Translation Studies

At a time when millions travel around the planet – some by choice, some driven by economic or political exile – translation of the written and spoken word is of ever increasing importance. This guide presents readers with an accessible and engaging introduction to the valuable position translation holds within literature and society.

Leading translation theorist Susan Bassnett traces the history of translation, examining the ways translation is currently utilized as a burgeoning interdisciplinary activity and extending her analysis into developing areas such as developing technologies and new media forms.

Translation Studies, fourth edition displays the importance of translation across disciplines, and is essential reading for students and scholars of translation, literary studies, globalization studies and ancient and modern languages.

Susan Bassnett is Professor of Comparative Literature at the University of Warwick. She has published extensively on translation, and her best known books include *Reflections on Translation* (2011), *Constructing Cultures* written with André Lefevere (1996) and *Post-Colonial Translation* co-edited with Harish Trivedi (1999). She translates from several languages and lectures on aspects of translation all over the world.

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Translation Studies

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For my father, who made it all possible.

Contents

General Editor's Preface to the third edition

No doubt a third General Editor's Preface to *New Accents* seems hard to justify. What is there left to say? Twenty-five years ago, the series began with a very clear purpose. Its major concern was the newly perplexed world of academic literary studies, where hectic monsters called 'Theory', 'Linguistics' and 'Politics' ranged. In particular, it aimed itself at those undergraduates or beginning postgraduate students who were either learning to come to terms with the new developments or were being sternly warned against them.

New Accents deliberately took sides. Thus the first Preface spoke darkly, in 1977, of 'a time of rapid and radical social change', of the 'erosion of the assumptions and presuppositions' central to the study of literature. 'Modes and categories inherited from the past' it announced, 'no longer seem to fit the reality experienced by a new generation'. The aim of each volume would be to 'encourage rather than resist the process of change' by combining nuts-and-bolts exposition of new ideas with clear and detailed explanation of related conceptual developments. If mystification (or downright demonisation) was the enemy, lucidity (with a nod to the compromises inevitably at stake there) became a friend. If a 'distinctive discourse of the future' beckoned, we wanted at least to be able to understand it.

With the apocalypse duly noted, the second Preface proceeded

piously to fret over the nature of whatever rough beast might stagger portentously from the rubble. 'How can we recognise or deal with the new?', it complained, reporting nevertheless the dismaying advance of 'a host of barely respectable activities for which we have no reassuring names' and promising a programme of wary surveillance at 'the boundaries of the precedented and at the limit of the thinkable'. Its conclusion, 'the unthinkable, after all, is that which covertly shapes our thoughts' may rank as a truism. But in so far as it offered some sort of useable purchase on a world of crumbling certainties, it is not to be blushed for.

In the circumstances, any subsequent, and surely final, effort can only modestly look back, marvelling that the series is still here, and not unreasonably congratulating itself on having provided an initial outlet for what turned, over the years, into some of the distinctive voices and topics in literary studies. But the volumes now re-presented have more than a mere historical interest. As their authors indicate, the issues they raised are still potent, the arguments with which they engaged are still disturbing. In short, we weren't wrong. Academic study did change rapidly and radically to match, even to help to generate, wide reaching social changes. A new set of discourses was developed to negotiate those upheavals. Nor has the process ceased. In our deliquescent world, what was unthinkable inside and outside the academy all those years ago now seems regularly to come to pass.

Whether the *New Accents* volumes provided adequate warning of, maps for, guides to, or nudges in the direction of this new terrain is scarcely for me to say. Perhaps our best achievement lay in cultivating the sense that it was there. The only justification for a reluctant third attempt at a Preface is the belief that it still is.

TERENCE HAWKES

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PREFACE TO THE FOURTH EDITION

When this book first appeared in 1980, there seemed to be little interest in the study of translation. Indeed, the notion of an independent field, some would say discipline in its own right, focusing on the theory and practice of translation would have been viewed with astonishment in the academic world. Translator training programmes, mostly outside the English-speaking world, provided professional courses for business and industry, but translation was not a mainstream university subject and when it was taught, appeared only as an adjunct to foreign language learning.

Today that world has changed. Millions more people are moving around the planet following the seismic changes of the late 1980s and early 1990s, which saw the collapse of communism and the break-up of the former Soviet Union, China opening her doors to the world, and the end of apartheid in South Africa. The greater facility and lower costs of international travel have also contributed to the movement of peoples, so that today most societies are multilingual and multicultural in ways that would have seemed impossible just a few years ago.

The 1980s was a decade of consolidation for the fledgling subject known as Translation Studies. Having emerged onto the world stage in the late 1970s, the subject began to be taken seriously, and was no longer seen as an unscientific field of enquiry of secondary importance. Throughout the 1980s interest in the theory and practice of translation

grew steadily. Then, in the 1990s, Translation Studies finally came into its own, for this proved to be the decade of its global expansion. Once perceived as a marginal activity, translation began to be seen as a fundamental act of human exchange. Today, in the twenty-first century, interest in the field has never been stronger and the study of translation is taking place alongside an increase in its practice all over the world.

The electronic media explosion of the 1990s and its implications for the processes of globalization highlighted issues of intercultural communication. Not only has it become important to access more of the world through the information revolution, but it has become urgently important to understand more about one's own point of departure. For globalization has its antithesis, as has been demonstrated by the worldwide renewal of interest in cultural origins and in exploring questions of identity. Translation has a crucial role to play in aiding understanding of an increasingly fragmentary world. The translator, as the Irish scholar Michael Cronin has pointed out, is also a traveller, someone engaged in a journey from one source to another. The twenty-first century surely promises to be the great age of travel, not only across space but also across time.[1] Significantly, a major development in translation studies since the 1970s has been research into the history of translation in different cultures, for an examination of how translation has helped shape our knowledge of the world in the past better equips us to shape our own futures.

Evidence of the interest in translation is everywhere. A great many books on translation have appeared steadily throughout the past three decades, new journals of translation studies have been established, and international professional bodies such as the European Society for Translation (EST) and the International Association for Translation and Intercultural Studies (IATIS) have come into being. There are now a number of translation encyclopaedias, Handbooks and Companions of Translation Studies, along with Readers and other anthologies, many of which enable research that appeared in small out-of-print journals to be made available to a new generation of readers. The important work of James Holmes, for example, who first coined the term 'translation studies' in 1972, is now widely available. New courses on translation in universities from Hong Kong to Brazil, from Montreal to Vienna offer further evidence of extensive international interest in translation

studies. There is no sign of this interest slowing down in the twenty-first century; rather, it shows the extent to which a reappraisal of the significance of translation in today's world and in history is taking place.

With so much energy directed at further investigation of the phenomenon of translation, it is obvious that any such development will not be homogeneous and that different trends and tendencies are bound to develop. We should not be surprised, therefore, that consensus in translation studies disappeared in the 1990s. However, that has been followed by lively diversification that continues today around the world. During the 1980s, Ernst-August Gutt's relevance theory, the *skopos* theory of Katharina Reiss and Hans Vermeer, and Gideon Toury's research into pseudotranslation all offered new methods for approaching translation, while in the 1990s the enormous interest generated by corpus-based translation research as articulated by Mona Baker opened distinct lines of enquiry that continue to flourish. Indeed, after a period in which research in computer translation seemed to have foundered, the importance of the relationship between translation and the new technology has risen to prominence and shows every sign of becoming even more important in the future. Research into audiovisual translation, internet translation, news translation and the translation of political discourse are among the fastest-growing fields at the present time. Nevertheless, despite the diversity of methods and approaches, one common feature of much of the research in Translation Studies is an emphasis on cultural aspects of translation, on the contexts within which translation occurs. Once seen as a sub-branch of linguistics, translation today is perceived as an interdisciplinary field of study and the indissoluble connection between language and way of life has become a focal point of scholarly attention.

The apparent division between cultural and linguistic approaches to translation that characterized much translation research until the 1980s is disappearing, partly because of shifts in linguistics that have seen that discipline take a more overtly cultural turn, partly because those who advocated an approach to translation rooted in cultural history have become less defensive about their position. In the early years when Translation Studies was establishing itself, its advocates positioned themselves against both linguists and literary scholars, arguing that

linguists failed to take into account broader contextual dimensions and that literary scholars were obsessed with making pointless evaluative judgements. It was held to be important to move the study of translation out from under the umbrella of either comparative literature or applied linguistics, and fierce polemics arguing for the autonomy of Translation Studies were common. Today, such an evangelical position seems quaintly outdated, and Translation Studies is more comfortable with itself, better able to engage in borrowing from and lending techniques and methods to other disciplines. The important work of translation scholars based in linguistics, such figures as Mona Baker, Roger Bell, Basil Hatim, Ian Mason, Kirsten Malmkjaer, Katharina Reiss, Hans Vermeer and Wolfram Wilss, to name but some of the better-known, has done a great deal to break down the boundaries between disciplines and to move translation studies on from a position of possible confrontation. Nor should we forget the enormous importance of such figures as J.C. Catford, Michael Halliday, Peter Newmark and Eugene Nida whose research into translation before Translation Studies started to evolve as a discipline in its own right laid the foundations for what was to follow.

Literary studies have also moved on from an early and more elitist view of translation. As Peter France, editor of the *Oxford Guide to Literature in English Translation* points out:

> Theorists and scholars have a far more complex agenda than deciding between the good and the bad; they are concerned, for instance, to tease out the different possibilities open to the translator, and the way these change according to the historical, social, and cultural context.[2]

There is a growing body of research that reflects this newer, more complex agenda, for as research in Translation Studies increases and historical data become more readily available, so important questions are starting to be asked, about the role of translation in shaping a literary canon, the strategies employed by translators and the norms in operation at a given point in time, the discourse of translators, the problems of measuring the impact of translations and, most recently, the problems of determining an ethics of translation.

