THIRD EDITION

ANTHONY PYM

EXPLORING TRANSLATION THEORIES

EXPLORING TRANSLATION THEORIES

Exploring Translation Theories presents a comprehensive analysis of the core contemporary paradigms of Western translation theory.

This engaging overview covers the key theories of equivalence, solution types, purposes, scientific approaches, uncertainty, automation, and cultural translation. Fully revised, this third edition adds coverage of Russian and Ukrainian theories, examples from Chinese, advances in machine translation, and research on translators' cognitive processes. Readers are encouraged to explore the various theories and consider their strengths, weaknesses, and implications for translation practice. The book concludes with a survey of the way translation is used as a model in postmodern cultural studies and sociologies, extending its scope beyond traditional Western notions.

Features in each chapter include:

- An introduction outlining the main points, key concepts, and illustrative examples.
- Examples drawn from a range of languages, although knowledge of no language other than English is assumed.
- Discussion points and suggested classroom activities.
- A chapter summary.

This comprehensive and engaging book is ideal both for self-study and as a textbook for translation theory courses within Translation Studies, Comparative Literature and Applied Linguistics.

Anthony Pym is Distinguished Professor of Translation and Intercultural Studies at Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Spain. His publications include *The Status of the Translation Profession in the European Union* (2013) and *On Translator Ethics* (2012).

Exploring Translation Theories

Third edition

Anthony Pym

To the memory of Gideon Toury

Contents

Acknowledgements

Glossary

Having a discipline means that you use certain words in special ways. Here is a list of words that are used in some special way when exploring translation theories.

Actor-network theory: A type of sociology that developed around Latour and Callon according to which all beings in the natural and human world are connected by networks formed by acts of translation.

Automation: The replacement of a human activity by a process carried out by machines, with little help from humans.

Binarism: The reduction of complex choices to just two alternatives, as when translation solutions are reduced to foreignization versus domestication.

Bottom-up: A way of analyzing anything by starting from the little things and working toward the big things. For example, you might list all the solutions used in a translation and then try to say what the translator's general strategy was. This is the opposite of 'top-down'.

Brief: The instructions the client gives to the translator: *Auftrag* in German, also called 'commission' in English. In translation practice, the more normal terms would be 'instructions' or 'job description'.

Charity: In Quine and Davidson, the principle by which an utterance is interpreted in such a way as to maximize possible agreements.

Complexity: Quality of a system where relations are indeterminate: at each node or point of connection there are alternative possible relations. In principle, the more alternatives, the greater the complexity.

Controlled authoring: The writing of a text while respecting a special set of rules. The rules may be for easy-access reading, the application of standardized terminology and syntax, or the avoidance of features known to be problematic for machine translation ('pre-editing').

Cooperation: Here, a communicative exchange that provides benefits for all participants. The benefits need not be of the same kind or of equal value.

Deconstruction: An exacting practice of text analysis that aims to reveal the slippages in language and the impossibility of meaning remaining eternally fixed. Here opposed to 'essentialism'.

Determinism: The belief that an event is wholly caused by a previous event or set of events that we can know about. For example, we might believe that a translation is caused ('determined') by what is in the start text or by the instructions received from the client.

Determinist theory: Here, a theory that assumes that, in a communication act, what is understood is caused by what is said or meant. Applied to translation, we would say that the correct translation is the one that is caused by the start-text author's ideas, intentions, message, or words.

Empathy: In Quine, the capacity to see a situation through the eyes of the other person.

Empiricism: The testing of hypotheses on the basis of data, which can be quantitative, qualitative, or both.

Epistemology: The study of the ways knowledge is produced, in this case knowledge about the text to be translated or the purpose to be achieved.

Equivalence: The relation between two or more texts or text elements that are believed to have the same value.

Essentialism: A belief that items are similar because they conform to an ideal form, meaning, or essence. Here opposed to 'deconstruction'.

Generalized translation: Translation that occurs in relations between all phenomena, both natural and human (as in actor-network theory). The term is used pejoratively by Berman.

Indeterminacy: Here, an instance of indeterminism that is believed to occur in a particular relation. A belief in general indeterminism might thus make us believe in the particular indeterminacy of translation.

Indeterminism: The belief that not all events are wholly caused ('determined') by previous events. If the one text can cause many different translations, then none of the translations can be wholly 'determined' by that text. Indeterminism would generally allow for some free will on the part of the translator.

Indeterminist theory: Here, a theory that does *not* assume determinacy. An indeterminist theory would accept that translation does not involve a transfer of ideas, intentions, meanings, or words. Most indeterminist theories would accept that a translation is based on an active interpretation of previous texts.

Indirect translation: A translation of a translation, usually into a language other than the original start language.

Internationalization: In industry discourse, the removal of culture-specific items from a product or text, usually as the first part of the localization process.

Interpretant: In Peirce, the subject (or sign?) that interprets the meaning of a sign.

Invariants: Structures or values that are judged to be the same in the start text and the target text.

Localization: In industry discourse, the process of internationalizing a product or text and then adapting it to target locales to some degree. Sometimes the adaptation part of the process is also called 'localization'.

Locale: A set of parameters specifying the conventions pertinent to the intended receivers of information.

Machine: Here used as a metonym for automatic language processing, particularly machine translation.

Marked: When a linguistic item is perceived as being in some way unusual or infrequent. It does not mean there is an actual mark written on the item. The opposite is 'unmarked'.

Modulation: In Vinay and Darbelnet, a solution that changes the point of view; here categorized as 'perspective change'.

Other (as in 'the other'): The person with whom one is interacting. Levinas distinguishes between the other (*autre*) that is like the self (a neighbour or a community member) and the 'completely Other' (*Autrui absolument autre*) who is not. This second sense is translated here as 'the other as Other'.

Parallel text: A non-translational target-language text on the same topic as the start text.

Passing theory: In Davidson, the expectations that a person has at any one moment in an exchange about the direction of the exchange, the possible outcomes, and the intentions of the other.

Post-editing: The correcting of machine-translation output.

Pre-editing: The editing of a text so that it passes through machine translation with a reduced number of errors; a special kind of 'controlled authoring'.

Remainder: In Lecercle, the parts of language that a particular theory or analysis does not consider pertinent.

Retranslation: A translation that is done later than a previous translation and into the same target language; the activity of producing a retranslation.

Science: Here the term 'science' enters the way the Russian Formalists understood it, as a way of describing cultural phenomena by using clear, rigorous categories and conducting replicable analyses. It is only marginally concerned with making and testing *predictions* in the form of 'laws', which would be the case in other disciplines.

Risk: Here, the probability of unsuccessful communication.

Semiosis: In Peirce, the process by which one sign expresses the meaning of another, forming chains that theoretically have no endpoint. This is done through the 'interpretant'.

Scepticism: The general attitude of having doubts about the veracity and stability of knowledge.

***Skopos* theory**: A set of propositions based on the idea that the target-side *Skopos* or purpose has priority in the translator's decisions. This theory

is only one part of the purpose paradigm, alongside theories that talk about purposes as functions without giving full priority to the target side.

Skopos: The purpose or aim of the translation; the function it is supposed to carry out in the situation of end-user reception.

Source text: Traditional term for 'start text'.

Start language: The language the translator works from.

Start text: The text the translator works from. The term is used here instead of 'source text' because translators these days work from client instructions, machine translation, translation memories, and term bases, all of which are also 'sources'.

Target language: The language the translator works into.

Target text: The text the translator produces; the translation.

Text: Any contiguous set of signs, in whatever medium, that are presumed to be related to each other.

Top-down: A way of analyzing anything by starting from the big things and working toward the little things. You might hypothesize that a translator had a general strategy and then list all the solutions used in a translation that can in some way test that hypothesis. This is the opposite of 'bottom-up'.

Translation memory suite: A set of electronic tools that recycle previous translations, these days with numerous added features such as machine-translation feeds, term bases, revision tools, and quality controls. Also called 'CAT tools' (computer-aided translation), although almost everything we do with texts is computer-aided.

Translation sociology: A translation of *sociologie de la traduction*, an alternative name for 'actor-network theory'.

Translatorial action: All the actions carried out by a translator, one of which may be translating.

Translatorial: Adjective to describe qualities of *translators*, as opposed to the adjective 'translational', used to describe qualities of *translations*.

Translatory: Adjective to describe the translation *process*.

Utterance: Anything said or written in a specific situation; here a synonym of 'text'.

Preface

This is a course that focuses on the main Western translation theories of the past century or so. It concerns both written translation and spoken translation (more correctly called 'interpreting'), so the term 'translation' will generally refer to both. The main aim of the course is to help you think about how to select between alternative ways of translating. When you have a problem to solve, what kinds of ideas can help you solve it?

For many people, including a lot of professional translators, you do not really need many ideas. Some years ago, one of my French translator friends told me that all problems could be solved with what he called 'cucumber theory'. The idea is simple: French cucumbers are about twice the size of Spanish cucumbers (we were in Spain at the time), so whenever the Spanish had 'two cucumbers', the translation in French should have 'one cucumber'. Problem solved! No need for any more theories!

Was the problem really solved? It might be if you are translating a recipe for gazpacho (cold Spanish soup), for example, but probably not if you are working on a report on European agriculture. The solution depends on the purpose of the translation, or perhaps on what country the recipe is to be used in. And then, I have been looking at cucumbers in different markets and I think the French cucumbers are certainly bigger but not *twice* as big: some recipes therefore indicate roughly the size of the cucumbers they need, adding a note to help struggling chefs. What looked like a simple all-purpose theory quickly becomes quite complicated. There are many doubts to resolve; translators have to think.

This course starts from the kind of thinking behind cucumber theory: if you make *changes* when you do the translation, the result can perhaps equal the original. One French unit is translated as two Spanish units and both texts finish up with the same amount of cucumber, more or less. That basic idea is called 'equivalence'. We will see how many other theories have questioned that simple equation, making it a very shaky idea. What are the other ways can we think about translation? The alternatives to equivalence have been more numerous than many suspect, and often creative and surprising.

