficulty in translating *overtly* is, of course, finding *linguistic-cultural* ‘equivalents’ on the language user dimensions. However, here we deal with *overt* manifestations of cultural phenomena which must be transferred only because they happen to be manifest linguistically in ST. A judgement of whether a ‘translation’ of culture-specific user characteristics is adequate in an *overt* translation cannot be objectively given, as the degree of correspondence in terms of social status between dialects in two different cultures cannot be measured at the present time since no completed cultural-comparative studies exist. Such an evaluation must therefore necessarily remain to a certain degree a subjective matter. However, as opposed to the difficulty of dealing with differences of cultural presuppositions with respect to *social role relationship*, *social attitude*, etc. in a particular text, which characterizes the evaluation of *covert* translation, the explicit overt transference necessary in an *overt* translation is still easier to pin down and diagnose.

As regards the evaluation of different translation texts of the same source text, my model facilitates an evaluative statement only to the extent that the relative importance of the individual situational dimensions has been demonstrated in the analysis of the source text. A relative weighting of *covertly* erroneous and *overtly* erroneous errors can only be achieved through a consideration of each individual textual pair. However, the subgroup of overtly erroneous errors referred to as ‘mismatches of the denotative meanings of elements of the source and translation texts’ will detract more seriously from the quality of a translation text when the source text has a strongly marked ideational functional component, e.g. mismatches of the denotative meaning of items in a science text are likely to be rated higher than a mismatch on ‘Social attitude’. A detailed hierarchy of errors for any individual case can, however, only be given for a specific comparison of two or more texts depending in any particular case on the objectives of the evaluation, or in the case of translation in the context of foreign language teaching, on the objectives set by the teacher.

A particular ST does not necessarily require simply one *covert* or *overt* translation, given the different, dynamic ways of viewing a text and different purposes for which a translation may, in the course of time, be required. However, in clarifying the distinction between *overt* and *covert*, and in detailing the

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consequences in translation practice and evaluation which follow the choice of a particular predominant translation type, the original model has succeeded in shedding some light on a theoretically problematical area of translation.

In evaluating translations, a *version* must be distinguished from a *translation*, and an *overt* translation from a *covert* translation. With these categories we can clarify the nature of the equivalence required for a translation of optimal quality. In translation, this equivalence is to be one of function, function being determined by a pragmatic linguistic-cum-context analysis, i.e. a detailed opening up of a particular source text and its translation text.

Returning to the three criteria (relationship between original and translation, between texts and human agents, distinction between translation and other textual operations) listed in [Chapter 2](#) for judging the differences in theoretical and empirical potential between different approaches to translation and translation evaluation, the model presented here is firmly based on the assumption that translation is a double-bind operation. As opposed to views that show a one-sided concern with the translation, its receptors and the conditions holding for the translation's reception in the target culture, the model takes account of both original and translation by positing a cline along which it can be shown which tie of the double-bind has priority in any particular case, the two endpoints of the cline being marked by the concepts *overt* translation (source text focused) and *covert* translation (target text focused). The relationship between (features of) the text(s) and the human agents involved (as author, translator, reader), is explicitly taken care of in the model through the provision of an elaborate system of pragmatic-functional analysis of original and translation, with the *covert–overt* cline on which a translation is to be placed determining the type of reception sought and likely to be achieved. Finally, the model explicitly provides for the means of distinguishing a translation from other types of textual operations by specifying the conditions holding for a translation to turn into a version. The notion of a cultural filter in *covert* translation cases needs to be substantiated through language-pair specific contrastive pragmatic research. In [Chapter 8](#) I will present examples of such research relevant for German–English and English–German cultural filtering.

# 6

## THE REVISED HOUSE MODEL OF TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT (1997)

As with the original model described above, the revised model, too, defines translation as the replacement of a text in the source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in the target language. An adequate translation is, then, a pragmatically and semantically equivalent one. As a first requirement for this equivalent, it is posited that a translation text has a function equivalent to that of its original.

In the revised model the textual function – consisting of an ideational and an interpersonal functional component in the Hallidayan sense – is again defined as the application (or use) of the text in a particular context of situation, the basic idea being that ‘text’ and ‘context of situation’ should not be viewed as separate entities, rather the context of situation in which the text unfolds ‘is encapsulated in the text ... through a systematic relationship between the social environment on the one hand and the functional organization of language on the other’ (Halliday 1989: 11). This means that the text must be referred to the particular situation enveloping it, and for this a way must be found for breaking down the broad notion of ‘context of situation’ into manageable parts, i.e. particular features of the context of situation or ‘situational dimensions’. The linguistic correlates of the situational dimensions are the means with which the textual function is realized and the textual function is the result of a linguistic-pragmatic analysis along the dimensions with each dimension contributing to the two functional components, the ideational and the interpersonal, in characteristic fashion. Opening up the text with these dimensions yields a specific textual profile which characterizes its function, which is then taken as the individual textual norm against which the translation is measured. The degree to which the textual profile and function of the translation (as derived from an analogous analysis) match the profile and function of the original is the degree to which the translation is adequate in quality. In evaluating the relative match between

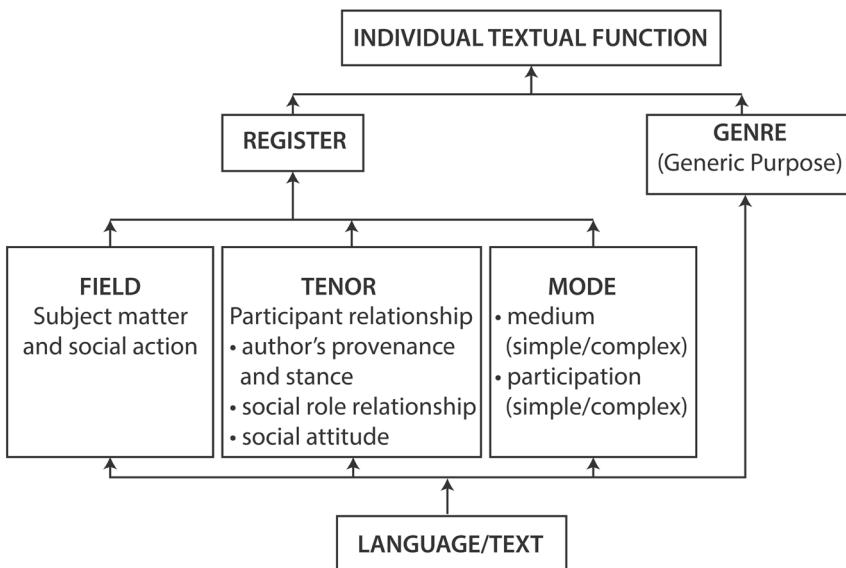
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original and translation, a distinction is made between ‘dimensional mismatches’ and ‘non-dimensional mismatches’.

In my revised (1997) model, the classic Hallidayan register concepts of ‘Field’, ‘Mode’ and ‘Tenor’ are used. The dimension of Field captures the topic, the content of the text or its subject matter, with differentiations of degrees of generality, specificity or ‘granularity’ in lexical items according to rubrics of specialized, general and popular. Tenor refers to the nature of the participants, the addresser and the addressees, and the relationship between them in terms of social power and social distance, as well as the degree of ‘emotional charge’. Included here are the text producer’s temporal, geographical and social provenance as well as his intellectual, emotional or affective stance (his ‘personal viewpoint’) vis-à-vis the content he is portraying and the communicative task he is engaged in. Further, Tenor captures ‘social attitude’, i.e. different styles (formal, consultative and informal). Mode refers to both the channel – spoken or written (which can be ‘simple’, e.g. ‘written to be read’ or ‘complex’, e.g. ‘written to be spoken as if not written’), and the degree to which potential or real participation is allowed for between writer and reader. Participation can also be ‘simple’, i.e. be a monologue with no addressee participation built into the text, or ‘complex’, with various addressee-involving linguistic mechanisms characterizing the text. In taking account of (linguistically documentable) differences in texts between the spoken and written medium, reference is also made to the empirically established corpus-based oral-literate dimensions hypothesized by Biber (1988). He proposes correlates of medium by suggesting dimensions along which linguistic choices may reflect medium, i.e. involved vs. informational text production; explicit vs. situation-dependent reference; abstract vs. non-abstract presentation of information.

The type of linguistic-textual analysis in which linguistic features discovered in the original and the translation correlated with the categories Field, Tenor and Mode does not, however, as in the original model, directly lead to a statement of the individual textual function (and its interpersonal and ideational components). Rather, the concept of ‘Genre’ is newly incorporated into the analytic scheme, ‘in between’ the register categories Field, Tenor, Mode. The category of Genre is an important addition to the analytic scheme for assessing the quality of a translation as it enables one to refer any single textual exemplar to the class of texts with which it shares a common purpose or function. Although the category register (Field, Tenor, Mode) captures the relationship between text and context – of prime importance for translation and translation criticism – establishing functional varieties of language use by correlating language-specific features with recurrent features of the situation in which the text is conventionally used, register descriptions are basically limited to capturing individual features on the linguistic surface. In order to characterize ‘deeper’ textual structures and patterns, a different conceptualization is needed. This is attempted via the use of ‘Genre’. While register captures the connection between texts and their ‘micro-context’, Genre connects texts with the ‘macro-context’ of the linguistic and cultural community in which the text is embedded.

The resultant scheme for textual analysis, comparison and assessment is as follows:



**FIGURE 6.1** A scheme for analysing and comparing original and translation texts

The analysis provided in the revised model for translation quality assessment along the levels of language/text, register and genre yields a textual profile that characterizes the individual textual function. Whether and how this textual function can be maintained depends on the type of translation sought for the original. In the following section, the different types of translation and versions mentioned in [Chapter 5](#) will be briefly reviewed and concretized.

### Overt and covert translation

The distinction between two different types of translation: overt and covert, already introduced and discussed in the original 1977 model, goes back to Schleiermacher's (1813) famous distinction between *verfremdende* (alienating) and *einbürgernde* (integrating) *Übersetzungen* (translations), which has had many imitators using different terms. What sets the overt–covert distinction apart from other similar distinctions and concepts is the fact that it is integrated into a coherent theory of translation criticism, inside which the origin and function of the two types of translation are consistently described and explained. The basic distinction is as follows: in an *overt* translation the receptors of the translation are quite 'overtly' *not* being addressed; an overt translation is thus one which is overtly a translation, not a 'second original'. Source texts that call for an overt

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translation have an established worth in the source language community; they are either historical source texts such as those tied to a specific occasion in which a precisely specified source language audience is/was being addressed or they may be timeless source texts, i.e. works of art and aesthetic creations which transcend a distinct historical meaning.

A *covert* translation is a translation which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture. The translation is covert because it is not marked pragmatically as a translation text of a source text but may conceivably have been created in its own right. A covert translation is thus a translation whose source is not specifically addressed to a particular source culture audience. A source text and its covert translation are pragmatically of equal concern for source and target language addressees. Both are equally directly addressed. A source text and its covert translation have equivalent purposes; they are based on contemporary equivalent needs of a comparable audience in the source and target language communities. In the case of covert translation texts, it is thus both possible and desirable to keep the function of the source text equivalent in the translation text. This can be done by inserting a ‘cultural filter’ (see p. 68 below for details) between original and translation with which to account for cultural differences between the two linguistic communities.

The distinction between overt and covert translation is given greater explanatory adequacy through the concepts of ‘frame’ and ‘frame shifting’, ‘discourse world’ and ‘world shifting’. Translation involves a transfer of texts across time and space, and whenever texts move, they also shift frames and discourse worlds. A frame often operates unconsciously as an explanatory principle, i.e. any message that defines a frame gives the receiver instructions in his interpretation of the message included in the frame. Similarly, the notion of a ‘discourse world’ (Edmondson 1981) refers to some superordinate structure for interpreting meaning in a certain way, for instance when a locutionary act acquires an illocutionary value by reference to a newly operant discourse world.

Applying these concepts to overt and covert translation, we can state the following: in overt translation, the translation text is embedded in a new speech event, which also gives it a new frame. An overt translation is a case of ‘language mention’ (as opposed to ‘language use’ in the case of covert translation); it is thus similar to a quotation. Relating the concept of ‘overt translation’ to the four-tiered analytical model (Function – Genre – Register – Language/Text), we can state that an original and its overt translation are to be equivalent at the level of language/text and register as well as genre. At the level of the individual textual function functional equivalence, while still possible, is of a different nature: it can be described as enabling access to the function the original has in its discourse world or frame. As this access is to be realized in a different language and in the target linguistic and cultural community, a switch in discourse world and frame becomes necessary, i.e. the translation is differently framed, it operates in its own frame and discourse world and can thus reach at best second-level functional equivalence. As this type of equivalence is, however, achieved through

equivalence at the levels of language/text, register and genre, the original's frame and discourse world are co-activated, such that members of the target culture may eavesdrop, as it were, i.e. be enabled to appreciate the original textual function, albeit at a distance. In overt translation, the work of the translator is important and clearly visible. Since it is the translator's task to permit target culture members to gain access to the original text and its cultural impact on source culture members, the translator puts target culture members in a position to observe and/or judge this text 'from outside'.

In covert translation, on the other hand, the translator attempts to re-create an equivalent speech event. Consequently, the function of a covert translation is to reproduce in the target text the function the original has in its frame and discourse world. A covert translation operates quite 'overtly' in the frame and discourse world provided by the target culture and no attempt is made to co-activate the discourse world in which the original unfolded. Covert translation is both psycholinguistically less complex than overt translation and more deceptive. The translator's task is to betray the original and to hide behind the transformation of the original; he is certainly less visible, if not totally absent. Since true functional equivalence is aimed at, the original may be legitimately manipulated at the levels of language/text and register using a cultural filter. The result may be a very real distance from the original. While the original and its covert translation need thus not be equivalent at the levels of language/text and register, they have to be equivalent at the level of genre and the individual textual function.

In evaluating a translation, it is essential that the differences between these two types of translation be taken into account. Overt and covert translations make different demands on translation criticism. The difficulty of evaluating an overt translation is reduced in that considerations of cultural filtering can be omitted. Overt translations are 'more straightforward', the originals being taken over 'unfiltered' and 'simply' transposed from the source to the target culture in the medium of a new language. The major difficulty in translating overtly is, of course, finding *linguistic-cultural* 'equivalents', particularly along the dimension of Tenor and its characterizations of the author's temporal, social and geographical provenance. However, here we deal with *overt* manifestations of cultural phenomena which must be transferred only because they happen to be manifest linguistically in the original. A judgement of whether a 'translation' of, for example, a dialect is adequate in overt translation can ultimately not be given objectively, i.e. the degree of correspondence in terms of social prestige and status cannot be measured in the absence of complete contrastive ethnographic studies – if, indeed, there will ever be such studies – so such an evaluation must remain to a certain degree a subjective matter. However, as opposed to the difficulty of evaluating differences in cultural presuppositions, and communicative preferences between text production in the source and target cultures, which characterizes the evaluation of covert translation, the explicit overt transference in an overt translation is still easier to judge.

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In connection with evaluating covert translations, it is necessary to consider the application of a cultural filter in order to be able to differentiate between a covert translation and a covert version. In the following section, the concept and function of the cultural filter will be given substance and discussed in more detail.

### **The cultural filter**

The concept of a ‘cultural filter’ introduced by myself (1977) is a means of capturing socio-cultural differences in expectation norms and stylistic conventions between the source and target linguistic-cultural communities. The concept was used to emphasize the need for empirical bases for any ‘manipulations’ on the original undertaken by the translator. Whether or not there is an empirical basis for changes made along the situational dimensions would be reflected in the assessment of the translation. Further, given the goal of achieving functional equivalence in covert translation, assumptions of cultural difference should be carefully examined before any changes from the original are made in the translation. The unmarked assumption is one of cultural compatibility, unless there is evidence to the contrary. In the case of the German and Anglophone lingua-cultural communities such evidence is now available, which has important consequences for cultural filtering. Since its first proposal, then, the concept of cultural filter has been given some substance and validity through a number of empirical contrastive-pragmatic analyses, in which Anglophone and German communicative differences and priorities were hypothesized along several dimensions. Converging evidence from a number of cross-cultural German–English studies conducted with different data, subjects and methodologies suggests that there are German communicative preferences which differ from Anglophone ones along a set of dimensions, among them directness, content-focus, explicitness and routine-reliance (cf. House 2006b).

For the comparative analysis of source and target texts and the evaluation of covert translations, it is essential to take into account whatever knowledge there is about cultural differences between target and source communities. It must be stressed at this point that there is a need for empirical research in the area of language-pair specific contrastive pragmatic analysis, and that there is a strong research desideratum in this field, an important field for translation studies, and in particular for translation criticism.

In the original model I had already distinguished between a translation and a version, with versions being subdivided into overt and covert ones. This division is upheld in the revised model. Overt versions are produced whenever a special function is overtly added to a translation text. There are two different cases of overt version production: 1. when a ‘translation’ is produced which is to reach a particular audience. Examples are special editions for a youthful audience with the resultant omissions, additions, simplifications or different accentuations of certain features of the source text etc., or popularizations of specialist works

(newly) designed for the lay public; and 2. when the ‘translation’ is given a special added purpose. Examples are interlingual versions or ‘linguistic translations’, resumés and abstracts, where it is the express purpose of the version producer to pass on only the most essential facts of the original. A covert version results whenever the translator – in order to preserve the original’s function – applied a cultural filter non-objectively and consequently undertook changes on the situational dimensions, i.e. the original has been manipulated without support by research.

In discussing different types of translations and the distinction between a translation and a version, there is an implicit assumption that a particular text may be adequately translated in only one way. The assumption that a particular text necessitates either a covert or an overt translation does, however, not hold in any simple way. Thus any text may, for a specific purpose, require an overt translation, i.e. it may be viewed as a document of ‘independent value’ existing in its own right, e.g. when its author has become, in the course of time, a distinguished figure, and then the translation might be evaluated as an overt translation.

Further, the specific purpose for which a ‘translation’ is made will, of course, determine whether a translation or an overt version should be aimed at, so just as the decision as to whether an overt or a covert translation is appropriate for a particular source text may depend on factors such as the changeable status of the text author, then clearly the initial choice between translating or version-producing cannot be made on the basis of features of the text, but may depend on the arbitrarily determined purpose for which the translation or version is required.

In the revised model of translation quality assessment I retained central concepts of the original model but also introduced new concepts – specifically in terms of the analytic apparatus suggested for pragma-linguistic analysis. However, I retained the central notion of source and target text comparison as the basis for translation quality assessment, even when this text-based approach has for many specialists in the translational field been overtaken by a more target-audience-oriented notion of translational appropriateness. I believe this recent shift of focus in translational studies to be fundamentally misguided.

The analytical categories are revised in such a way that the three levels of analysis: *Language/Text*, *Register* and *Genre* are related exponentially, and at the same time each level contributes to the characterization of a functional profile for the individual source or target text.

The notion of *Genre* is of theoretical interest, though this interest has not been developed in detail in these pages so far. I have proposed to use the term in its everyday sense, while applying some restrictions. What counts as a genre cannot therefore be manipulated by academic whim, but is to be discovered in the everyday practice of the lingua-culture in question. The category remains a socially determined, pre-scientific category in the sense that its parameters cannot be set by scientific decree. Consequently, of course, it is conceded that

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the concept remains fuzzy-edged. Two factors contribute to this lack of clarity. Firstly, we have the issue of degree of delicacy in distinguishing one genre from another. If ‘speech’ constitutes a genre, does ‘speech given at a dinner-party held for fundraising purposes’ also constitute a genre? As I conceived it, the category is a very broad one. Secondly, we have the issue of criteria for distinction – as genres can be characterized and distinguished on many dimensions simultaneously, the use of different distinguishing criteria will lead to different categorial results. Take, for example, the instance of a verbal delivery in a formal setting which is designed to introduce another person, who will later address the assembled company. Informally we could assign such an event to the category ‘speech’ and/or the category ‘introduction’. It is both. Note that the categorial assignment ‘introductory speech’ does not resolve the theoretical issue at stake, firstly because it simply transposes the categorial issue to one of degree of delicacy, and secondly because it leaves open the hierarchical issue, i.e. the question as to whether we are handling a speech used as an introduction, or an introduction realized via a speech. I have adopted the position that *Genre* is to be conceived so broadly that an inventory of generic categories subsumes all texts across all cultures. However, I have not attempted the rather daunting task of spelling out what this inventory might contain. Further, while any text in any culture can, in principle, be assigned to a genre, it is not the case that every genre has textual realizations in every culture. The category *Genre* is therefore universal in the sense of universal grammar – it can accommodate all instances, but not every instantiation would realize all its exponents: in different cultures, certain genres might have ‘null realizations’.

It follows that inside the theory developed in this book, a translation of a particular text will belong to the same genre as the original, be that translation *overt* or *covert*. In the case that the genre to which the source text is to be assigned has a null realization in the target lingua-culture, and a covertly functional equivalence is desired, then clearly translation as such is not possible: a different *version* of the source text will have to be substituted, or indeed some non-verbal realization.

In sum, the category of *Genre* relates an individual pair of texts to this broader category, and enables thereby intra-generic comparison and, possibly, generalization. In my own research (House 2004) it has, for example, been possible to examine a larger corpus of texts belonging to the specific genre of children’s books. The analysis and comparison of 52 German and English texts inside this genre, together with their translations, gives explanatory weight to the analysis of any one single textual pair, in that the results of the analysis of one original and its translation can be related to a system of translational norms and options operating within this particular genre, across this intercultural gap. The model developed in this book thus opens up the possibility of research into culturally conditioned translational norms, which are likely to differ for different genres. More research with large corpora of texts belonging to different genres would thus give greater explanatory value to any individual translation analysis.

# 7

## IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REVISED 1997 MODEL

### A test case

This chapter demonstrates the revised 1997 model of translation quality assessment by presenting a model analysis of an original text and its *covert* translation. For easy reference in the presentation of the analysis, paragraphs are numbered sequentially.