Perhaps the most exciting new trend of all is the expansion of the discipline of Translation Studies beyond the boundaries of Europe. In Canada, India, Hong Kong, China, Africa, Brazil and Latin America, the concerns of scholars and translators have diverged significantly from those of Europeans. More emphasis has been placed on the inequality of the translation relationship, with writers such as Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Tejaswini Niranjana and Eric Cheyfitz arguing that translation was effectively used in the past as an instrument of colonial domination, a means of depriving the colonized peoples of a voice. For in the colonial model, one culture dominated and the others were subservient, hence translation reinforced that power hierarchy. As Anuradha Dingwaney puts it,

> The processes of translation involved in making another culture comprehensible entail varying degrees of violence, especially when the culture being translated is constituted as that of the "other".[3]

In the 1990s two contrasting images of the translator emerged. According to one reading of the translator's role, the translator is a force for good, a creative artist who ensures the survival of writing across time and space, an intercultural mediator and interpreter, a figure whose importance to the continuity and diffusion of culture is immeasurable. In contrast, another interpretation sees translation as a highly suspect activity, one in which an inequality of power relations (inequalities of economics, politics, gender and geography) is reflected in the mechanics of textual production. As Mahasweta Sengupta argues, translation can become submission to the hegemonic power of images created by the target culture:

> a cursory review of what sells in the West as representative of India and its culture provides ample proof of the binding power of representation; we remain trapped in the cultural stereotypes created and nurtured through translated texts.[4]

Translation scholarship in the twenty-first century continues to emphasize the unequal power relationships that have characterized the translation process. But whereas in earlier centuries this inequality was

presented in terms of a superior original and an inferior copy, today the relationship is considered from other points of view that can best be termed post-colonial. Parallel to the exciting work of Indian, Chinese and Canadian translation scholars, writers such as Octavio Paz, Carlos Fuentes and Haroldo and Augusto de Campos have called for a new definition of translation. Significantly, all these writers have come from countries located in the continent of South America, from former colonies engaged in reassessing their own past. Arguing for a rethinking of the role and significance of translation, they draw parallels with the colonial experience. For just as the model of colonialism was based on the notion of a superior culture taking possession of an inferior one, so an original was always seen as superior to its 'copy'. Hence the translation was doomed to exist in a position of inferiority with regard to the source text from which it was seen to derive.

In the new, post-colonial perception of the relationship between source and target texts, that inequality of status has been rethought. Both original and translation are now viewed as equal products of the creativity of writer and translator, though as Paz pointed out, the task of these two is different. It is up to the writer to fix words in an ideal, unchangeable form and it is the task of the translator to liberate those words from the confines of their source language and allow them to live again in the language into which they are translated.[5] In consequence, the old arguments about the need to be faithful to an original start to dissolve. In Brazil, the cannibalistic theory of textual consumption, first proposed in the 1920s, has been reworked to offer an alternative perspective on the role of the translator, one in which the act of translation is seen in terms of physical metaphors that stress both the creativity and the independence of the translator.[6]

Today the movement of peoples around the globe can be seen to mirror the very process of translation itself, for translation is not just the transfer of texts from one language into another, it is now rightly seen as a process of negotiation between texts and between cultures, a process during which all kinds of transactions take place mediated by the figure of the translator. Significantly, cultural theorist Homi Bhabha uses the term 'translation' not to describe a transaction between texts and languages but in the etymological sense of being carried across from one place to another. He uses translation metaphorically to

describe the condition of the contemporary world, a world in which millions migrate and change their location every day. In such a world, translation is fundamental:

> We should remember that it is the 'inter' – the cutting edge of translation and renegotiation, the *in-between* space – that carries the burden of the meaning of culture.[7]

Central to the many theories of translation articulated by non-European writers are three recurring strategems: a redefinition of the terminology of faithfulness and equivalence, the importance of highlighting the visibility of the translator and a shift of emphasis that views translation as an act of creative rewriting. The translator is seen as a liberator, someone who frees the text from the fixed signs of its original shape making it no longer subordinate to the source text but visibly endeavouring to bridge the space between source author and text and the eventual target language readership. This revised perspective emphasizes the creativity of translation, seeing in it a more harmonious relationship than the one in previous models that described the translator in violent images of 'appropriation', 'penetration' or 'possession'. The post-colonial approach to translation is to see linguistic exchange as essentially dialogic, as a process that happens in a space that belongs to neither source nor target absolutely. As Vanamala Viswanatha and Sherry Simon argue, 'translations provide an especially revealing entry point into the dynamics of cultural identity-formation in the colonial and post-colonial contexts.'[8]

Until the end of the 1980s Translation Studies was dominated by the systemic approach pioneered by Itamar Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury. Polysystems theory was a radical development because it shifted the focus of attention away from arid debates about faithfulness and equivalence towards an examination of the role of the translated text in its new context. Significantly, this opened the way for further research into the history of translation, leading also to a reassessment of the importance of translation as a force for change and innovation in literary history.

In 1995, Gideon Toury published *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*, a book that reassessed the polysystems approach disliked by some

scholars for its over-emphasis on the target system. Toury maintains that since a translation is designed primarily to fill a need in the target culture, it is logical to make the target system the object of study. He also points out the need to establish patterns of regularity of translational behaviour, in order to study the way in which norms are formulated and how they operate. Toury explicitly rejects any idea that the object of translation theory is to improve the quality of translations: theorists have one agenda, he argues, while practitioners have different responsibilities. Although Toury's views are not universally accepted they are widely respected, and it is significant that during the 1990s there was a great deal of work on translation norms and a call for greater scientificity in the study of translation.

Polysystems theory filled the gap that opened up in the 1970s between linguistics and literary studies and provided the base upon which the new interdisciplinary Translation Studies could build. Central to polysystems theory was an emphasis on the poetics of the target culture. It was suggested that it should be possible to predict the conditions under which translations might occur and to predict also what kind of strategies translators might employ. To ascertain whether this hypothesis was valid and to establish fundamental principles, case studies of translations across time were required, hence the emergence of what has come to be termed descriptive studies in translation. Translation Studies began to move out into a distinctive space of its own, beginning to research its own genealogy and seeking to assert its independence as an academic field.

Whereas previously the emphasis had previously been on comparing original and translation, often with a view to establishing what had been 'lost' or 'betrayed' in the translation process, the new approach took a resolutely different line, seeking not to evaluate but to understand the shifts of emphasis that had taken place during the transfer of texts from one literary system into another. Polysystems theory focused exclusively on literary translation, though it operated with an enlarged notion of the literary which included a broad range of items of literary production including dubbing and subtitling, children's literature, popular culture and advertising.

Through a series of case studies, this broadening of the object of study led to a division within the group of translation scholars loosely

associated with the polysystems approach. Some, such as Theo Hermans and Gideon Toury sought to establish theoretical and methodological parameters within which the subject might develop, and others such as André Lefevere and Lawrence Venuti began to explore the implications of translation in a much broader cultural and historical frame. Lefevere first developed his idea of translation as refraction rather than reflection, offering a more complex model than the old idea of translation as a mirror of the original. Inherent in his view of translation as refraction was a rejection of any linear notion of the translation process. Texts, he argued, have to be seen as complex signifying systems and the task of the translator is to decode and re-encode whichever of those systems is accessible.[9] Lefevere noted that much of the theorizing about translation was based on translation practice between European languages and pointed out that problems of the accessibility of linguistic and cultural codes intensifies once we move out beyond Western boundaries. In his later work, Lefevere expanded his concern with the metaphorics of translation to an enquiry into what he termed the conceptual and textual grids that constrain both writers and translators, suggesting that

> Problems in translating are caused at least as much by discrepancies in conceptual and textual grids as by discrepancies in languages.[10]

These cultural grids determine how reality is constructed in both source and target texts, and the skill of the translator in manipulating these grids will determine the success of the outcome. Lefevere argues that these cultural grids, a notion deriving from Pierre Bourdieu's notion of cultural capital, highlight the creativity of the translator, for he or she is inevitably engaged in a complex creative process.

Similarly, Venuti insists upon the creativity of the translator and upon the his or her visible presence in a translation.[11] So important did research into the visibility of the translator become in the 1990s, that it can be seen as a distinct line of development within the subject as a whole. Translation according to Venuti, with its allegiance both to source and target cultures 'is a reminder that no act of interpretation can be definitive'.[12] Translation is therefore a dangerous act, potentially subversive and always significant. In the 1990s the figure of the sub-

servient translator was replaced with the visibly manipulative translator, a creative artist mediating between cultures and languages. In an important book that appeared in 1991, the translator of Latin American fiction, Suzanne Jill Levine playfully described herself as 'a subversive scribe', an image that prefigured Venuti's view of the translator as a powerful agent for cultural change.[13]

Levine's book is indicative of another line of enquiry within Translation Studies that focuses on the subjectivity of the translator. Translation scholars such as Venuti, Douglas Robinson, Anthony Pym and Mary Snell-Hornby, translators who have written about their own work such as Tim Parks, Peter Bush, Barbara Godard and Vanamala Viswanatha, have all stressed in different ways the importance of the translator's role. This new emphasis on subjectivity derives from two distinct influences: on the one hand, the growing importance of research into the ethics of translation, and on the other hand a much greater attention to the broader philosophical issues that underpin translation. Jacques Derrida's rereading of Walter Benjamin opened the flood-gates to a re-evaluation of the importance of translation not only as a form of communication but also as continuity.[14] Translation, it is argued, ensures the survival of a text. The translation effectively becomes the after-life of a text, a new 'original' in another language. This positive view of translation serves to reinforce the importance of translating as an act both of inter-cultural and inter-temporal communication. Who, for example, would have any access to the forgotten women poets of ancient Greece without translation, asks Josephine Balmer in her illuminating preface to her translations of classical women poets?[15]

The development of Translation Studies in the 1990s can best be seen as the establishment of a series of new alliances that brought together research into the history, practice and philosophy of translation with other intellectual trends. The links between Translation Studies and post-colonial theory represent one such alliance, as do the links between Translation Studies and corpus linguistics. Another significant alliance is that between Translation Studies and gender studies. For language, as Sherry Simon points out, does not simply mirror reality, but intervenes in the shaping of meaning.[16] Translators are directly involved in that shaping process, whether the text they are dealing with

is an instruction manual, a legal document, a novel or a classical drama. Just as Gender Studies have challenged the notion of a single unified concept of culture by asking awkward questions about the ways in which canonical traditions are formed, so Translation Studies, through its many alliances, asks questions about what happens when a text is transferred from source to target culture. One of the most powerful statements about re-evaluating the importance of translation has come from the American comparative literature scholar, Bella Brodzki. In a book that links translation with cultural memory studies, *Can These Bones Live?* (2007), Brodzki argues that translation is embedded in an extensive network of social and political relations. She goes on to say that translation underwrites all cultural transactions, 'from the most benign to the most venal', adding that just as we can no longer ignore the impact of gender in all discursive fields, so we should acknowledge translation as equally significant.[17]