This third edition tries to make the course more accessible and practical. The treatment of equivalence has been simplified as much as possible, largely because my earlier distinction between 'natural' and 'directional' theories was widely misunderstood – I was categorizing theories, not equivalence itself. Sometimes it is better to withdraw a distinction rather than insist. I have also added a chapter on solution types, hoping that the discussion will be of use in the translation class. Other changes have more to do with historical coverage. Since the second edition, I have learned something about theories written in Russian and Ukrainian, which are included here to some extent (probably not enough), and I have become more aware of Chinese work on translation (again, probably not aware enough). Further, the advances in machine translation since 2016 are reflected in the introduction of translation technologies into many of the suggested activities and in the reorientation of the chapter on localization so that it addresses the wider processes of automation. I have also added quite a few references to recent work in translation studies.

This book was written to accompany two of the best introductory works in the field: *Introducing Translation Studies* (fifth edition 2022) by Jeremy Munday, Sara Ramos Pinto, and Jacob Blakesley, and *Introducing Interpreting Studies* (third edition 2022) by Franz Pöchhacker. My aim here is to focus more squarely on the *theories*, not so much on the research or applications, and to make those theories engage with each other. This means that many fields of research, particularly those that have not made strong original contributions to core translation theory, have been side lined. Some readers will be surprised to find little attention paid to gender studies, postcolonialism, or various kinds of ethics. This is not to belittle the work done in those areas, and there is no suggestion that the theories dealt with here are somehow more neutral or scientific than the more engaged approaches. On the contrary, when I did historical work on the categories of translation solutions (Pym 2016a), I was fascinated at the extent to which political ideologies inform almost everything translation theorists do, simply because we are dealing with the profoundly political problem of how cultures should interrelate. However, when a particular theory draws all of its ideas and most of its data from outside of any concern with translations as texts, I have chosen not to include it the main chapters here – the final chapter, on cultural translation, loosens that restraint and lets things run a bit wilder.

This book also accompanies Lawrence Venuti's *Translation Studies Reader* (fourth edition 2021) and *The Interpreting Studies Reader* (2001) edited by Franz Pöchhacker and Miriam Shlesinger. Both those volumes are superb collections of key texts. My aim has not been to replace them: anyone who wants to know about translation theory should read the theorists, in context and in all their complexity. Only with first-hand knowledge of the fundamental texts can you really follow the intricacies of critical thought.

1 What is a translation theory?

This chapter explains why people argue about translation and how theorization can be related to translation practice. I also present the overall structure of the book, the kind of translation it deals with, some reasons for studying translation theories, and the ways the course can be used as part of group learning.

1.1 From theorizing to theories

Translators are theorizing all the time. They do more than solve problems, but once they have encountered a translation problem, they usually have to decide between several possible solutions. They need ideas in order to make that decision.

Let us say you have to translate the Chinese noun *guanxi* (关系). Any dictionary will tell you it means something like 'connection', 'relation', 'relationship', or 'social network', depending on the context, but most commentaries also mention that it involves specifically *Chinese* relations and obligations. What do you do? Depending on the situation, you might choose 'social network' or 'connections' and risk losing the Chinese specificity. Or you might use the Chinese term *guanxi* in English, and risk people not understanding. Or you could use the Chinese and add an explanation. Or perhaps you could look for an equivalent in English-language cultures, perhaps 'the old boys' network' or 'the old school tie', depending on the situation, at the risk of adding sexism, class location, and cultural appropriation to all the other risks.

All those options could be legitimate, given the appropriate text, purpose, and client. Even reference to 'old boys' network' might work well enough if the situation concerns an unfair advantage in a job interview (perhaps to render the negative value of *la guan xi* 拉关系). Formulating those options (*generating* possible translations) and then choosing between them (*selecting* a definitive translation) can be a difficult operation. Yet translators are doing precisely that all the time, in split seconds. Whenever they have doubts about that kind of decision, whenever they stop to think about why one rendition might be better than others, they bring into play a series of ideas about what

translation is and how it should be carried out. They are theorizing. It is part of the regular practice of translating.

That private, internal theorizing first becomes public when translators discuss what they do. They do not usually talk about all the boring parts of translation: the long passages where basic literalism works well enough or all you do is fix up ('post-edit') the humdrum mistakes made in machine translation. The discussions between translators tend to focus on the rich problems, the ones that are hard to solve, the ones that people disagree about. That is why theories tend to be about problem-solving, even when a lot of what translators do is rather less interesting.

Sometimes this out-loud theorizing involves no more than a few shared words for the things we are dealing with. For example, here I will refer to the 'start text' as the one we translate from, and to the 'target text' as the translation we produce. By extension, I will talk about the 'start language' and the 'target language', or the 'start culture' and the 'target culture'. 'Translating' would then be a set of processes leading from one side to the other.

Do these terms mean we are already using a theory? They look innocent enough, but simple words can carry some very powerful assumptions. For instance, here I am saying 'start text' where many others say 'source text'. Why do this? It is not just because 'start' agrees with what is said in a few other European languages. It is because in *not* saying 'source', I raise questions about other views of translation. Surely the text we translate from is itself made up of translations, reworked fragments of previous texts, all tied up in never-ending translational networks? Just check where each of our words comes from! And these days when smart clients give us a job to do, they do not just give a text: we also receive a translation memory, a glossary of some kind, and some instructions, any or all of which could be the 'source' for what we put in the translation. So why assume a natural, pristine 'source', like a river bubbling up from the earth? 'Start' is a word that can implicitly say something on the level of theory.

One can go further. Why, for example, should our traditional terms reduce translation to just two sides ('start' and 'target')? Surely each target could be a link to further translations down the road, in a range of languages and cultures? If you think about it, there could always be numerous sides involved. So why just two?

One can go further still. When we put the 'start' and 'target' ideas alongside the word 'translation' as the union of '*trans-*' (meaning 'across') and '*latio*' (meaning 'side'), we see that the words build up a very *spatial* image where we just go from one side to the other. The words suggest that translators move things across space, perhaps affecting the target side but not doing anything to the start side. Now, is that always true?

Compare 'trans-lation' with 'anuvad' (अनुवाद), a Sanskrit and Hindi term for translation that basically means, I am told, 'repeating' or 'saying later' (cf. Trivedi 2006: 107; Spivak 2007: 274). According to this alternative term, the main difference between one text and the other could be not in space,

but in time. Translation might then be seen as a constant process of updating and elaborating, rather than as a physical movement across cultures. Our interrelated names-for-things encapsulate theories, even though we are not aware of them doing so.

That does not mean that *all* our inner thinking is constantly turned into public theories. When translators talk with each other, they mostly accept common terms without too much argument. Straight mistakes are usually repaired quickly, through reference to usage, to linguistic knowledge, or to common sense. For instance, we might correct a translator who identifies the term *guanxi* with kinship in a context where the relation clearly does not concern family. Any ensuing discussion might be interesting, but it will have no great need of translation theory (sociology perhaps, but not ideas about translation). Only when there are disagreements over different ways of translating does private theorization tend to become public translation theory. If different translators have come up with alternative renditions of the term *guanxi*, one of them might argue that 'translation should explain the start culture' (so they will use the Chinese term and insert an explanation). Another could say 'translation should make things understandable to the *target* culture' (so they might just put 'social network'). A third might consider that 'the translation should re-situate everything in the target culture' (so they might go for something like 'old boys' club'). And a fourth could insist that since the start text was not primarily about politics or social relations, there is no need to waste time on an ornamental detail: they might calmly eliminate all mention of *guanxi*.

When those kinds of arguments are happening, practical theorizing is turning into explicit theories. The arguments turn out to be between different positions. Sometimes the debates turn one way rather than the other; other times initially opposed positions will find they are compatible within a larger theory. Often, though, people remain with their fixed positions and keep arguing. And for some strange reason (perhaps because they are facing computers all day or are locked away in interpreting booths), translators seem to like arguing.

1.2 Why people do not understand other theories

As theorizing turns into theory, the words are attached to other words to describe reasons and work processes. Some theories develop names and explanations for multiple aspects of translation, including names for the presumed blindness of other theories. This particularly occurs when we find general ideas, relations, and principles for which there is internal coherence and a shared point of departure. For example, one set of theories uses the common terms 'source' (not 'start'), 'target', and 'equivalence'. They agree that the term 'equivalence' names an invariance relation between the 'source' and the 'target'. Their shared point of departure is the comparison of source texts with target texts. People using those theories of equivalence can discuss

translation with each other quite happily. They share the same words and general ideas about the aims of a translation and the point of the discussions. They can even reach some kind of consensus about the various modes of equivalence.

On the other hand, we sometimes find people arguing about translation problems and reaching nothing but constant disagreement or mutual puzzlement. In such cases, the words are probably being interpreted in very different ways. For example, one kind of theory may set about comparing translations with non-translations, both in the same language. They find that linguistic structures like connectors are used more in translations than in non-translations (this would be one of several 'translation tendencies' or 'universals of translation', see 5.8 below). They then construct theories about why translators use language in that special way. But for anyone working in terms of equivalence, those results merit one huge yawn or an occasional exclamation: *So what* if translators have a special way of using language? They shouldn't! These are not proper translations! We should be looking at the work of *good* translators only! And so on.

In those kinds of debates, neither side appreciates the other's perspective. The outcome may be continued tension (debate without resolution), revolution (one theory wins out over the other), or more commonly shared silence (theorists choose to travel along separate paths).

1.3 What kind of translation is this book about?

This book starts from the kind of translation you would probably like a professional translator to do when working on anything from your research report to your autobiography, for instance. It is the kind you might expect to find when you pick up a novel that has been translated in the past century or so, in virtually any culture in the post-industrial world. It is the kind where we assume, often wrongly, that the translator has made no major additions and no major subtractions and that there is some degree of invariance with respect to the start text. But those kinds of assumptions are by no means universal.

If you go back to translations in medieval Europe, you find many different concepts at work in different cultures, fulfilling a huge variety of purposes. Translators could leave out whole chapters, they could add reams of personal commentary and explanation, they sometimes assumed the voice of an author. And if you go and look at the way language mediation is performed in the many traditional social groups around the world, you sometimes have a hard time finding anything like the kind of translation that you would generally expect to be used for your research report or autobiography. This means that this book is not about *all* the kinds of translation that there are in the world. This is partly because we do not know enough about them all, which means there is a weak empirical basis for any theory that would attempt to talk about them all. But there is another reason as well.