The text is an English children's book translated into German (taken from a corpus of excerpts from 52 children's books and their translations; for details see House 2004). In order to be able to make grounded statements about the quality of the translation of this book, both the original and the translation text are analysed at the same level of delicacy, and the translation text is then compared with the source text's textual profile. The revised 1997 model of translation quality assessment is here used to demonstrate the operation of the method of analysis and comparison of a children's book, the picture book *Peace at Last* by Jill Murphy and its German translation *Keine Ruh für Vater Bär*.

### **Children's book text (ST English; TT German)**

#### ***Source text***

*Peace at Last* by Jill Murphy (1980), London: Macmillan.

- 1 The hour was late.
- 2 Mr Bear was tired, Mrs Bear was tired and
- 3 Baby Bear was tired, so they all went to bed.
- 4 Mrs Bear fell asleep. Mr Bear didn't. Mrs Bear began to snore. "SNORE,"
- 5 went Mrs Bear, "SNORE, SNORE, SNORE."
- 6 "Oh NO!" said Mr Bear, "I can't stand THIS." So he got up and went to sleep
- 7 in Baby Bear's room.

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8 Baby Bear was not asleep either. He was lying in bed pretending  
9 to be an aeroplane. “NYAAOW!” went Baby Bear, “NYAAOW! NYAAOW!”  
10 “Oh NO!” said Mr Bear, “I can’t stand THIS.”  
11 So he got up and went to sleep in the living room.  
12 TICK-TOCK ... went the living room clock ... TICK-TOCK, TICK-  
TOCK.  
13 CUCKOO! CUCKOO! “Oh NO!” said Mr Bear,  
14 “I can’t stand THIS.” So he went off to sleep in the kitchen.  
15 DRIP, DRIP ... went the leaky kitchen tap.  
16 HMMMMMM ... went the refrigerator. “Oh NO,” said Mr Bear,  
17 “I can’t stand THIS.” So he got up and went to sleep in the garden.  
18 Well, you would not believe what noises there are in the garden at night.  
19 “TOO-WHIT-TOO-WHOO!” went the owl.  
20 “SNUFFLE, SNUFFLE,” went the hedgehog.  
21 “MIAAOW!” sang the cats on the wall. “Oh, NO!” said Mr Bear, “I can’t  
stand  
22 THIS.” So he went off to sleep in the car.  
23 It was cold in the car and uncomfortable, but Mr Bear was so tired that  
24 he didn’t notice. He was just falling asleep when all the birds started  
25 to sing and the sun peeped in at the window. “TWEET TWEET!” went the  
birds.  
26 SHINE, SHINE ... went the sun.  
27 “Oh NO!” said Mr Bear, “I can’t stand THIS.”  
28 So he got up and went back into the house.  
29 In the house, Baby Bear was fast asleep, and Mrs Bear had  
30 turned over and wasn’t snoring any more. Mr Bear got into bed and closed  
31 his eyes. “Peace at last,” he said to himself.  
32 BRRRRRRRRRRRRRRR! went the alarm clock, BRRRRRR!  
33 Mrs Bear sat up and rubbed her eyes.  
34 “Good morning, dear,” she said. “Did you sleep well?”  
35 “Not VERY well, dear,” yawned Mr Bear.  
36 “Never mind,” said Mrs Bear. “I’ll bring you a nice cup of tea.”  
37 And she did.

### **Target text**

*Keine Ruh für Vater Bär*, translated by Ingrid Weixelbaumer, 1981. Vienna and Munich: Annette Betz Verlag. Originally published in English as *Peace at Last* by Jill Murphy.

- 1 Es war Schlafenszeit.
- 2 Vater Bär war müde. Mutter Bär war müde und Baby Bär war müde ... also gingen
- 3 sie alle ins Bett. Mutter Bär schlief sofort ein. Vater Bär nicht.

- 4 Mutter Bär begann zu schnarchen. „SCH-CH-HHH“, machte Mutter Bär.
- 5 „SCH-CHCH-HHH, SCH-CHCHCH-HHH“ „Oh, NEIN!“ sagte Vater Bär.
- 6 „DAS halte ich nicht aus.“ Er stand auf und ging ins Kinderzimmer.
- 7 Dort wollte er schlafen.
- 8 Baby Bär schlief auch noch nicht. Er lag im Bett und spielte Flugzeug.
- 9 „WIEEE-AUUU, WIEEE-AUUU-UMM!“ „Oh, NEIN!“ sagte Vater Bär.
- 10 „DAS halte ich nicht aus.“ Er stand auf und ging ins Wohnzimmer.
- 11 Dort wollte er schlafen.
- 12 TICK-TACK ... machte die Kuckucksuhr im Wohnzimmer ... TICK-TACK,
- 13 TICK-TACK, KUCKUCK! KUCKUCK! „Oh, NEIN!“ sagte Vater Bär.
- 14 „DAS halte ich nicht aus.“ Er stand auf und ging in die Küche.
- 15 Dort wollte er schlafen.
- 16 TROPF, TROPF ... machte der undichte Wasserhahn. HMMMMMM machte
- 17 der Kühlschrank. „Oh, NEIN!“ sagte Vater Bär. „DAS halte ich nicht aus.“
- 18 Er stand auf und ging in den Garten. Dort wollte er schlafen.
- 19 Tja, nicht zu glauben, was es da an Geräuschen gibt, nachts im Garten.
- 20 „HUH-WITT-HUHUHUHHH!“ machte die Eule. „Schnüff, Schnüff“ machte der Igel.
- 21 „MIAAU!“ sangen die Katzen auf der Mauer. „Oh, NEIN!“
- 22 sagte Vater Bär.
- 23 „DAS halte ich nicht aus.“ Er stand auf und ging zu seinem Auto.
- 24 Es war kalt und ungemütlich im Auto. Aber Vater Bär war so müde,
- 25 daß er es gar nicht merkte. Die Augen fielen ihm zu. Er war schon fast
- 26 eingeschlafen, da fingen die Vögel zu singen an, und die Sonne blinzelte
- 27 zum Fenster herein.
- 28 „ZIWITT ZIWITT!“ zwitscherten die Vögel, und die Sonne schien
- 29 immer heller. „Oh, NEIN!“ sagte Vater Bär. „DAS halte ich nicht aus.“
- 30 Er stieg aus und ging ins Haus zurück.
- 31 Alles war still und friedlich. Baby Bär schlief fest, und Mutter Bär
- 32 hatte sich umgedreht und schnarchte nicht mehr. Vater Bär schlüpfte unter
- 33 die Decke und seufzte tief. „Endlich Ruh‘ im Haus!“ sagte er zu sich.
- 34 BRRRRRRRRR! machte der Wecker. BRRRRR! Mutter Bär rieb
- 35 sich die Augen und
- 36 gähnte. „Guten Morgen, mein Lieber“ sagte sie. „Hast du gut geschlafen?“
- 37 „Nicht SEHR, meine Liebe“, brummte Vater Bär. „Macht nichts“, sagte
- 38 Mutter Bär.
- 39 „Warte, ich bring dir das Frühstück ans Bett.“
- 40 „Und die Post!“ rief Baby Bär.
- 41 „Oh, NEIN!“ sagte Vater Bär, als er den Polizeistempel sah.
- 42 „PARKSÜNDER!“ rief Baby Bär. „Parksünder-Daddy!“

### ***Back translation***

*Keine Ruh für Vater Bär* [No peace for Father Bear] (Originally published as *Peace at Last* by Jill Murphy).

- 1 It was sleeping time.
- 2 Father Bear was tired. Mother Bear was tired and Baby Bear was tired ... so
- 3 they all went to bed. Mother Bear went to sleep immediately. Father Bear did not.
- 4 Mother Bear began to snore. “SCH-CH-HHH” went Mother Bear.
- 5 “SCH-CHCH-HHH, SCH-CHCHCH-HHH” “Oh, NO!” said Father Bear.
- 6 “THAT I can’t stand.” He got up and went into the children’s room.
- 7 There he wanted to sleep.
- 8 Baby Bear was also not asleep yet. He lay in bed and played aeroplanes.
- 9 “WIEEE-AUUU, WIEEE-AUUU-UUMM!” “Oh, NO!” said Father Bear.
- 10 “THAT I can’t stand.” He got up and went into the living room.
- 11 There he wanted to sleep.
- 12 TICK-TACK ... went the cuckoo clock in the living room ... TICK-TACK,
- 13 TICK-TACK, KUCKUCK! KUCKUCK! “Oh, NO!” said Father Bear.
- 14 “THAT I can’t stand.” He got up and went into the kitchen.
- 15 There he wanted to sleep.
- 16 DRIP, DRIP ... went the leaking kitchen tap. HMMMMMM went
- 17 the fridge. “Oh, NO!” said Father Bear. “THAT I can’t stand.”
- 18 He got up and went into the garden. There he wanted to sleep.
- 19 Well, it’s unbelievable what noises there are, at night in the garden.
- 20 “HUH-WITT-HUHUUHUUH!” went the owl. “Sniff, Sniff” went the hedgehog.
- 21 “MIAUU!” sang the cats on the wall. “Oh, NO!”
- 22 said Father Bear.
- 23 “THAT I can’t stand.” He got up and went to his car.
- 24 It was cold and uncomfortable in the car. But Father Bear was so tired
- 25 that he did not notice at all. His eyes closed. He had nearly fallen
- 26 asleep, when the birds started to sing, and the sun blinked
- 27 into the window.
- 28 “ZIWITT ZIWITT!” chirped the birds, and the sun shone
- 29 brighter and brighter. “Oh, NO!” said Father Bear. “THAT I can’t stand.”
- 30 He got out and went back into the house.
- 31 Everything was quiet and peaceful. Baby Bear was fast asleep and Mother Bear
- 32 had turned around and snored no longer. Father Bear snuggled
- 33 under the cover and sighed deeply. “Finally quiet in the house!” he said to himself.
- 34 BRRRRRRRRRR! went the alarm clock. BRRRRR! Mother Bear rubbed her eyes and
- 35 yawned. “Good morning, my dear,” she said. “Did you sleep well?”

- 36 "Not VERY, my dear," grumbled Father Bear. "Doesn't matter," said Mother Bear.
- 37 "Wait, I'll bring your breakfast to the bed."
- 38 "And the mail!" shouted Baby Bear.
- 39 "Oh NO!" said Father Bear, when he saw the police stamp.
- 40 "Parking ticket sinner!" shouted Baby Bear. "Parking ticket sinner-Daddy!"

## **Analysis of ST and Statement of Function**

### **Field**

The original is a picture book for two- to six-year-olds. It presents a harmless, peaceful family idyll in the form of a story about a bear family: Mr Bear, Mrs Bear and Baby Bear. The plot is simple; an everyday experience is described: Mr Bear can't sleep, wanders about the house, and finally drops off to sleep back in his own bed only to be woken up by the alarm clock. He is comforted, however, by Mrs Bear and a nice cup of tea – a simple story full of warmth and gentle humour, just right for a bedtime story for young children. The title of the book, *Peace at Last*, is well in line with this characterization.

### *Lexical means*

A preponderance of lexical items that are likely to be part of the nascent verbal competence of young children developed in interactions in the immediate *hic-et-nunc* environment, i.e. their home and neighbourhood surroundings: 'tired', 'go to bed', 'fall asleep', 'sleep', 'snore', 'Baby Bear's room', 'living room', etc.

### *Syntactic means*

Short clauses with simple structures throughout the text. No embedding, no syntactic complexity.

### *Textual means*

Strong textual cohesion which makes the text easily comprehensible and digestible for young children. Textual cohesion is achieved through a number of different procedures, most prominently through iconic linkage and theme dynamics.

### *Iconic linkage*

There is iconic linkage between many clauses in the text, highlighting (for the children's benefit) a reassuring similarity and thus recognizability of states and actions, and also heightening the dramatic effects, as for instance in:

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- 2, 3: ‘Mr Bear was tired. Mrs Bear was tired; Baby Bear was tired.’  
6, 10, 13, 16, 21, 27: “Oh NO!” … “I can’t stand THIS.”  
6, 11, 14, 17, 22, 28: ‘So he got up and went to sleep in Baby Bear’s room (the living room, the kitchen, the garden, the car).’ ‘So he got up and went back into the house.’

### *Theme dynamics*

Thematic movement frequently arranged in sequences of theme–rheme movements to ensure given–new ordering, e.g. 28–29; foregrounded rhematic fronting in all clauses with onomatopoetic items: 9, 12, 15, etc. for dramatic effect.

### *Tenor*

#### *Author’s temporal, geographical and social provenance*

Unmarked, contemporary, standard middle-class British English.

#### *Author’s personal (emotional and intellectual) stance*

The author views the characters she creates with a warm sense of humour, empathy and involvement, without becoming sentimental. The characters keep their dignity and are not infantilized.

### **Lexical means**

Characters keep their names including titles: ‘Mr’ and ‘Mrs’ Bear, which results in a neutral, detached manner of description which also adds a humorous note, considering that the characters are teddy bears.

### **Syntactic means**

Monotonous repetition of phrases for humorous effect, e.g. 34, 35: “Did you sleep well?” … “Not VERY well”.

### *Social role relationship*

- (a) Author–reader: symmetric, intimate relationship between both types of addressees: adults (parents and other carers) and children; no ‘talking down’, no evidence of educational, pedagogic motivation, no hidden, ideologically induced lecturing.

- (b) Author–characters in the story: respect for individuality of characters through leaving titles and generic terms ('Mrs Bear'), sympathy, empathy.
- (c) Characters amongst themselves: tolerance, sympathy, irony and good humour.

### **Lexical means**

Title and names ('Mr', 'Mrs' Bear) throughout the text for humorous effect.  
 34, 35: Use of address form 'dear' to create intimacy.

### **Syntactic means**

18: Direct address of readers creates involvement and intimacy.

### **Textual means**

- (a) 34–35: Presence of ritualized move 'How-are-you?' and ritualized second-pair part ('Not very well') as well as ensuing uptake ('Never mind') to provide stark contrast to the preceding story of Mr Bear's misery and thus humorous effect.
- (b) 37: Short-clipped final phrase to seal the preceding promising move: also closing and 'sealing' the relationships in comfort, intimacy and reassurance.

### **Social attitude**

Informal style level: conversational, intimate style characterizing the type of talk occurring in a family.

### **Syntactic means**

Simplicity of clauses, coordination rather than subordination, simplicity of noun phrases, lack of pre- and post-modification.

### **Lexical means**

Use of lexical items marked as informal through their use in familiarity-inducing settings; onomatopoeic elements, e.g. DRIP, MIAAOW, followed by informal 'go' in the past tense ('went'); informal conjunction 'So'.

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### **Mode**

#### *Medium: complex*

*Written to be read aloud as if not written*, creating for the young listener the illusion that the person doing the reading aloud is inventing it simultaneously with the reading, i.e. real-life spontaneous oral language is being simulated. Along Biber's three (oral-written) dimensions: involved vs. informational, explicit vs. situation dependent, abstract vs. non-abstract, this picture book can be located at the involved, situation-dependent and non-abstract end of the cline.

#### **Syntactic means**

Frequency of short coordinated clauses linked with 'and'; use of conjunction 'so' characterizing spoken language.

#### **Phonological means**

Presence of emphatic stress frequent in oral encounters, and marked in writing through capitalization (e.g. 'BRRRRR went the alarm clock').

#### **Textual means**

Ample use of repetition for redundancy throughout the text in order to make comprehension easier for young readers/listeners.

#### *Participation*

Complex: monologue with built-in (fictional) dialogic parts.

#### **Lexical means**

Use of 'well', a token typically used at the beginning of a response in a dialogue (18).

#### **Syntactic means**

Presence of rhetorical, addressee-directed utterance (18).

#### **Textual means**

Heavy use of direct speech designed to increase listeners'/readers' involvement in the story. This direct speech includes a deliberate 'animation' of the animals and

the objects such as the tap and the living room clock, who are depicted as emitting (intentionally?) noises in a way suggesting interaction with Mr Bear.

### **Genre**

Picture book for young children designed to be read aloud by adults, often as a bedtime story. The ‘communicative purpose’ of such a book is to entertain children, comfort and reassure them, and (maybe) also ‘elevate’, i.e. educate them. In the English tradition, children’s books often use humour to gently socialize the young into family life and the world beyond. The text is supported by pictures. I have omitted them here as they do not add anything that the words themselves do not make explicit. In fact the pictures are the same in the original and the German translation.

### **Statement of Function**

The function of the original text consisting of an ideational and an interpersonal functional component may be summed up as follows: although the ideational functional component is not marked on any of the dimensions, it is nevertheless implicitly present, in that the text informs the readers about certain social activities and events involving the protagonists depicted in the text, in other words, it tells a story! However, the ideational component is clearly less important than the interpersonal one, which is marked on all the dimensions used for the analysis of the text.

The particular Genre, picture books written for young children, determines that the interpersonal function is primary, its purpose being to provide reassurance and comfort, a sense of belonging, and increased understanding of how the world around the child functions.

On Field, too, the interpersonal component is strongly marked: the description of a typical episode in family life, where a member of the family experiences a sleepless night, is presented in a light-hearted, good-natured, long-suffering and humorous way, making the story amusing, entertaining and easily comprehensible. On Tenor, the author’s personal stance as well as the particular social role relationship and social attitude evident in the text strongly mark the interpersonal functional component: the relationships between author and reader and between the (fictional) characters are characterized by good humour. The informal style level also clearly feeds into the interpersonal functional component by enhancing the text’s intimate humorously human quality. On Mode, the medium characterized as *written to be read as if not written* marked as involved, situation-dependent and non-abstract, as well as the many stretches of simulated speech (monologue and dialogue) clearly also strengthen the interpersonal function because of the emotive effect of spontaneous immediacy and directness.

## ST and TT comparison and Statement of Quality

### **General**

As opposed to the original, the translation is far from presenting a peaceful family idyll; the translation's title *Keine Ruh für Vater Bär* [No peace for Father Bear] already points to a rather different story, i.e. the translation transforms the original's positive soothing atmosphere into a 'negative' one, falsely ironic and 'funny' in the sense of the German 'Schadenfreude', i.e. enjoying another person's misery. In the translation one recognizes a motive found in many post-1968 German children's books (see also House 2004): a deliberate attempt to reach what is (presumably) perceived as a pedagogically desirable goal, namely to encourage children to 'emancipate themselves', i.e. to stand up to their parents. This ideological stance is expressed in a forcedly ironic and 'funny' storyline which (barely) cloaks a clear didactic mandate. The original's harmless, peaceful story is changed into a series of minor disasters. This impression is substantiated by the following individual mismatches along Field, Tenor, Mode and Genre.

### **Field**

#### *Textual mismatches*

Loss of cohesion: the onomatopoetic lexical items are not consistently rendered: (28/29) *und die Sonne schien immer heller* [and the sun shone brighter and brighter] vs. (26) 'SHINE, SHINE ... went the sun', presumably in an attempt to 'correct' the original in that the sun does not make noises and should therefore (presumably) not be presented in the same vein as the other noise-making objects in the story. This mismatch results in a loss of humour, precisely because the imaginative agency of the sun is omitted.

The consistent use of an equivalent of the conjunction 'so' throughout the text is not kept up in the translation: apart from some repetitions of the phrase *Dort wollte er schlafen* [There he wanted to sleep] at the beginning of the text (7, 11, 15, 18), different structures are used. Thus, for example, (22) 'So he went off to sleep' is rendered as (23) *Er stand auf und ging* [He got up and went] or (28) 'So he got up and went back into the house' is turned into (30) *Er stieg aus und ging ins Haus zurück.* [He got out and went back into the house.]

#### *Syntactic mismatches*

The use of onomatopoeia in English is based on 'normal', i.e. lexicalized verbs (e.g. 'snore', 'drip', 'snuffle'); the German 'equivalents' often resemble infantilized comic-strip-like interjections (*sch-sch-sch, schnüff-schnüff*).

## **Tenor**

### *Author's personal (emotional and intellectual) stance*

Loss of humour, sentimentalization and infantilization of characters in the story.

## **Lexical mismatches**

The characters Mr Bear, Mrs Bear and Baby Bear are changed into the sentimentalized and infantilized German collocations *Vater Bär* [Father Bear], *Mutter Bär* [Mother Bear], *Baby Bär* [Baby Bear]. This change also means a loss of humour, created in English precisely through the clash between the titles 'Mr', 'Mrs' and the fact that we are here dealing with teddy bears, which are in fact children's toys.

## **Syntactic mismatches**

Clause structures are even simpler than in the English original, i.e. two simple short clauses are made out of one longer coordinated one, e.g. (6/7) 'So he got up and went to sleep in Baby Bear's room' vs. *Er stand auf und ging ins Kinderzimmer. Dort wollte er schlafen.* [He got up and went into the children's room. There he wanted to sleep.]

## **Social role relationship**

### *Between author and readers, between author and protagonists, and between protagonists*

These three role-relationships are clearly interdependent such that the relationship between the protagonists is a reflection of the author's assessment of her readers and her view of her characters. The relationships are changed quite radically in the German translation, witness the following mismatches.

## **Textual mismatches**

The German translation transforms the book's positive atmosphere into a negative one. To start with, the original's title *Peace at Last* is turned into *Keine Ruh für Vater Bär* [No peace for Father Bear], a total contradiction of the original's title. And in keeping with the German title's ominous prediction (which flies in the face of the original's hopeful promise), a consistently negative storyline is continued until the end of the story, which is also the very opposite of 'peaceful'. Compare here lines 34–37 in the original with the German text's lines 28–34. The entire sequence starting with *Und die Post!* [And the mail!] is invented, and added by the translator (presumably on the basis of the final picture in the book, in which an official-looking envelope can be detected).

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At the end of the original story, the mother is nice, warm, friendly (“Never mind ... a nice cup of tea”), and the final words ‘And she did’ indicate that she brings the tea as a ‘sealing’ comfort. In the German translation, however, the clause *Warte, ich bring dir das Frühstück ans Bett* [Wait, I’ll bring your breakfast to the bed] merely hints that this act is part of her sober daily routine.