The common threads that link the many diverse ways in which translation has been studied over the past two decades are an emphasis on diversity, a rejection of the old terminology of translation as faithlessness and betrayal of an original, the foregrounding of the manipulative powers of the translator and a view of translation as bridge-building across the space between source and target. This celebration of in-betweenness, which scholars from outside the field of translation have also stressed, reflects the changing nature of the world we live in. Once upon a time, it was deemed to be unsafe and undesirable to occupy a space that was neither one thing nor the other, a no-man's-land with no precise identity. Today, in the twenty-first century, political, geographical and cultural boundaries are perceived as more fluid and less constraining than at any time in recent history and the movement of peoples across those boundaries is increasing. In such a world, the role of the translator takes on a greater significance. This is the reason why translation is so avidly discussed and in such demand. The 'cultural turn' that Translation Studies underwent in the 1990s drew attention to the fact that translation involves much more than the transfer of texts produced in one language into another. Translation is acknowledged as a textual process that always involved a dual context – the source and the target. This greater emphasis on the socio-cultural dimension of translation has been useful in expanding

interest in translation to a wider community, and the rise of post-colonial translation research is one indication of this, as is the emphasis placed on translation in the study of World Literature. However, it is important not to lose sight of the fact that translation is first and foremost a textual practice. Both Lawrence Venuti and David Bellos, two of the best-known translators and translation scholars, have written books pointing out the continued need for close reading of translations. In his aptly titled *Translation Changes Everything* (2013) Venuti notes that

> We still do not understand the cultural and social implications of the translator's verbal choices, and no consensus has developed as to how translations might be written and read or even what sort of communicative act translation is.[18]

Bellos, in his witty book written for general rather than specialist readers, *Is That a Fish in Your Ear?*, subtitled *Translation and the Meaning of Everything* (2012) poses a series of questions that he explores in a number of short essays. His questions include: what can we learn from translation? Are there different operations involved in different kinds of translating? Is translation fundamentally different from other forms of writing? and What is it that translators actually do?[19]

Translation Studies in the twenty-first century is developing and diversifying so rapidly that no single book can do the subject justice. However, what can be said with confidence is that there is still a great deal about translation that needs to be investigated. Some of the key questions posed by translation scholars about such issues as the relativity of meaning, the importance of the socio-cultural context in which texts are produced and reproduced and the agency of the translator are all in different ways being taken up by researchers who do not always define themselves as working within Translation Studies, but who understand the importance of the role played by translation in shaping the world they inhabit. Now that Translation Studies has come of age and acquired a position in the global academy, some of the insights developed by its practitioners may also be of use to researchers in other fields.

There is always a comparative element in the study of translation, because if a translation exists, there must also be another text some-

where else. Those who know both languages can see what a translator has done with the source language (SL) text and can therefore learn about the textual strategies employed by that translator. If there are several translations, then monolingual readers too can benefit from comparing the different versions. A translation is a physical manifestation of one person's reading and rewriting of someone else's text, and so can offer unique insights into processes of textual manipulation. The more we understand about translation, the more we learn about human communication in an increasingly multifaceted, globalized world.

INTRODUCTION

In 1978, in a brief Appendix to the collected papers of the 1976 Louvain Colloquium on Literature and Translation, André Lefevere proposed that the name *Translation Studies* should be adopted for the discipline that concerns itself with 'the problems raised by the production and description of translations'.[1] The present book is an attempt to outline the scope of that discipline, to give some indication of the kind of work that has been done so far and to suggest directions in which further research is needed. Most importantly, it is an attempt to demonstrate that Translation Studies is indeed a discipline in its own right: not merely a minor branch of comparative literary study, nor yet a specific area of linguistics, but a vastly complex field with many far-reaching ramifications.

The relatively recent acceptance of the term Translation Studies may perhaps surprise those who had always assumed that such a discipline existed already in view of the widespread use of the term 'translation', particularly in the process of foreign language learning. But in fact the systematic study of translation is still in swaddling bands. Precisely because translation is perceived as an intrinsic part of the foreign language teaching process, it has rarely been studied for its own sake. What is generally understood as translation involves the rendering of a source language (SL) text[2] into the target language (TL) so as to ensure that (1) the surface meaning of the two will be approximately similar and (2) the structures of the SL will be preserved as closely as possible but not so closely that the TL structures will be seriously distorted. The

instructor can then hope to measure the students' linguistic competence, by means of the TL product. But there the matter stops. The stress throughout is on understanding the syntax of the language being studied and on using translation as a means of demonstrating that understanding.

It is hardly surprising that such a restricted concept of translation goes hand in hand with the low status accorded to the translator and to distinctions usually being made between the writer and the translator to the detriment of the latter. Hilaire Belloc summed up the problem of status in his Taylorian lecture *On Translation* as long ago as 1931, and his words are still perfectly applicable today:

> The art of translation is a subsidiary art and derivative. On this account it has never been granted the dignity of original work, and has suffered too much in the general judgement of letters. This natural underestimation of its value has had the bad practical effect of lowering the standard demanded, and in some periods has almost destroyed the art altogether. The corresponding misunderstanding of its character has added to its degradation: neither its importance nor its difficulty has been grasped.[3]

Translation has been perceived as a secondary activity, as a 'mechanical' rather than a 'creative' process, within the competence of anyone with a basic grounding in a language other than their own; in short, as a low status occupation. Discussion of translation products has all too often tended to be on a low level too; studies purporting to discuss translation 'scientifically' are often little more than idiosyncratic value judgements of randomly selected translations of the work of major writers such as Homer, Rilke, Baudelaire or Shakespeare. What is analysed in such studies is the *product* only, the end result of the translation process and not the process itself.

The powerful Anglo-Saxon anti-theoretical tradition has proved especially unfortunate with regard to Translation Studies, for it has merged so aptly with the legacy of the 'servant-translator' that arose in the English-speaking world in the nineteenth century. In the eighteenth century there had been a number of studies on the theory and practice of translation in various European languages, and 1791 had

seen the publication of the first theoretical essay on translation in English, Alexander Tytler's *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (see p. 72). But although in the early nineteenth century translation was still regarded as a serious and useful method for helping a writer explore and shape his own native style, much as it had been for centuries, there was also a shift in the status of the translator, with an increasing number of 'amateur' translators (amongst whom many British diplomats) whose object in translating had more to do with circulating the contents of a given work than with exploring the formal properties of the text. Changing concepts of nationalism and national languages marked out intercultural barriers with increasing sharpness, and the translator came gradually to be seen not as a creative artist but as an element in a master–servant relationship with the SL text.[4] Hence Dante Gabriel Rossetti could declare in 1861 that the work of the translator involved self-denial and repression of his own creative impulses, suggesting that

> often would he avail himself of any special grace of his own idiom and epoch, if only his will belonged to him; often would some cadence serve him but for his author's structure – some structure but for his author's cadence . . .[5]

At the opposite extreme Edward Fitzgerald, writing about Persian poetry in 1851, could state 'It is an amusement to me to take what liberties I like with these Persians, who, (as I think) are not Poets enough to frighten one from such excursions, and who really do want a little Art to shape them.'[6]

These two positions, the one establishing a hierarchical relationship in which the SL author acts as a feudal overlord exacting fealty from the translator, the other establishing a hierarchical relationship in which the translator is absolved from all responsibility to the inferior culture of the SL text are both quite consistent with the growth of colonial imperialism in the nineteenth century. From these positions derives the ambiguity with which translations have come to be regarded in the twentieth century. For if translation is perceived as a servile occupation, it is unlikely to be dignified by analysis of the techniques utilized by the servant, and if translation is seen as the pragmatic activity of an individual with a mission to 'upgrade' the SL text, an analysis of the

translation process would cut right across the established hierarchical system.

Further evidence of the conflicting attitudes towards translation in the English-speaking world can be drawn from the way in which educational systems have come to rely increasingly on the use of translated texts in teaching, without ever attempting to study the processes of translation. Hence a growing number of British or North American students read Greek and Latin authors in translation or study major nineteenth-century prose works or twentieth-century theatre texts whilst treating the translated text as if it were originally written in their own language. This is indeed the greatest irony of the whole translation debate: that those very scholars who reject the need to investigate translation scientifically because of its traditional low status in the academic world do at the same time teach a substantial number of translated texts to monolingual students.

The nineteenth-century legacy has also meant that translation study in English has devoted much time to the problem of finding a term to describe translation itself. Some scholars, such as Theodore Savory,[7] define translation as an 'art'; others, such as Eric Jacobsen,[8] define it as a 'craft'; whilst others, perhaps more sensibly, borrow from the German and describe it as a 'science'.[9] Horst Frenz[10] even goes so far as to opt for 'art' but with qualifications, claiming that 'translation is neither a creative art nor an imitative art, but stands somewhere between the two.' This emphasis on terminological debate in English points again to the problematic of English Translation Studies, in which a value system underlies the choice of term. 'Craft' would imply a slightly lower status than 'art' and carry with it suggestions of amateurishness, while 'science' could hint at a mechanistic approach and detract from the notion that translation is a creative process. At all events, the pursual of such a debate is purposeless and can only draw attention away from the central problem of finding a terminology that can be utilized in the systematic study of translation. So far, in English, only one attempt has been made to tackle the terminological issue, with the publication in 1976 of Anton Popovič's *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*:[11] a work that sets out, albeit in skeletal form, the basis of a methodology for studying translation.