What I want to call the Western translation form, this translation concept that started to become dominant in European print culture about five hundred years ago, moved around the world with the spread of modernity in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Pym 2022). It gained importance very roughly with the railway lines that connected regions, prior to the university system that did the same thing – industry and education are the mainstays of this modernity. The translation form moved, then so too did theorizations of that form. Evidence of the dissemination can be found in various histories. Semizu (2006: 283) states that there was 'no explicit reference to translation in the history of academic discourse in Japan until the eighteenth century'. For Paker (2006: 344), Ottoman concepts of interlingual text production changed in the late nineteenth century, when translations from French were associated with a stronger sense of fidelity and accuracy. Trivedi (2006: 104, 106, 107) notes that prior to British colonization, India did not have 'translation' in the European sense: there was a range of concepts including *anuvad* and similar terms This meant that when the Western translation form arrived in nineteenth-century Bengal, for example, the word 'translation' was used as a sign of an imported modernity (Saha 2019; Kundu 2019). Tschacher (2011: 27) similarly observes: 'Up to the eighteenth century, South Asian Islamic literatures seem to offer very little evidence of "translations" in the narrow sense.' Chan (2001) associates the arrival of Western translation concepts in China, specifically the opposition between two main ways of translating, with the modernity of the May the Fourth Movement from 1919. In all these instances, contact with Western ideologies and technologies certainly gave new reasons to translate, but the contact was also with the Western form of translation. That form encountered alternative translation concepts, requiring interpretation and giving rise to numerous new discourses, as indeed has happened within the West itself, which is a very diverse space. But some basic assumptions about what a translation is would nevertheless seem to have become remarkably similar around the world. I have taught translation on six continents. Much to my personal disappointment, in all those classes there has been general agreement that 'translation' means no major addition, no major subtraction, and some degree of invariance. So there is a very real probability that, in starting from the Western translation form, the theories I start from here are addressing the kind of translation you would expect a professional translator to do, virtually wherever you may be.

Admittedly, one is tempted to pretend otherwise. The colonial and imperialist expansion of the West is to be regretted in countless respects. One way of opposing its effects might be to gather as many non-Western theories as possible and insert them here to present alternatives at every turn. I have done a little of that, but not much. Venuti goes further in his reader (Venuti 2021) where he adds four Chinese texts to the Western fare. Two of them, Yan Fu and Lu Xun, usefully mark out the arrival of modernity, while the other two, prefaces to early translations of Buddhist sutras – the first two readings in the reader – are the kind of informal theorizing that one finds in

countless translators' prefaces and notes virtually anywhere you look in pre-modern times (in Spanish, we have a collection of them in Santoyo 1987). Those two texts are engaging to read but are difficult to see as 'foundational' of all translation studies, as Venuti himself recognizes in his commentary. Great for marketing, but not for translation history.

In sum, I think it is more honest to admit that the kind of translation theory dealt with in this book did not start in China, that its modernity has been part and parcel of colonial and imperial history, and that alternative theorizations have always existed. The inherited guilt of the Western researcher must be expressed but it should not lead to claims that history was otherwise: the dissemination of the Western translation form is hard to deny. And the effects may not all be bad. Chang (2015) argues that the Western ideas helped broaden the Chinese concept of translation as *fanyi* 翻译, bringing greater diversity and debate to Chinese discourses on translation. It is not for me to judge such things.

1.4 How this book is organized

An exploration is a motivated journey, opening tracks through terrain and reporting on what is found along the way. It is rather different from an overview or map of an entire land: I have not attempted to cover *all* the different translation theories that can be found, and I have not paid much attention to their organization into separate periods, countries, or schools – many will be disappointed. Instead, each chapter starts from a basic question and then seeks answers to that question. The questions concern fairly widespread quandaries in translation studies: I will be talking about equivalence, purposes, the aspiration to science, the problem of uncertainty, the impact of automation, and, for want of a better term, cultural translation. There is, however, a frame for the whole. The exploration starts from equivalence, which is an idealist concept that is widely questioned these days: its certainty has retreated from the world. The question then becomes: *How do we translate knowing that there is no substantial basis in equivalence?* The answers are that we translate by achieving target-side purposes, or by adhering to the norms of our cultures and perhaps some laws of translation, or by playing with multiple similarities, or by using automation to create artificial equivalences, or by doing something different from narrow language translation altogether. There is just one basic question, then many different answers, and none of them is wrong.

That means that the order of the chapters here is not strictly chronological. What I am calling theories of 'uncertainty' were present in one form or another all the way along. In fact, the fundamental conflict between uncertainty and equivalence would be the basic problem to which all these sets of theories respond. Further, the newer theories have not automatically replaced the older ones. If that were true, you would only have to read the last chapter of the book. On the contrary, here I spend a lot of time on

equivalence-based theories precisely to indicate the complexity and longevity of the approach – a lot of equivalence lives on within theories of localization and in our machine translations. Theories can, of course, become more exact in their descriptions and predictions, in accordance with a certain accumulation of knowledge and the refinement of concepts. This sometimes happens in the field of translation, since the newer theories occasionally try to accommodate the perspectives of the older ones. For example, German-language *Skopos* theory can accept equivalence as being appropriate in a 'special case' scenario. That kind of accumulation is not, however, to be found in any move to deconstruction, for example, which would regard both equivalence and purpose as indefensible essentialisms. In such cases, there is no question of trying to fit one theory inside the other. Those theories differ in their very basic assumptions of what translation is, what it can be, and how a translator should act in the world. In fact, when the theories clash, people are often using the one word 'translation' to refer to quite different things. Debate then becomes pointless, at least until someone attempts to rise above the initial ways of thinking. Only then, when an attempt is made to understand an alternative view of translation, can there be productive theorizing in the public domain.

You might have to read more than the last chapter.

1.5 Why study translation theories?

Why study theories? Teachers sometimes claim that a translator who knows about different theories will work better than one who knows nothing about them. As far as I am aware, there is no empirical evidence for that claim, and there are good reasons to doubt its validity. All translators theorize, not just the ones who express their theories in technical terms. In fact, untrained translators may work more efficiently because they know *less* about complex theories: they have fewer doubts and do not waste time reflecting on the obvious. On the other hand, some awareness of different theories can be of practical benefit when confronting problems for which there are no established solutions, where significant creativity is required. The theories can pose productive questions and sometimes point to successful answers. Theories can also be significant agents of change, especially when they are made to challenge endemic thought. We can learn much from the Sanskrit idea of translation as 'saying later', for instance. And public theories can help make translation users aware that translation is a very complex thing, much harder than using machine translation, in fact hard enough to study at university. This should help enhance the public image of translators and interpreters, even when the translators and interpreters do not like the theories.

The main practical advantage I want to defend here is that of a *plurality* of theories. Rather than set out to defend any one moment of great insight, it is important to make people aware that there are many valid ways

of approaching translation, many different ways of thinking about it, any of which may prove useful or stimulating in a given situation.

Awareness of a range of theories can help the translation profession in several ways. When arguments occur, theories provide translators with tools not just to defend their positions but also potentially to find out about other positions. The theories might simply name things that people had not previously thought about. If a client complains that the term *guanxi* has disappeared from the translation, you could say you have achieved 'compensatory correspondence' by explaining Chinese social relations two pages later. The client might not be entirely convinced that you have acted as a translator, but the technical term for a translation solution could help explain possibilities they had not previously considered. In fact, that bit of theorizing might be of as much practical use to the client as to the translator. The more terms and ideas you have, the more you can explore the possibilities and limits of translation.

Some knowledge of different theories can also be of direct assistance in the translation process itself. At the beginning of this chapter, I presented a simple theory of the translation process: a problem is identified, possible solutions are generated, and one solution is selected. That is just a set of related names-for-things, not an absolute truth. In terms of the model, a plurality of theories can widen the range of potential solutions that translators think of. On the selective side, theories can also provide a range of reasons for choosing one solution and discarding the rest, as well as defending that solution when necessary. Some theories are very good for the *generative* side, since they criticize the more obvious options and make you think about a wider range of factors. Science-inspired, indeterminist, and cultural-translation approaches all fit the bill there. Other kinds of theory are needed for the *selective* moment of translating, when decisions have to be made between the available alternatives. That is where reflections on the basic purposes of translation, the norms of localization, and risk management could provide guidelines.

1.6 How should translation theories be studied?

Since all translators theorize, it would be quite wrong to separate theory from the practice of which it is already a part. The best uses of theory are in active discussions about different ways of solving very specific translation problems. Teachers can promote that kind of discussion on the basis of translations that students have already done. Hopefully they will find that, at a few rich points, some students disagree with others. Get those groups to debate the point, then you suggest a few appropriate terms and concepts once the students have demonstrated their need for those things. In this way, students come to theories only when they find they need them. Classes on individual sets of theories might then be built on that foundation in practice.

Unfortunately, our education institutions tend to separate theory from practice, often demanding a separate course in 'translation theory'. If necessary, that can be done. However, the theories and their implications should

still be drawn out from a series of practical tasks, structured as discovery processes. This book has been designed to allow that kind of use. Toward the end of each chapter, I list some frequent arguments, most of which do not have any clear resolution. I hope those notes might lead to further debate. Then, at the end of each chapter, I suggest some projects and activities that can be carried out in class or given as assignments. I usually provide no solutions to the problems; in most cases, there *are* no entirely correct solutions. Of course, the examples should always be adapted for use in a particular class. More important, the practical activities should be integrated into the learning process; they could come at the *beginning* of a class and then lead into theoretical reflection, rather than follow the theory as a possible application. Work bottom-up, from problem-solving to ideas, rather than top-down, from fixed theories to examples.

In a sense, the challenge of this book is to work against its fixed written form, since here I give explanations first and applications second. The real learning of theory, even for the self-learner, should be in dialogue and debate.

Summary

This chapter has started from idea that translators theorize as they translate, and that this initial theorization can eventually lead to formalized theories. Two problems then emerge. First, formal theories become increasingly separated from translation practice. To overcome that separation, one solution is to use a dynamic, comparative, and evidence-oriented testing of theories in translation practice or in the classroom. In the process, this testing should widen the range of alternatives available to the translator. Second, as different ways of seeing and defining translation evolve, the proponents of one theory may simply not understand the principles of another. One of the aims of this book is to overcome such misunderstandings. Yet a position is taken in that play of differences: the theories most explored here concern the translation concept that emerged in Europe from the Early Modern period and that has since been disseminated as a fellow traveller of modernity. This book is by no means neutral or universal in vision.