### Lexical mismatches

Framed by the major manipulations of title and ending, the body of the German text contains a pattern of negativization and problematization, and it is not only the relationship between father and son that is presented in a negative and problematic way but also the relationship between mother and father. Implicitly authoritarian role-relationships are therefore built into the translator’s version of the story. The very first sentence: ‘The hour was late’ is translated in such a way as to evoke a different role-relationship between parents and child: *Es war Schlafenszeit* [It was sleeping time]. This clause implies a parental regime (when it’s late and dark, children must be in bed asleep), where the English original remains a neutral statement. As noted above, the ‘neutral’ Mrs and Mr Bear become *Mutter* and *Vater Bär* [Mother and Father Bear], which typecasts them exclusively as parents. Similarly, Baby Bear’s room becomes *das Kinderzimmer* [the children’s room], a generic term, i.e. the room is then not an individual’s room but belongs to someone in the role of a child, the role relationship between child and parent then being marked as fixed and normative.

Further, the use of the German expressions *mein Lieber* [my dear] and *meine Liebe* [my dear] (35/36) helps to disrupt the harmony of the happy family idyll portrayed in the English original. Despite the deceptive formal equivalence between ‘my dear’ and *mein(e) Liebe(r)*, these phrases are certainly not pragmatically equivalent. *Mein Lieber* has a distinctively ironic (not humorous!) overtone.

30: The uncaring and dismissive phrase *Macht nichts* [Doesn’t matter] is also clearly not equivalent to ‘never mind’. In fact, *macht nichts* is much more direct, and less concerned and polite. The use of *macht nichts* and *Warte* [Wait] by the German *Mutter Bär* in particular give her a superficial and indifferent air: whereas in English ‘never mind’ relates to *alter* (‘never you mind’) and is thus comforting, the German *macht nichts* refers to self (*das macht mir nichts aus*), a crucial difference not only in terms of perspective but also in terms of illocutionary force.

8: (*Baby Bär*) *lag im Bett und spielte Flugzeug* [(Baby Bear) lay in bed and played aeroplanes] is different from ‘(Baby Bear) was lying in bed pretending to be an aeroplane’ in that the German expression implies a division between the world of adults and the world of children, the latter ‘playing at things’. In the English original, Baby Bear is taken more seriously, treated more as an equal. The German translation infantilizes and sentimentalizes the character. Similarly, (24) ‘He was just falling asleep’ is rendered with a metaphorical expression typically used in German child-talk (25) *Die Augen fielen ihm zu*.

The ‘bourgeois’ family is presented in the German translation as a unit which allows for no peace, and Mr Bear, who in English (30/31) ‘got into bed and closed his eyes’, *schlüpfte unter die Decke und seufzte tief* [snuggled under the cover and sighed deeply] in German (32/33), and he is not content to ‘yawn’ as he is allowed to do in the English original (35), rather he must grumble: (36) *brummte Vater Bär* [grumbled Father Bear].

At the very end of the story (40) the compound noun *Parksünder* [Parking ticket sinner] (followed and intensified by the collocation *Parksünder Daddy* [Parking ticket sinner-Daddy] (40) epitomizes the ‘Schadenfreude’ and the forcedly funny one-upmanship of the child over his father.

## **Mode**

### *Participation*

In one instance ((18) in the original; (19) in the translation), the attempt, via a rhetorical question, to directly involve participants is not kept up in the translation. Instead, the German translation presents an impersonal, rather laid back statement with the initial informal, regional starter *tja* [well].

## **Genre**

Inasmuch as the translation is still a children’s picture book to be read to young children, there has been no change in the Genre of this text. However, the ‘framing’ is very different in the text: both title and ending set a very different tone: a humorous, innocent book to be read with pleasure, amusement and joy is turned into an ideologically laden, pedagogically motivated book imbued with a certain forced wit, and a tendency to infantilize the protagonists in the story through lexical and textual means.

As the analysis of a larger corpus ( $n=52$ ) of German–English and English–German children’s books has revealed (House 2004), there seem to be patterned differences between texts in this genre in the two linguistic and cultural communities. In German children’s books there seems to be a tendency to depict a type of role relationship between children and adults in much the same way as was outlined above, i.e. there is more sentimentalization, more infantilization, less (and different) humour, greater explicitness and a greater need to impose edifying pedagogic ideas and ideologies on the stories told in German children’s books.

### *Statement of quality*

The analysis of original and translation has revealed mismatches along the dimensions of Field, Mode and in particular Tenor, with a consequent substantial change of the interpersonal functional component of the text’s function. On

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Field, loss of cohesion was established in several cases, detracting from the aesthetic and emotive pleasure a well-knit text will elicit.

On Tenor, the author's stance is changed such that the translation loses the original's subtle and warm humour, superimposing instead a new note of infantilization and sentimentalization onto the text through syntactic simplification and changes of protagonists' names and titles. Most incisive, however, are the changes in the social role relationship portrayed in the original and the translation: the original's positive reassuring atmosphere is transformed into a negative one. 'Schadenfreude' is substituted for comfort and friendliness. Children are depicted as generically different from adults, and an implicitly more authoritarian relationship and, consequently, a general 'negativization' and 'problematization' of the role relationship between all the story's characters is implied, such that 'no peace' can be found – a situation which may have been designed as 'funny', but is, if pitted against the original, clearly the very opposite.

If we interpret the above results in the light of the analyses of a larger corpus of German and English children's books (House 2004), they reflect a culturally conditioned, ideologically tinted difference in the realization of Genre between English and German children's books. This difference is most clearly visible in the different framing in the German translation: the title and the end of the German story guide the reader/listeners along a different path than is suggested in the original.

These differences may be interpreted as reflecting differences in German and English communicative preferences and norms established in cross-cultural research (see House 2006b and [Chapter 8](#) below). For a full understanding of these culture-conditioned differences, however, one would need much more data, and a comprehensive comparative analysis of the various strands of intellectual, artistic, economic, legal and socio-political forces in the two cultures in question and their influence on text production and reception. Such a broad ethnographic approach coupled with a detailed linguistic analysis may be less utopian than it would seem. It certainly is the most promising and fruitful way of relating context to text, and text to context.

The German translation analysed above can be described as a covert translation, in which a cultural filter has been applied. One wonders, however, why the translator or the publisher had not opted for an overt translation. It is a sad truth that translators of children's books seem to feel particularly licensed to produce covert translations, making changes whenever they think these are appropriate, thus barring children from access to the original's voice. Children are often totally underrated in their imaginative and learning capacities. Their natural curiosity and their desire to be exposed to strange, foreign and different worlds and norms is simply overridden. One reason for this tendency to adapt original texts to the receiving cultures' dominant genre may be the current one-sided, often dogmatic reception-oriented climate, which needs, in the opinion of this author, to be counteracted by solid text- cum context-based linguistic analysis.

# 8

## CONTRASTIVE PRAGMATICS, INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND UNDERSTANDING

Their relevance for cultural filtering in translation quality assessment

### Contrastive pragmatics

One of the most intriguing ‘open questions’ that emerged from the original model was the nature of the *cultural filter* in *covert* translation, where the differences in communicative preferences, mentalities and values are to be taken into account in the process of translation. In the original model, it was hypothesized that in some of the test cases examined the cultural filter was not ‘legitimately’ applied. This hypothesis needed closer investigation, the assumption being that empirical research into similarities and differences in the socio-culturally determined communicative preferences in the two lingua-cultures involved in translation (in my case English and German) would give substance to the notion of cultural filter, and consequently provide us with a more solid foundation for judgements of the legitimacy of the application of a cultural filter in *covert* translation. In what follows I will look first at contrastive pragmatic analyses I conducted in the past. This will be followed by a glance at the literature on intercultural communication and understanding.

### As an example: contrastive discourse analyses: German–English

In the seventies and eighties I conducted a number of contrastive pragmatic analyses comparing the discourse of German and English native speakers, the subjects being students at German and English universities (cf. House 1996; Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989). The data collection methods were open, self-directed dyadic role plays, often followed by retrospective interviews and discourse completion tests combined with meta-pragmatic assessment tests, as well as naturalistic data drawn from interactions between English and German native speakers. In the following I want to briefly describe the discourse phenomena

investigated and to summarize the results, indicating their relevance for the cultural filter (English–German) in the model of translation quality assessment. The analyses undertaken were based on the discourse analysis model provided in Edmondson (1981) and the interactional grammar of Edmondson and House (1981) as well as on the categories of analysis developed within the ‘Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project’ (CCSARP) (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989). The data were elicited in the framework of two projects to be described in greater detail in what follows. The first project dealt with the acquisition of communicative competence by German learners of English (cf. Edmondson *et al.* 1984). It involved dialogic speech, which was elicited in open role-play from German native speakers, English native speakers and German learners of English. The discourse type was dyadic face-to-face conversations in everyday situations of some interactional complexity. The role plays were based on a number of abstract interactional bases and the role relationship between the two participants was such that the two parameters [+/-authority] and [+/-familiarity] led subjects to produce a wide variety of different speech acts in different social constellations. In this framework I conducted various contrastive discourse analyses using the data produced by the German and the English native speakers. These contrastive pragmatic analyses were conducted mainly in order to establish the presence or absence of pragmatic differences in the verbal behaviour of English and German speakers.

A comparison was made in the following areas:

### ***Discourse phases***

Discourse phases, i.e. discourse opening and closing phases, were analysed in terms of their various structural elements, their sequencing, the interactional functions of these structures, and their linguistic realizations (summary in House 1996).

### ***Discourse strategies***

The analysis of discourse strategies (summary in House 1996), i.e. supportive moves used in an anticipatory and prophylactic manner (such as, for example, checks on availability, e.g. ‘Are you free tonight?'; getting a pre-commitment, e.g. ‘Can you do me a favour?'; disarming the interlocutor, e.g. ‘I don't want to bore you with unnecessary details'; or muddling your way through an issue by expanding it verbosely) also revealed differences between English and German discourse.

### ***Gambits***

The analysis of gambits (cf. House 1996), i.e. discourse elements such as ‘well’, ‘you know’, ‘you see’, question tags, etc. that function to ‘lubricate’ an ongoing

discourse in different ways, and also serve the speaker as time-gaining routines during speech production similarly highlighted differences between English and German discourse.

### **Speech acts**

The analysis of the realization of speech acts, especially requests and complaints, (House 1996; House and Kasper 1981) as potentially face-threatening acts was one of the most important parts of my work. Phenomena such as directness and politeness in the use of speech act were investigated, and different ‘levels of directness’ were suggested ranging, for example in the case of requests, from the most direct level, the raw imperative, to the most indirect ‘hints’ with which speakers skirt around a subject.

In the second project, larger and internationally operating: the ‘Cross-Cultural Speech Act Realization Project’ (Blum-Kulka *et al.* 1989), which involved cross-cultural pragmatic contrast between seven different languages and language varieties, I again conducted a number of German–English contrastive pragmatic analyses (House 1989; Blum-Kulka and House 1989). The data were elicited in this project through the method of using a (written) discourse completion test consisting of 16 everyday dialogic situations with a blank left in each situation for the insertion of a certain speech act. These were presented to subjects (university students) on a questionnaire. The data were triangulated with retrospective interviews and so-called meta-pragmatic assessment tests, i.e. tests in which subjects were asked to assess, for example, the appropriateness of certain utterances in a given situation or the level of politeness or directness in a set of utterances, the social role relationship, or the rights and obligations of participants holding in a given situation.

The result of my analyses with 200 German and 100 English subjects basically confirmed the results of my work in the previous project: German subjects tend to opt for more direct realizations of requests, and they prefer to surround their requests with more content-oriented discourse strategies than English native speakers (who tend to prefer interpersonally active and routinized strategies). In their realization of apologies, Germans tend to choose self-referenced moves whereas the English native speakers more frequently select moves conventionally expressing concern for alter, e.g. ‘You’re not upset, are you?’ vs. *Ich wollte Dich nicht kränken*, are the most frequently realized English and German expressions of apology in a workplace situation where one colleague had insulted the other with a careless remark.

Germans were again found to use discourse strategies to explicitly introduce topics, and to justify and give reasons for a request, for instance, more frequently than English native speakers. English native speakers also tend to use more routinized expressions in realizing apologies than German speakers, so in many of the apology situations presented to subjects in the project, English native speakers used the illocutionary force indicating device: ‘sorry’ in places where

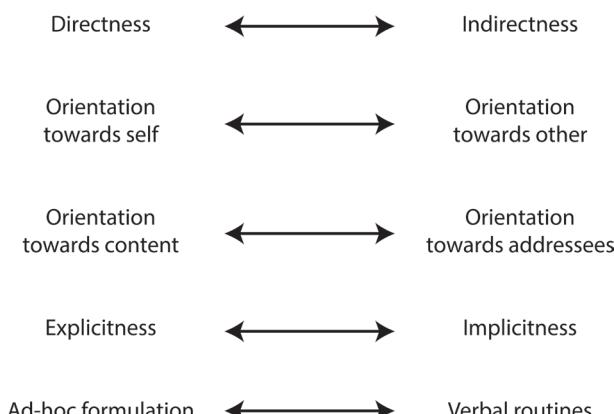
the German subjects realized a surprising variety of different tokens: (*Oh*) *Entschuldigung*, *Entschuldigen Sie bitte*, *Verzeihung*, *Tut mir leid*, *Pardon*, *Sorry*, as well as a number of different combinations of these tokens.

More recently, I have tried to look into the manifestations and causes of cross-cultural misunderstandings between German and English speakers (House 2003a). Data were collected in authentic conversations, interviews, self-reports and field-notes. Results so far suggest that a substantial part of German–English cross-cultural misunderstandings result from differences in the pragmatic areas outlined above.

### Five dimensions of cross-cultural difference: English–German

From all these individual results of a whole series of cross-cultural pragmatic analyses based on different subjects, data and methodologies, a consistent pattern emerges: in a variety of everyday situations, German subjects tended to interact in ways that were more direct, more explicit, more self-referenced and more content-oriented. German speakers were also found to be less prone to resorting to verbal routines than English speakers. The pattern of cross-cultural differences that emerged from my German–English contrastive pragmatic analysis can be displayed along five dimensions as in [Figure 8.1](#).

Along these dimensions, Germans were found to give preference to positions on the left hand side. It must be stressed again that we are dealing with continua or clines rather than clear-cut dichotomies, with tendencies rather than categorical distinctions. At this stage of the discussion one might also pose the question whether results such as the ones described above and especially the hypothesized five dimensions as generalizations from these results increase existing prejudices and stereotypes. Admittedly, this is a real danger. However, there are at least three ways to minimize this danger:



**FIGURE 8.1** Dimensions of cross-cultural differences (German–English)

1. conduct further empirical cross-cultural pragmatic research, which draws on different and larger samples and is designed to falsify the results so far achieved;
2. involve bicultural experts in the interpretation and evaluation of the data;
3. extend bicultural contrastive studies towards multicultural ones, which might relativize the results of bicultural contrastive studies.

Influences on communicative patterns such as the ones briefly sketched above need further systematic investigation, and an equally systematic attempt to link them to empirically established cross-cultural communicative differences. In setting up my five dimensions of cross-cultural difference, I started with a series of detailed contrastive pragmalinguistic analyses, suggesting differences in English and German interactional norms, from which I hypothesized differences in discourse orientations. In doing so, I implicitly suggest, of course, that language use is linked to culture and mentality, and that linguistic differences in the realization of discourse phenomena may be taken to reflect 'deeper' differences, at a conceptual-cognitive and emotive level, in cultural preference and expectation patterns. This type of 'deep difference' can have serious consequences for the process of translation as it is likely to influence translators' decisions about changes in the original text. The translator may consciously or unconsciously apply a cultural filter in covert translation to account for cross-cultural differences in the expectation norms holding in the two cultures concerned.

In the following I will give a few examples of the type of cultural shifts that can occur in covert translations from English to German and German to English.

The first one is an example of what I would call the German predilection for 'letting the cat out of the bag' in the interest of being explicit. Many more examples can be found in the translations of TV film titles, of which I will only list a few here, complete with backtranslations (BT) into English:

### **Example 1**

*Where are the Children?* vs. *Grenzenloses Leid einer Mutter* [BT: Limitless suffering of a mother]

*Jack the Bear* vs. *My Dad – ein ganz unglaublicher Vater* [BT: My Dad, a totally incredible father]

*A Gunfight* vs. *Duell in Mexico* [BT: Duelling in Mexico]

*Trapped and Deceived* vs. *Wenn Eltern ihre Tochter verraten* [BT: When parents betray their daughter]

*Mommie Dearest* vs. *Meine liebe Rabenmutter* [BT: My dear cruel mother]

In all the German translations of the film titles, the content of the film is 'given away': the titles explicitly tell the reader what to expect in the film.

**Example 2**

The next example is an advertisement taken from Smith and Klein-Braley (1997: 173). Both the English and the German translations are based on a French original.

[Picture of a beautiful lady]

AIR FRANCE

The chances of her being seated next to you are so slim that you won't regret the extra space between our seats.

*L'Espace Europe*

We know how hard it is for business travellers to have to concentrate on their work while waging the eternal battle of the armrest, so we have rearranged the space between our *L'Espace Europe* seats. Where there used to be rows of three seats, there are now two seats separated by a little table. Your seat is much wider, more comfortable and the total space more conducive to a little privacy. Now, when you take a seat in one of our planes, you take your seat in space. [Picture of seats with table.]

The Right to Privacy. Air France introduces passenger's rights.

vs.

AIR FRANCE

Ihre Chancen stehen schlecht, daß sie neben Ihnen sitzt. Ihrem Komfort zuliebe haben wir den Abstand zwischen den Sitzen spürbar vergrößert.

*L'Espace Europe*

Geschäftsreisende wollen im Flugzeug Akten studieren, Zeitung lesen oder sich in Ruhe auf eine Sitzung vorbereiten. Am liebsten ohne Tuchfühlung zum Nachbarn. Oder zur Nachbarin. Darum haben wir unsere *L'Espace Europe* von Grund auf neu gestaltet. Größer, schöner, bequemer und vor allem mit viel willkommener Ablagefläche zwischen den Sitzen. Für viel Ellbogenfreiheit beim Lesen, Essen und Entspannen genau die richtige Distanz. Und auch für ein anregendes Gespräch. [Picture of seats with table.]

Ihr Recht auf Distanz. Bei Air France sind Sie mit Recht Fluggast.

[Back Translation] AIR FRANCE

The chances that she sits next to you are bad. For your comfort we have noticeably enlarged the distance between the seats.

*L'Espace Europe*

Business travellers want to examine files, read newspapers or prepare for a meeting in peace. Preferably without coming into contact with a fellow traveller – male or female. This is why we have completely revamped our *L'Espace Europe*. Bigger, more beautiful, more comfortable and above all with much more welcome space between the seats for depositing things. For much freedom for your elbows while reading, eating and relaxing just the right distance. And also for and inspiring conversation. [Picture of seats with table.]

Your right to distance. When flying Air France you are a passenger with rights.

Smith and Klein-Braley (1997) comment that the German advertisement provides more precise specification of activities than the English one. While the passengers in the English advertisement generically ‘concentrate on their work’, their German counterparts are involved more explicitly in *Akten studieren, Zeitung lesen oder sich in Ruhe auf eine Sitzung vorbereiten* [examining files, reading newspapers or preparing for a meeting in peace], and whereas the English readers are not informed about the reasons why passengers need space, the German reader learns that space is needed to enable the passenger to *lesen, essen und entspannen* [read, eat and relax]. Further, as Smith and Klein-Braley also point out in their perceptive analysis, the English advertisement attempts to directly address the reader as potential consumer through frequent repetition of ‘you’ and ‘your’, whereas such an interpersonal appeal is only present in the heading and slogan in the German advertisement.

The last example is taken from the signs in washrooms of Lufthansa planes. The original is presumably English, the standard language in air space.

As a courtesy to the next passenger may we suggest that you use your towel to wipe off the wash basin

vs.

Als freundliche Geste Ihren Mitreisenden gegenüber bitten wir, den Waschtisch mit dem gebrauchten Handtuch zu säubern [BT: As a friendly gesture to your fellow passengers, we ask that you clean the wash basin with your used towel]

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Here we can see both the parameters: directness–indirectness and explicitness vs. implicitness in operation. Previous similar signs featured an even more direct request in the German translation: *bitten wir Sie ...* [we request you].

Taken together, contrastive pragmatic studies are an important research strand for translation studies and should be taken account of in judging the effects and legitimacy of a cultural filter employed in covert translation.

## **Intercultural communication and intercultural understanding**

Over and above the type of contrastive pragmatic study described above using the example of my own work over the past decades, another important strand for translation quality assessment involves the rich resources drawn from the fields of intercultural and cross-cultural research. I will also show how translation quality assessment can benefit from integrating aspects of intercultural studies. First of all, translation *is* intercultural communication between members of different lingua-cultural groups with their often widely diverging knowledge sets, values, beliefs, histories, traditions and social, regional and local backgrounds.

Intercultural communication can be simply characterized as communication between members of different cultures who presumably follow differing socio-cultural rules for behaviour, including speaking, and who can range from groups at the national level, such as linguistic minorities (Turks or Lebanese in Germany) to groups identified by their social class, age or gender. Differences also emerge from different historical developments, traditions, legal systems, experiences, attitudes, affect, and so on.