Since the early 1960s significant changes have taken place in the field

of Translation Studies, with the growing acceptance of the study of linguistics and stylistics within literary criticism that has led to developments in critical methodology and also with the rediscovery of the work of the Russian Formalist Circle. The most important advances in Translation Studies in the twentieth century derive from the groundwork done by groups in Russia in the 1920s and subsequently by the Prague Linguistic Circle and its disciples. Vološinov's work on Marxism and philosophy, Mukařovský's on the semiotics of art, Jakobson, Prochazka and Levý on translation (see Section 3) have all established new criteria for the founding of a theory of translation and have showed that, far from being a dilettante pursuit accessible to anyone with a minimal knowledge of another language, translation is, as Randolph Quirk puts it, 'one of the most difficult tasks that a writer can take upon himself.'[12] That translation involves far more than a working acquaintance with two languages is aptly summed up by Levý, when he declares that

> A translation is not a monistic composition, but an interpenetration and conglomerate of two structures. On the one hand there are the semantic content and the formal contour of the original, on the other hand the entire system of aesthetic features bound up with the language of the translation.[13]

The stress on linguistics and the early experiments with machine translation in the 1950s led to the rapid development of Translation Studies in Eastern Europe, but the discipline was slower to emerge in the English-speaking world. J.C. Catford's short study in 1965 tackled the problem of linguistic untranslatability (see pp. 35–40) and suggested that

> In *translation*, there is substitution of TL meanings for SL meanings: not transference of TL meanings into the SL. In *transference* there is an implantation of SL meanings into the TL text. These two processes must be clearly differentiated in any theory of translation.[14]

He thus opened a new stage of the debate on translation in English. But although his theory is important for the linguist, it is nevertheless

restricted in that it implies a narrow theory of meaning. Discussion of the key concepts of equivalence and cultural untranslatability (see Section 1) has moved on a long way since this book first appeared.

Translation research today has benefited a great deal from work in marginally related areas. Research in semiotics, developments in grammatology and narratology, advances in the study of bilingualism and multilingualism and child language-learning can all be utilized within Translation Studies. Postcolonialism, gender studies and deconstruction have also provided insights into the study of translation and provided new methodological tools, as has research in cultural studies, film studies and audiovisual studies.

Translation Studies, therefore, is exploring new ground, bridging as it does the gap between the vast area of stylistics, literary history, linguistics, semiotics and aesthetics. But at the same time it must not be forgotten that this is a discipline firmly rooted in practical application. When André Lefevere tried to define the goal of Translation Studies he suggested that its purpose was to 'produce a comprehensive theory which can also be used as a guideline for the production of translations',[15] and whilst some may question the specificity of this statement, his clear intention to link theory with practice is indisputable. The need for systematic study of translation arises directly from the problems encountered during the actual translation process and it is as essential for those working in the field to bring their practical experience to theoretical discussion, as it is for increased theoretical perceptiveness to be put to use in the translation of texts. To divorce the theory from the practice, to set the scholar against the practitioner as has happened in other disciplines, would be tragic indeed.

Although Translation Studies covers such a wide field, it can be roughly divided into four general areas of interest, each with a degree of overlap. Two are *product-oriented*, in that the emphasis is on the functional aspects of the TL text in relation to the SL text, and two of them are *process-oriented*, in that the emphasis is on analysing what actually takes place during translation.

The first category involves the *History of Translation* and is a component part of literary history. The type of work involved in this area includes investigation of the theories of translation at different times, the critical response to translations, the practical processes of commissioning and

publishing translations, the role and function of translations in a given period, the methodological development of translation and, by far the most common type of study, analysis of the work of individual translators.

The second category, *Translation in the TL culture*, extends the work on single texts or authors and includes work on the influence of a text, author or genre, on the absorption of the norms of the translated text into the TL system and on the principles of selection operating within that system.

The third category *Translation and Linguistics* includes studies which place their emphasis on the comparative arrangement of linguistic elements between the SL and the TL text with regard to phonemic, morphemic, lexical, syntagmatic and syntactic levels. Into this category come studies of the problems of linguistic equivalence, of language-bound meaning, of linguistic untranslatability, of machine translation, etc. and also studies of the translation problems of non-literary texts.

The fourth category, loosely called *Translation and Poetics*, includes the whole area of literary translation, in theory and practice. Studies may be general or genre-specific, including investigation of the particular problems of translating poetry, theatre texts or libretti and the affiliated problem of translation for the cinema, whether dubbing or sub-titling. Under this category also come studies of the poetics of individual, translators and comparisons between them, studies of the problems of formulating a poetics, and studies of the interrelationship between SL and TL texts and author–translator–reader. Above all in this section come studies attempting to formulate a theory of literary translation.

It would be fair to say that work in categories 1 and 3 is more widespread than work in categories 2 and 4, although there is little systematic study of translation history and some of the work on translation and linguistics is rather isolated from the mainstream of translation study. It is important for the student of translation to be mindful of the four general categories, even while investigating one specific area of interest, in order to avoid fragmentation.

There is, of course, one final great stumbling block waiting for the person with an interest in Translation Studies: the question of *evaluation*. For if a translator perceives his or her role as partly that of 'improving' either the SL text or existing translations, and that is indeed often the

reason why we undertake translations, an implicit value judgement underlies this position. All too often, in discussing their work, translators avoid analysis of their own methods and concentrate on exposing the frailties of other translators. Critics, on the other hand, frequently evaluate a translation from one or other of two limited standpoints: from the narrow view of the closeness of the translation to the SL text (an evaluation that can only be made if the critic has access to both languages) or from the treatment of the TL text as a work in their own language. And whilst this latter position clearly has some validity – it is, after all, important that a play should be playable and a poem should be readable – the arrogant way in which critics will define a translation as good or bad from a purely monolingual position again indicates the peculiar position occupied by translation *vis-à-vis* another type of *metatext* (a work derived from, or containing another existing text), literary criticism itself.

In his famous reply to Matthew Arnold's attack on his translation of Homer, Francis Newman declared that

> Scholars are the tribunal of Erudition, but of Taste the educated but unlearned public is the only rightful judge; and to it I wish to appeal. Even scholars collectively have no right, and much less have single scholars, to pronounce a final sentence on questions of taste in their court.[16]

Newman is making a distinction here between evaluation based on purely academic criteria and evaluation based on other elements, and in so doing he is making the point that assessment is *culture bound*. It is pointless, therefore, to argue for a definitive translation, since translation is intimately tied up with the context in which it is made. In his useful book *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint*,[17] André Lefevere compares translations of Catullus' Poem 64 with a view not to comparative evaluation but in order to show the difficulties and at times advantages of a particular method. For there is no universal canon according to which texts may be assessed. There are whole sets of canons that shift and change and each text is involved in a continuing dialectical relationship with those sets. There can no more be the ultimate translation than there can be the ultimate poem or the

ultimate novel, and any assessment of a translation can only be made by taking into account both the process of creating it and its function in a given context.

As will be illustrated later in this book, the criteria for the translation process and the function of the TL text have varied enormously through the ages. The nineteenth-century English concern with reproducing 'period flavour' by the use of archaisms in translated texts, often caused the TL text to be more inaccessible to the reader than the SL text itself. In contrast, the seventeenth-century French propensity to gallicize the Greeks even down to details of furniture and clothing was a tendency that German translators reacted to with violent opposition. Chapman's energetic Renaissance Homer is far removed from Pope's controlled, masterly eighteenth-century version. Yet to compare the two with a view to evaluating them in a hierarchical structure would serve no purpose.

The problem of evaluation in translation is intimately connected with the previously discussed problem of the low status of translation, which enables critics to make pronouncements about translated texts from a position of assumed superiority. The growth of Translation Studies as a discipline, however, should go some way towards raising the level of discussion about translations, and if there are criteria to be established for the evaluation of a translation, those criteria will be established from within the discipline and not from without.

In the present book, the problem of evaluation is not developed at any length, partly due to reasons of space but mainly because the purpose of this book is to set out the basics of the discipline rather than to offer a personal theory. The book is organized in three sections, in an attempt to present as many aspects of the field of Translation Studies as possible. Section 1 is concerned with the central issues of translation, with the problem of *meaning*, *untranslatability* and *equivalence*, and with the question of translation as a part of communication theory. Section 2 traces lines through different time periods, to show how concepts of translation have differed through the ages and yet have been bound by common links. Section 3 examines the specific problems of translating poetry, prose and drama. The emphasis throughout is on *literary translation*, although some of the issues discussed in Section 1 are applicable to all aspects of translation and interpreting.

I am well aware that among the many aspects of translation not developed here, the problem of translation between non-related languages is clearly one of the most crucial. This aspect of translation is considered briefly in Section 1, but since to my great regret I am only able to work in Indo-European languages, I thought it best not to venture into areas outside my competence, except where points of general theoretical principle are concerned that might be applicable to all languages.

Underlying this discussion of translation is the belief that there are general principles of the process of translation that can be determined and categorized, and, ultimately, utilized in the cycle of text – theory – text regardless of the languages involved.

1

CENTRAL ISSUES

LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

The first step towards an examination of the processes of translation must be to accept that although translation has a central core of linguistic activity, it belongs most properly to *semiotics*, the science that studies sign systems or structures, sign processes and sign functions (Hawkes, *Structuralism and Semiotics*, London 1977). Beyond the notion stressed by the narrowly linguistic approach, that translation involves the transfer of 'meaning' contained in one set of language signs into another set of language signs through competent use of the dictionary and grammar, the process involves a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria also.

Edward Sapir claims that 'language is a guide to social reality' and that human beings are at the mercy of the language that has become the medium of expression for their society. Experience, he asserts, is largely determined by the language habits of the community, and each separate structure represents a separate reality:

> No two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached.[1]

Sapir's thesis, endorsed later by Benjamin Lee Whorf, is related to the more recent view advanced by the Estonian semiotician, Jurí Lotman, that language is a *modelling system*. Lotman describes literature and art in general as *secondary modelling systems*, as an indication of the fact that they are derived from the primary modelling system of language, and declares as firmly as Sapir or Whorf that 'No language can exist unless it is steeped in the context of culture; and no culture can exist which does not have at its center, the structure of natural language.'[2] Language, then, is the heart within the body of culture, and it is the interaction between the two that results in the continuation of life-energy. In the same way that the surgeon, operating on the heart, cannot neglect the body that surrounds it, so the translator treats the text in isolation from the culture at his or her peril.

TYPES OF TRANSLATION

In his article 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', Roman Jakobson distinguishes three types of translation:[3]

(1) Intralingual translation, or *rewording* (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs in the same language).
(2) Interlingual translation or *translation proper* (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language).
(3) Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* (an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems).