2 Equivalence

This chapter starts with the idea that something we say in one language *can* have the same value as its translations into other languages. The relation between the start text and each translation is then one of equivalence ('equal value'), no matter whether the relation is at the level of form, function, or anything in between. Equivalence does not say that languages are the same; it just says that some *values* can be the same. Many theories share that assumption. For some, the things of equal value exist *prior* to the act of translation. On that view, it makes no difference whether you translate from language A into language B or vice versa. That kind of equivalence is closely allied with linguistic analyses that compare the way different languages can express the same thing in different ways. Alternatively, equivalence can be seen as something that is operative in the translation situation itself. It is what many translators, clients, and translation-users *believe* about translation: it can be seen as a relation between texts, as an aim in the mind of the translator, as a promise the translator makes to the receiver, and as an assumption the receiver makes when approaching a text as a translation. The concept of equivalence should be appreciated in all that complexity.

> The **main points** covered in this chapter are:
>
> - Equivalence is a relation of 'equal value' between a start-text segment and a target-text segment.
> - Equivalence can be established on any linguistic level, from form to function.
> - Structuralist linguistics, especially of the kind that saw languages as worldviews, sometimes considered equal value to be theoretically impossible.

- Theories of equivalence solved that problem by working at levels lower than language systems, focusing on contextual signification rather than systemic meaning.
- The idea of equivalence was applied in text comparisons but can also be seen as a *belief* held by translators and the receivers of translations.
- The claim that texts in different languages are equivalent assumes that the languages themselves can ultimately have the same value. This assumption can be dated from the Early Modern period in the West.

The term 'equivalence' basically says that texts or text segments in different languages can have equal ('equi') value ('valence'). The word has nevertheless been interpreted in many different ways. Worse, its meanings are frequently mixed up, with disastrous consequences.

For some theorists writing in Russian from the 1930s, the word *ekvivalent* referred to cases where **two expressions in different languages matched each other entirely**. In Smirnov and Alekseev (1934), this kind of equivalence was opposed to 'substitution', which covered all the ways a text can be *transformed* in the process of translation. So there was equivalence as 'matching' and then a lot of changes that could be made. The same general meaning can be seen in later writers in Russian, including Retsker (1950) and Sobolev (1950):

> What is exact translation? If we are talking about a separate word, for example, *stul* [chair], it looks like it will be enough to substitute it with its French, English, and German equivalents [*ekvivalent*]: *chaise, chair, Stuhl*, etc. But are there always the right equivalents? Those who compile dictionaries know very well that this is not at all the case.
> (Sobolev 1950: 141, trans. Nune Ayvazyan)

Yes indeed, we would have to take a close look at the chairs in question – not all chairs are the same! But there you have it: the Russian term for equivalence did mean exact matching, at least as an ideal. But none of these scholars ever said that their narrow kind of equivalence was *all* there was to translation; they had other words for the changes that translators have to make.

Outside of Russian, one does find the word 'equivalence' sometimes being used to refer to an ideal matching of this kind (for example in Jakobson 1959/2021 and Quine 1960: 27). But then this same word **'equivalence' started being used in an entirely different way**. This is the origin of a thousand misunderstandings.

You can track the change in the work of the French linguists Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1972), who compared French and English. In their

introduction, the linguists are driving along the highway and they ask 'Is LENTEMENT ['slow' in French] really the equivalent of SLOW?' (1958/ 1972: 18), which implies that 'equivalence' refers to the two words matching up exactly as traffic signs. But then, in the very same book, they use the same French word *équivalence* to describe situations where two *very different idioms* express the same idea: the English idiom 'like a bull in a china shop' is presented as the equivalent of 'comme un chien dans un jeu de quilles' (like a dog in a game of skittles), since both give the idea of a rough intruder breaking everything. What has happened here? The same word 'equivalence' was now being used to describe the way translators radically *change texts* in order to achieve the same value. This sense of *transformation-based equivalence* would then be the one used in most texts in English, especially Nida (1964) and Catford (1965). That is, 'equivalence' took on roughly the same meaning that 'substitution' had had for the Russians from the 1930s. Hence the confusion!

Before we get to the examples, let me finish the story (further details are in Ayvazyan and Pym 2016). What happened then was that the theorists in Russian began to adopt the transformation-based sense of 'equivalence', starting from Barkhudarov (1975: 13). So these days there is general agreement among translation theorists, at least in Russian and other European languages, that a theory of equivalence concerns the ways translators *change* texts. It is not a mode of thought that supposes that all languages somehow correspond to each other in a one-to-one way. After all, if languages really did correspond like that, there would be no great need for translators and therefore nothing to theorize about.

2.1 Equivalence as transformation, aim, and promise

Most discussions of equivalence actually concern cultural differences. For instance, Friday the 13th is an unlucky day in English-language cultures but not traditionally in most other cultures. In China, the unlucky number is four, not thirteen, and in Spanish, the unlucky day is *Tuesday* the 13th. This means that when you translate the name of that day, you have to know exactly what kind of information is required. If you are just referring to the calendar, then Friday will do; if you are talking about bad luck, then a better translation in Spanish would probably be *martes 13* (Tuesday the 13th). The world is full of such examples. The color of death is mostly black in the West, mostly white in the East. A nodding head means agreement in western Europe disagreement in Turkey. You can find similar examples in the cultures you know about. The expressions are different, but the functions seem to be the same, or vice versa.

Understood in this way, the idea of equivalence says that **a translation can have the same value** as some aspect of a corresponding start text. Sometimes the value is on the level of form (two words translated by two words), sometimes it is reference (Friday is always the day before Saturday), sometimes it

is function (the function 'bad luck on 13' corresponds to Friday in English and Tuesday in Spanish). The idea does not say exactly what kind of value is supposed to be the same in each case; it just says that equal value can be achieved on one level or another.

The Scottish linguist **John Catford** (1965) pointed out that equivalence need not be on all language levels at once: it can be 'rank-bound'. You might therefore strive for equivalence to the sounds of a text, to a word, to a phrase, to a sentence, to a semantic function, and so on – those levels are the 'ranks'. Catford recognized that a translator might choose to work at just one level, for example giving a phonetic transcription of a whole text, but he saw that most translating is 'free' or 'unbounded' in the sense that it operates on several levels on different occasions:

> Usually, but not always, there is sentence-level equivalence, but in the course of a text, equivalences may shift up or down the rank-scale, often being established at ranks lower than the sentence.
>
> (Catford 1965: 75–76)

For example, a translator might opt for phonetic equivalence when writing *guanxi* as a translation, then immediately switch to sentence-level equivalence for the rest of the paragraph, then explain a semantic function in a footnote, and so on. Catford's idea of equivalence accounts for all those kinds of solutions.

The Russian linguist **Leonid Barkhudarov** roughly followed Catford in this use of equivalence. He nevertheless saw it from a slightly different perspective, insisting more vigorously that something in the two texts must remain the same and is thus **invariant**:

> The purpose of the linguistic theory of translation is the scientific description of the process of translation as an interlingual transformation, that is, the transformation of a text in one language into an equivalent text in another language. […] What makes us consider a translated text equivalent to its original? […] When a text in the start language is substituted by a text in the target language, there has to remain a certain invariant. The degree of the preservation of this invariant determines the degree of equivalence of the target text to the start text.
>
> (Barkhudarov 1975: 6–9; trans. Nune Ayvazyan)

The translator can make numerous changes to a text, and there can be differences all over the place, but for Barkhudarov, if there is no invariant, then the text is simply not a translation. You might like to try this out on examples like the musical *West Side Story* (1957), which can be seen as a translation of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (1597): everything is different, but the basic plot remains invariant. Of course, most of the translations we

are asked to produce require considerably more equivalence than that, but it is still possible to see almost all kinds of cultural products, from comics to architecture, as partial translations of other cultural products.

The Canadian translator and translation scholar **Brian Mossop** (2016) goes a little further when he claims that most professional translators aim for as much invariance as possible. They are 'oriented toward sameness of meaning except in a few passages where they vary meaning to make their translations receivable' (2016: 329). Whereas the older theories were based on comparing texts, Mossop's approach is focused on the translator's mental state, on what Mossop thinks people are striving to do as they translate. He calls this state '**invariance orientation**', perhaps because by the time he was writing, in 2016, 'equivalence' had become such a misunderstood word that it could not be used with clarity in mainstream translation theory. But the idea was still there: equivalence assumes invariance.

The same thing can be seen from yet another perspective. The British translation theorist **Andrew Chesterman** (2001: 149) views translating as a kind of implicit promise that the translator makes to the receivers of the translation: 'I hereby promise that this text represents the original in some relevant way' (cf. Tymoczko 1999: 110). The word 'representation' here could be a synonym for equivalence (although Chesterman also talks about 'similarity') and the 'relevant way' sounds like any of the many levels on which invariance can be claimed. Of course, there can be many other kinds of implicit promises made in a text, such as an undertaking to entertain, to instruct, or to support a community. But this particular promise, the one assuring relevant representation, would have to be made if the text is to be considered a translation.

Imagine you are applying for a job and you ask a translator to render your curriculum vitae or personal résumé into a language you do not know. The translator then says, 'I'll just change everything to make it sound better, okay?' What are you going to think? You might want the translator to promise at least some basic level of invariance, if only so your future employer will have an idea of who you are. That is, you might expect some degree of equivalence.

2.2 Dynamic equivalence as naturalness

Once equivalence was seen in terms of transformation, it was not long before scholars started finding several different *kinds* of equivalence. The American linguist and Bible scholar **Eugene Nida**, for example, might have looked at the Spanish *martes 13* and immediately seen that there are two ways of rendering it. He initially named these as two different kinds of equivalence.

On the one hand, if you choose *Tuesday the 13th*, that would be '**formal equivalence**', since it mimics the form of what is said in Spanish. That is the kind of solution that a Bible translator might use when going into a culture that has no words for Christian concepts. When translating into the Arrernte

language in Central Australia in the late nineteenth century, Lutheran missionaries used this approach to invent new compounds. For example, *tjalka* (flesh) plus *erama* (to become) gives *tjalkerama*, to become flesh, incarnation (Hersey 2006: 17). Nida (1970) later took to calling this approach 'formal correspondence', thus leaving the term 'equivalence' free for the more transformational sense.