In the past, many studies of intercultural communication have been concerned with cases of failed intercultural communication, cases in which interactants fail to understand one another and thus cannot communicate successfully. Reasons for this were often ascribed to ‘intercultural differences’ such as values, beliefs and behaviours of culture members (cf. e.g. Gumperz 1982; Thomas 1983; Tannen 1986; Scollon and Scollon 1995; Spencer-Oatey 2000; House *et al.* 2003). Frequently, we find in this literature essentialist generalizations where culture is linked to race, nation or region, leading to cultural stereotypes, mentalities and national characters. If we regard translation as one of the most important forms of intercultural communication between members of different lingua-cultural groups with their often diverging knowledge sets, values, histories, traditions, legal systems, attitudes and social and regional backgrounds, we need to briefly look at the main research traditions in the field of intercultural communication. In what one may call ‘the old thinking about intercultural communication’, we often find propagations of cultural stereotypes, mentalities and ‘national characters’. Culture is simplified and instrumentalized for the expansion of neo-liberal capitalism, global business and military interventions (called ‘humanitarian help’), often in the name of peace, progress or security. This frequently goes hand in hand with a deplorable trivialization and marginalization of language and with a focus on superficial differences in behavioural etiquette as signs of

insuperable differences in mind-set. The roots of this line of thinking can be found in colonization, trade, diplomacy, military invasions or so-called ‘peace research’ as well as other domains where ‘the other’ needed to be understood if only to enable easier routes of domination. Intercultural communication in these contexts is both simplified and instrumentalized for the expansion of neo-liberal capitalism, tourism and military ‘humanitarian’ intervention in the name of progress, peace, security, aid and ‘understanding’. The literature in this tradition is vast and extremely popular, abounding with comparisons of so-called ‘intellectual styles’ or ‘cultural thought patterns’ (i.e. ways of turning thoughts into language). Thus Kaplan (1966), in his classic ‘doodles article’ entitled ‘Cultural Thought Patterns’, suggested the existence of five discourse types based on genetic language types: the linear and logical progression in English, the parallel constructions with the first idea completed in the second part of a composition in Semitic languages, the circularity with which a topic is looked at from different angles in Oriental languages, the licence to digress and introduce ‘extraneous’ material in Romance languages, and lastly and similarly to Romance discourse, the freedom to digress lengthily using parenthetical amplifications and subordinate elements in Russian. German would be placed somewhere in between Romance languages and Russian, such that the difference between the typical German discourse type and the typical English one hypothesized by Kaplan is marked indeed. Kaplan’s hypotheses also partially confirm my own German–English contrastive studies.

As opposed to the more linguistically oriented investigations of text productions, a more speculative, non-empirical approach to looking at intercultural differences in writing is the one exemplified by Galtung (1985). On the basis of his familiarity with scholars from different cultural backgrounds, Galtung hypothesized four different ‘intellectual styles’, which he called *Sachsenisch* (Saxonic), *Gallisch* (Gallic), *Nipponisch* (Nipponic) and *Teutonisch* (Teutonic), designating their respective backgrounds. Galtung correlates these styles with their relative strengths and weaknesses in terms of the analysis of paradigms, the production of theses, the formation of theories, and the ability to provide commentaries on other intellectuals. For instance, the Saxonic intellectual style is very strong on the production of (hypo)theses, where the Teutonic one is weak. The Saxonic style is weak on theory formation, where the Teutonic style is very strong, and the Teutonic style is also superior to the Saxonic one in terms of paradigm analysis. Teutonic intellectual style, according to Galtung, is more elitist, individualistic, and monologue-oriented as well as polarized, involving an attack on others’ weak points, whereas the Saxonic style is more ‘democratic’, non-polarized, and aims more at dialogue and a harmonization of different viewpoints. Commenting on Galtung’s speculations, Clyne states that ‘while [Galtung’s] categories help account for some aspects of German academic discourse, the “democratic” characteristics of the “Saxonic” are not necessarily accompanied by tolerance for variation, cultural and otherwise’

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(1994: 28). Such generalizations are not only untenable but are dangerously close to creating and cementing prejudice.

Other influential approaches assuming cultural differences in value orientations are the psychosocially oriented cross-cultural studies on comparative ‘work-related’ values by Hofstede (e.g. 1984, 1991), and Hall’s classification of cultures according to certain dimensions (cf. Hall 1976; Hall and Hall 1983). Like Galtung’s ideas, both approaches are to be viewed extremely critically today.

Hofstede investigated differences in cultural values on the basis of a questionnaire study with over 100,000 employees in a large multi-national company in 40 countries, triangulated by other empirical studies. He suggested four cross-cultural dimensions along which cultures differ: individualism vs. collectivism, power distance, masculinity vs. femininity, and uncertainty avoidance. Assigning entire countries with certain leanings toward being, e.g. ‘masculine’, seems today not only prejudice-generating but rather ridiculous, too.

From an anthropological vantage point, Edward T. Hall (1976) attempted to classify cultures and indeed mentalities according to ‘hidden differences’ in terms of preferences of ‘high or low context’ and ‘monochronic or polychronic time’ in culture-conditioned communication. In high-context communication ‘most of the information is either in the physical context or internalized in the person, while very little is explicitly coded’ (1976: 79), whereas in low-context communication ‘the mass of the information is vested in the explicit code’ (1976: 79). Hall further distinguishes polychrone and monochrone cultures. Individuals in monochrone (‘M-time’) cultures tend to do only ‘one thing at a time’, taking schedules, plans and temporal commitments very seriously, whereas individuals in polychrone (‘P-time’) cultures do several things at the same time, taking plans, schedules, dates etc., with a pinch of salt. Again, such ideas appear to be rather dated today.

While real socio-cultural diversity and superdiversity, complexity, hybridity and individuality is largely ignored in this literature, the ‘new thinking about intercultural communication’ takes account of this complexity and regards culture as diversified, dynamic, fluid, hybrid, constructed and emergent, and recognizes that the boundaries in the globalized world are increasingly blurred and negotiable, where ‘cultures’ are interconnected in multiple interactions and exchanges (cf. e.g. Blommaert 2005, 2010; Piller 2011). Notions such as ‘small cultures’ (Holliday 1999, 2013) and ‘Community of Practice’ (Wenger 1998) have come to be seen as more useful than that of a monolithic ‘culture’, with intercultural communication being regarded today more often than not as social practice in motion. Questions about the influence of ‘culture’ on individuals and groups and on translation need to be framed in a more modest way, examining questions such as: who makes culture relevant to whom, for which purpose, where and in which context? Intercultural communication is therefore not seen as based on some previously existing givens but rather emerges as a particular discursive construction in a particular context.

Such responses also help with assessing intercultural understanding, an important prerequisite for evaluating translations. In studies on intercultural understanding in the past we find a focus on failure, ‘culture shock’, ‘clashes of civilization’ or misunderstanding (cf. Agar 1994; Huntingdon 1997; Coupland *et al.* 1991; House *et al.* 2003). More recently, and alongside the new thinking on intercultural communication, we can find a shift towards examining how intercultural understanding is managed in certain communities of practice (Bührig *et al.* 2009; House 2012).

Many researchers today have shifted their focus on how interactants manage intercultural understanding (cf. e.g. Sarangi 1994; Bührig and ten Thije 2006). And it is of course also intercultural understanding which is the basis for the single most important concept in translation: functional equivalence. Functional equivalence is a condition for achieving a comparable function of a text in another context. So intercultural understanding reflects the success with which the linguistic-cultural transposition has been undertaken.

The link between functional equivalence as the basis of translation and intercultural understanding (basis of intercultural communication) is highlighted when we consider the concept of the ‘dilated speech situation’ (Ehlich 1984). According to Ehlich, the main characteristic or function of ‘texts’ is their role as ‘agents of transmission’, providing a bridge between speaker and hearer, who are not at the same place at the same time. It is a text’s role as a sort of ‘messenger’ that makes it possible for the hearer to receive the speaker’s linguistic action despite the divergence of the production and reception situations. Through such a ‘transmission’ carried out by a text, the original speech situation becomes ‘dilated’. Because a speaker knows that her message will be ‘passed on’, she adapts her formulation accordingly; she makes a ‘text’ out of her linguistic action. Texts are therefore not limited to the written medium, but can also exist in an oral form. The notion of the ‘dilated speech situation’ is highly relevant for oral and written intercultural communication, translation and interpreting. But translation is more complex; it is not only dilated but also ruptured. It can be characterized by a specific rupture of the original speech situation which is the result of a linguistic barrier between author and reader or between speaker (member of culture 1) and hearer (member of culture 2) which can only be bridged by acts of translation and interpreting. The translator passes on the linguistic action in L1 (situation 1) to the L2 addressees (situation 2). This procedure is not without consequence for the transmitted linguistic action. While monolingual texts already show signs of being prepared for transmission, this is of course particularly true of translated texts: they undergo a double transmission process.

Besides the importance of the dilation of the speech situation in translation, another characteristic is that it is an essentially reflective activity, much more so than ‘normal’ monolingual communicative actions. Here, reflection aims to achieve functional equivalence. On account of this inherent reflective nature, translation has great potential for intercultural communication and intercultural

understanding. Ideally this reflection would also heighten the translator's sensitivity to ethical issues. The inherently reflective nature of translation reveals itself in a translator's focus on the situatedness of a text, as she is aware of the interconnectedness of text and context in translation (House 2006a). Exploring texts in context is, as Blommaert (2005) put it, 'the only way of exploring text'. As texts travel through time and space and different orders of indexicality in acts of translation, they must be re-contextualized. To describe, explain and evaluate this, we need a theory of translation as re-contextualization, intercultural communication and intercultural understanding.

In this chapter I have first described my own research in contrastive pragmatics which is to be taken as an illustrative example for the relevance of such research for cultural filtering in cases of covert translation. I believe it is necessary for translators and translation evaluators to draw on similar research whenever it is available in different language pairs. Equally necessary is translators' and translation evaluators' critical awareness of the state of the art in intercultural communication and intercultural understanding so as to enrich their understanding of the need, or indeed the absence of the need, for cultural filtering.

# 9

## GLOBALIZATION AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR CULTURAL FILTERING IN TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

In this chapter I will look into the current processes of globalization and their social, political, economic and linguistic consequences for contemporary life, institutions and the workplace. I will look at what these developments mean for translation and translation quality assessment. I will also discuss the role of the English language in its function as a global lingua franca and the way it might affect the nature and frequency of translation worldwide. The conclusion drawn in this chapter will be that far from damaging the demand for and spread of translation, the processes of globalization and internationalization are responsible for a drastic increase in the demand for translations. I will describe the areas in which this demand is particularly substantial, and what this distribution might mean for a model for translation quality assessment.

Often such a new demand for translation involves contexts characterized by radically unequal power relations between individuals, groups, languages and literatures. Translators are asked to play an important role in questioning and/or resisting existing power structures (Baker and Pérez-González 2011: 44). In these contexts, translation does not function only as a conflict mediating and resolving action but also as a space where tensions are signalled and power struggles are played out. An extreme case of such tensions is the positioning of translators in zones of war. In such a context, translation scholars have looked at the impact the performance of translators has had on the different parties in a war zone, whether and how translators align themselves with their employers or refuse to do so, and how personally involved they become in situations of conflict and violence (cf. Baker 2006; Maier 2007; Inghilleri 2009).

Globalization has today turned into a buzzword used to describe the flow of goods, people, capital, symbols and images around the world, facilitated by modern technological advances in the media and in information and communication technology that have led to global mobility in business and

culture, and to large-scale economic de-localization, mass migration and phenomena like ‘global terrorism’.

## Globalization of discourse

Discourse can be defined as contextualized language, as language-in-society, and globalization can be seen as a context in which discourse occurs in modern times. In the field of globalized discourse, computer-mediated linguistic aspects play an important role. Linguistic aspects of globalized discourse can be located at various linguistic levels, for example lexical, semantic, pragmatic-discourse and socio-semiotic ones. At the lexical level, globalized discourse has often been characterized as featuring a large number of so-called internationalisms (cf. e.g. Braun *et al.* 2003), especially Anglicisms. Such borrowings have either been categorically condemned for damaging local languages in their expressive and functional potential, or they have been looked upon more positively as facilitating intercultural communication processes by creating common lexical reservoirs.

At the semantic level, globalized trends have been identified in the semantic development of routine formulae and illocutionary force indicating devices (IFIDs) such as ‘please’, ‘sorry’ or ‘thank you’. The semantic flexibility of such seemingly fixed items has often been underrated in intercultural contexts. As Terkourafi (2011) has shown, such borrowings tend to be put to the service of functions that already exist in the receiving languages, while at the same time contributing to the development of new functions additional to their original functions in English (see also Heine and Kuteva 2005, who make a similar point with regard to language change through language contact).

At the pragmatic, discourse level, globalized norms of written discourse in various genres seem to ‘drift’ towards English-based rhetorical structures. English-based forms of rhetorical patterns have been observed to filter into academic, scientific and economic discourse in many other languages. Recent studies on intercultural rhetoric (cf. e.g. Canagarajah 2007) point out that since cultures are in principle hybrid and dynamic, negotiation and accommodation processes tend to be set in motion in any text production.

At the socio-semiotic level, intercultural globalized discourse has been described as an assemblage of ‘globalized linguistic signs’ that lead to the creation of new globalized multilingual landscapes (cf. Gorter 2006). Linguistic landscapes are an important new research strand in intercultural pragmatics which may reveal how written language is made visible in public, often urban, spaces in hitherto unexplored ways. Much research has been done on East Asian megacities such as Seoul, Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore and Tokyo (cf. e.g. Backhaus 2006), illustrating the increased usage of multilingual and multicultural signs in a globalized urban world.

An important area in studies of globalized intercultural discourse is concerned with the use of modern technology. Computer mediated communication and Internet domains as influential new communicates of practice have thus become

increasingly popular research foci. Many studies in this paradigm look at the influx of English words into blogs or television commercials in other languages. Such imports are remarkable, because they do not fill a lexical gap in the receiving language; perfectly simple words are more often than not easily available in the receiving language but they are strategically replaced by English words in order to achieve certain effects. For instance, the use of the English word ‘car’ in a blog is chosen to add a certain pragmatic function like advertising one’s ‘global identity’, modernity or rebellion in computer mediated communication. Clearly, the English language is here instrumentalized as a resource for ‘interculturalizing’ a native language. It remains an open question, however, whether the Internet is on its way to becoming an ‘equalizing’ force, an all-embracing ‘global language’ in a ‘virtual universe’ able to create an egalitarian ubiquitous society without political, social or linguistic borders – a type of universal intercultural communication, or whether it is an elitist tool for promoting more inequality between the haves and the have-nots.

Blommaert has introduced the important notion of ‘orders of indexicality’ (2005: 73), by which he means that indexical meanings, i.e. connections between linguistic signs and contexts, are ordered, and closely related to other social and cultural features of social groups. This helps us to focus both on concrete empirically observable semiotic means as micro-processes and on wider socio-cultural, political and historical phenomena. Globalization leads to an increasing intensified flow of movements of images, symbols and objects causing forms of contact and difference. This means that classic sociolinguistic notions like ‘speech community’ can no longer legitimately be held to be true. The focus needs to be on language in motion, with various spatiotemporal frames simultaneously interacting. Increasingly problematic is also the idea of a maintenance of functions: when linguistic items travel across time, space and indexical order, as they always do in translation, in transnational flows, they may well take on different locally valid functions. In Blommaert’s words:

Whenever discourses travel across the globe, what is carried with them is their shape, but their value, meaning or function do not often travel along. Value, meaning or function are a matter of uptake, they have to be granted by others on the basis of the prevailing orders of indexicality, and increasingly also on the basis of their real or potential ‘market value’ as a cultural commodity.

(2005: 72)

This means that the globalization of discourse makes it necessary to problematize and relativize basic cultural values and orientations such as those which are transmitted and expressed in and through language. In order to investigate what globalization does to discourse, we need to examine how language functions in different societies, where language needs to be broken down as those richly contextualized forms that occur in society. These forms are

complex and variable, emanating from language users' linguistic repertoires. But these repertoires no longer belong in an isolated way to a single national society, rather they are 'influenced by *the structure of the world system*' (Blommaert 2005: 15). This means that we also need to take account of the relationships between different societies and their impact on the repertoires of language users.

An important feature of the phenomenon of globalized discourse in the modern world is its 'layered simultaneity' (Blommaert 2005: 237). This is of course propelled by modern technological means and is appearing as a sign of growing interconnectedness. If we want to grasp the type of globalized discourse we are confronted with today, we need to engage in close analysis of situated social events in order to reveal how multiple orders of indexicality are at play simultaneously. This also affects the role of globalized languages such as English, the use of which in different locales results in the employment of different, particular forms of discourse. To understand this, socio-cultural, intrinsically historical macro-processes need to be examined in order to see what is going on at the micro-process level.

One of the most influential developments in the worldwide use of languages today is the spread of English and the ever growing importance of the English language in many contexts and genres worldwide. This situation also has consequences for the practice of translation. A recent breakdown by source languages presented by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Translation (European Commission 2009) shows that as many as 72.5 per cent of source texts translated by the DGT (including those originating outside the Commission) were drafted in English (by comparison: 11.8 per cent in French, 2.7 per cent in German). The English texts were frequently written by speakers who are not native speakers of English, but speakers of English as a lingua franca (ELF). What this surge in ELF texts may mean for translation and for translators is a field of inquiry that is as yet largely uncharted.

Since the prime aim of any lingua franca communication is mutual intelligibility in efficient and easy processes of communication, correctness tends not to be an important criterion (cf. the recent discussion in Cogo and Dewey 2012: 59). Equally non-important in ELF use is what generations of learners of English have both dreaded and unsuccessfully imitated: culturally embedded, typically English forms such as idioms or other routinized phrases full of insider cultural-historical references invariably based on national tradition, convention or class.

Taken together, the most important features of ELF today are its enormous functional flexibility, its immense variability and its spread across many different linguistic, geographical and cultural areas, as well as the readiness with which linguistic items from different languages can be, and in fact are, integrated into the English language (cf. Firth 2009). Internationally and intra-nationally, ELF can also be regarded as a special type of intercultural communication (House 2011a). Since the number of non-native speakers of English, i.e. speakers of ELF, is now substantially larger than the number of native speakers of English (the

ratio is about five to one, tendency rising), English in its role as a global lingua franca can be said to be no longer owned by its native speakers (cf. Widdowson 1994; Seidlhofer 2011).

ELF is also definitely not a language for specific purposes, or some sort of pidgin or creole. Nor is it some species of ‘foreigner talk’ or learner language. And it is not BSE – Bad Simple English. The Interlanguage paradigm with its focus on the linguistic deficits of learners of a foreign or second language measured against an in principle unattainable native norm is also no longer valid here. ELF speakers are not to be regarded as learners of English, but as multilingual individuals with linguistic-cultural ‘multicompetence’. And it is this multicompetence which needs to be taken as a norm for describing and explaining what ELF speakers do in communicative acts of speaking, writing or translating. ELF speakers are per se multilingual and multicultural speakers, for whom ELF is a ‘language for communication’, a medium which can be given substance with different national, regional, local and individual cultural identities. As a ‘language for communication’ (House 2003b), ELF does not offer itself as a language for emotional identification: users of ELF prefer their own L1 for this purpose.

Opponents of the global use of ELF now often recommend the use of a so-called ‘lingua receptiva’ or a ‘language of regional communication’ based on the assumption of multilingual speakers’ natural capacity for ‘receptive bilingualism’ (cf. ten Thije and Zeevaert 2007; Rehbein *et al.* 2012). The idea is that in a multilingual encounter, each interactant uses her native language, assuming that the meaning of her message will be inferred and understood by her interlocutor. Using a ‘lingua receptiva’ has a long-standing tradition throughout the world, yet it was ignored or suppressed due to the homogenizing language policies of the European nation states in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But it is alive and well in many multilingual niches, and it occurs predominantly in border regions, in institutional discourse (workplace, television, educational settings, health care discourse, sales talk, meetings, etc.) and in cross-generational communication within and across language families.

That the global use of ELF will eventually ‘kill’ other languages is unlikely given the complementary distribution of ELF and speakers’ native languages.

But what about translation? Does the increasing use of ELF constitute a threat to translation? Not really. The very same phenomena that have caused the use of ELF to grow have also influenced translation, i.e. globalization processes that boosted ELF use have also led to a continuing massive increase in translations worldwide. Alongside the impact of globalization on the world economy, international communication and politics, translation has also become much more important than ever before.

Information distribution via translation today relies heavily on new technologies that promote a worldwide translation industry. Translation plays a crucial and ever-growing role in multilingual news writing for international press networks, television channels, the Internet, the World Wide Web, social media, blogs, Wikis, etc. Today, the BBC, Al Jazeera International, Russia

Today, Deutsche Welle, Press TV and many other globally and multilingually operating TV channels rely heavily on translations of messages into many different languages. Whenever information input needs to be rapidly disseminated across the world in different languages, translations are indispensable. Translation is also essential for tourist information worldwide and information flow in globalized companies, where – supported by translation processes – ELF is now often replaced by native languages to improve sales potential (cf. Bührig and Böttger 2010; Lüdi *et al.* 2010).

Further, there is a growing demand for translation in localization industries. Software localization covers diverse industrial, commercial and scientific activities ranging from CD production, engineering and testing software applications to managing complex team projects simultaneously in many countries and languages. Translations are needed in all of these. Indeed, translation is part and parcel of all worldwide localization and glocalization processes. In order to make a product available in many different languages it must be localized via translation. This process is of course similar to ‘cultural filtering’, an essential practice in covert translation. Producing a localized, i.e. culturally filtered and translated, version of a product is essential for opening up new markets, since immediate access to information about a product in a local language increases its demand. An important offshoot is the design of localized advertising, again involving massive translation activity. Translation can thus be said to lie at the very heart of the global economy today: it tailors products to meet the needs of local markets everywhere in processes of glocalization.

Translation is also increasingly propelled by the World Wide Web, whose development has spread the need for translation into e-commerce. The steady increase of non-English speaking Web users naturally also boosts translation. Another factor contributing to the growing importance of translation is e-learning. The expansion of digital industries centred around e-learning and other education forms spread over the Web in many different languages again shows the intimate link between translation and today’s global economy (cf. e.g. Cronin 2003: 8–41).

In sum, globalization has led to a veritable explosion of demand for translation. Translation is therefore not simply a by-product of globalization, but an integral part of it. Without translation, the global capitalist consumer-oriented and growth-fixated economy would not be possible. Therefore, we cannot really say that ELF has threatened, or diminished the importance of, translation. Not everybody, however, shares this positive assessment of ELF and translation.