Having established these three types, of which (2) *translation proper* describes the process of transfer from SL to TL, Jakobson goes on immediately to point to the central problem in all types: that while messages may serve as adequate interpretations of code units or messages, there is ordinarily no full equivalence through translation. Even apparent synonymy does not yield equivalence, and Jakobson shows how intralingual translation often has to resort to a combination of code units in order to fully interpret the meaning of a single unit. Hence a dictionary of so-called synonyms may give *perfect* as a synonym for *ideal* or *vehicle* as a synonym for *conveyance* but in neither case can there be said to be complete equivalence, since each unit contains within itself a set of non-transferable associations and connotations.

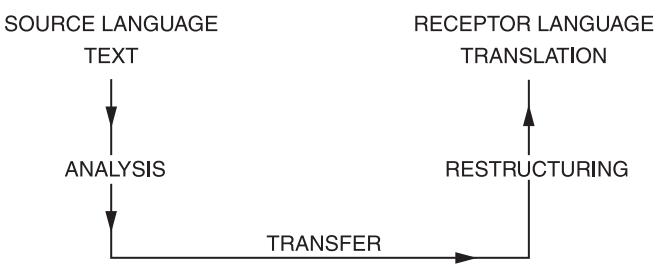
Because complete equivalence (in the sense of synonymy or sameness) cannot take place in any of his categories, Jakobson declares that all poetic art is therefore technically untranslatable:

> Only creative transposition is possible: either intralingual transposition – from one poetic shape into another, or intralingual transposition – from one language into another, or finally intersemiotic transposition – from one system of signs into another, e.g. from verbal art into music, dance, cinema or painting.

What Jakobson is saying here is taken up again by Georges Mounin, the French theorist, who perceives translation as a series of operations of which the starting point and the end product are *significations* and function within a given culture.[4] So, for example, the English word *pastry*, if translated into Italian without regard for its signification, will not be able to perform its function of meaning within a sentence, even though there may be a dictionary 'equivalent'; for *pasta* has a completely different associative field. In this case the translator has to resort to a combination of units in order to find an approximate equivalent. Jakobson gives the example of the Russian word *syr* (a food made of fermented pressed curds) which translates roughly into English as *cottage cheese*. In this case, Jakobson claims, the translation is only an adequate *interpretation* of an alien code unit and equivalence is impossible.

DECODING AND RECODING

The translator, therefore, operates criteria that transcend the purely linguistic, and a process of decoding and recoding takes place. Eugene Nida's model of the translation process illustrates the stages involved:[5]



As examples of some of the complexities involved in the interlingual translation of what might seem to be uncontroversial items, consider the question of translating *yes* and *hello* into French, German and Italian. This task would seem, at first glance, to be straightforward, since all are Indo-European languages, closely related lexically and syntactically, and terms of greeting and assent are common to all three. For *yes* standard dictionaries give:

French: *oui, si*
German: *ja*
Italian: *si*

It is immediately obvious that the existence of two terms in French involves a usage that does not exist in the other languages. Further investigation shows that whilst *oui* is the generally used term, *si* is used specifically in cases of contradiction, contention and dissent. The English translator, therefore, must be mindful of this rule when translating the English word that remains the same in all contexts.

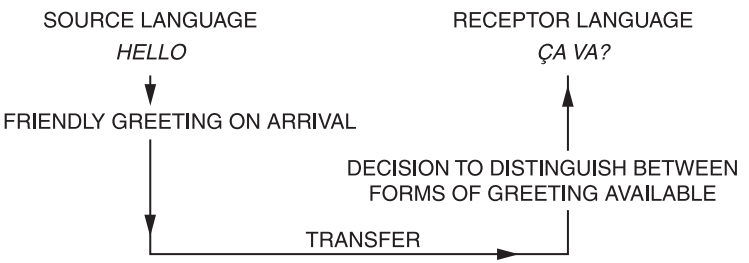
When the use of the affirmative in conversational speech is considered, another question arises. *Yes* cannot always be translated into the single words *oui*, *ja* or *si*, for French, German and Italian all frequently double or 'string' affirmatives in a way that is outside standard English procedures (e.g. *si*, *si*, *si*; *ja*, *ja*, etc.). Hence the Italian or German translation of *yes* by a single word can, at times, appear excessively brusque, whilst the stringing together of affirmatives in English is so hyperbolic that it often creates a comic effect.

With the translation of the word *hello*, the standard English form of friendly greeting when meeting, the problems are multiplied. The dictionaries give:

French: *ça va?*; *hallo*
German: wie *geht's*; *hallo*
Italian: *olà*; *pronto*; *ciao*

Whilst English does not distinguish between the word used when greeting someone face to face and that used when answering the telephone, French, German and Italian all do make that distinction. The

Italian *pronto* can only be used as a telephonic greeting, like the German *hallo*. Moreover, French and German use as forms of greeting brief rhetorical questions, whereas the same question in English *How are you?* or *How do you do?* is only used in more formal situations. The Italian *ciao*, by far the most common form of greeting in all sections of Italian society, is used equally on arrival and departure, being a word of greeting linked to a moment of contact between individuals either coming or going and not to the specific context of arrival or initial encounter. So, for example, the translator faced with the task of translating *hello* into French must first extract from the term a core of meaning and the stages of the process, following Nida's diagram, might look like this:



What has happened during the translation process is that the *notion of greeting* has been isolated and the word *hello* has been replaced by a phrase carrying the same notion. Jakobson would describe this as interlingual transposition, while Ludskanov would call it a *semiotic transformation*:

> Semiotic transformations (Ts) are the replacements of the signs encoding a message by signs of another code, preserving (so far as possible in the face of entropy) invariant information with respect to a given system of reference.[6]

In the case of *yes* the invariant information is *affirmation*, whilst in the case of *hello* the invariant is the *notion of greeting*. But at the same time the translator has had to consider other criteria, e.g. the existence of the

oui/si rule in French, the stylistic function of stringing affirmatives, the *social context* of greeting – whether telephonic or face to face, the class position and status of the speakers and the resultant *weight* of a colloquial greeting in different societies. All such factors are involved in the translation even of the most apparently straightforward word.

The question of semiotic transformation is further extended when considering the translation of a simple noun, such as the English *butter*. Following Saussure, the structural relationship between the signified (*signifié*) or concept of butter and the signifier (*signifiant*) or the sound-image made by the word *butter* constitutes the linguistic sign *butter*.[7] And since language is perceived as a system of interdependent relations, it follows that *butter* operates within English as a noun in a particular structural relationship. But Saussure also distinguished between the syntagmatic (or horizontal) relations that a word has with the words that surround it in a sentence and the associative (or vertical) relations it has with the language structure as a whole. Moreover, within the secondary modelling system there is another type of associative relation and the translator, like the specialist in advertising techniques, must consider both the primary and secondary associative lines. For *butter* in British English carries with it a set of associations of wholesomeness, purity and high status (in comparison to margarine, once perceived only as second-rate butter though now marketed also as practical because it does not set hard under refrigeration).

When translating *butter* into Italian there is a straightforward word-for-word substitution: butter—*burro*. Both *butter* and *burro* describe the product made from milk and marketed as a creamy-coloured slab of edible grease for human consumption. And yet within their separate cultural contexts *butter* and *burro* cannot be considered as signifying the same. In Italy, *burro*, normally light coloured and unsalted, is used primarily for cooking, and carries no associations of high status, whilst in Britain *butter*, most often bright yellow and salted, is used for spreading on bread and less frequently in cooking. Because of the high status of *butter*, the phrase *bread and butter* is the accepted usage even where the product used is actually margarine.[8] So there is a distinction both between the *objects* signified by *butter* and *burro* and between the *function and value* of those objects in their cultural context. The problem of equivalence here involves the utilization and perception of the object in

a given context. The *butter–burro* translation, whilst perfectly adequate on one level, also serves as a reminder of the validity of Sapir's statement that each language represents a separate reality.

The word *butter* describes a specifically identifiable product, but in the case of a word with a wider range of SL meanings the problems increase. Nida's diagrammatic sketch of the semantic structure of *spirit* (see p. 31) illustrates a more complex set of semantic relationships.[9]

Where there is such a rich set of semantic relationships as in this case, a word can be used in punning and word-play, a form of humour that operates by confusing or mixing the various meanings (e.g. the jokes about the drunken priest who has been communing too often with the 'holy spirit', etc.). The translator, then, must be concerned with the particular use of *spirit* in the sentence itself, in the sentence in its structural relation to other sentences, and in the overall textual and cultural contexts of the sentence. So, for example,

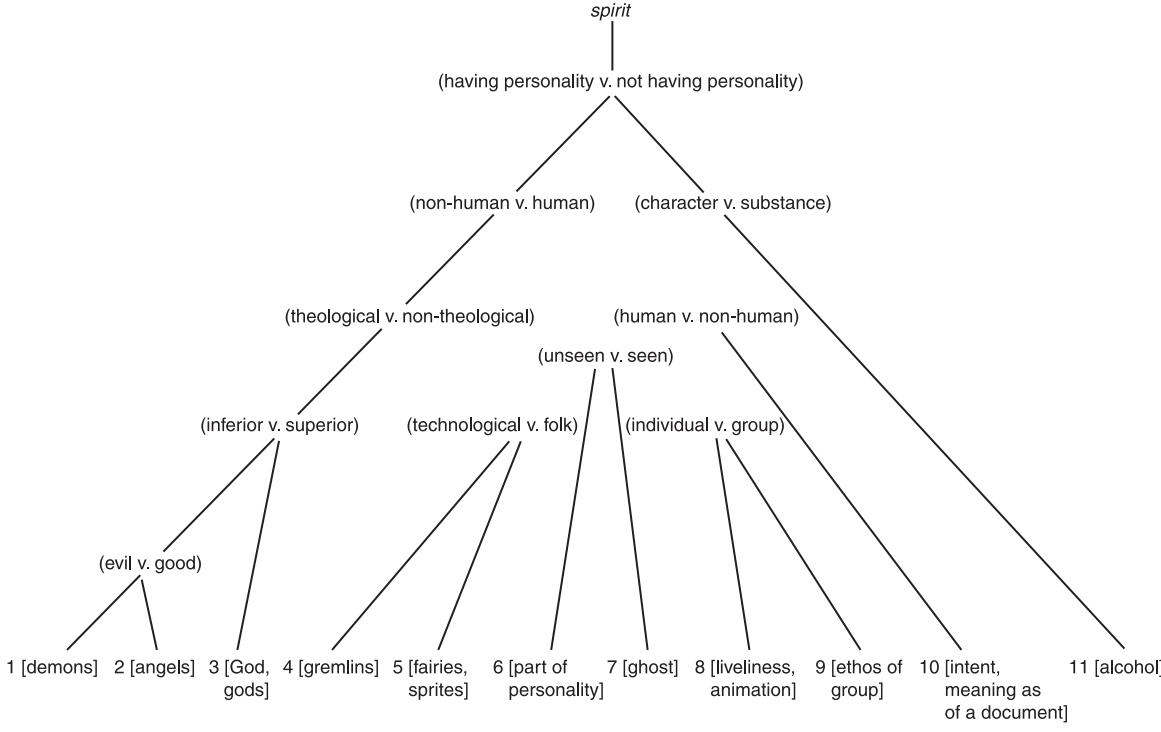
The spirit of the dead child rose from the grave

refers to 7 and not to any other of Nida's categories, whereas

The spirit of the house lived on

could refer to 5 or 7 or, used metaphorically, to 6 or 8 and the meaning can only be determined by the context.