On the other hand, if you choose *Friday the 13th*, that would be '**dynamic equivalence**' for Nida (1964) since it activates the same or similar cultural function. The Lutheran missionaries in Central Australia noted that the Arrernte word *altjira* named an eternal totem spirit in the night sky and so they used that word for 'God' (Moore 2019). In doing so, they assumed that the Arrernte culture had a concept of an eternal transcendent being, so the one 'function' could be expressed in two different languages. That said, not everyone is sure the idea of a high god was in the culture before the missionaries arrived. This means that dynamic equivalence can be used to hide or repress cultural differences.

Since Nida's main concern was that the Bible should be accessible to all, he was very much in favour of dynamic equivalence. At the same time, he recognized there were numerous instances where formal correspondence still had to be used, so he was not arguing that an entire translation had to be done in one way or the other. His preference for dynamic equivalence also came with frequent references to what was 'natural' in a language or culture. This can be seen in the following definition of translation:

> Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the *closest natural equivalent* of the source-language message.
>
> (Nida and Taber 1969: 12; italics mine)

In many cases, this works. There are matching terms for parts of the body and basic kinship structures, for example. In other cases, the search for what is 'natural' is rather more tortuous, as in the example of *altjira* in Central Australia. Nida's test for naturalness is based on an idea of **equivalent effect**: 'the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message' (Nida 1964: 159). If New Testament texts had an effect on people in first-century Palestine, they should somehow have the same effect on readers all around the world today. At one level, this is very basic: the text helped produce converts then and should do so now. On almost every other level, though, the idea of 'equivalent effect' might require quite extreme transformations. Nida uses the example of Paul the Apostle's instruction that the members of the various Christian communities should 'greet each other with a holy kiss [φιλήματι ἁγίῳ]' (Romans 16:16). Nida notes that this could be translated literally, perhaps along with a note that a kiss on the cheek was a standard greeting at the time. But the idea of men kissing men is still not considered very natural by many churches in our day, so Nida commends

the 'dynamic equivalence' rendition as 'give one another a hearty handshake all round' (1964: 160). And handshaking is indeed what many Christian churches make us do at services these days. It has become natural, in a way.

The idea of naturalness is very tricky. When the Arrernte in Central Australia were told that the Christian god was called 'Altjira', that must have seemed extremely *unnatural*: the missionaries were changing the meanings of their words. With time, though, *altjira* became their common word for God, so the totem spirit in the sky took on another name, *tnankara*, which they borrowed from the neighbouring Luritja language and has now become natural, in a way (Kenny ed. 2018: 164). It is very hard to pretend that the passage from one word to the other was entirely benign or neutral. The act of translation, under whatever kind of equivalence, can enact a massive disruption of language and culture. An apparent naturalness is sometimes best seen as the result of a long process, for better or for worse.

2.3 Equivalence vs structuralism

In the second half of the twentieth century, translation theorists mostly dealt with equivalence against the backdrop of structuralist linguistics. A strong line of thought leading from Wilhelm von Humboldt to Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf had argued that **different languages express different views of the world**. This connected with the views of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, who in the early years of the twentieth century explained how languages form systems that are meaningful only in terms of the differences between the items. The word *sheep*, for example, has a value in English because it does not designate any other animal and it does not refer to *mutton*, which is the meat, not the animal (the difference between names for animals and names for their meat is systemic in English) (Saussure 1916/ 1974: 115). In French, on the other hand, the word *mouton* designates both the animal and the meat, both *sheep* and *mutton*. So the words *sheep* and *mouton* could not be strictly equivalent, since they operate differently in their respective language systems.

The relations between linguistic items were seen as 'structures'; languages were considered sets of such structures (and hence different 'systems'). **Structuralism** said we should study those relations rather than analyze the things themselves. Do not look at actual sheep; do not ask what we want to do with those sheep; do not ask about the universal ethics of eating meat. Just look at the relations, the structures, that make language meaningful. If, according to structuralist linguistics, the words *sheep* and *mouton* have very different values, they cannot translate each other with any degree of certainty. In fact, since different languages cut the world up in very different ways, no words will ever be completely translatable out of their language system. Translation should simply not be possible.

The Russian linguist **Roman Jakobson** (1959/2021) was highly structuralist when he claimed that Germans see death as a man (*der Tod*, masculine

gender) whereas the Russians see it as a woman (смерть, feminine gender) because the languages attribute those genders. Similarly, says Jakobson, 'the Russian painter Repin was baffled as to why Sin had been depicted as a woman by German artists: he did not realize that 'sin' is feminine in German (*die Sünde*), but masculine in Russian (rpex)' (1959/2021: 156). This could be the way our languages shape the way we perceive the world. The masculine sins of Russian cannot really be a full equivalent of the feminine sins of German, and their rewards in death are similarly non-equivalent. Does each language really determine the way these things are seen?

That kind of structuralist linguistics proved to be of remarkably little help to anyone trying to understand how translations work in the world. As the French translation theorist Georges Mounin argued in the early 1960s, 'if the current theses on lexical, morphological, and syntactic structures are accepted, one must conclude that translation is impossible. And yet translators exist, they produce, and their products are found to be useful' (1963: 5; my translation). Either translation did not exist, or the dominant linguistic theories were inadequate.

Think for a moment about the kinds of arguments that could be used here. What should we say, for example, to someone who claims that the whole system of Spanish culture (not just its language) gives meaning to *martes 13* (Tuesday the 13th) in a way that no English system could ever reproduce? Or what do we say to Poles who once argued that, since the milk they bought had to be boiled before it could be drunk, their name for milk could never be translated by the normal English term *milk* (cf. Hoffman 1989)? The same for *guanxi*, which my Chinese colleagues tell me I will never really understand. If the structuralist argument is pushed to the limit, we can never be sure of understanding anything beyond our own linguistic and cultural systems, let alone translating the little that we do understand.

Theories of transformational equivalence then got to work. They tried to explain something that the structuralist linguistics of the day did not particularly want to explain. Here are some of the arguments that were used:

Signification: Within linguistic approaches, close attention was paid to what is meant by 'meaning'. **Saussure** had distinguished between a word's 'value' (which it has in relation to the language system) and its 'signification' (which it has in actual use). To cite a famous example from chess, the *value* of the knight is the sum of all the moves it is allowed to make, whereas the *signification* of an actual knight depends on the position it occupies at any stage of a particular game. So 'value' would depend on the language system (which Saussure called *langue*), while 'signification' would be the actual use of language (which Saussure termed *parole*). For theorists like the Romanian-German linguist **Eugenio Coșeriu** (1978), if translation could not reproduce the structural value, it might still convey the signification. French, for example, has no word for *shallow* (as in 'shallow water') but the signification can be conveyed by the two words *peu profound* ('not deep'). The language structures may be different, but equivalence is still possible.

Language use: Some theorists then took a closer look at the level of language use (*parole*) rather than at the language system (*langue*). Saussure had claimed that there could be no systematic scientific study of *parole*, but translation theorists like the Swiss-German **Werner Koller** (1979/2020) were quite prepared to disregard the warning. If something like equivalence could be demonstrated and analyzed, then there were systems beyond that of *langue*.

Componential analysis: A related approach, more within lexical semantics, was to list all the functions and values associated with a start-text item and then see how many of them are found on the target side. This kind of componential analysis might analyze *mouton* as '+ animal, + meat,–young meat (*agneau*)', *mutton* as '+ meat,–young meat (lamb)', and *sheep* as '+ animal'. Then we would make our translation selections in accordance with the components pertinent to the particular situation in the start text. Problem solved.

'**Sense**': Other theorists said that equivalence was a relation to something that stood outside of the start and target texts. This would technically be a *tertium comparationis*, a third element of comparison. The translator would go from the start text to this thing, then from the thing to the corresponding target text. So you would go from 'holy kiss' to the cultural act of a normal greeting, and then to 'hearty handshake'. The Parisian theorist of interpreting **Danica Seleskovitch** argued a translation can only be natural if translators succeed in forgetting entirely about the form of the start text and 'listen to the sense', or '**deverbalize**' the text so that they are only aware of the sense, which can be expressed in all languages (cf. 6.1.1 below). This is the basis of what is known as the theory of sense (*théorie du sens*) (Seleskovich and Lederer 1984). From our perspective here, it is a process-based model of natural equivalence.

All of those ideas named or implied a relation of equivalence, and they did so in ways that defended the existence of translation in the face of structuralist linguistics.

2.4 Relevance theory

As these ideas about equivalence progressed, so too did linguistics: structuralism gave way to rather more interesting approaches. Transformational grammar was obviously of direct interest to theorists of equivalence, especially Nida, and it helped develop early machine translation systems: equivalence was achieved through transformations. Another kind of linguistics of interest to translation was pragmatics. Building on the work of Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), the field developed as a way of studying how language is used to perform acts in specific situations. This meant some linguists were talking about the smaller situations of actual use that translation theorists like Koller were also groping towards.

The German linguist and Bible translation consultant **Ernst-August Gutt** (1991/2014) applies pragmatics to translation. He looks at the theories of equivalence and says that, in principle, there is no limit to the kinds of

equivalence that can be established. Every text, in fact every translation decision, might need its own theory of equivalence. This means that all these theories are seriously flawed since, in principle, a theory should have fewer terms than the object it accounts for.

To overcome this difficulty, Gutt looks closely at the kinds of things people *believe* about translations, perhaps in the vein of the kind of promise that Chesterman describes but this time from the perspective of the receiver. He is interested in cases where the receiver knows the text is a translation ('overt translations') and the receiver is concerned with the context of the start text ('direct translation'). An advertisement for a detergent, for example, might have been translated but that is usually of no concern to the receiver, who hopefully wants to know how well the detergent cleans. For Gutt, when we receive a direct translation, we think we understand what receivers of the original understood, and our belief does not depend on any comparison of the linguistic details. Equivalence thereby becomes a belief in '**complete interpretative resemblance**', in the sense that the way one receiver interprets the translation is supposed to resemble the way another receiver interpreted the start text. This is like Nida's 'equivalent effect' argument, but here it is a belief based on a process of reception. It could be like Seleskovitch's 'sense', except that it here is not wholly located outside of language.

Gutt regards language as a weak representation of meaning, no more than a set of 'communicative clues' that receivers have to interpret. When he sets out to explain how interpretation is carried out, he draws on the concept of **implicature**, formulated by the philosopher **H. Paul Grice** (1975). The basic idea is that we do not communicate by language alone, but by the relation between language and context. Consider the following example analyzed by Gutt:

> Start text: Mary: 'The back door is open.'
> Start context: If the back door is open, thieves can get in.
> Intended implicature: We should close the back door.