In a recent article for *The Linguist*, Snell-Hornby deplores ‘the hazards of translation studies adopting a global language’ (2010: 18). To support her argument, Snell-Hornby presents examples of defective translations into English reputedly taken from millions of texts ‘displayed or published worldwide ... intended to pass as English’ (2010: 18). Snell-Hornby uses the terms ‘Globish/American/British’ (GAB), ‘Eurospeak’, ‘McLanguage’ or even ‘Global English’ (used here, idiosyncratically, with a negative connotation) to designate ‘the

reduced, interference-bound system of verbal communication based on a low common denominator of the English code basically comprehensible to those with some knowledge of English' (2010: 18).

According to Snell-Hornby, using ELF for very simple communication (e.g. SMS, chats, blogs, etc.) is innocuous. However, ELF is of no use in more complex and sophisticated forms of communication – including those involved in the publication and dissemination of scientific knowledge. As English has increasingly asserted itself in academic circles over the last decades, a need has arisen for scholarly publications and academic conference presentations to be either written in English in the first place or translated into English by non-native ELF speakers. In Snell-Hornby's opinion, differences in communicative conventions between English and other languages are likely to be routinely overlooked by academics forced to write in ELF and translators translating from and into ELF. As a result, written and oral texts written and/or delivered by non-native ELF speakers often fail to comply with standard lexico-grammatical choices or widely held rhetorical conventions in English, thus making ELF communication less effective and more difficult to follow.

As part of her critique of ELF, Snell-Hornby discusses the role that the continued dominance of English in conferences and publications plays in shaping disciplinary agendas across different academic fields. Foremost among the effects of this dominance is, Snell-Hornby argues, the exclusion of many scholars lacking sufficient knowledge of English from the academic discourse. To overcome the 'stultifying effect of immensely complex cultural and linguistic material being monopolized by a single language' (2010: 19), Snell-Hornby proposes that translation scholars speak out against this trend by promoting insights into other cultures, respecting the integrity of speakers of other languages. What are we to make of these arguments against ELF in general and the role of ELF in translation in particular? In a response to Snell-Hornby's arguments described above, House (2010) argues that ELF is not a defective, but a fully functional means of communication, and that the arguments put forward against ELF come close to an appeal for an outdated prescriptive native English norm. More importantly, the claim that ELF speakers' written and oral contributions to journals, conferences, and so on are 'exceedingly difficult' to follow is not based on empirical research. On the other hand, Snell-Hornby's claim that the use of ELF is detrimental for intellectual progress – on the grounds that it is more difficult for the contributions of non-native users of English to be acknowledged by mainstream disciplinary discourses – has been problematized by scholars in the field of translation studies. In her recent survey of trajectories of research in translation studies, Tymoczko (2005) places the rise of English as a world language at the centre of the increasing internationalization of the field beyond Eurocentric perspectives. As a result of this internationalization process, Tymoczko notes, '[e]ver more scholars from developing nations are active in the discipline professionally, publishing articles and contributing to conferences, as well as teaching translation in their home countries' (2005: 1086).

House (2010) also challenges Snell-Hornby's critique of the translation examples used to illustrate the negative impact of ELF activities from a more practical perspective. For House, these examples of 'bad translations' (e.g. 'Please bump your head carefully' instead of 'Mind your head') cannot be taken as a valid argument against the role played by ELF in translation, but simply as evidence of the incompetence of individual translators. Despite their contrasting interpretation of these examples, both Snell-Hornby's and House's stances bring to the fore the ambivalent relationship between ELF translation and issues pertaining to translation quality and translational competence. For while recent scholarly work on ELF has gone some way towards challenging negative perceptions of communicative practices involving the use of English as a vehicular language, translator trainers and translation industry players continue to perceive ELF translation as a dubious form of mediation. At the centre of this stance are two assumptions: the traditionalist view that non-native speakers of English cannot match the output of an English-native professional translator, in terms of either quality or productivity; and, by extension, the commonly held position across European universities that translator training programmes should focus on fostering students' direct translation skills, i.e. their ability to translate into their mother tongue. Ultimately, the debate on the professional and academic recognition of ELF translation has been framed largely in terms of directionality, i.e. direct vs. inverse translation.

Beeby Lonsdale (2009) explores the complexity of factors that have informed the debate on directionality practices since the 1950s and contributed to explaining the uneven prevalence of 'translation into a non-mother tongue' (Pokorn 2005) in different geographical contexts. These include the degree of proximity between the lingua-cultures that trainee translators must learn to mediate; the size of the pool of professional translators available to work in each direction of certain language combinations in a given translation market; and, less frequently, idiosyncratic ideological conditions dictating that official translators should work into a foreign language – thus assuring the political allegiance of translators responsible for shaping the international community's perception of their country through their translations.

But traditional attitudes towards translation into a non-native tongue have been affected in recent decades by a set of new factors pertaining to the impact of globalization and the ubiquity of new communication technologies. Of particular relevance is the growing 'use of English as an international language and as a language of administration within certain multilingual countries (such as India or South Africa), higher education and business' (Beeby Lonsdale 2009: 86). Indeed, this new scenario has brought about a range of developments that are fostering the generalization of translation into English by speakers of other languages.

Firstly, there is the centrality of 'internationalization' – understood as 'the process of generalizing a product so that it can handle multiple languages and cultural conventions, without the need for re-design' (Esselink 2000: 25) – to processes of economic and cultural globalization. In today's global economy,

companies seeking to market their goods and services globally will often begin by translating their brochures and websites into English. Insofar as these texts translated into English are normally intended for international consumption, the fact that translators may not have native speaker competence in the target lingua-culture is often found to be less significant.

Secondly, a large proportion of translation projects in the digital economy are carried out by teams of professionals under the supervision of a project manager, who identifies the project's specific requirements, organizes a project plan, and secures and manages technological and human resources to successfully complete and deliver the project. Within these teams, translation into English as a non-mother tongue is increasingly common, as the fact that some individual translators may lack native speaker competence in the target language can be addressed during the 'wind-up' or final stage of the project. The involvement of non-native English translators in collective projects involving translations into English is particularly frequent in those cases where quality testing involves either a 'pragmatic revision' of the translated text, usually performed by an English-native reviser who has not been involved in the translation process and whose aim is to improve the final version; or a 'fresh look', where the English-native reviser approaches the translation as an independent text and gauges the extent to which it adheres to target readers' expectations. From a pedagogical perspective, Pokorn (2005: 28–29) agrees there is no reason why translators should work only into their mother tongue to ensure that their work is linguistically and culturally acceptable. In collective translation projects involving the collaboration of competent non-native professionals and qualified native-speaker linguistic and stylistic advisers, translations into a non-mother tongue can be just as successful as those produced by native speakers of the target language.

Thirdly, growing translation costs incurred by corporate organizations and public institutions alike have prompted some clients to commission new types of translation that do not require native speaker competence in the target language. This is the case, for example, in the European Commission, where translation requesters are encouraged to state explicitly the purpose that the translation is meant to serve (Wagner 2003). Of the five types of translation that requesters can choose from ('basic understanding', 'for information', 'for publication', 'for EU image' and 'legislation'), at least the first two can be competently translated by professionals working out of their native language into English. This initiative, Wagner argues, should be extended to other professional contexts and also placed at the centre of translator training activities. In her opinion, wider awareness of a purpose-driven approach to the commissioning and execution of translations would help 'to avoid misunderstandings between translators and their clients' (Wagner 2003: 99).

While translation into English as a non-mother tongue has consolidated its presence in professional settings, the assumption underpinning the debate on this type of translation is that translators should adhere to the expectations of native English readers, rather than those of readers using English as a lingua franca.

Such an attitude may well change as we can now see a veritable explosion of demand for translation from and into English as a lingua franca, translation being at the heart of the global economy. Globalization, which characterizes much of contemporary life, has brought about a concomitant rise in the demand for texts that are simultaneously meant for recipients in many different languages and cultures. Until recently, translators and text producers routinely applied a cultural filter. However, due to the impact of English as a global lingua franca, this situation may now change, leading to a conflict between culture specificity and universality in textual norms and conventions, with ‘universality’ really standing for Anglo-Saxon norms. While the influence of English on other languages in the area of lexis has long been acknowledged, its impact on the levels of syntax, pragmatics and discourse has hardly been researched. Rules of discourse and textualization conventions often operate stealthily at deeper levels of consciousness and thus present a particular challenge for translation evaluation.

In the Hamburg project ‘Covert Translation’, to be discussed in more detail in the following chapter, we looked at the influence of global English on covert translations of English science and economic texts into German, French and Spanish, using the evaluation model outlined above, as well as a diachronic tripartite corpus (original texts, their translations and comparable texts in the target languages) and larger reference corpora. The most important consequence of the results of this work for translation evaluation would be the following: if in covert translation from English, cultural filtering no longer takes place, with the result that dominant Anglo-Saxon norms ‘take over’, giving rise to culturally alien genres and genre mixtures, a new translation typology would need to be set up with different transition modalities from translation to version. If texts that hitherto called for adaptation processes in cultural filtering are now increasingly translated overtly, we also need a different conception of ‘overt translation’. The type of overt translation resulting from superimposing Anglo-Saxon norms onto texts in other languages clearly no longer resembles the classic overt translation which involved co-activation of source and target discourse worlds and presented itself as a ‘hybrid text’. Rather, the new overt translation (replacing the former covert translation) is the result of domination and conquering. It is ‘hybrid’ in a different, yet unexplored way, and does not allow for any co-existence of discourse world. Since we are at present only at the beginning of such revolutionary changes in translation and multilingual text production, much more research using larger corpora and different language pairs is needed before definitive conclusions can be drawn.

In this chapter I have discussed some of the consequences globalization processes can have on translation and translation quality assessment. Such processes need to be considered together with the contrastive pragmatic research adumbrated in [Chapter 8](#): results of cross-cultural differences in discourse conventions which needed to be taken into account in cultural filtering need now to be checked against ongoing globalization processes, as has been done in the project ‘Covert Translation’ mentioned above.

# 10

## CORPUS STUDIES AND THEIR RELEVANCE FOR THE NOTION OF GENRE IN A MODEL FOR TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

One of the most important recent developments in translation studies is the provision of large electronically stored language corpora. Translation scholars, translation evaluators and practising translators can now greatly benefit from the rapid technological progress in storing and manipulating large quantities of data. In this chapter I will give a brief outline of the role of corpus studies in translation (for a recent detailed discussion see Zanettin 2014) before concentrating on its potential role for enriching translation quality assessment.

Corpora can profitably be used to ‘lend an element of empirical intersubjectivity to the concept of equivalence, especially if the corpus represents a variety of translators’ (Altenberg and Granger 2002: 17). In order to be optimally useful, corpora need to be carefully designed and they need to be provided with appropriately contextualized data (for a good example of such a corpus see the Cologne Specialized Translation Corpus (CSTC) (Krein-Kühle 2013)). Corpora such as this one are useful for going beyond individual exemplar-based translation evaluation such as the analyses of individual texts provided by the House model. Corpora can lift the results of the analyses of individual texts to a more general level. In short they can make results more intersubjectively reliable and valid.

Translation corpora are an important source for translation quality assessment as they provide a reliable methodological tool for clarifying hypothesized equivalences and for establishing reliable patterns of translation regularities (cf. the recent discussion of the role of corpora in translation in Zanettin 2014). An optimal use of corpora needs to be based on a theoretical and methodological framework which gives pride of place to the concept of equivalence. Put differently, equivalence in translation can be made open to generalization and intersubjective verification through the use of parallel (translation) corpora and comparable corpora (holding monolingual texts in the target language).

A corpus in translation studies has a useful function as *one* of many tools of scientific inquiry. Regardless of frequency and representativeness, corpus data are useful because they are often better data than those derived from accidental introspections, and for the study of certain problems such as overall development of the use of modal verbs, corpus data are indeed the only available data. But if the use of corpora is to maximally fulfil its potential, it should be taken in conjunction with other tools: introspection, observation and textual and ethnographic analysis. In translation studies, as in other disciplines, we must assess the relative value of the analytical-nomological paradigm on the one hand, where already existing hypotheses (and categories) are to be confirmed or rejected, and where variables are explicated and operationalized, and the explorative-interpretative paradigm on the other hand, where in-depth case studies are conducted to develop categories for capturing newly emerging phenomena. It is important that these two lines of inquiry, the qualitative and the quantitative, are not considered to be mutually exclusive, rather they should be regarded as supplementing each other.

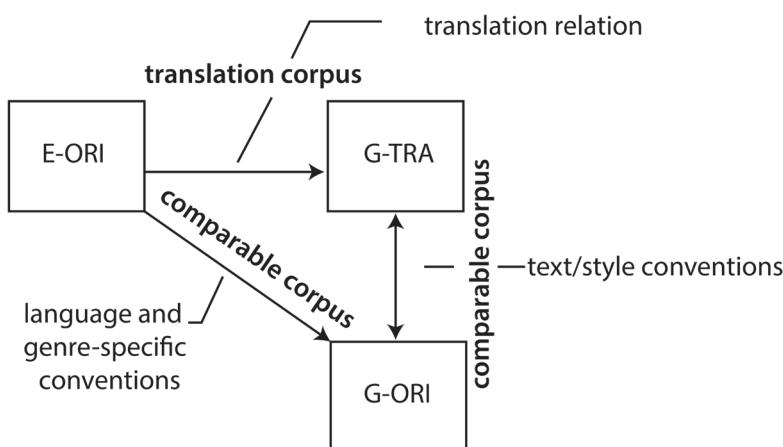
Corpus evidence, and in particular seemingly impressive statistics, should not be seen as an end in itself, but as a starting point for continuing richly (re-)contextualized qualitative work with values one finds interesting – and these need not necessarily be the most frequent phenomena, for the least frequent values can also catch one's attention. In the last analysis, the object of corpus translation studies should not be the explanation of what is present in the corpus, but the understanding of translation. The aim of a corpus is not to limit the data to an allegedly representative sample, but to provide a framework for finding out what sort of questions should be asked about translation and about language used in different ways. The value of corpus translation studies lies in how it is used. Corpus translation studies is not a new branch of translation studies, it is simply a methodological basis for pursuing translation research. In principle, it should be easy to combine corpus translation studies with many other traditional ways of looking at translation. If this is done, corpus translation studies can greatly enrich our vision.

Not only can corpora in translation quality assessment provide an extension and verification of exemplar-based qualitative case study analyses, their use can also act as a link between qualitative and quantitative work enabled through corpora. In the following I will provide an example of a corpus-based project which effectively links qualitative work based on the House model and quantitative analyses: the project '*Verdecktes Übersetzen* – Covert Translation', conducted at the German Science Foundation's Research Centre on Multilingualism in Hamburg from 1999 to 2011 (Becher *et al.* 2009). The general assumption underlying this corpus-driven project is that the dominance of the English language in many domains today can lead to variation and change of indigenous communicative norms in German (and other languages) in both covert translations from English and in original texts, resulting in a gradual adaptation to Anglophone norms. More concretely, we hypothesized that

adaptations to Anglophone communicative norms can be located along dimensions of empirically established communicative preferences such as the ones established for English and German (see [Chapter 8: Five Dimensions of Cross-Cultural Difference: English–German](#)). An influence of English on German texts would manifest itself in quantitative and qualitative changes in the use of certain linguistic items and structures in German translations and comparable texts in genres where Anglophone dominance is particularly noticeable, such as popular science or business.

To test the project hypothesis, we put together a multilingual corpus holding about 650 texts of English–German originals and translations as well as French and Spanish control texts. The selected sources reflect a sphere of text production and reception that is of pervasive socio-cultural influence. The genre ‘popular science’ comprises (synchronously/diachronically for the time frames 1978–1982 and 1999–2002) articles on topics of general socio-political relevance. These texts, totalling about 700,000 words, have been selected from publications by official organs (e.g. *Scientific American*, *New Scientist* and their satellite journals produced in other languages). The genre ‘economic texts’ comprises (synchronously/diachronically) around 300,000 words of annual reports by globally operating companies, updated from 2002 to 2006, letters to shareholders, mission statements, visions, corporate statements and product presentations. An investigation into the reverse translation relation: German–English, French/Spanish–English is of particular interest in reference to this genre.

[Figure 10.1](#) below presents the structure of the project corpus showing the functions of and the interrelations between the various subcorpora: English Original Texts (E-ORI), German Translations (G-TRA) and German Original Texts (G-ORI).



**FIGURE 10.1** Translation and comparable corpora (example: English–German)

Source: Kranich *et al.* 2012: 331

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The research can be divided into three phases: qualitative analyses, quantification and re-contextualization on the basis of the results of the quantitative analyses.

In the qualitative analyses House's translation quality assessment model was used as a controlled procedure to avoid the creation or perpetuation of 'scientifically manufactured stereotypes'. Baumgarten *et al.* (2004) found that in popular scientific articles written in English an effort is made to simulate interaction with the reader, who is often addressed directly and 'drawn into' the scenes described in the text, as in the following example from *Scientific American*:

### **Example 1**

Susan Buchbinder 'Avoiding Infection after HIV-Exposure' in *Scientific American*, July 1998/'Prävention nach HIV-Kontakt' [BT: Prevention after HIV-Contact] in *Spektrum der Wissenschaft*, Oktober 1998

- 1(a) Suppose *you* are a doctor in an emergency room and a patient tells *you* she was raped two hours earlier. She is afraid she may have been exposed to HIV, the virus that causes AIDS but has heard that there is a 'morning-after pill' to prevent HIV infection. Can *you* in fact do anything to block the virus from replicating and establishing infection?

This opening passage of an article on HIV infections is translated into German for the German daughter publication *Spektrum der Wissenschaft* as follows:

- 1(b) In der Notfallaufnahme eines Krankenhauses berichtet eine Patientin, sie sei vor zwei Stunden vergewaltigt worden und nun in Sorge, AIDS-Erregern ausgesetzt zu sein, sie habe gehört, es gebe eine „Pille danach“, die eine HIV-Infektion verhüte. Kann der Arzt überhaupt etwas tun, was eventuell vorhandene Viren hindern würde, sich zu vermehren und sich dauerhaft im Körper einzunisten?

[BT: In the emergency room of a hospital a patient reports that she had been raped two hours ago and is now worrying that she had been exposed to the AIDS virus. She said she had heard that there was an 'after-pill', which might prevent an HIV infection. Can the *doctor* in fact do anything which might prevent potentially existing viruses from replicating and establishing themselves permanently in the body?]

This translation can be understood as governed by the aim to adapt the American English original to the reading habits of the German target audience. Note that changes have been made in particular concerning the degree of addressee involvement: the German reader is no longer asked to imagine herself one of the agents of the scene presented. Instead, the scene in the hospital is presented in the German version 'from the outside', the addressee not being

asked to actively engage with what is presented (cf. Baumgarten *et al.* 2004). Here are some more examples of the qualitative analysis in the project work:

### **Example 2**

David Baltimore and Carol Heilman ‘HIV Vaccines: Prospects and Challenges’ in *Scientific American*, July 1998/‘Wie nahe ist ein HIV-Impfstoff’ [BT: How close is an HIV vaccine?] in *Spektrum der Wissenschaft*, Oktober 1998

- 2(a) Most vaccines activate what is called the humoral arm of the immune system.
  - 2(b) Die meisten Vakzine aktivieren den sogenannten humoralen Arm des Immunsystems (nach lateinisch *humor*, Flüssigkeit).
- [BT: Most vaccines activate the so-called humoral arm of the immune system (after Latin *humor*, liquid).]

In 2(b) we can see how the translator freely expatiates on the content by adding an etymological explanation.

### **Example 3**

Susan Buchbinder ‘Avoiding Infection after HIV-Exposure’ in *Scientific American*, July 1998/‘Prävention nach HIV-Kontakt’ [BT: Prevention after HIV-Contact] in *Spektrum der Wissenschaft*, Oktober 1998

- 3(a) Treatment may reduce the chance of contracting HIV infection after a risky encounter.
  - 3(b) Eine sofortige Behandlung nach Kontakt mit einer Ansteckungsquelle verringert unter Umständen die Gefahr, dass sich das Human-Immunschwäche-Virus im Körper festsetzt. Gewähr gibt es keine, zudem erwachsen eigene Risiken.
- [BT: Immediate treatment after contact with a source of infection reduces under certain circumstances the danger that the human immuno-deficiency-virus establishes itself in the body. There is no guarantee for this, moreover new risks arise.]

Extract 3(b) shows how the German translation adds information, thus explicitizing the text. The content of the original English sentence is ‘unpacked’, with details being freely added and hypothetical questions a reader might be assumed to ask being answered. For instance, the reader might ask: ‘which treatment?’ and receive the answer ‘immediate treatment’ in the German text. And in answer to the question ‘how safe is the treatment?’ the German reader is informed that success cannot be guaranteed and new risks may emerge.

The qualitative project analyses revealed that in the English popular science texts, readers are ‘invited’ to identify with the persons depicted in the text’s discourse world through various linguistic means. Mental processes (*verba dicendi* and *verba cogitandi*) serve to establish a personal relationship with the reader, and simulated dialogues, repetition, structural parallelism, framing and other narrative devices are used to personalize and dramatize science. As opposed to the English originals, the German popular science texts in the first time frame avoid the use of mental processes. They are less person-oriented, less persuasive and tend to be more technical and ‘seriously scientific’. In addition, no framing or other narrative devices are presented. A certain ‘didactic tenor’ is often noticeable in the German texts, i.e. the text producer may have assumed a lack of knowledge on the part of the reader, a situation in need of being remedied by the text producer. The result of these didactic interventions and explanations is of course that readers are spared inferencing processes. These explanations are based on the assumption that readers want to be instructed rather than entertained.

The quantitative project analyses served first of all to verify the results of the qualitative analyses with regard to the diachronic development of the frequency of occurrence of those linguistic means vulnerable to variation and change over time under Anglophone influence. Secondly, they were designed to reveal preferred usage of those vulnerable linguistic means that express ‘subjectivity’ and ‘addressee orientation’ and various collocation and co-occurrence patterns as well as syntactic and textual position vis-à-vis the organization of information. The linguistic forms and phenomena which were found in our qualitative analysis to express ‘subjectivity’ and ‘addressee orientation’ in English and German include the following: modal verbs, semi-modals, modal words, modal particles, mental processes, deixis, connective particles, sentence adverbials, ‘ing’-adverbials, progressive aspect, sentential mood, complement constructions, frame-constructions, commenting parentheses and matrix constructions. Since the individual corpus parts differ substantially in terms of word count we limited ourselves to presenting percentages and normalized frequencies in our research.