Firth defines meaning as 'a complex of relations of various kinds between the component terms of a context of situation'[10] and cites the example of the English phrase *Say when*, where the words 'mean' what they 'do'. In translating that phrase it is the function that will be taken up and not the words themselves, and the translation process involves a decision to replace and substitute the linguistic elements in the TL. And since the phrase is, as Firth points out, directly linked to English social behavioural patterns, the translator putting the phrase into French or German has to contend with the problem of the non-existence of a similar convention in either TL culture. Likewise, the English translator of the French *Bon appetit* has a similar problem, for again the utterance is situation-bound. As an example of the complexities involved here, let



us take a hypothetical dramatic situation in which the phrase *Bon appetit* becomes crucially significant:

> *A family group have been quarrelling bitterly, the unity of the family has collapsed, unforgivable things have been said. But the celebratory dinner to which they have all come is about to be served, and the family sit at the table in silence ready to eat. The plates are filled, everyone sits waiting, the father breaks the silence to wish them all 'Bon appetit' and the meal begins.*

Whether the phrase is used mechanically, as part of the daily ritual, whether it is used ironically, sadly or even cruelly is not specified. On a stage, the actor and director would come to a decision about how to interpret the phrase based on their concept of characterization and of the overall meaning and structure of the play. The interpretation would be rendered through voice inflexion. But whatever the interpretation, the significance of the simple utterance cutting into a situation of great tension would remain.

The translator has to take the question of interpretation into account in addition to the problem of selecting a TL phrase which will have a roughly similar meaning. Exact translation is impossible: *Good appetite* in English used outside a structured sentence is meaningless. Nor is there any English phrase in general use that fulfils the same function as the French. There are, however, a series of phrases that might be applicable in certain situations – the colloquial *Dig in* or *Tuck in*, the more formal *Do start*, or even the ritualistically apologetic *I hope you like it*, or *I hope it's alright*. In determining what to use in English, the translator must:

(1) Accept the untranslatability of the SL phrase in the TL on the linguistic level.
(2) Accept the lack of a similar cultural convention in the TL.
(3) Consider the range of TL phrases available, having regard to the presentation of class, status, age, sex of the speaker, his relationship to the listeners and the context of their meeting in the SL.
(4) Consider the significance of the phrase in its particular context – i.e. as a moment of high tension in the dramatic text.

(5) Replace in the TL the invariant core of the SL phrase in its two referential systems (the particular system of the text and the system of culture out of which the text has sprung).

Levý, the great Czech translation scholar, insisted that any contracting or omitting of difficult expressions in translating was immoral. The translator, he believed, had the responsibility of finding a solution to the most daunting of problems, and he declared that the functional view must be adopted with regard not only to meaning but also to style and form. The wealth of studies on Bible translation and the documentation of the way in which individual translators of the Bible attempt to solve their problems through ingenious solutions is a particularly rich source of examples of semiotic transformation.

In translating *Bon appetit* in the scenario given above, the translator was able to extract a set of criteria from the text in order to determine what a suitable TL rendering might be, but clearly in a different context the TL phrase would alter. The emphasis always in translation is on the *reader* or listener, and the translator must tackle the SL text in such a way that the TL version will correspond to the SL version. The nature of that correspondence may vary considerably (see Section 3) but the principle remains constant. Hence Albrecht Neubert's view that Shakespeare's Sonnet 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?' cannot be semantically translated into a language where summers are unpleasant is perfectly proper, just as the concept of God the Father cannot be translated into a language where the deity is female. To attempt to impose the value system of the SL culture onto the TL culture is dangerous ground, and the translator should not be tempted by the school that pretends to determine the original *intentions* of an author on the basis of a self-contained text. The translator cannot *be* the author of the SL text, but as the author of the TL text has a clear moral responsibility to the TL readers.

PROBLEMS OF EQUIVALENCE

The translation of idioms takes us a stage further in considering the question of meaning and translation, for idioms, like puns, are culture bound. The Italian idiom *menare il can per l'aia* provides a good

example of the kind of shift that takes place in the translation process.[11] Translated literally, the sentence

Giovanni sta menando il can per l'aia.

becomes

John is leading his dog around the threshing floor.

The image conjured up by this sentence is somewhat startling and, unless the context referred quite specifically to such a location, the sentence would seem obscure and virtually meaningless. The English idiom that most closely corresponds to the Italian is *to beat about the bush*, also obscure unless used idiomatically, and hence the sentence correctly translated becomes

John is beating about the bush.

Both English and Italian have corresponding idiomatic expressions that render the idea of prevarication, and so in the process of interlingual translation one idiom is substituted for another. That substitution is made not on the basis of the linguistic elements in the phrase, nor on the basis of a corresponding or similar image contained in the phrase, but on the function of the idiom. The SL phrase is replaced by a TL phrase that serves the same purpose in the TL culture, and the process here involves the substitution of SL sign for TL sign. Dagut's remarks about the problems of translating metaphor are interesting when applied also to the problem of tackling idioms:

> Since a metaphor in the SL is, by definition, a new piece of performance, a semantic novelty, it can clearly have no existing 'equivalence' in the TL: what is unique can have no counterpart. Here the translator's bilingual competence – 'le sens', as Mallarmé put it 'de ce qui est dans la langue et de ce qui n'en est pas' – is of help to him only in the negative sense of telling him that any 'equivalence' in this case cannot be 'found' but will have to be 'created'. The crucial question that arises is thus whether a metaphor can, strictly speaking, be translated as *such*, or whether it can only be 'reproduced' in some way.[12]

But Dagut's distinction between 'translation' and 'reproduction', like Catford's distinction between 'literal' and 'free' translation[13] does not take into account the view that sees translation as semiotic transformation. In his definition of translation equivalence, Popovič distinguishes four types:

(1) *Linguistic equivalence*, where there is homogeneity on the linguistic level of both SL and TL texts, i.e. word for word translation.
(2) *Paradigmatic equivalence*, where there is equivalence of 'the elements of a paradigmatic expressive axis', i.e. elements of grammar, which Popovič sees as being a higher category than lexical equivalence.
(3) *Stylistic (translational) equivalence*, where there is 'functional equivalence of elements in both original and translation aiming at an expressive identity with an invariant of identical meaning'.
(4) *Textual (syntagmatic) equivalence*, where there is equivalence of the syntagmatic structuring of a text, i.e. equivalence of form and shape.[14]

The case of the translation of the Italian idiom, therefore, involves the determining of stylistic equivalence which results in the substitution of the SL idiom by an idiom with an equivalent function in the TL.

Translation involves far more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages and, as can be seen in the translation of idioms and metaphors, the process may involve discarding the basic linguistic elements of the SL text so as to achieve Popovič's goal of 'expressive identity' between the SL and TL texts. But once the translator moves away from close linguistic equivalence, the problems of determining the exact nature of the level of equivalence aimed for begin to emerge.

Albrecht Neubert distinguishes between the study of translation as a *process* and as a *product*. He states bluntly that: 'the "missing link" between both components of a complete theory of translations appears to be the theory of equivalence relations that can be conceived for both the dynamic and the static model.'[15] The problem of equivalence, a much-used and abused term in Translation Studies, is of central importance, and although Neubert is right when he stresses the need

for a theory of equivalence relations, Raymond van den Broeck is also right when he challenges the excessive use of the term in Translation Studies and claims that the precise definition of equivalence in mathematics is a serious obstacle to its use in translation theory.

Eugene Nida distinguishes two types of equivalence, *formal* and *dynamic*, where formal equivalence 'focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content. In such a translation one is concerned with such correspondences as poetry to poetry, sentence to sentence, and concept to concept.' Nida calls this type of translation a 'gloss translation', which aims to allow the reader to understand as much of the SL context as possible. *Dynamic equivalence* is based on the principle of *equivalent effect*, i.e. that the relationship between receiver and message should aim at being the same as that between the original receivers and the SL message. As an example of this type of equivalence, he quotes J.B. Phillips rendering of *Romans* 16:16, where the idea of 'greeting with a holy kiss' is translated as 'give one another a hearty handshake all round'. With this example of what seems to be a piece of inadequate translation in poor taste, the weakness of Nida's loosely defined types can clearly be seen. The principle of *equivalent effect* which has enjoyed great popularity in certain cultures at certain times, involves us in areas of speculation and at times can lead to very dubious conclusions. So E.V. Rieu's deliberate decision to translate Homer into English prose because the significance of the epic form in Ancient Greece could be considered equivalent to the significance of prose in modern Europe, is a case of *dynamic equivalence* applied to the formal properties of a text which shows that Nida's categories can actually be in conflict with each other.

It is an established fact in Translation Studies that if a dozen translators tackle the same poem, they will produce a dozen different versions. And yet somewhere in those dozen versions there will be what Popovič calls the 'invariant core' of the original poem. This invariant core, he claims, is represented by stable, basic and constant semantic elements in the text, whose existence can be proved by experimental semantic condensation. Transformations, or variants, are those changes which do not modify the core of meaning but influence the expressive form. In short, the invariant can be defined as that which exists in common between all existing translations of a single work. So the

invariant is part of a dynamic relationship and should not be confused with speculative arguments about the 'nature', the 'spirit' or 'soul' of the text; the 'indefinable quality' that translators are rarely supposed to be able to capture.