If we know about the context, we realize the start text is a suggestion or instruction, not just an observation. What is being said (the actual words of the start text) is not what is being meant (the implicature produced by these words interacting with a specific context).

Looking at the above example, if we were going to translate the start text, we would have to know whether the receiver of the translation has access to the context. If we can be sure of that access, we might just translate the words of the text, producing something like formal equivalence ('The back door is open', and the receiver can figure out the consequences). If not, we might prefer to translate the implicature, somehow rendering the 'function', what the words apparently mean ('We should close the back door', and let's not try any fancy language). The notion of implicature can thus give us two kinds of equivalence, as in many of the previous theories.

Gutt, however, does not really want those two kinds of equivalence to be on the same footing. He asks how Mary's utterance should be reported (or translated). There are at least two possibilities:

Report 1: 'The back door is open.'
Report 2: 'We should close the back door.'

Gutt points out that both these reports will be successful if the receiver has access to the start context; we can thus establish equivalence on either of those levels. What happens, though, when the new receiver does *not* have access to the start context? Let us say we do not know about the possibility of thieves; perhaps we are more interested in the children being able to get in when they come home from school. If the reporter is working in this new context, only Report 2, the one that renders the implicature, is likely to be successful. It will tell us that the back door should be closed, even if there are doubts about the reason. Gutt, however, prefers to allow interpretation in terms of the *start* context only. He would opt for Report 1. For him, something along the lines of Report 2 would have no reason to be a translation – it has the same status as 'We should buy this detergent'.

Gutt's application of relevance theory might be considered idiosyncratic on this point. It could be attributed to his particular concern with Bible translation. In insisting that interpretation should be in terms of the start context, Gutt effectively discounts much of the 'dynamic equivalence' that Nida wanted to use. He insists that the original context is the one that counts and that it 'makes the explication of implicatures both unnecessary and undesirable' (1991/2014: 175). In the end, 'it is the audience's responsibility to make up for such differences' (175). Make the receiver work! In terms of our example, the receiver of Report 2 should perhaps be smart enough to think about the thieves. Only when there is a serious risk of misinterpretation should the translator inform the audience about contextual differences, perhaps by adding '…because there might be thieves'.

At this point, equivalence has become quite different from the simple comparing of languages or the counting of words. The application of relevance theory shows equivalence to be something that operates more on the level of the thought processes activated in the reception of a translation. That is a very profound shift of focus.

2.5 Where did equivalence come from?

We have seen that the idea of equivalence as transformation has been approached from several different perspectives: as a degree of invariance between two texts (Catford, Barkhudarov), as an aim in the translator's mindset (Mossop), as a translator's implicit promise to receivers (Chesterman), as a relation between two reception effects (Nida), and as a belief that receivers can have about translation (Gutt). There are many more theorists of equivalence than those we have

seen here – I have focused on just a few different voices, and there will be a couple more in the next chapter. I would like to close with a question for which I have no definitive answer: Where did the theories of equivalence come from?

The German translation scholar **Wolfram Wilss** (1982: 134–135) suspected that the basic idea must have come from mathematics. Unfortunately, there are very few references to mathematics in the texts. The term 'equivalence' does appear in the early research on machine translation, but not in any mathematical sense. One has to think more critically and more historically.

It could be that the prominent role played here by Bible translators, especially Nida, is no accident. The basic pillars of equivalence could be Judeo-Christian. From Judaism, we have the prohibition to add to or take away from the text; from Greek idealism we have the separation of the spirit from the word (as in Paul the Apostle), giving the great binarisms of Western translation theory – Jewish thinkers like Derrida and Meschonnic do not accept that separation of spirit from word. Those features might make equivalence not just European, but specifically Christian European.

Unfortunately, the history of translation indicates little continuity from the Hebrew, Greek, and Roman views on translation to equivalence-based theories of translation. There was something in the way, something that was also based on Christian theology.

In European tradition, medieval writers on translation had *no* developed concept of equivalence. The concept is just as it is hard to find there as anywhere beyond Europe. Much of medieval thinking instead assumed a **hierarchy of languages**, where some languages were considered intrinsically better than others. At the top were the languages of divine inspiration (Biblical Hebrew, New Testament Greek, sometimes Arabic, later sometimes Sanskrit), then the languages of divinely inspired translation (the Greek of the Septuagint, the Latin of the Vulgate), then the national vernaculars, then the patois or regional dialects. Most translations went downward in the hierarchy, from Hebrew or Greek to Latin, then from Latin to the vernaculars, and the church then gave spoken translations from the pulpit in the patois. This usually meant that translation was seen as a way of **enriching the target language** with the values of a superior start language. A quite different kind of hierarchy can be found in Early Imperial China (Lung 2011), where interpreters were seen as mediating between inferior languages and the superior language of the Chinese court – the asymmetric relation between languages would similarly make equivalence unthinkable. Chan (2004: 3) remarks that, more generally, 'Chinese thinking on translation remained for some time strongly influenced by an attitude which saw the target culture as infinitely superior', which, he claims, in turn led to a marginalization of translation itself.

In Europe, the hierarchy gradually disappeared with the **development of national languages**, when Italian, French, and Spanish, for example, were considered just as good as Latin and Greek. That change can be dated with some precision. In the fourteenth century, Dante was adamant that translation meant inevitable loss: 'nothing which is harmonized by the bond of

the Muse can be translated from its own language into another, without breaking all its sweetness and harmony' (Alighieri 1307/1887: 28). But in the sixteenth century, Luther (1530) looked to German speakers for natural equivalents, not to the Bible in Latin, while Vives (1533) saw all languages as being different from each other and argued that one could translate for *both* form (*verba*) and meaning (*sensus*), and Boscán in 1534 loudly proclaimed that his Spanish translation of Castiglione's Italian *Il Cortegiano* had 'moved it from one vernacular into another that is perhaps just as good' (in Santoyo 1987: 59). None of these Early Modern writers used the term 'equivalence', but the ideological grounding for it was there.

What is intriguing is that between these two moments in European intellection history we have Gutenberg's printing press operating from 1455. Before printing, the start text was not a stable entity: texts tended to undergo constant incremental changes in the process of copying (each copyist adapted and changed things) and those small changes followed the numerous variations of regional dialects, prior to the standardization of national vernaculars. There was usually not just one 'text' waiting to be translated and not just one standard language in which the text was held. Why try to be equivalent if there is nothing stable to be equivalent to? **Printing and the rise of standardized vernaculars** would seem to have helped the idea that a translation could attain a value equal to that of a start text – there was now a fixed text to be equal to. Following this same logic, the relative demise of equivalence as a concept might correspond to the electronic technologies by which contemporary texts are constantly evolving, primarily through constant updating (think of websites, software, and product documentation). Without a fixed text, to what should a translation be equivalent?

2.6 Some virtues of equivalence-based theories

Equivalence is the basic idea in terms of which all the other sets of theories in this book will be positioned. To that extent, its role is foundational, even though it itself had many sources in the past. Almost all the later theories will be saying bad things about equivalence. To seek something of a balance, let me list a few of the *good* things that can be said about it:

• In a context where structuralism seemed to make translation theoretically impossible, theories of equivalence defended translation as a vital social practice. In fact, they made equivalence so possible that they formulated several ways of achieving it.
• Although ideas like 'same value', 'sense', and 'function' are very idealistic, they do correspond to widespread *beliefs* about what a translation is. If there is a consensus among professionals, clients, and receivers that a translator seeks equivalence (no matter what the actual terms used), then a theory that expresses that view is serving a social function. Only when

we have terms for a consensus can we start to test its viability and perhaps try to modify it.

- Understood in terms of controlled transformation, theories of equivalence generally recognize that translators have a broad range of possible renditions to choose from and that the factors influencing their choices are not always restricted to the start text. To that extent, equivalence can become an invitation to creativity.
- All these theoretical texts are full of examples, collected by people who loved languages. Instead of just telling translators how to translate, the theorists were discovering the many different ways people actually do translate. That opening to empiricism fed into the analysis of solution types and the science-inspired literary approaches that we will meet in the next chapters.
- Perhaps because it is so entrenched in current translation practice, equivalence has proved remarkably hard to get rid of. As Schjoldager (2020: 91) claims, and as we will soon see, 'the notion of equivalence has played and still plays an essential role in most translation theories'.

2.7 Frequently had arguments

Many of the historical problems with equivalence will be dealt with in the next few chapters. Here I briefly discuss a few of the arguments that have concerned equivalence as such.

2.7.1 Equivalence presupposes symmetry between languages

Mary Snell-Hornby (1988: 22) criticized the concept of equivalence as presenting 'an illusion of symmetry between languages'. We can now see that her criticism might be valid with respect to some aspects of theories that assume a common naturalness (as in some of Nida) but definitely not with respect to anything concerning transformation and language ranks. Even the early theorists of equivalence as matching always had at least one other term for translation as transformation. As for the promotion of an 'illusion', the tables turn as soon as we accept that much of what users believe about translations is indeed illusory, and that the illusions can be analyzed as having a social and psychological force. That is, the illusions come not just from the theories, but from social usage itself.

2.7.2 Theories of equivalence make the start text superior

This is a criticism in the spirit of Vermeer (1989, 1989/2021), from the *Skopos* approach that we will meet soon. If we ask what a translation is 'equivalent to', the answer usually involves something in the start text. That text would be the determining factor in the equivalence relation, and theories of equivalence do tend to regard the start text as having some

kind of priority over the translation. On the other hand, as soon as you recognize the *plurality* of possible equivalents, some further criteria are required if the translator is to make a guided choice between them. Gutt's use of relevance theory touches on those further criteria, making the start text just one element alongside the context, and his theory is still based on equivalence.

2.7.3 The tests of equivalence have no psychological basis

Methods like componential analysis or linguistic ranks can to some extent describe the equivalents that we find, but they cannot claim to represent the way translators think. As argued by Jean Delisle (1988: 72–73), they are linguistic explanations without any reference to translators' cognitive processes. This means that their use in pedagogical situations could be misleading and even counterproductive. Similar questions should be asked about the empirical status of Seleskovitch's 'deverbalization' and indeed about broad assumptions concerning the way translations are received.