As stated above, our quantitative analyses were conducted to verify the results of our qualitative work with the House model. For this purpose, linguistic phenomena associated with author–reader interaction were examined, such as for instance the use of personal pronouns and connectives as prime linguistic means for producing more interactionality in a written text, as well as the use of epistemic modality, since epistemic modal marking can help to present opinions brought forward in a text as less definite, thus leaving more room for the addressee’s own judgement.

As stated above, our basic assumption is that English–German translations in the field of popular science are showing over time a tendency to allow more and more importations of conventions and norms from the English source text, which then even find their way, in some cases, into comparable, monolingually produced (non-translated) German texts. Since the later texts included in our

corpus (1999–2002) already show some contact-induced convergence, it is necessary first to look at the results produced by the analysis of the earlier comparable English and German texts in the corpus from the time frame 1978–1982, to find out which basic contrasts could be established quantitatively.

Overall, the contrastive results for the use of the personal pronoun ‘we’ *wir*, sentence initial ‘and’ *und* and ‘but’ *aber/doch* as well as the epistemic modal marker in popular scientific texts from 1978 to 1982 can be summarized as in [Table 10.1](#) below.

**TABLE 10.1** Pragmatic contrasts between English and German original popular scientific texts as seen from the frequency<sup>1</sup> of selected linguistic items (1978–1982)

	<i>Personal pronoun 'we'</i> <i>wir</i>	<i>Sentence-initial 'and'</i> <i>und</i>	<i>Sentence-initial 'but'</i> <i>aber/doch</i>	<i>Epistemic modal markers</i>
English originals	27.5	3.1	32.6	22.8
German originals	17.7	0.9	9.0	7.1
<i>Conclusions</i>	English texts are more personal.	English texts simulate spoken interaction more.	English texts simulate spoken interaction more.	English texts are more dialogic.

<sup>1</sup> The frequencies are normalized on the basis of 10,000 words, except the frequencies for ‘but’ *aber/doch*, which are normalized on the basis of 1,000 sentences.

Source: Kranich *et al.* 2012: 323

## Analysis of the translation relation

[Table 10.2](#) summarizes the results of changes over the two time frames in the use of the linguistic phenomena examined in the parallel and comparable project corpora.

The overview in [Table 10.2](#) shows that shining-through is a common phenomenon in English–German translations of popular scientific texts. Concerning three of the four investigated phenomena, clear evidence for source-language shining-through was found. Although translators obviously do not take over source language expressions uncritically, but make adaptations (e.g. they sometimes use sentence-internal connectives instead of sentence initial ‘but’, or translate epistemic modal markers of low modal strength with markers of high modal strength), they still make a number of translation choices that lead to features in the translated text which make it different from target language texts produced monolingually. We can therefore conclude that German popular scientific texts translated from English are indeed more interactional than German original texts in this genre.

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**TABLE 10.2** Shining-through and contact-induced changes in translated and non-translated German popular scientific texts

	<i>Personal pronoun 'we'</i>	<i>Sentence-initial 'and'</i>	<i>Sentence-initial 'but'</i>	<i>Epistemic modal markers</i>
Shining-through effects in translations	Yes	Unclear	Yes	Yes
Impact on German originals	No	No	Yes	No
<i>Conclusions</i>	German original texts become more personal, but change is not due to translations.	German original texts become more interactional, but reason is unclear.	German original texts become more interactional as authors adopt Anglophone usage patterns from translations.	German original texts do not become more dialogic.

Source: Kranich *et al.* 2012: 331

As far as the main project hypothesis is concerned, i.e. that German original texts in the genre of popular science will also increasingly adopt Anglophone conventions, we find, however, that the evidence to support this view is not very strong. Only the case study on the sentence-initial concessive conjunctions ('but' *aber/doch*) furnishes results that clearly support the hypothesis (Becher 2011). In this case, the English–German translations indeed appear to pave the way for an overall change in conventions in the German genre of popular scientific writing, leading to a higher degree of interactionality in the original German texts. As far as epistemic modal markers are concerned, on the other hand, we see absolutely no evidence that the German original texts adopt a more interpersonal style.

Results on the use of sentence-initial 'and' *und* and on the use of the personal pronoun 'we' *wir* are somewhat less clear. The German originals do in fact become more interactional, increasingly using both sentence-initial *und* and the personal pronoun *wir*. However, the functions these two linguistic items are put to differ remarkably from the functions of English 'and' and 'we'. English influence on German text conventions via English–German translations is therefore not likely here. A more indirect type of Anglophone influence might be a more plausible explanation. In English (both British and American) the general trend over recent decades can be observed that texts have become more informal and more colloquial (cf. Mair 2006), hence more interactional. This trend can be linked to general cultural processes, such as the democratization of knowledge and a

growing taste for informality in interaction. It seems reasonable to assume that the same overall societal processes are at work in German society as in the UK and the USA. These cultural-societal trends may be influenced by the prestige of Anglophone (particularly US) culture, so that the trends we see in the German original texts in our corpus could be said to be caused by the presence of the prestigious Anglophone model in a rather indirect way. As far as the impact of English–German translations on changes in German genre conventions is concerned, we can, however, only conclude that it is marginal, as it can only be clearly established for one out of four features investigated.

The main hypothesis of this diachronic corpus-based project that the pervasive influence of the English language causes communicative norms in other languages (here: German) to adapt to Anglophone norms can therefore not be answered in any simple way. At least three explanatory models offer themselves:

*Model 1: Translation as mediator of the English takeover: the translation process effects change.* Here translation is in fact the locus of change: translation as a means of language contact aids the original's influence on its translations. This would be the case where texts formerly lending themselves to being covertly translated are no longer culturally filtered but Anglicized, their own norms and conventions being eclipsed and appropriated.

*Model 2: Universal impact of globalization: translation as reflector of change and not instigator thereof.* The translational process reflects change, as agent in the service of globalization and international *Zeitgeist*. Despite its role as *locus classicus* of language contact, it is not through translation that norms in the target language change, it is rather through the overpowering omnipresence of hegemonic English that changes in textual conventions arise.

*Model 3: Translation as cultural conservation: the translational process resists change.* This is the type of hypothesis I suggested earlier with regard to the bulk of our qualitative case studies where there was no change in the rites of covert translation, that is, translators are professionals, language experts who are highly aware of contrasts and differences between languages and thus preserve the norms of the target text genre.

In summary and to conclude, the results of the research project discussed above have not allowed us to give a simple answer about whether and how global English and globalization processes influence communicative norms in other languages, in this case particularly German, via language contact in translation. Much more research is needed, taking account of a host of different factors that may have an impact on language variation and change through translation.

In this chapter I have shown that my translation quality assessment model has been usefully integrated into a corpus-driven research project. In fact it has functioned as the basis for both quantitative corpus analysis and its ensuing translation-related analysis.

# 11

## COGNITIVE TRANSLATION-RELATED RESEARCH AND ITS RELEVANCE FOR TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

This chapter discusses some recent developments in research on the process of translation: thinking aloud studies, retrospective process studies, various psycholinguistic and behavioural experiments, as well as neuro-linguistic and neuro-psychologic studies of the translation process. I will critically discuss the potential benefits such studies have for increasing our knowledge of what goes on in a translator's head, as well as for translation studies in general and for developing an integrated model of translation quality assessment.

As O'Brien (2013: 6) has pointed out, translation process research has heavily 'borrowed' from a number of disciplines: linguistics, psychology, cognitive science, neuroscience, reading and writing research and language technology. The influence of these disciplines and their particular research directions and methodologies on translation studies is at the present time something of a one-way affair, but given time, a reciprocal interdisciplinarity may occur, with the result that translation studies will be not only a borrower but also a lender.

Since translation, as we saw in [Chapter 1](#), can be regarded as a cognitive process, there is a need to explore what happens when a translator is in 'bilingual mode' (Grosjean 2001), and what exactly it is that empowers a translator to comprehend, transfer and re-constitute stretches of text from one particular language to another, and to assess the quality of the resultant translation. What is needed is a sound, theoretically based description and explanation of how strategies of comprehending, problem solving and decision making with reference to the textual material a translator is handling come about in the translator's bilingual mind. Such a focus does not need to be at the expense of the social and the cultural: it has long been suggested that socio-culturally shared knowledge sets as linguistic-cognitive representations in the form of schemata, scripts, plans, constructions and routines result from conventionalization processes in a particular culture via the medium of language (cf. e.g. Sperber 1996; Cook and Bassetti 2011).

Introspective and retrospective studies (cf. e.g. Göpferich and Jääskeläinen 2009; Jääskeläinen 2011) frequently involving monologic, sometimes also dialogic tasks, as well as rating and other decision-related tasks have been a productive research paradigm since their inception over 30 years ago. For the response-based views of translation quality assessment, taking account of translators' and receptors' reactions and the underlying cognitive processes is very important.

The validity and reliability of the verbal report data elicited in such studies have, however, more often than not been taken for granted, although they are in fact far from clear. Despite many attempts over the past decades to improve the quality of thinking aloud protocol (TAP) data – offering, for instance, intensive preparatory training sessions to better enable subjects to provide insights into their strategy-using behaviour – the general assumption behind this type of research has not really been questioned. The fundamental belief underlying all introspective and retrospective translation studies is that persons, when involved in the act of translating, have at least partial control over their mental processes, and that these processes are at least partially accessible to them, i.e. open to their conscious inspection and verbalization. It is, however, far from clear that this assumption is valid. Even more important from the point of view of research methodology is the fact that at present it is not clear that this assumption *can* be confirmed or falsified.

The major reason for this in all research based upon introspection is that we touch upon one of the most important and most controversial issues in contemporary cognitive science: the nature of consciousness (cf. e.g. Cohen and Stemmer 2007; Eagleman 2011). Much recent neuroscience literature has in fact pointed to the importance of the non-conscious – a depressing finding for translation process research. But there is fortunately an increasing awareness of some of the methodological issues in translation process research mentioned above. Jääskeläinen (2011) stresses the importance of a systematic review of the problems of verbal report data, which would take into account the specific nature of translation tasks and also include contrastive pragmatic analyses of the language pairs involved in translation, such as the ones discussed in [Chapter 8](#).

Translation scholars have recently tried to devise behavioural experiments designed to avoid the ‘black box’ and directly trace the individual steps in the translation process, measuring temporal progress, frequency and kinds of revisions undertaken by the translator, the (measurable) effort expended, the nature and number of attention foci and attention shifts as well as the frequency and kind of emotional stress responses shown by the translator while translating. This ambitious agenda was made possible through recent, mostly computer-related technological progress allowing experiments using keyboard logging, screen recording, eye-tracking and various physiological measures to be undertaken. A recent overview of this line of behavioural translation-related research that often combines various tools (e.g. keyboard logging and eye-tracking) is provided in Shreve and Angelone (2010) and O’Brien (2011). Critical

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issues with regard to the validity and reliability of these behavioural experiments remain, however. Among them are the following: is it proven that measurements of observable behaviour (as provided in keyboard logging, eye-tracking, etc.) can really tell us something about the underlying cognitive processes that occur in a translator's mind? And can measurements of observable behaviour really explain the nature of cognitive representations of the two languages, throw light on a translator's metalinguistic and linguistic-contrastive knowledge, and illuminate comprehension, transfer and reconstitution processes emerging in translation procedures – and, last but not least, serve to assist us in translation quality assessment? Not really! Such experiments can only tell us something about observable behaviour, which is what they were designed for.

Another recent trend in cognitive translation studies is bilingual neuro-imaging research. The results of such research crucially depend on the type of task used. With the exception of some rare recent use of isolated sentences, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), positron emission tomography (PET) and event related potential (ERP) studies are most often word-based (cf. e.g. Price *et al.* 1999; Klein *et al.* 2006; Hernandez 2009). However, as discussed in [Chapters 1](#) and [2](#) of this volume, translation is essentially text-based. On account of the inherent task artificiality, bilingual neuro-imaging studies lack ecological validity. To quote eminent neuroscientist Paradis:

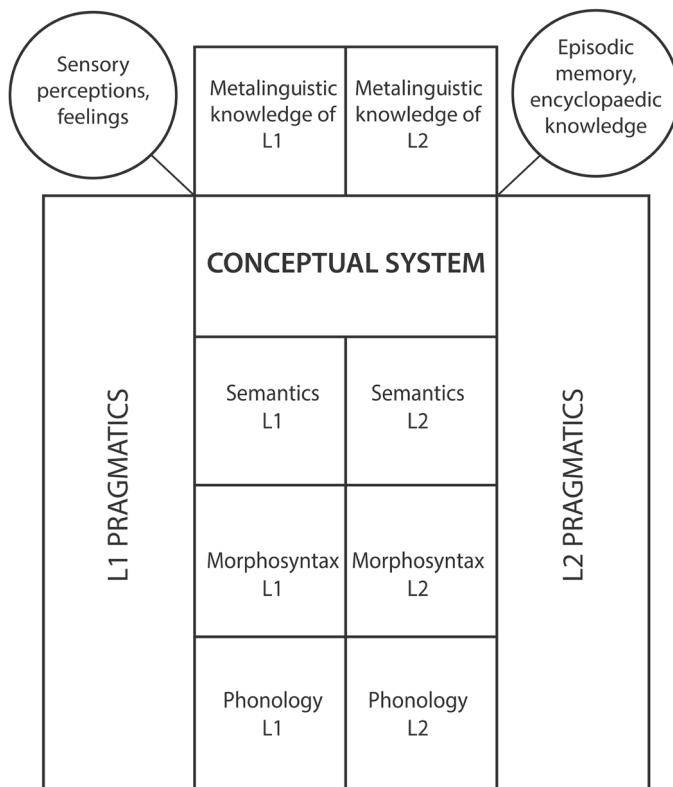
The use of any task other than the natural use of language (including natural switching and mixing) has the same consequence as using single words: the task does not tap the normal automatic processes that sustain the natural use of language including the contribution of pragmatics and its neural underpinnings.

(2009: 157–58)

The majority of neuro-imaging studies on laterality and language switching and mixing use single words as stimuli, for instance in picture naming experiments where subjects are asked to switch on command. According to Paradis (2009: 160), brain activity crucially differs for language use in natural situations and in language use 'on cue' and, most importantly, these situations correspond to opposite types of processes. Indeed, single words are very different from the rest of language. They are part of the (conscious) vocabulary of a language, not part of the lexicon. The latter includes morpho-syntactic properties and is integrated into each language subsystem's neural network in the bilingual brain. Single word stimuli are explicitly known form-meaning associations subserved by declarative memory, while procedural memory underlies normal, natural language use. Each memory system relies on distinct neuro-functional structures. And normal, natural language use also critically involves cortical areas of the brain's right hemisphere to process the pragmatic aspects of utterances – but this is irrelevant in processing single words that are deprived of context.

Another problem with neuro-imaging data relates to the nature of the evidence from neuro-imaging data: blood flow and other haemo-dynamic responses routinely provided in such data cannot be taken to be direct measures of neuronal activity. Further, most neuro-imaging studies have not been replicated. Many reported neurological activations are strongly task-dependent and rely on a particular technique employed, such that replication is difficult. And it is this task and technique dependence which suggests that the reported activations in the brain are indicative of the particular task and technique employed rather than indicative of language representation, processing and switching per se. Given these problems, it is necessary to look for a theory with enough descriptive and explanatory potential before expecting enlightenment from experimental neuro-imaging studies, whose usefulness for translation studies is, at the present time, not clear at all.

Paradis has formulated an original neuro-linguistic theory of bilingual mind. Figure 11.1 shows his model depicting the neuro-functional and linguistic cognitive system of the bilingual mind.



**FIGURE 11.1** A schematic representation of the components of verbal communication

Source: Paradis 2004: 227

Figure 11.1 shows different levels for explicit metalinguistic knowledge of a bilingual's two languages: L1 and L2, a joint conceptual system and different language-specific levels of semantics, morpho-syntax and phonology. L1 and L2 pragmatics encompass and feed into both the conceptual system and the different language levels. Paradis hypothesizes that bilinguals (including translators) have two subsets of neuronal connections, one for each language, and these are activated or inhibited (for instance in the process of translation) independently. But there is also one larger set on which they can draw items of either language at any one time. All selections are automatic, i.e. unconsciously driven by activation levels. With specific reference to translation, Paradis proposes the operation of two distinct translation strategies: a strategy of translating via the conceptual system involving processes of linguistic decoding (comprehension) of source text material plus encoding (production) of target text material, and direct transcoding by automatic application of rules which involves moving directly from linguistic items in the source language to equivalent items in the target language. In other words, source language forms immediately trigger target language forms, thus bypassing conceptual-semantic processing.

Paradis' theory is highly relevant for translation in that he presents an explanation for the representation modi of two languages as keys to essential translation processes of decoding, comprehending, transferring, re-assembling and re-verbalizing; it is thus also relevant for translation quality assessment. Of particular significance in his model is the overriding importance he assigns to the L1 and L2 pragmatics components which impact on the conceptual system and on the other linguistic levels. With regard to the separate conceptual system jointly for both L1 and L2, the model can explain that expert translators often do not need to access it as they move directly from the source to the target language.

The importance accorded by Paradis to the pragmatics component suggests the possibility of combining his model of the bilingual (translator's) brain with my own functional-pragmatic translation theory of linguistic text analysis, translation and translation evaluation. My model's two translation types: overt translation and covert translation are, as discussed above, defined as outcomes of different types of re-contextualization procedures with qualitatively different cognitive demands on the translator: overt translation is psycholinguistically and cognitively complex, covert translation is simple. In overt translation, the pragmatics of the source text and the target text are mentally co-activated, and this is why overt translation can be called psycholinguistically and cognitively complex. 'Real' functional equivalence cannot be achieved, and is also not aimed at – only a kind of second-level functional equivalence is possible. In covert translation there is no co-activation of the pragmatics of the source text and the target text, and it is this absence of mental co-activation which explains why covert translation can be said to be a psycholinguistically and cognitively simple act. Covert translation often involves massive intervention on the levels of language/text, register and genre, and in order to achieve the necessary functional equivalence, the translator needs to make allowance for the target text's

pragmatics component. This can be done via the use of a ‘cultural filter’, a construct capturing the differences between the lingua-culturally determined conventions and norms of expectation of the source text and target text addressees. As mentioned in Chapter 8, there is a deplorable lack of contrastive pragmatic work on register and genre variation in different language pairs, which renders a solid theoretical underpinning of translation studies in this respect next to impossible. What is clearly needed here is a combination of qualitative, quantitative, exemplar- and corpus-based as well as experimental cross-cultural research (for promising suggestions of such a combination see e.g. Halverson 2010 and Alves *et al.* 2010).

Paradis’ model is highly relevant for translation studies and for translation quality assessment because it provides support for the assumptions underlying House’s model for translation quality assessment with regard to the concept of the cultural filter in covert translation with its hypothesized complete switch to L2 pragmatic norms, and with regard to the hypothesized co-activation of the L1 and L2 pragmatics components in overt translation. Paradis’ model clearly supports my hypothesis described above that overt translation is psycholinguistically more complex due to an activation of a wider range of neuronal networks – across two pragmatics-cum-linguistics representational networks (see Figure 11.1) in the translation process. Paradis’ model also supports my hypothesis that covert translation is psycholinguistically simple since only one pragmatics-cum-linguistics representational network – the one for L2 – is being activated in the process of translation.

To sum up, a critical look at current research involving intro- and retrospection, behavioural experiments and neuro-imaging studies might lead to a new cognitive-linguistic orientation in translation quality assessment and a fresh attempt at theorizing translation in general. In this regard, I have pointed to Paradis’ neuro-linguistic theory of bilingualism as particularly useful for, and compatible with, a theory of translation quality assessment.

Another approach that is of potential relevance for a new view of translation quality assessment is the one recently outlined by Halverson (2014). Halverson pleads for a new cognitively oriented framework that takes account of the nature of multilingual cognition which differs from monolingual cognition and can be summarized in the idea of a multilingual’s ‘multicompetence’ (e.g. Bassetti and Cook 2011; House 2011b).

According to Halverson it is time to supplement text-based approaches with cognitively viable ones. If this were done, says Halverson, a reorientation towards the individual translator would be inevitable because translators as multilingual and multicompetent speakers have an essentially different kind of linguistic competence from that of monolingual speakers. In Halverson’s opinion, a new focus on the individual translator is also inevitable because the process of translation is not as dualistic as often assumed: translators tend to activate (at least for some of the time) more than one language at a time simultaneously comprehending (in one language) and producing (in another). The translator’s

unique bilingual competence is thus crucially significant. Taking this competence as a starting point can thus serve as an important supplement to the study of source and target texts.

Concepts such as language, knowledge, norms and culture need to be recognized as both cognitive and social. An important question then is how the cognitive and the social are related. As Halverson argues, Searle's notion of 'the Background' (1995) and Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* (1977) are particularly relevant here. The notion of 'situated cognition' is also relevant, which is a view of cognition as integrating cognition and world at the empirical level. For Searle, Background – roughly similar to Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* – defined as 'systems of durable, transposable dispositions' (Bourdieu 1977: 72) functions causally because humans routinely adapt to the social structure of the world they live in, developing knowledge structures which enable appropriate responses without having to represent the social structures. The notion of 'the Background' is therefore a cognitive one which enables humans to create and sustain the social world they live in.

Halverson (2004, 2008) has linked Searle's ideas with translational reality. She also emphasized the need for integrating the notion of *habitus* into translation theory as a means of linking individual knowing and doing (which are cognitively grounded) with a social realm of causal forces which both enable knowing and doing but also constrain them (see also Inghilleri 2003). The two concepts of Background and *habitus* capture the integration of the social world and the cognizing individual. From this it follows that the social is oriented much more towards the human being where it is instantiated, rather than towards the abstract systems or patterns which may pertain within a collective.