In trying to solve the problem of translation equivalence, Neubert postulates that from the point of view of a theory of texts, translation equivalence must be considered a *semiotic category*, comprising a *syntactic*, *semantic* and *pragmatic* component, following Peirce's categories.[16] These components are arranged in a hierarchical relationship, where semantic equivalence takes priority over syntactic equivalence, and pragmatic equivalence conditions and modifies both the other elements. Equivalence overall results from the relation between signs themselves, the relationship between signs and what they stand for, and the relationship between signs, what they stand for and those who use them. So, for example, the shock value of Italian or Spanish blasphemous expressions can only be rendered pragmatically in English by substituting expressions with sexual overtones to produce a comparable shock effect, e.g. *porca Madonna – fucking hell*.[17] Similarly, the interaction between all three components determines the process of selection in the TL, as for example, in the case of letter-writing. The norms governing the writing of letters vary considerably from language to language and from period to period, even within Europe. Hence a woman writing to a friend in 1812 would no more have signed her letters *with love* or *in sisterhood* as a contemporary Englishwoman might, any more than an Italian would conclude letters without a series of formal greetings to the recipient of the letter and his relations. In both these cases, the letter-writing formulae and the obscenity, the translator decodes and attempts to encode pragmatically.

The question of defining equivalence is being pursued by two lines of development in Translation Studies. The first, rather predictably, lays an emphasis on the special problems of semantics and on the transfer of semantic content from SL to TL. With the second, which explores the question of equivalence of literary texts, the work of the Russian Formalists and the Prague Linguists, together with more recent developments in discourse analysis, have broadened the problem of equivalence in its application to the translation of such texts. James Holmes, for example, feels that the use of the term equivalence is 'perverse',

since to ask for sameness is to ask too much, while Durišin argues that the translator of a literary text is not concerned with establishing equivalence of natural language but of artistic procedures. And those procedures cannot be considered in isolation, but must be located within the specific cultural–temporal context within which they are utilized.[18]

Let us take as an example, two advertisements in British Sunday newspaper colour supplements, one for Scotch whisky and one for Martini, where each product is being marketed to cater for a particular taste. The whisky market, older and more traditional than the Martini market, is catered to in advertising by an emphasis on the quality of the product, on the discerning taste of the buyer and on the social status the product will confer. Stress is also laid on the naturalness and high quality of the distilling process, on the purity of Scottish water, and on the length of time the product has matured. The advertisement consists of a written text and a photograph of the product. Martini, on the other hand, is marketed to appeal to a different social group, one that has to be won over to the product which has appeared relatively recently. Accordingly, Martini is marketed for a younger outlook and lays less stress on the question of the quality of the product but much more on the fashionable status that it will confer. The photograph accompanying the brief written text shows 'beautiful people' drinking Martini, members of the international jet set, who inhabit the fantasy world where everyone is supposedly rich and glamorous. These two types of advertisement have become so stereotyped in British culture that they are instantly recognizable and often parodied.

With the advertising of the same two products in an Italian weekly news magazine there is likewise a dual set of images – the one stressing purity, quality, social status; the other stressing glamour, excitement, trendy living and youth. But because Martini is long established and Scotch is a relatively new arrival on the mass market, the images presented with the products are exactly the reverse of the British ones. The same modes, but differently applied, are used in the advertising of these two products in two societies. The products may be the same in both societies, but they have different values. Hence Scotch in the British context may conceivably be defined as the equivalent of Martini

in the Italian context, and vice versa, in so far as they are presented through advertising as serving equivalent social functions.

Mukařovský's view that the literary text has both an autonomous and a communicative character has been taken up by Lotman, who argues that a text is *explicit* (it is expressed in definite signs), *limited* (it begins and ends at a given point), and it has *structure* as a result of internal organization. The signs of the text are in a relation of opposition to the signs and structures outside the text. A translator must therefore bear in mind both its autonomous and its communicative aspects and any theory of equivalence should take both elements into account.[19]

Equivalence in translation, then, should not be approached as a search for sameness, since sameness cannot even exist between two TL versions of the same text, let alone between the SL and the TL version. Popovič's four types offer a useful starting point and Neubert's three semiotic categories point the way towards an approach that perceives equivalence as a dialectic between the signs and the structures within and surrounding the SL and TL texts.

LOSS AND GAIN

Once the principle is accepted that sameness cannot exist between two languages, it becomes possible to approach the question of *loss and gain* in the translation process. It is again an indication of the low status of translation that so much time should have been spent on discussing what is lost in the transfer of a text from SL to TL whilst ignoring what can also be gained, for the translator can at times enrich or clarify the SL text as a direct result of the translation process. Moreover, what is often seen as 'lost' from the SL context may be replaced in the TL context, as in the case of Wyatt and Surrey's translations of Petrarch (see pp. 65–6; 114–19).

Eugene Nida is a rich source of information about the problems of loss in translation, in particular about the difficulties encountered by the translator when faced with terms or concepts in the SL that do not exist in the TL. He cites the case of Guaica, a language of southern Venezuela, where there is little trouble in finding satisfactory terms for the English *murder, stealing, lying*, etc., but where the terms for *good, bad, ugly*

and *beautiful* cover a very different area of meaning. As an example, he points out that Guaica does not follow a dichotomous classification of *good* and *bad*, but a trichotomous one as follows:

(1) *Good* includes desirable food, killing enemies, chewing dope in moderation, putting fire to one's wife to teach her to obey, and stealing from anyone not belonging to the same band.
(2) *Bad* includes rotten fruit, any object with a blemish, murdering a person of the same band, stealing from a member of the extended family and lying to anyone.
(3) *Violating taboo* includes incest, being too close to one's mother-in-law, a married woman's eating tapir before the birth of the first child, and a child's eating rodents.

Nor is it necessary to look so far beyond Europe for examples of this kind of differentiation. The large number of terms in Finnish for variations of snow, in Arabic for aspects of camel behaviour, in English for light and water, in French for types of bread, all present the translator with, on one level, an untranslatable problem. Bible translators have documented the additional difficulties involved in, for example, the concept of the Trinity or the social significance of the parables in certain cultures. In addition to the lexical problems, there are of course languages that do not have tense systems or concepts of time that in any way correspond to Indo-European systems. Whorf's comparison (which may not be reliable, but is cited here as a theoretical example) between a 'temporal language' (English) and a 'timeless language' (Hopi) serves to illustrate this aspect (see Figure 1).[20]

UNTRANSLATABILITY

When such difficulties are encountered by the translator, the whole issue of the translatability of the text is raised. Catford distinguishes two types of *untranslatability*, which he terms *linguistic* and *cultural*. On the linguistic level, untranslatability occurs when there is no lexical or syntactical substitute in the TL for an SL item. So, for example, the German *Um wieviel Uhr darf man Sie morgen wecken?* or the Danish *Jeg fandt brevet* are linguistically untranslatable, because both sentences involve

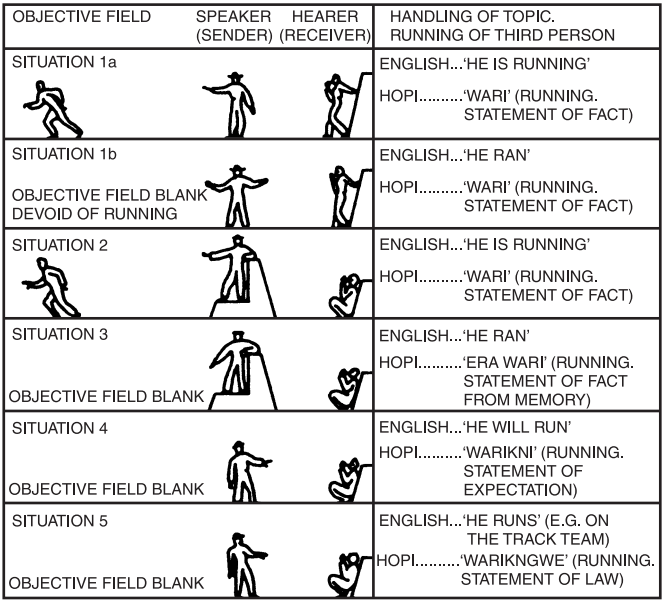


Figure 1 Whorf's comparison between temporal and timeless languages

structures that do not exist in English. Yet both can be adequately translated into English once the rules of English structure are applied. A translator would unhesitatingly render the two sentences as *What time would you like to be woken tomorrow?* and *I found the letter*, restructuring the German word order and adjusting the position of the postpositive definite article in Danish to conform to English norms.

Catford's category of linguistic untranslatability, which is also proposed by Popovič, is straightforward, but his second category is more problematic. Linguistic untranslatability, he argues, is due to differences in the SL and the TL, whereas cultural untranslatability is due to the absence in the TL culture of a relevant situational feature for the SL text. He quotes the example of the different concepts of the term *bathroom* in an English, Finnish or Japanese context, where both the object and the use made of that object are not at all alike. But Catford also claims that more abstract lexical items such as the English term *home* or *democracy* cannot be described as untranslatable, and argues that

the English phrases *I'm going home*, or *He's at home* can 'readily be provided with translation equivalents in most languages' whilst the term *democracy* is international.

Now on one level, Catford is right. The English phrases can be translated into most European languages and *democracy is* an internationally used term. But he fails to take into account two significant factors, and this seems to typify the problem of an overly narrow approach to the question of untranslatability. If *I'm going home is* translated as *Je vais chez moi*, the content meaning of the SL sentence (i.e. self-assertive statement of intention to proceed to place of residence and/or origin) is only loosely reproduced. And if, for example, the phrase is spoken by an American resident temporarily in London, it could either imply a return to the immediate 'home' or a return across the Atlantic, depending on the context in which it is used, a distinction that would have to be spelled out in French. Moreover the English term *home*, like the French *foyer*, has a range of associative meanings that are not translated by the more restricted phrase *chez moi*. *Home*, therefore, would appear to present exactly the same range of problems as the Finnish or Japanese *bathroom*.

With the translation of *democracy*, further complexities arise. Catford feels that the term is largely present in the lexis of many languages and, although it may be relatable to different political situations, the context will guide the reader to select the appropriate situational features. The problem here is that the reader will have a concept of the term based on his or her own cultural context, and will apply that particularized view accordingly. Hence the difference between the adjective *democratic* as it appears in the following three phrases is fundamental to three totally different political concepts:

> the American Democratic Party
> the German Democratic Republic
> the democratic wing of the British Conservative Party.