2.7.4 New information cannot be 'natural'

If translations are supposed to bring information that is *new* to a language or culture, then they cannot be expected to be 'natural'. Since new ideas and techniques will require new terms and expressions, those translations are going to be **marked** in ways that their start texts are not. This argument usually becomes a question for terminology: should the translation use loans from the start language, or should new terms be invented from the resources considered 'natural' in the target language? The ideology of natural equivalence would certainly prefer the latter, but the speed of technological change is pushing translators to the use of loans and the like, particularly from English. There is little evidence that whole language systems are suffering directly because of it. Languages tend to die when they receive no translations at all.

2.7.5 Equivalence hides imperialism

If a translation brings a culture a new way of thought, any attempt to present that thought as being 'natural' is fundamentally duplicitous and quite possibly imperialistic. Can Nida really pretend that the Christian God was already in the non-Christian cultures into whose languages the Bible has been translated? In dynamic equivalence, the nature of the start text is concealed, the readers are deceived, and we have an ideological 'illusion of symmetry' far stronger than anything Snell-Hornby was criticizing. At that point, translation has been reduced to the problem of marketing a product (for criticisms of Nida along these lines, see Meschonnic 1973, 2003, 2011 and Gutt 1991/ 2014).

2.7.6 Naturalness promotes parochialism

The American translator and critic **Lawrence Venuti** (particularly 1998) is concerned with the effects that apparent naturalness ('fluency') has on the way major cultures see the rest of the world. If all cultures are made to sound like contemporary fluent English, then Anglo-American culture will believe that the whole world is like itself. For Venuti, a non-natural ('resistant') translation should use forms that are *not frequent* in the target language, whether or not those forms are equivalent to anything in the start text. At that point, the argument primarily concerns how one should write, and only secondarily how one should translate.

Theorists of equivalence will probably not win all these debates. They should nevertheless be able to hold their own for a while. They might even find a few blind spots in the theories that came later.

Summary

This chapter started by defending equivalence against those who misleadingly reduce it to a claim that all languages are structured the same way. The chapter nevertheless finishes with a rather less enthusiastic assessment. We have seen that the common-sense notion of 'equal value' gained intellectual validity in opposition to the structuralist belief in languages as worldviews; we have noted how 'natural equivalents' can be illusory and highly subject to change. Once equivalence is seen as an aim in the translator's mind, as a promise to the receiver, or as a receiver's belief in 'interpretative resemblance', it can be valued as a social fiction, particularly to the extent that it becomes cost-effective in the general practice of cross-cultural communication. Although very few theorists of equivalence would wholly share that view (most think they are describing linguistic facts), the idea of a functional illusion can make the concept of equivalence compatible with some of the other approaches that we will be seeing in the next few chapters.

Sources and further reading

The fourth edition of *The Translation Studies Reader* (Venuti 2021) has only a text by Nida to represent equivalence. Vinay and Darbelnet and Catford were in earlier editions but disappeared, which might indicate how far mainstream theory has moved away from the ideas closest to professional practice. Munday et al. (2022) cover the polarities of equivalence in the chapter on 'equivalence and equivalent effect'. A good library should have Catford (1965), Vinay and Darbelnet (1958 and subsequent editions; the English translation was published in 1995), and something of Nida (the general theory is in *Toward a Science of Translating*, 1964). Critics of equivalence are nowadays abundant. Very few of them, however, have taken the trouble to read the foundational texts in detail or to understand the intellectual climate in

which the ideas developed. For a taste of the arguments, one might fruitfully tackle Gutt's *Translation and Relevance* (1991/2014) and the first chapter of Venuti's *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995), which presents a rich mixture of argument and insinuation about the effects of equivalence. For a more virulent attack on Nida, Henri Meschonnic is available in English (2003, 2011).

Suggested projects and activities

1. Compare different translations (in the same language) of the one paragraph. If there is invariance, where? Is it between the translations or between each translation and the start text? Do the differences between the translations indicate different kinds of equivalence? Is there any evidence of different equivalence-maintaining strategies happening at different linguistic ranks?
2. This is a trick for teachers. Find a poem that has been creatively translated into the students' first language (hopefully a translation that does not challenge the concept of equivalence). Now present the translation as if it were the start text, and the start text as if it were the translation. Ask the class to evaluate the text that you have presented as a translation. Why will they tend to find the assumed translation *inferior* to what they believe the source to be? Why might this be so? (I have borrowed this activity from Andrew Chesterman; if it doesn't work, blame it on him.)
3. The whole class translates the same text into their first language. Then they see in what places in the text they all agree on the one equivalent, and in what places there are many different equivalents (this is an application of the choice-network analysis proposed by Campbell 2001). Do the places with many equivalents necessarily correspond to what is hardest to translate?
4. Take the same start text as in the previous activity. Now use an online machine translation system to do back-translations of it several times (for example, moving from English to Chinese and back to English then back to Chinese, for the one text). At what points does equivalence cease to work both ways? That is, when do we enter the ping-pong relation of equivalence, where we go back and forward between the same things? Why do we reach those points?
5. Each student writes a short text in their first language about a topic they are closely related to (the most wonderful moment in their life or perhaps the moment they were most frightened). Other students then translate those texts, ideally into *their* first language, if the class mixes languages. The first students receive their translations back and are asked to evaluate them. How do they feel about being translated? Do theories of equivalence have any relation to their feelings? Usually, no matter how accurate the translation, the experience will be felt to be more real in the start text. What might this say about equivalence as a promise and an expectation? What does it say about Dante's claim that translation involves loss?

6. As an extension of the previous activity, the translation is revised by a third student and by the author of the start text. Who makes the most changes to the translation? Why? What does this say about the nature of equivalence? Who has the right to judge what is equivalent?

7. Consider the gameshow *Who Wants to be a Millionaire?*, which started on British television in 1998 and spawned versions all over the world. In almost all languages, the translation of 'millionaire' is a million of whatever currency is involved. What are the exceptions? Why are they exceptions? Is this an application of cucumber theory (as explained in the Preface above)?

8. In the American poet Edgar Allan Poe's prose poem *Eureka* (1848) there is the following comment on 'Infinity': 'This, like 'God', 'spirit', and some other expressions of which the *equivalents* exist in all languages, is by no means the expression of an idea – but of an *effort at one*' (1848/2011: 18; italics mine). If an idea of the infinite exists in all cultures, can the different words for gods all be considered equivalents, as Poe seems to suggest? (By the way, this is the earliest reference to translation equivalence that I have found so far.)

9. The Prussian scholar and diplomat Wilhelm von Humboldt is commonly attributed with the idea that different languages express different worldviews, an idea that can be used in arguments against the possibility of equivalence. But was there a kind of basic equivalence at work when von Humboldt claimed that his humanism, unlike that of the Greeks and Romans, had 'the thought of respecting a person simply because they are a person' (1836: 22)? The principle is indeed a noble recognition of equal values – it is in the first article of the German constitution: 'Human dignity shall be inviolable'. But then consider what von Humboldt saw as the logical consequence:

> It is a splendid privilege of *our own day* to carry civilization into the remotest corners of the earth, to couple this endeavor with every undertaking, and to utilize power and means for the purpose, even apart from other ends. The operative principle here, of universal *humanity*, is an advance to which only our own age has truly ascended.
>
> (1836: 22, my translation, italics in the text)

If the equivalents do not exist, is it the duty of civilized cultures to bring them to the rest of the world, using any 'power and means' available?

3   Solutions

Theories of equivalence allow us to ask *how* translators can produce texts that in some respects share values with previous texts in other languages. Answers to that question refer to many different things: translators attempt to achieve equivalence by using different procedures, techniques, strategies, and sometimes methods. Here I look at a few of the typologies that have been proposed for those things. Since all these theories are based on comparisons between texts rather than on studies of what goes on in the translator's brain, I am focusing on what we see in the texts: the *solutions* that translators have come up with. The processes by which translators actually reach those solutions are for another day.

This chapter starts from the simplest typologies: the great binary oppositions that run right through Western translation theory (other traditions have worked with three or more). It then looks at typologies that became increasingly complex, finishing with those that have seven or so major solution types, which might be the most pedagogically useful.

The **main points** covered in this chapter are:

- There are usually more than just two ways of translating.
- Some theories describe the different ways in terms of three or so different *types of text* to be translated.
- Other theories say there is just *one* way of translating but that it can draw on many ways of solving translation problems.
- The most pedagogically useful typologies have about seven main solution types.
- The more traditional solution types respect invariance and can be seen as ways of establishing equivalence.

3.1 Only two kinds of translation?

We saw that Catford (1965) made a distinction between 'rank-bound' equivalence, where the translator works to find solutions on just one language level (word, phrase, clause, sentence, text, etc.), and 'unbounded' or 'free' equivalence, where the translator can move between language levels, in effect mixing different kinds of equivalents. This distinction between two types of translating has become a very strong tradition.

The German applied linguist **Juliane House** (2018: 14) explains that the basic recurring opposition is between 'literal' and 'free' translation. House says this opposition is found in European tradition as well as in the Chinese and Arabic worlds. This would seem to repeat Catford's distinction, except that there is no mention of equivalence or linguistic ranks. One supposes 'literal' means sticking as close as possible to the original text but adjusting for syntax and normal word choices. And then, 'free' means doing… what exactly? Whatever you like?

Let us think about this for a moment. I want to translate the Spanish sentence 'Me gustas'. A morpheme-for-morpheme rendition would be 'To me pleases [you]'. That is certainly rank-bound but is it literal? With a bit of adjustment, it can become 'To me you are pleasing', which is syntax-bound, and then 'I like you', which is proposition-bound, perhaps in more ways than one. Now, at which precise point did the literal version become free? And then, if we are truly free, why not translate the sentence as 'I think you're cute' or even 'I love you'. Is that what freedom means? How many risks can we take? Some of these translations can get you into a lot of trouble!

The main problem with the idea that there are just two kinds of translation is that one of those kinds, called 'free' or 'unbounded', usually includes a whole lot of different ways of translating. And if you look closely at the type called 'literal', you also find quite a few different possibilities. So why would anyone try to insist that there are just two ways of translating?