Several other recent schools of thought have emphasized the role of the 'embeddedness' of cognition: see, for example, Shore (1996), Sperber (1996) and Enfield and Levinson (2006), the latter propagating an ethnographic and multidisciplinary perspective on the social-cognitive interface. Cognition is here seen as both embedded and extended, an idea that has also recently gained ground in translation studies, for instance by Risku (2010), and in the 'Capturing Translation Processes' (CTP) project at the Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften. The variety of data types in the CTP project (workplace observation, interview, questionnaire, computer logging, screenshot recordings, eye-tracking and retrospective verbalizations) can serve as a basis for providing important new insights into situated translation.

Another attempt at integrating the social and the cognitive can be seen in Clark's notion of 'common ground'. Clark describes his notion by stating that: 'Two people's common ground is, in effect, the sum of their mutual common, or joint knowledge, beliefs, and suppositions' (1996: 93). The idea is integral to Clark's account of language use as 'joint action'. It is clearly important to the concerns of translation studies and translation quality assessment, but it has not been dealt with in as much detail here primarily because the two selected notions are part of more comprehensive ontological claims, while Clark's concern is in accounting more specifically for language use.

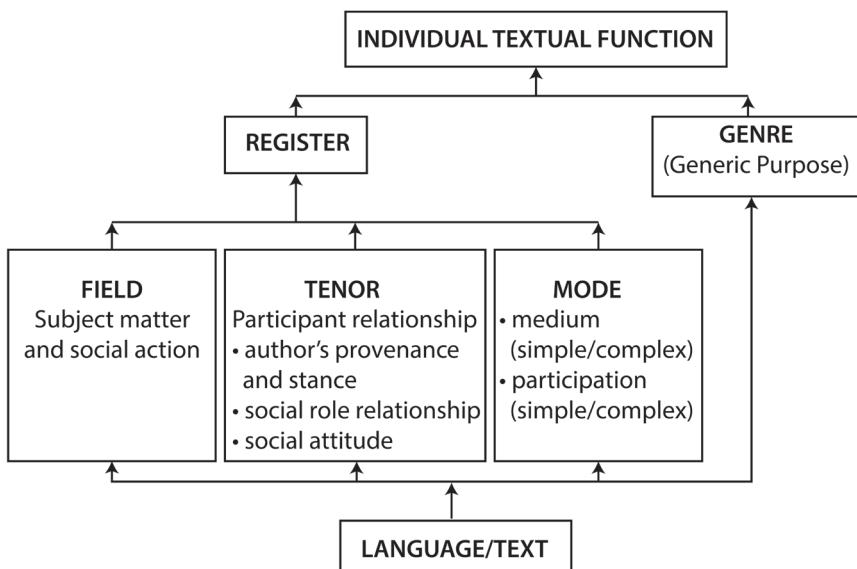
Taken together, the boundaries of cognition are today extended: the cognitive and the social are no longer separated, and ‘situated cognition’ is viewed as ‘embodied, extended and embedded’ (Robbins and Aydede 2009: 3). If the social world is dependent on cognitive processes, and if cognition is situated in the social world, we need to accept that the cognizing individual is the meeting place of the two.

I have in this chapter described different approaches to translation as a cognitive process. For translation quality assessment, the neuro-linguistic theory proposed by Michel Paradis was found to be highly relevant because it provides support for the hypothesized cognitive differences between the two fundamental types of translation proposed for the House model of translation quality assessment. Another interesting recent suggestion with regard to the relevance of a cognitive view of translation discussed in this chapter is the one put forward by Sandra Halverson. For translation quality assessment, her proposal of the relevance for translation of new socio-cognitive approaches stressing the importance of embedded socially situated cognition supports the assumptions in my model of the embeddedness of texts in the social context, of the need to consider situated cognitive processes of different complexities in overt and covert translation, and the assumption of a common ground in cultural filtering. However, Halverson’s proposition of the primacy and indeed centrality of the person of the translator in translation studies cannot be reasonably accepted for my model of translation quality in both its previous versions and in the new version to be presented in the next chapter. The model was and is essentially a text-based one which provides generalizations through the integration of the category Genre, Corpus Studies as well as insights into the differential complexity of cognitive-pragmatic processing.

# 12

## TOWARDS A NEW INTEGRATIVE MODEL OF TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT

In this final chapter I will sketch a newly revised model of translation quality assessment, in which the various strands and perspectives discussed in the previous chapters are taken account of and, as far as possible, integrated. So the question I will ask is how the model which is represented again below will need to be modified given the research strands described in [Chapters 8–11](#) and their relevance to translation quality assessment. I will also provide another exemplary analysis of a source text and its translation.



**FIGURE 12.1** A scheme for analysing and comparing original and translation texts

Let us first look at how issues concerning contrastive pragmatics, intercultural communication and intercultural understanding, which were discussed in [Chapter 8](#), relate to the above model for translation quality assessment, and how they might be used in modifying and updating the model.

Is contrastive pragmatics research in its focus on two different lingua-cultures and their similar or different conventions, norms and values still relevant for translation quality assessment? In my model, the findings of such research were claimed to be relevant for substantiating the ‘cultural filter’ in covert translation, for informing translators about where and how adaptations to the target culture’s norms were to be made in covert translation, and for legitimizing translational shifts on the basis of the findings of contrastive pragmatic research. Even today, I would still maintain the relevance of such research and I would continue to recommend that the scope of the cultural filter in covert translation be extended via findings of contrastive pragmatic research with as large a number of language pairs as possible. Following up on my own German–English contrastive research, a number of studies have recently been completed that look at the similarities and differences between communicative styles in different languages, for example English–French (Küppers 2008); English–Spanish–German (Kranich and González-Díaz 2010); English–Persian (Amouzadeh and House 2010); Arabic–German (Harfmann 2009); Japanese–German (Yamamori 2013); Japanese–English (Junge 2011); English–Chinese (Liu forthcoming). However, as our discussion of the ‘new thinking’ in the field of intercultural communication and intercultural understanding in [Chapter 8](#) has shown, it is important to be much more wary than before of undue generalizations and to be constantly on the look-out for changes in communicative norms and styles as members of different lingua-cultures increasingly communicate and mix with one another, making the boundaries of different cultural norms difficult to determine. As processes of internationalization and globalization as well as internal diversification continue to increase, translation quality assessment has become more complicated and the evaluator needs to be abreast of the dynamic changes in communicative styles in the world around her.

In sum, the notion of the cultural filter continues to be of crucial importance in translation quality assessment. However, the discussions in [Chapter 8](#) and in particular in [Chapter 9](#) have brought to the fore the current likelihood of variation and change in lingua-cultural norms, so a possible rapprochement in communicative norm due to globalization and internationalization processes needs to be constantly watched out for in translation and translation quality assessment. This throws an extra burden on practising translators and translation quality assessors. No easy all-purpose and eternally valid generalizations can safely be applied any longer. Rather, individual cases must be carefully considered to decide whether and how cultural filtering is to be applied.

With respect to the relevance of corpus studies for translation quality assessment discussed in [Chapter 10](#), the results of corpus driven translation research are, as we have seen, immediately relevant for lifting evaluation of an

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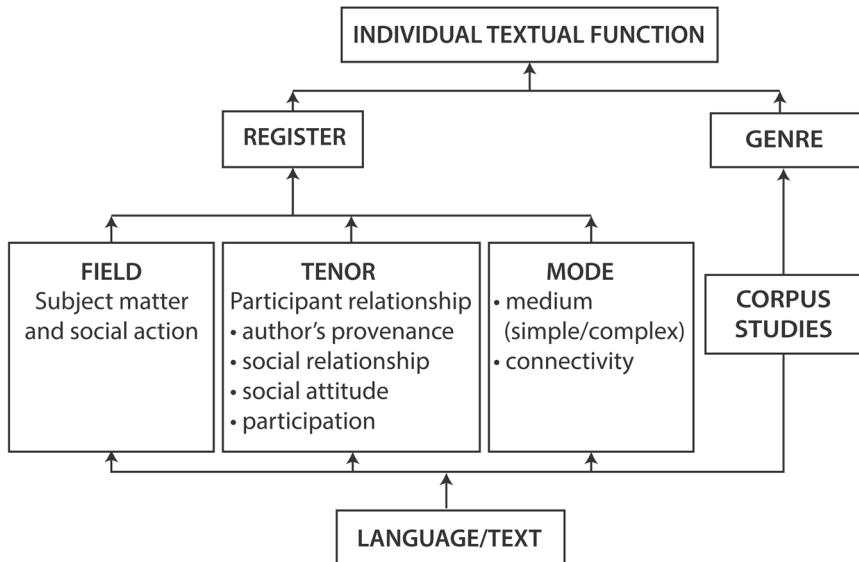
individual text as an exemplar onto a more general level. In my model this would mean that corpus studies affect primarily the notion of Genre. Corpus work would give empirical substance to the previously rather vague notion of Genre. Since corpus studies provide the assessor with information about whether and how far characteristics of a single translation are in line with the norms and conventions of the Genre in the target culture, there is also an obvious link with the notion of the cultural filter here, with the two concepts supplementing each other.

Finally, cognitive research in translation studies, which was highlighted in [Chapter 11](#), can be integrated into my model in that Paradis' neuro-linguistic theory, as we have seen above, provides important support for the hypothesized differences in processual complexity between the two types of translation and the notion of the cultural filter on which this model builds.

How far the individual translator, his competence, working context, task specificities and resources can be taken into account, remains an open question. The model is essentially based on text–context, and the results of the comparative analyses it provides as well as the generalizations it now affords with corpus studies feeding into the category of Genre seem to preclude – at least for the present time – any consideration of the individual translator's knowledge, experience, workplace conditions, and so on.

Over and above these modifications of the model which originated in taking cognizance of research in the selected areas discussed in [Chapters 8, 9, 10](#) and [11](#), I have also decided to modify the model in the internal workings of the dimensions of Field, Tenor and Mode. These modifications are the result of extensive work with the model in the Hamburg project 'Covert Translation' (see [Chapter 10](#)), which showed that often there was an unnecessary overlap in the findings along the categories of Field, Tenor and Mode. Thus, within Field the analysis now focuses only on lexis, the granularity of lexis, lexical fields and Hallidayan processes (Material, Mental, Relational). Within Tenor, only lexical and syntactic choices are examined along the subcategories of Stance, Social Role Relationship, Social Attitude and Participation. And along Mode, the analysis will focus as before Medium (spokenness versus writtenness), Theme–Rheme and Connectivity (Coherence and Cohesion).

The resulting newly revised model would then look as shown in Figure 12.2:



**FIGURE 12.2** A revised scheme for analysing and comparing original and translation texts

Given this newly updated model, I will now present a model analysis of a source text and its translation to demonstrate its viability. The original text and its German translation are taken from the Project corpus ‘Covert Translation’, which can be accessed at the University of Hamburg’s website *Zentrum für SprachKorpora* (Centre for Language Corpora).

### Excerpt from Unilever Annual Report (2000)

Unilever’s Corporate Purpose (2000)

- I      1      Our purpose in Unilever is to meet the everyday needs of the people everywhere – to anticipate the aspirations of our consumers and customers and to respond creatively and competitively with branded products and services which raise the quality of life.
- II     1      Our deep roots in local cultures and markets around the world are our unparalleled inheritance and the foundation for our future growth. We will bring our wealth of knowledge and international

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- 5      expertise to the service of local consumers – a truly
- 6      multi-local multinational.
- III    1      Our long term success requires a total commitment
- 2      to exceptional standards of performance and
- 3      productivity, to working together effectively and
- 4      to a willingness to embrace new ideas and learn
- 5      continuously.
- IV    1      We believe that to succeed requires the highest
- 2      standards of corporate behaviour towards our
- 3      employees, consumers and the societies and
- 4      world in which we live.
- V     1      This is Unilever's road to sustainable, profitable
- 2      growth for our business and long term value
- 3      creation for our shareholders and employees.

Unilevers Unternehmensphilosophie (2000) [BT: Unilever's company philosophy]

- I     1      Wir als Unilever konzentrieren unsere Anstrengungen
- 2      weltweit darauf, den täglichen Bedarf der Menschen zu
- 3      befriedigen. Hierbei ist es wichtig, die künftigen Wünsche
- 4      unserer Verbraucher und Kunden zu erkennen, um kreativ
- 5      mit wettbewerbsfähigen Marken- und Servicekonzepten
- 6      ihre Lebensqualität zu verbessern.

[BT: We as Unilever concentrate our efforts worldwide to satisfy the daily demand of people. In this respect it is important to recognize the future wishes of our consumers and customers in order to improve creatively their quality of life with competitive brands and service concepts.]

- II    1      Wir sind in allen Teilen der Welt mit denjenigen Kulturen
- 2      und Märkten tief verwurzelt. Dies ist ein großes Kapital,
- 3      auf dem unser künftiges Wachstum fußt. Unser Wissen und
- 4      unsere internationale Expertise kommen allen Kunden
- 5      an allen Orten dieser Welt zugute. Damit sind wir ein
- 6      multinationales Unternehmen mit multi-lokaler Ausrichtung.

[BT: We are deeply rooted in all parts of the world with their respective cultures and markets. This is a big capital, on which our future growth is based. Our knowledge and our international expertise will benefit all customers in all locations of the world. On account of this we are a multinational firm with a multi-local focus.]

- III 1 Unser langfristiger Erfolg ist nur möglich, wenn wir uns  
 2 außergewöhnliche Standards hinsichtlich Leistung und  
 3 Produktivität setzen, und wenn wir effizient und mit aller  
 4 Bereitschaft zusammenarbeiten, neue Ideen durchzusetzen  
 5 und immer wieder neu hinzuzulernen.

[BT: Our long-term success will only be possible, if we set ourselves exceptional standards with respect to performance and productivity, and if we work together efficiently and with all willingness to push through new ideas and always keep learning anew.]

- IV 1 Wir sind davon überzeugt, daß wir als Unternehmen  
 2 nur dann erfolgreich sind, wenn wir uns gegenüber unseren  
 3 Mitarbeitern, Verbrauchern, unserem Gemeinwesen und  
 4 der Welt, in der wir leben, vorbildlich verhalten.

[BT: We are convinced that we as a company can only be successful, if we behave in an exemplary way towards our employees, consumers, our communities and the world in which we live.]

- V 1 Unilevers Weg führt über nachhaltiges, profitables  
 2 Wachstum zur langfristigen Stärkung unseres Unternehmens  
 3 und seiner Substanz. Dies tun wir für unsere Kapitalgeber  
 4 und unsere Mitarbeiter.

[BT: Unilever's path leads to a long-term strengthening of our company and its substance via sustainable, profitable growth. This we do for our shareholders and employees.]

### **Analysis of the original English text along the lines of the newly revised model**

#### **Field**

The text presents the values and principles of Unilever, a multi-national, globally operating company, which defines itself in this text as taking account of both local and global interests, identities, foci, objectives and strategies. The text is not simply an expository statement, but is also an exhortatory document in that individual members of this company are alerted to guiding principles and professions of faith and trust in the company that they are to follow. Therefore the text does not simply describe a kind of status quo in the Unilever 'family', rather it is designed to realize requests for actions and behaviour in order to create and sustain a corporate identity.

Field is realized through the following linguistic means:

### *Lexical means*

Use of simple, easily comprehensible words and cliché collocations, all of which have positive and positively evaluative connotations. Adjectives are often intensified, featuring comparative and superlative forms that function as expressions of subjective evaluations.

Examples:

I<sub>1</sub> – ‘everyday needs’; I<sub>2</sub> – ‘the people everywhere’; I<sub>4</sub> – ‘creatively and competitively’; I<sub>5</sub> – ‘the quality of life’.

II<sub>1</sub> – ‘deep roots’; II<sub>2</sub> – ‘unparalleled’; II<sub>3</sub> – ‘growth’; II<sub>4,5</sub> – ‘wealth of knowledge and international expertise’; II<sub>5,6</sub> – ‘a truly multi-local multinational’.

III<sub>1</sub> – ‘long term success’; ‘total commitment’; III<sub>2</sub> – ‘exceptional’; III<sub>3</sub> – ‘effectively’; III<sub>4,5</sub> – ‘new ideas and learn continuously’.

V<sub>1,2,3</sub> – ‘sustainable, profitable growth for our business and long term value creation for our shareholders and employees’.

### *Lexical fields*

Human behaviour, beliefs, knowledge.

### *Processes*

Preponderance of relational (I<sub>1</sub>, II<sub>1</sub>, III<sub>1</sub>, IV<sub>1</sub>) and mental (I<sub>2,4</sub>, III<sub>1</sub>, IV<sub>1</sub>) processes. Remarkably few material processes (I<sub>4</sub>, II<sub>4</sub>).

The effect of this distribution is a text which is designed to display the feelings, intentions and beliefs of human beings as well as abstract relations between states of affairs. It is a text that is less focused on concrete acts of doing by human beings.

### *Tenor*

#### *Author's temporal, social and geographical provenance*

Unmarked concerning the author's regional, social and temporal provenance.

#### *Author's personal (emotional and intellectual) stance*

In this text, the authors, i.e. the two chairpersons of Unilever supported by selected members of employees from all parts of the company, demonstrate optimism, hope and conviction in the company's success. What is noticeable is a certain preparedness to missionize and pass on this optimism to the addressees:

all employees of Unilever worldwide. Through this type of missionizing the text takes on an emotional character.

### **Lexical means**

High frequency of words and collocations with positive connotations right through the text. The high frequency of intensifying nouns and adjectives (the latter also featuring superlatives) is responsible for the text's emotional character.

Examples:

I<sub>1</sub> – ‘everyday’; I<sub>2</sub> – ‘everywhere’.

II<sub>2</sub> – ‘unparalleled’; II<sub>4</sub> – ‘wealth of knowledge’; II<sub>5</sub> – ‘expertise’; ‘truly’.

III<sub>1</sub> – ‘total commitment’; III<sub>3</sub> – ‘effectively’; III<sub>5</sub> – ‘continuously’.

IV<sub>1,2</sub> – ‘the highest standards’.

V<sub>2</sub> – ‘growth’; ‘long term’.

### **Syntactic means**

Very long complex sentences that often make up one whole paragraph. However, most of these clauses are highly elaborate, additive paratactic constructions which can easily be decoded, processed and understood: I – one sentence; II – two sentences; III – one sentence; IV – one sentence; V – one sentence.

### ***Social role relationship***

The authors are members of the multi-national company Unilever. The addressees are both other employees and external readers who are meant to be convinced by this text. The role relationship is symmetrical. A strong feeling of belonging to the company and believing in its purpose is being celebrated in the text. The addressees are not directly ordered to do or believe something, rather they are meant to be ‘won over’ by an extremely positive presentation of the company.

### **Lexical means**

A high frequency of words and collocations with exclusively positive connotations is used here to convince and ‘work on’ the addressees. The assumed equality of the text producers and the addressees is only disrupted by the use of the unmistakeably hierarchical noun ‘employees’ (IV, V).

### **Syntactic means**

Frequent use of inclusive personal pronouns ‘our’ and ‘we’ in all five paragraphs.

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Use of grammatical metaphors to realize less invasive, indirect requests, declarations of intentions and persuasive acts.

Examples:

I<sub>1</sub> – ‘Our purpose ... is to X’ instead of the congruent realization ‘we do X’ (this is an interpersonal grammatical metaphor designed to express indirectness). This is repeated in the following two paragraphs.

IV<sub>1</sub> – ‘to succeed requires’: another grammatical metaphor. Compare the congruent realization ‘we need’.

I<sub>1</sub> – use of a postnominal non-finite ‘to’-infinitive construction, which weakens both the illocutionary and the perlocutionary force of the statement because the meaning of the clause is rendered less explicit and specific. The agentive subject is left implicit; it can only be deduced from the head of the noun phrase ‘Our purpose in Unilever’.

II<sub>1</sub> – use of a grammatical metaphor in the subject noun phrase in an identifying clause rendering the meaning of the clause less specific and explicit.

III<sub>1</sub> – use of grammatical metaphors in the two noun phrases leading to greater implicitness.

I<sub>5</sub> – use of the noun phrase ‘the quality of life’, in which the anaphoric possessive pronoun ‘their’, to be expected in the co-text of the clause, is not used. The effect of this is a greater generality and also a greater indirectness in relation to the addressees.

### *Social attitude*

The style of the text is ordinary colloquial English appropriate for a text that is meant to be easily comprehended by all employees of the company.

### **Lexical means**

Choice of words and collocations that belong to colloquial English and can be understood by non-specialists.

### **Syntactic means**

Complex, but paratactical structures throughout, which are expanded by simple additive conjunctions like *and* are therefore easily processable.

### *Participation*

Simple: monologue with merely indirect address and involvement of addressees.

## Syntactic means

Use of inclusive personal pronoun ‘we’ and possessive pronoun ‘our’ in the entire text. The effect of this use is to simulate a situated interactional context.

## **Mode**

### *Medium and Connectivity*

Complex: this is a written text appropriate for reading aloud or any other way of oral rendition designed to give the impression that it does not stem from a written text. Along Biber’s three dimensions for differentiating oral from written texts, i.e. involved vs. informative, explicit vs. situation-dependent, abstract vs. non-abstract, this text can be characterized as follows: it is rather more involved than informative, rather more situation-dependent than explicit, and rather more abstract than non-abstract.

## Lexical means

High frequency of abstract, emotionally involved words, collocations and metaphors.

Examples:

I – ‘purpose’, ‘needs’, ‘aspirations’, ‘creatively and competitively’, ‘quality of life’.

II – ‘deep roots’, ‘cultures’, ‘unparalleled inheritance’, ‘international expertise’.

III – ‘long term success’, ‘total commitment’, ‘exceptional standards of performance and productivity’, ‘embrace new ideas’.

IV – ‘highest standards of corporate behaviour’.

V – ‘Unilever’s road to sustainable growth’.

## Syntactic means

Frequency of complex but nearly exclusively paratactic structures additively strung together and thus optimally useful for an oral rendition as such structures are easily cognitively processed.