So although the term is international, its usage in different contexts shows that there is no longer (if indeed there ever was) any common ground from which to select relevant situational features. If culture is perceived as dynamic, then the terminology of social structuring must

be dynamic also. Lotman points out that the semiotic study of culture not only considers culture functioning as a system of signs, but emphasizes that 'the *very relation of culture to the sign and to signification* comprises one of its basic typological features.'[21] Catford starts from different premises, and because he does not go far enough in considering the dynamic nature of language and culture, he invalidates his own category of *cultural untranslatability*. In so far as language is the primary modelling system within a culture, cultural untranslatability must be *de facto* implied in any process of translation.

Darbelnet and Vinay, in their useful book *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais* (A Comparative French–English Stylistics),[22] have analysed in detail points of linguistic difference between the two languages, differences that constitute areas where translation is impossible. But once again it is Popovič who has attempted to define untranslatability without making a separation between the linguistic and the cultural. Popovič also distinguishes two types. The first is defined as

> A situation in which the linguistic elements of the original cannot be replaced adequately in structural, linear, functional or semantic terms in consequence of a lack of denotation or connotation.

The second type goes beyond the purely linguistic:

> A situation where the relation of expressing the meaning, i.e. the relation between the creative subject and its linguistic expression in the original does not find an adequate linguistic expression in the translation.

The first type may be seen as parallel to Catford's category of linguistic untranslatability, while into this second type come phrases such as *Bon appetit* or the interesting series of everyday phrases in Danish for expressing thanks. Bredsdorf's Danish grammar for English readers gives elaborate details of the contextual use of such expressions. The explanation of the phrase *Tak for mad*, for example states that 'there is no English equivalent of this expression used to a host or hostess by the guests or members of the household after a meal.'

A slightly more difficult example is the case of the Italian *tamponamento* in the sentence *C'è stato un tamponamento*.

Since English and Italian are sufficiently close to follow a loosely approximate pattern of sentence organization with regard to component parts and word order, the sentence appears fully translatable. The conceptual level is also translatable: an event occurring in time past is being reported in time present. The difficulty concerns the translation of the Italian noun, which emerges in English as a noun phrase. The TL version, allowing for the variance in English and Italian syntax, is

There has been/there was a slight accident (involving a vehicle).

Because of the differences in tense-usage, the TL sentence may take one of two forms depending on the context of the sentence, and because of the length of the noun phrase, this can also be cut down, provided the nature of the accident can be determined outside the sentence by the receiver. But when the significance of *tamponamento* is considered *vis-à-vis* Italian society as a whole, the term cannot be fully understood without some knowledge of Italian driving habits, the frequency with which 'slight accidents' occur and the weighting and relevance of such incidents when they do occur. In short, *tamponamento* is a sign that has a culture-bound or context meaning, which cannot be translated even by an explanatory phrase. The relation between the creative subject and its linguistic expression cannot therefore be adequately replaced in the translation.

Popovič's second type, like Catford's secondary category, illustrates the difficulties of describing and defining the limits of translatability, but whilst Catford starts from within linguistics, Popovič starts from a position that involves a theory of literary communication. Boguslav Lawendowski, in an article in which he attempts to sum up the state of translation studies and semiotics, feels that Catford is 'divorced from reality',[23] while Georges Mounin feels that too much attention has been given to the problem of untranslatability at the expense of solving some of the actual problems that the translator has to deal with.

Mounin acknowledges the great benefits that advances in linguistics have brought to Translation Studies; the development of structural linguistics, the work of Saussure, of Hjelmslev, of the Moscow and Prague Linguistic Circles has been of great value, and the work of Chomsky

and the transformational linguists has also had its impact, particularly with regard to the study of semantics. Mounin feels that it is thanks to developments in contemporary linguistics that we can (and must) accept that:

(1) Personal experience in its uniqueness is untranslatable.
(2) In theory the base units of any two languages (e.g. phonemes, monemes, etc.) are not always comparable.
(3) Communication is possible when account is taken of the respective situations of speaker and hearer, or author and translator.

In other words, Mounin believes that linguistics demonstrates that translation is a dialectic process that can be accomplished with relative success:

> Translation may always start with the clearest situations, the most concrete messages, the most elementary universals. But as it involves the consideration of a language in its entirety, together with its most subjective messages, through an examination of common situations and a multiplication of contacts that need clarifying, then there is no doubt that communication through translation can never be completely finished, which also demonstrates that it is never wholly impossible either.[24]

As has already been suggested, it is clearly the task of the translator to find a solution to even the most daunting of problems. Such solutions may vary enormously; the translator's decision as to what constitutes invariant information with respect to a given system of reference is in itself a creative act. Levý stresses the intuitive element in translating:

> As in all semiotic processes, translation has its *Pragmatic dimension* as well. Translation theory tends to be normative, to instruct translators on the OPTIMAL solution; actual translation work, however, is pragmatic; the translator resolves for that one of the possible solutions which promises a maximum of effect with a minimum of effort. That is to say, he intuitively resolves for the so-called MI.[25]

VISIBILITY

One of the most important keywords in Translation Studies that emerged in the 1990s is 'visibility'. In 1995 Lawrence Venuti's history of translation, *The Translator's Invisibility*, appeared, in which he argues that in contemporary Anglo-American culture there is such minimal recognition of the importance of translation that translators and their works are effectively rendered invisible. Translated texts are judged acceptable provided traces of their foreign origin are removed and the ideal translation should read as fluently as possible, to create an illusion of transparency. Venuti suggests that this practice not only devalues the work of translators, but derives from a position of anglocentric complacency which he sees as xenophobic at home and imperialistic abroad.[26] To support his case, Venuti produced figures for world translation publications, showing how little was translated into English, compared to what was translated out of English. He also argues that translators have colluded with this state of affairs, choosing to render themselves invisible, and calls for both readers and translators to reflect on what he terms 'the ethnocentric violence of translation', urging them to endeavour to highlight the fact that translations derive from works produced in other cultural contexts:

> What I am advocating is not an indiscriminate valorization of every foreign culture or a metaphysical concept of foreignness as an essential value . . . The point is rather to elaborate the theoretical, critical, and textual means by which translation can be studied and practiced as a locus of difference, instead of the homogeneity that widely characterizes it today.[27]

The subsequent importance of Venuti's call for action cannot be underestimated. In 1813 Friedrich Schleiermacher had differentiated between a translation strategy that domesticated the SL text, so that it would read as though it had been written in the TL in the first place, and a strategy that found ways of expanding the TL by a process of foreignization. Venuti uses Schleiermacher's distinction to support his argument, and sets foreignization as a superior translation

method to that of domestication, or 'acculturation' as it is also known. In a later book, *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* (1998), Venuti went further and argued that 'domestication' and 'foreignization' indicate fundamentally ethical attitudes towards foreign texts and cultures. Domestication conforms to the expectations, values and norms of the target culture, while foreignization challenges readers by making them aware that they are encountering texts from outside their known parameters.

Venuti was writing about attitudes to translation in the English-speaking world, but his call for greater recognition of translators has been taken up by scholars working in translation all over the world, as can be seen by a growing number of publications focusing on the agency of the translator. This move to reassess the creative role of the translator has also been given impetus by André Lefevere's call for translation to be seen as rewriting, with the translator acknowledged as the creator of a new text for a new set of readers. In his *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* published in 1992, Lefevere pointed out that most readers do not read literature as written by its writers, but as rewritten by its rewriters.[28] He wanted translation to be seen as a fundamentally important textual practice, one that should be studied alongside other forms of rewriting which include historiography, anthologization, literary criticism, editing and film and television adaptation. For both Lefevere and Venuti, the study of translation should be at the core, not at the margins of literary and cultural studies.

SCIENCE OR 'SECONDARY ACTIVITY'?

The purpose of translation theory, then, is to reach an understanding of the processes undertaken in the act of translation and, not, as is so commonly misunderstood, to provide a set of norms for effecting the perfect translation. In the same way, literary criticism does not seek to provide a set of instructions for producing the ultimate poem or novel, but rather to understand the internal and external structures operating within and around a work of art. The pragmatic dimension of translation cannot be categorized, any more than the 'inspiration' of a text can be defined and prescribed. Once this point is accepted, two

issues that continue to bedevil Translation Studies can be satisfactorily resolved; the problem of whether there can be 'a science of translation' and whether translating is a 'secondary activity'.

From the above discussion, it would seem quite clear that any debate about the existence of a science of translation is out of date: there already exists, with Translation Studies, a serious discipline investigating the process of translation, attempting to clarify the question of *equivalence* and to examine what constitutes *meaning* within that process. But nowhere is there a theory that pretends to be normative, and although Lefevere's statement about the goal of the discipline (see p. 19) suggests that a comprehensive theory might also be used as a *guideline* for producing translations, this is a long way from suggesting that the purpose of translation theory is to be proscriptive.

The myth of translation as a secondary activity with all the associations of lower status implied in that assessment, can be dispelled once the extent of the pragmatic element of translation is accepted, and once the relationship between author/translator/reader is outlined. A diagram of the communicative relationship in the process of translation shows that the translator is both receiver and emitter, the end and the beginning of two separate but linked chains of communication:

Author – Text – Receiver = Translator – Text – Receiver

Translation Studies, then, has moved beyond the old distinctions that sought to devalue the study and practice of translation by the use of such terminological distinctions as 'scientific v. creative'. Theory and practice are indissolubly linked, and are not in conflict. Understanding of the processes can only help in the production and, since the product is the result of a complex system of decoding and encoding on the semantic, syntactic and pragmatic levels, it should not be evaluated according to an outdated hierarchical interpretation of what constitutes 'creativity'.

The case for Translation Studies and for translation itself is summed up by Octavio Paz in his short work on translation. All texts, he claims, being part of a literary system descended from and related to other systems, are 'translations of translation of translations':

Every text is unique and, at the same time, it is the translation of another text. No text is entirely original because language itself, in its essence, is already a translation: firstly, of the non-verbal world and secondly, since every sign and every phrase is the translation of another sign and another phrase. However, this argument can be turned around without losing any of its validity: all texts are original because every translation is distinctive. Every translation, up to a certain point, is an invention and as such it constitutes a unique text.[29]