## Textual means

Markedly frequent use of lexical repetition and grammatical parallelism as rhetorical means of de-automatization and foregrounding certain items. This helps to make the ‘mission’ of the text rhetorically more effective and emotionally involved, as well as strongly cohesive: I<sub>1,2</sub>.

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- (a) Lexical repetition: I<sub>1,2</sub> – ‘everyday’–‘everywhere’; III<sub>1</sub> and V<sub>2</sub> – ‘long term’; II<sub>4,5,6</sub> – ‘international’–‘local’–‘multi-local multinational’;
- (b) parallelism of prepositional phrases: V – ‘for our business and long term value creation for our shareholders and employees’;
- (c) parallelism of ‘to’-infinitive constructions: I – ‘to meet ... to anticipate ... and to respond’;
- (d) parallelism of postnominal modification: commitment to exceptional standards: III<sub>3,4</sub> – ‘to working together ... and to a willingness to embrace’;
- (e) appositive structure which functions as a kind of improvised afterthought, creating an impression of orality, spontaneity and emotional involvement as well as a rhetorically effective conception of corporate identity: II<sub>5,6</sub>;
- (f) rhetorically effective structures for convincing addressees of the value of the company’s mission: cohesive macrostructure achieved through the echoic similarity of the beginning of the paragraphs plus a rhetorically effective final paragraph with a retrospective, summative evaluation of all previous paragraphs: ‘This is Unilever’s road.’

In sum, we can say that the addressees are being carefully guided through the text via a clear structure that is full of repetitions and parallel structures to the final, rather bombastic resultative statement.

#### ***Genre***

The text belongs to the genre of mission statement. Mission statements are statements of purpose designed to promote a company’s identity through persuasive self-presentation. Texts in this genre can be characterized by a religion-like missionary fervour and moral tenor. In some sense, this genre can be seen as a subgroup of advertisements: although the aim of texts in this genre is not an increase in sales of a certain product as in most advertisements, praising the performance of a company and in general the altogether positive description of the characteristics of this company, the behaviour of its employees and the optimistic outlook towards the future development of the company may justify likening texts in this genre to advertisements.

The findings of the analysis of this single exemplar are reinforced by the extensive corpus work (using parallel and comparable corpora) conducted with a large number of texts in this genre in the framework of the project ‘Covert Translation’ and its corpus of economic texts. I refer the reader to the description of this work in [Chapter 10](#). Especially relevant is the work by Böttger (2007), who summarizes her analyses of missions and visions in her dissertation and stresses the strong interpersonal marking along the dimensions of Tenor and Mode in texts in this genre.

## Statement of Function

The function of this text consists of an ideational and an interpersonal functional component. It can be characterized as follows: it is the intention of the authors to give a positive, impressive and effective presentation of their company while describing norms of behaviour, attitudes and values of the company's employees as a status quo, indirectly requesting them as important goals for everyone in the company.

The interpersonal functional component is strongly marked in this text (as in all texts belonging to this genre) in all three dimensions: Field, Tenor and Mode. The ideational component – although of course present in that information is being passed on – is much less strongly marked.

Along the dimension of Field, the interpersonal functional component is strongly reinforced by the many words and phrases with positive connotations, especially the evaluative, intensifying, superlative attributes as well as the preponderance of relational and especially mental processes, the latter inviting identification with the message of the text.

Along the dimension of Tenor the emotional, rather dramatic style with its lexical clichés and its rhetorical finesse supported by massive repetition and parallelism; the nature of the evaluative and intensifying adjectives and nouns; and the abundance of grammatical metaphors through which a certain vagueness and indirectness is achieved all clearly support the interpersonal functional component. The choice of the style level: colloquial without any complicated technical words and phrases as well as structurally simple with additive clause expansions, makes for easy comprehensibility and a strong appellative effect on the addressees.

Along Mode, the medium characterized as complex, i.e. *written to be read aloud* and as involved, situation-dependent, rather abstract and fuelled by the many emotionally effective words and collocations and the fact that we are dealing with a monologue with 'built-in' involvement of the addressees, also acts to reinforce the interpersonal functional component. Further, there is high connectivity, achieved through simple paratactic and additive structures, and the carefully planned text cohesion and coherence achieved mainly through lexical repetition and grammatical parallelism reinforce the interpersonal functional component, since all these phenomena strengthen readability and thus affect the interpersonal functional component.

## Comparison of original and translation

### *Field*

#### *Lexical differences*

Words and collocations have consistently fewer positive connotations. The 'shadow meanings' (Chafe 2000) can thus be characterized as more negative and less forceful, more direct and aggressive. See the following indicative cases:

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I<sub>1</sub> – *unsere Anstrengungen darauf konzentrieren* [concentrate our efforts] vs. ‘our purpose is to meet ...’.

II<sub>2</sub> – *großes Kapital* [big capital] vs. ‘unparalleled inheritance’.

II<sub>3</sub> – *unser Wissen* [our knowledge] vs. ‘our wealth of knowledge’.

II<sub>5,6</sub> – *ein multinationales Unternehmen mit multi-lokal Ausrichtung* [a multinational firm with a multi-local focus] vs. ‘a truly multi-local multinational’.

III<sub>1</sub> – *nur möglich, wenn wir uns außergewöhnliche Standards ... setzen* [only possible, if we set ourselves exceptional standards] vs. ‘total commitment to exceptional standards’.

III<sub>3</sub> – *effizient* [efficiently] vs. ‘effectively’. This is a pair of ‘false friends’: ‘effectively’ relates to a positive end-result; *effizient*, however, is a lexical item that collocates with a request and is laden with pressure towards maximal performance.

III<sub>4</sub> – *neue Ideen durchzusetzen* [push through new ideas] vs. ‘embrace new ideas’.

IV<sub>4</sub>/IV<sub>1,2</sub> – *vorbildlich verhalten* [behave in an exemplary way] vs. ‘the highest standards of corporate behaviour’.

There is restricted use of abstract and metaphorical words and phrases, which results in a stronger concreteness and directness. Grammatical metaphors are often transformed into congruent statements. Examples:

III<sub>4</sub> – *neue Ideen durchzusetzen* [push through new ideas] vs. ‘embrace new ideas’.

IV<sub>1,2,3</sub> – *dass wir ... nur dann erfolgreich sind, wenn* [that we ... can only be successful, if] vs. ‘requires the highest standards of corporate behaviour’.

V<sub>3,4</sub>/V<sub>1,2,3</sub> – *Dies tun wir für unsere Kapitalgeber und unsere Mitarbeiter* [This we do for our shareholders and employees] vs. ‘This is Unilever’s road to ... long term value creation for our shareholders and employees.’

### Processes

The German translation features more material processes:

I<sub>1</sub> – *Wir ... konzentrieren unsere Anstrengungen* [We ... concentrate our efforts] vs. ‘Our purpose in Unilever is ...’.

III<sub>3</sub>/III<sub>1,2,3</sub> – *wenn wir effizient ... zusammenarbeiten* [if we work together efficiently] vs. ‘commitment to ... working together effectively’.

IV<sub>2,3,4</sub>/IV<sub>1,2</sub> – *wenn wir uns ... vorbildlich verhalten* [if we behave in an exemplary way] vs. ‘requires the highest standards of corporate behaviour’.

V<sub>3,4</sub>/V<sub>1,2,3</sub> – *Dies tun wir für unsere Kapitalgeber und unsere Mitarbeiter* [This we do for our shareholders and employees] vs. ‘This is Unilever’s road to ... long term value creation for our shareholders and employees.’

## **Tenor**

### *Author's personal stance*

The German translation is much less emotionally engaged than the English text. It is less positively missionizing, much more requestive and exhortatory, and generally more neutral, objective and concrete. While the English text is persuasively positive and unrestrictedly globally oriented, the German translation sets conditions and is thus of limited reach.

### **Lexical differences**

The German text has fewer words and collocations with positive connotations, and fewer intensifying and superlative adjectives (cf. Field above).

I<sub>1</sub> – *wir... konzentrieren unsere Anstrengungen* [we concentrate our efforts] vs. ‘our purpose is to meet’: shadow meanings in German are decidedly negative, evoking hard work, effort and discipline, versus the English evasively abstract and neutral ‘our purpose is ...’.

III<sub>5</sub> – *immer wieder neu hinzuzulernen* [always keep learning anew] vs. ‘learn continuously’. The German phrase *immer wieder* has a distinctly negative shadow meaning, since *immer wieder* is frequently used in an insistently criticizing manner, and often implies that what was done before is not sufficient: there must always be a new start in order to overcome current deficits. Through the shadow meaning of ‘start anew’, a kind of rupture is achieved, which is in direct contrast to the use of the adverb ‘continuously’ in English.

IV<sub>1</sub> – *Wir sind davon überzeugt* [We are convinced that] vs. ‘We believe’. ‘We believe’ is not rational, not cognitive, rather emotional, quasi-religious in this context. *Überzeugt* [convinced], on the other hand, is rational and implies the final point of a rational process of conviction.

### **Syntactic differences**

II<sub>5</sub> – the consistently positive authorial stance in the English text is strongly supported by the fact that in a clause with active voice the personal pronoun ‘we’ as an inclusive identifying agentive subject is inserted, which is associated with the interpersonal concept ‘service’. In the German translation we find the possessive pronoun *unser* [our] in a clause that focuses less on the addressees and what service is expended on them and more on the knowledge and expertise of the company.

III – in the German translation we find a restrictive (and by extension prescriptive) negative conditional sentence *nur möglich, wenn* [only possible, if ...], where

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in English we have a positive statement with the pivot ‘total commitment’, a collocation suggesting a strong moral shadow meaning, which is put in rheme position via the use of the verb ‘require’.

### Social role relationship

Stronger directness and explicitness in the requestive actions expressed in the text when it comes to convincing addressees along with less global, i.e. more reduced, conditioned and restricted, quasi-religious zeal celebrating the company’s philosophy.

### Lexical differences

More negatively connotated lexis (cf. Field above) and more explicit admonishment, e.g. III<sub>3</sub> – *effizient* [efficient] vs. ‘effective’.

I – ‘the quality of life’ is more general and global than the German *ihre Lebensqualität* [their quality of life].

IV<sub>3</sub> – ‘the societies’ vs. *unserem Gemeinwesen* [our communities]. The English phrase is much more globally focused than the more locally significant German phrase.

IV<sub>1,2 / 2,3,4</sub> – ‘highest standards of corporate behaviour’ vs. *wenn wir uns ... vorbildlich verhalten* [If we behave in an exemplary manner]. The phrase ‘an exemplary manner’ has the shadow meaning of a pedantic schoolmaster, suggesting a more direct request, which is in stark contrast to the indirect English grammatical metaphor.

### Syntactic differences

- (a) Avoidance of grammatical metaphors in the German text, e.g. in I<sub>1</sub> – *Wir als Unilever konzentrieren unsere Anstrengungen ...* [We as Unilever concentrate our efforts ...] vs. ‘Our purpose in Unilever is to meet ...’;
- (b) use of ‘if’-conditional clauses which set up conditions for the truth value of a proposition that is to be fulfilled by the addressee. The result of this is a stronger illocution of exhortation; compare especially constructions such as *ist nur möglich, wenn wir* [is only possible if] (III<sub>1</sub>) and *dass wir als Unternehmen nur dann erfolgreich sind, wenn* [that we as a company can only be successful, if we] (IV<sub>1,2</sub>). Such constructions can be said to approximate the illocutionary force of a threat.

### Social attitude

The style level of the translation can be described as more technical, as befits an economic, business text. This is different from the original English text.

## Lexical differences

More business terminology:

I<sub>5</sub> – *wettbewerbsfähige Marken- und Servicekonzepte* [competitive brands and service concepts] vs. ‘branded products and services’. In German, the phrases are rendered in business slang, whereas the English phrases are in common use.

II<sub>2</sub> – *großes Kapital* [big capital] vs. ‘unparalleled inheritance’.

II<sub>4</sub> – *internationale Expertise* vs. ‘international expertise’. In German, the words ‘international expertise’ are foreign, not commonly used words, and thus part of a special economic register.

V<sub>1,2</sub> – *profitables Wachstum* [profitable growth] vs. ‘sustainable, profitable growth’. In German ‘profitable’ is a foreign word used mainly in special business terminology.

V<sub>3</sub> – *unsere Kapitalgeber* (literally: ‘our capital givers’) vs. ‘our shareholders’. In German this is a special business term.

## Syntactic differences

Greater complexity in the German text through the use of hypotactic constructions such as ‘if’ conditional clauses.

## *Participation*

Simple: monologue with only indirect addressee participation

## **Mode**

### *Medium*

Simple: written. The translation is more strongly informative and neutrally objective. Along Biber’s dimensions, the translation text can be characterized as follows: more informative than involved, more explicit than situation-dependent, and more non-abstract than abstract.

## Lexical differences

Greater frequency of special business terminology in the German translation, which deviates from the use of standard colloquial English (see also ‘Social attitude’ above):

I<sub>2</sub> – *Bedarf* [demand] vs. ‘needs’; I<sub>5</sub> – *wettbewerbsfähige Marken- und Servicekonzepte* [competitive brands and service concepts] vs. ‘branded products and services’.

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II<sub>1</sub> – *Kapital* [capital] vs. ‘inheritance’. Special term in German vs. colloquial word in English.

II<sub>4</sub> – *Expertise* vs. ‘expertise’. Unlike the English word ‘expertise’, the German word is a foreign one and part of a special terminology.

V<sub>1,2</sub> – *profitables Wachstum* [profitable growth]. Unlike the English word ‘profitable’, the German word *profitabel* is a foreign loan word and part of a special business terminology.

### Syntactic differences

- (a) Use of subordinate conditional clauses introduced by *wenn* ('if'): III<sub>1</sub>, IV<sub>2</sub> in the German text;
- (b) omission of the reader-friendly structures with syntactic parallelism: I, III, IV;
- (c) disruption of the simple additive English structure via the insertion of a prepositional phrase: V – *über nachhaltiges, profitables Wachstum* [via sustainable, profitable growth].

### Textual differences

There is no coherence-creating grammatical parallelism in the entire German text.

The German translation is, however, microstructurally strongly cohesive through the insertion of typically German anaphoric conjunctions such as *dies* [this] or *hierbei* [in this respect], necessitated in German through the disruption of the lengthy clause constructions which we found in the English text. However, this procedure destroys the rhetorically effective parallelism achieved in English through repetition of lexical items, ‘to’-infinitive constructions and post-nominal modifications.

From a macrostructural, coherence perspective, the loss in the German text of the parallelism of the beginnings of the paragraphs is an important difference; so is the lack of the rather bombastic anaphorically summative final paragraph. Both these omissions detract from the text’s overall coherence. The German text develops a rather more localistic cohesive pattern, such that we find a rigidly upheld theme–rheme sequence where the rheme of each clause is picked up as theme in the next one as a sort of commentary. The anaphoric, local prepositional adverbials *hierbei* [in this respect], *damit* [on account of this] (I<sub>3</sub> and II<sub>5</sub>), the anaphoric demonstrative pronoun *dies* [this] (II<sub>2</sub> and V<sub>3</sub>) and the temporal cataphoric adverb *dann* (IV<sub>2</sub>), as well as the theme–rheme sequence, together create this cohesion.

We can summarize that addressees of the German text are less efficiently guided through the text because of the lack of the following: lexical repetition and, macrostructurally, repetition at the beginnings of paragraphs, grammatical parallelism, and the final summative clause.

## Genre

The genre – mission – seems to be interpreted differently in German. This is already evident in the title: ‘company philosophy’ (*Unternehmensphilosophie*). The German genre is less conceived as a persuasive advertising text, less rhetorically refined, less missionizing and unconditionally positive but rather a more demanding, requestive, more reportative and objective type of mission genre than the English one.

## Statement of Quality

In the German translation, the interpersonal functional component is less strongly marked. The translator has used – either consciously or unconsciously – a cultural filter and changed the German text accordingly. The analyses and comparison of the two texts have revealed lingua-cultural differences along all the dimensions.

The perlocutionary effect of the two texts differs. The English text can be characterized as expressing its meaning indirectly in a positive, emotional tenor – achieved through abstract and superlative words and phrases, the use of grammatical metaphors – and with this a kind of addressee-orientation designed to stimulate a kind of belonging and togetherness in the addressees. This is achieved without pressure just through the persuasive impact of the rhetorical means used to convince the addressees of the value of a strong ‘corporate identity’.

The German translation is less indirect and implicit, giving a concrete and informative presentation of the state of affairs of the company. The use of often negatively connoted words and phrases and the use of ‘if’-conditional clauses amounting to camouflaged threats results in a kind of reglementation with a strong requestive teacher-like stance. The rhetorical strategies that play such an important role in the English text are not present in the German translation. The communicative conventions that are typical of German texts (see [Chapter 8](#)), i.e. directness, explicitness and content-orientedness, are foisted upon the German translation in the process of cultural filtering and this filtering submerges the rhetorical strategies used in the original English text.

In sum, in the newly revised model presented and tested above I have decided to maintain its basic structure. Modifications include the new positioning of the category of ‘Participation’ inside Tenor and the addition of a box indicating the important role of Corpus Studies for the category of Genre. For the mechanics of the analysis, the model now provides for an investigation of the incidence of different verb types (Hallidayan processes, Halliday and Matthiessen 2004) under the category of Field, and restricting the analysis of textual aspects to Mode in order to minimize overlap. Under Mode I now include a summative category called ‘connectivity’, which subsumes phenomena of textual coherence and cohesion. The cultural filter, one of the mainstays of the model, and the distinction made between covert and overt translation and their hypothesized

difference in psycholinguistic complexity in the process of translation is in this revised version given added support by Paradis' neuro-linguistic theory. With its emphasis on the importance of the pragmatic component in bilingual language production and reception, Paradis' theory also supports my model's reliance on pragmatic and functional analyses.

Finally, I want to repeat here the importance I have always attached to the difference between linguistically based analysis and what I would call 'social evaluation'.

In translation quality assessment it is important to be maximally aware of the difference between (scientifically based) analysis and (social) judgement in evaluating a translation, in other words there is a difference between comparing textual profiles, describing and explaining differences established in the analysis and evaluating the quality of a translation.

Instead of taking complex psychological categories like intuition, reaction and belief as cornerstones for evaluation, a functional-linguistic approach focuses on texts, the products of (often unfathomable) human decision processes. But such an approach does not enable the evaluator to pass judgement on what is a 'good' or a 'bad' translation. Any evaluation depends on a large variety of factors that necessarily enter into a social evaluative judgement. This judgement emanates from the analytic, comparative process of translation criticism, i.e. it is the linguistic analysis which provides grounds for arguing social evaluative judgement. The choice of an overt or a covert translation depends not only on the translator or on the text to be translated, or on her subjective interpretation of the text, but also on the reasons for the translation, the implied readers and on publishing and marketing policies, i.e. factors which have nothing to do with translation as a linguistic procedure. Such factors are social factors, which concern human agents as well as socio-cultural, political or ideological constraints and which tend to be far more influential than linguistic considerations or the translator herself. But translation is also a linguistic-textual phenomenon. The primary concern for translation evaluators remains linguistic-textual analysis and comparison. Social factors, if divorced from textual analysis, are of secondary relevance. Linguistic description and explanation should not be confused with evaluative assertions made on the basis of social, political, ethical or individual grounds. It seems imperative to emphasize this distinction given the current climate where the criteria of scientific validity and reliability are often usurped by criteria such as social acceptability, political correctness, vague emotional commitment or fleeting *Zeitgeist* fashion. Translation as a phenomenon in its own right, as a linguistic-textual operation, should not be confused with issues such as what the translation is for, or what it should, might, or must be for.

Like language itself, translation evaluation has two functional components, an ideational and an interpersonal one. They lead to two separable steps. The first, primary one, is linguistic analysis, description and explanation based on knowledge and research. The second, secondary one, refers to value judgements, social and ethical questions of relevance and personal taste. In translation, we

need both. Judging without analysing is irresponsible, and analysing without judging is pointless. However, we must also concede that while judging is easy, understanding is infinitely more complex.

Returning to the three basic criteria outlined in [Chapter 2](#) – the relationship between original and translation, between texts and human agents, and the distinction between translation and other secondary textual operations – this model for translation quality assessment is based on a view of translation as a double-linkage operation. As opposed to a one-sided concern with the translation, its receptors and the translation's reception in the target culture, the model takes account of both source and target texts by positing a cline along which it can be shown which tie of the double-linkage has priority in any particular translation case – the two endpoints of the cline being marked by the concepts overt translation and covert translation. The relationship between (features of) the text(s) and the human agents involved (as author, translator and reader) is explicitly accounted for through the provision of an elaborate system of pragmatic-functional analysis of original and translation, with the overt-covert cline on which a translation is to be placed determining the type of reception sought and likely to be achieved. Finally, explicit means are provided for distinguishing a translation from other types of textual operation by specifying the conditions which hold for a translation to turn into a version.

Integrating empirically verified cultural filters into the evaluation process might be taken to mean that there is greater certainty as to when a translation is no longer judged to be a translation but rather a covert version. True, in the past 20 years or so many studies have been conducted in the field of contrastive pragmatics involving many different language pairs with the result that a better basis now exists for evaluating covert translation in a non-arbitrary way. However, given the dynamic nature of socio-cultural and communicative norms and the way research tends to lag behind, translation critics will still have to struggle to remain abreast of new developments to help them judge the appropriateness of changes through the application of a cultural filter in any given language pair.

In other words, it must be emphasized again that the model provides first and foremost for linguistic analysis, description and comparison of texts, linking them with situational and cultural contexts, and (through the categories of genre and corpus studies) with other texts of the same communicative purpose. This is to be conducted within the framework of a theory of differentiated translational purposes (*overt* versus *covert*). This type of description, interpretation and explanation, enabled via the model and the metalanguage it provides, is not to be confused with the type of 'good vs. bad' evaluative judgement made on the basis of social, political, ethical or moral norms or individual persuasion. A detailed analysis of the 'hows' and the 'whys' of translated texts versus their originals has to be the descriptive foundation for any argued assessment of whether and to what degree a given translation may be seen to be adequate or not.

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