As House indicates, in European tradition, the general idea of having two ways of translating goes back at least to the Roman statesman and orator **Cicero**, who said you could translate like an interpreter (*ut interpres*) or like a public speaker (*ut orator*):

> For I translated the most famous orations of the two most eloquent orators from Attica […] I did not translate them as an interpreter, but as an orator, with the same ideas, forms and, as it were, figures, with language fitted to our usage.
>
> (Cicero 46CE/1949, trans. McElduff 2009: 133)

This is an opposition based on equivalence at different ranks. Cicero claims to seek equivalence on the level of ideas and forms, whereas he elsewhere characterizes the interpreter as working word for word (Cicero 45CE/2004: 69; cf. McElduff 2009: 134). Of course, there are other things happening here

as well. Cicero is working between Greek and Latin, two languages that, for him, had virtually the same standing; the unnamed interpreters were working with many different languages at a decidedly non-elitist level. In fact, the basic opposition could be between different reasons for translating: one kind develops eloquence for the speeches of a political elite, while the other would presumably be to get information across for more banal kinds of business. The distinction is not quite as simple as 'literal' versus 'free'.

Cicero's basic opposition surfaced again when the Roman poet and dramatist **Horace** later gave advice to budding playwrights: 'In ground open to all you will win private rights […] if you do not seek to render *word for word as a slavish translator*' (Horace *circa* 19 BCE/1929: 461, Loeb translation, italics mine). That is, *avoid* word-for-word, since it lacks creativity and allows interference from the foreign language (the line is often misinterpreted as supporting literalism). And then the Bible translator **Jerome** cited the authority of Cicero when he claimed to translate sense-for-sense, although not in the case of the Bible, where he said he worked word-for-word because 'even the syntax contains a mystery' (395 CE/1958: 137). Even though these claims may not correspond to actual translation practice, what interests me here is that the terms of the argument are not 'literal' versus 'free' but rather 'word' (*verba*) versus 'sense' (*sensum*). Further, when the translator decides to work on one level or the other, it could be due to the type of text: political speeches and plays are for 'sense' (Cicero, Horace), whereas sacred texts are for 'the word' (Jerome).

That basic binarism then bounces down through history with slight modifications. The nineteenth-century German preacher and translator **Friedrich Schleiermacher** (1813/1963) argued that translations could be either **foreignizing** (*verfremdend*) or **domesticating** (*verdeutschend*, 'Germanizing'). He famously described the two possible movements as follows:

> Either the translator leaves the author in peace, as much as possible, and moves the reader toward that author, or the translator leaves the reader in peace, as much as possible, and moves the author toward the reader.
>
> (1813/1963: 63; my translation)

Schleiermacher's preference was for the foreignizing option (*verfremdend*), whereas Cicero's was for the domesticating method (*ut orator*).

The same basic opposition appears in the work of the Bible scholar **Eugene Nida**. His 'formal equivalence' would be close to literalism, while 'dynamic equivalence' tries to recreate the function the words might have had in their original situation, which sounds like translating sense for sense. Would Nida say that translators are *free* to do whatever they like in order to make the text sound natural? Not really. Although he condoned the 'hearty handshake' to render a 'holy kiss', he did *not* support more extreme substitutions such as translating the 'lamb of God' as a 'seal of God' for Inuit cultures that

do not have lambs: 'one cannot dispense with a term for sheep or lambs, for these animals figure so largely in the entire sacrificial system' (Nida and Taber 1969: 111). (In previous editions of this book, I erroneously implied that Nida supported the reference to 'seals', but he was not quite so liberal – dynamic equivalence was not for all cases.)

A similar dichotomy is found in the English translation critic **Peter Newmark** (1988), who distinguished between '**semantic**' and '**communicative**' translation. The semantic kind looks *back* to the formal values of the start text and retains them as much as possible; the communicative kind looks *forward* to the needs of the new addressee, adapting to them as much as necessary. Newmark's preferences tended to lie on the 'semantic' side, especially with respect to what he called 'authoritative texts'.

These dichotomies are mostly presented as different ways translators can work. Grand binarisms can also be based on the ways a translation *represents* its anterior text. For example, the Czech theorist **Jiří Levý** (1963/2011) distinguished between '**illusory**' and '**anti-illusory**' translations. When you read an 'illusory' translation, you are not aware it is a translation: it has been so well adapted to the target culture that it might as well be a text written anew. This is very common criterion: a translation is successful when you do not know it is a translation. An 'anti-illusory' translation, on the other hand, retains some marked features of the start text, letting you know it is a translation. The basic opposition has been reformulated by a number of others. **Juliane House** (1997) refers to '**overt**' and '**covert**' translations, where 'overt' means receivers are aware the text is a translation, while 'covert' means they are not. **Christiane Nord** (1997/2018) prefers the terms '**documentary**' and '**instrumental**' to describe different translations, since a translation can either work as an explicit representation of the start text (and thus as a 'document') or it can re-enact the communicative function (as an 'instrument'). The Israeli theorist **Gideon Toury** (1980, 1995/2012) talked about translations being '**adequate**' (to the start text) or '**acceptable**' (in terms of the norms of reception). The American theorist and translator **Lawrence Venuti** (1995), referring back to Schleiermacher, identifies '**fluent**' translations as the domesticating kind that he claims to find generally being done into English, and opposes them to '**resistant**' translations, which indicate the foreignness of the start text.

Only two sides?

Many theories of equivalence are based on two opposed ways of translating, often allowing that there are possible mixes between the two. The strategies they are talking about are not always the same, and some of the theorists have diametrically opposed preferences, but they are all thinking in twos. Here is a shortlist:

Cicero:	like a (literal) interpreter	like an orator
Schleiermacher:	foreignizing	domesticating
Nida:	formal	dynamic
Newmark:	semantic	communicative
Levý:	anti-illusory	illusory
House:	overt	covert
House:	literal	free
Nord:	documentary	instrumental
Toury:	adequate	acceptable
Venuti:	resistant	fluent

Does this mean translation theorists have been saying the same thing over and over, down through the centuries? Not really. The relations between the two types have been thought about in several different ways. To see this, try to apply the pairs of terms to the simple example we have used. If we take *martes 13*, we know that a formal-equivalence solution is *Tuesday 13th* and a dynamic-equivalence solution is *Friday the 13th*. One might assume that the first solution is foreignizing, if and when it sounds a little strange. But does it sound strange? If it is read like just another date, it will not be giving information on any cultural difference. This is why, if we wanted something more clearly foreignizing (anti-illusory, overt, documentary, adequate, resistant), we might consider something like 'bad-luck *martes* 13th', 'Tuesday 13th, bad-luck day', or even 'Tuesday 13th, bad-luck day in Spanish-speaking countries'. Is that kind of translation equivalent? Certainly not on the level of form (in the last rendition I have added a whole phrase). Could one claim equivalence in terms of function? Hardly. After all, a simple referential phrase has become a whole cultural explanation, at a place where the start text did not need to offer any explanation. Some would say that the added words here are not equivalent since they make the text too long to be a translation. Others might claim that this kind of expansion is merely considering implicit cultural knowledge and making it explicit (using 'explicitation' as a solution), and since the resulting cultural knowledge is the same, equivalence still reigns.

This is a point where equivalence theories tend to baulk, since the debates then concern what is or is not a translation. Worse, it is a question that theories of equivalence were never really designed to answer, since they more or less assumed an answer.

To return to the question: Is there any reason why there should only be two ways of translating? Surely most translation problems can be solved in *more* than two ways, as we have just seen in the case of *Friday the 13th*.

There are some quite deep reasons for having just two options, if you know where to look. As noted, **Friedrich Schleiermacher** argued that there

were only two basic strategies, which we know in English as 'foreignizing' and 'domesticating'. Why just these two? For Schleiermacher, it is because 'just as they must belong to *one* country, so people must adhere to *one* language or another, or they will wander untethered in an unhappy middle ground' (1813/1963: 63; my translation). Translators, it seems, cannot have it both ways: they must decide to situate their texts in one language or the other, in fact one country or the other. As it happened, Schleiermacher's lecture was given in the middle of the wars against Napoleon: he was arguing as a Prussian patriot, and implicitly against the French preference for domestication. When he pointed to just two ways of translating, he implied that there was no middle ground between national causes, since that would be the zone of traitors. The binarisms thereby serve to separate and reinforce national languages. Or could that be what all translations do?

3.2 Three text types so three kinds of translation?

Are the major binarisms strictly necessary? There have been exceptions, both West and East: Joan Lluís Vives (1533/2017) recognized the criteria of form (*verba*), meaning (*sensus*), and then a balance of the two, and the Chinese translator Yan Fu (1901/2004: 69) famously had his *three* requirements: faithfulness, comprehensibility, and elegance' (信达雅). Are these the exceptions that prove the rule? It would certainly seem that the idea of 'one side or the other' is deeply anchored in Western thought, at least. Yet the practical problems of translating are rarely quite so easy. Instead of thinking in terms of large ideologies, some theorists have tried to look at what translators do, at how they solve problems, and then the theorists come up with categories on that basis. That is, they work **bottom-up**, from practice, rather than **top-down**, from big ideas.

One of the most repeated insights in this bottom-up camp is that the way you translate depends on **the kind of text y**ou are translating. Something like this can be found in Jerome (395/1962) when he says he translates word-for-word in the case of the Bible, and for that matter Schleiermacher (1813/1963) started his lecture by distinguishing between informative texts and the literary-philosophical texts that he really wanted to talk about. Something much more sophisticated can be found in the Ukrainian literary scholar **Volodymyr Derzhavyn**, in this quite remarkable passage from 1927:

> A human language performs simultaneously (but in every particular case to various extents) three functions: communicative, cognitive and artistic, which are predisposed to translation not in the same degree [...]. So there exist three types of translation: translation-account, translation-transcription (not used separately) and translation-stylization, only the last one being artistic to one degree or another.
>
> (Derzhavyn 1927: 44, translated in Kal'nychenko 2011: 262)

That is, the three functions are always present, but one comes to the fore in a specific kind of text – Jakobson (1960) would later say the same of his language functions – and this gives three different kinds of translation. The nature of the three types is not altogether clear, but something similar becomes easier to understand in the types described by the Russian translation scholars **L. N. Sobolev** (1950) and **Andrei Fedorov** (1953: 198).

Fedorov's simplest text typology

- News reports, documentaries, and scientific texts, where the translator must pay careful attention to terms
- Publicity and texts that have a 'purely propagandistic intention' (сугубо пропагандистская установка), where the effect on the reader is what counts (1953: 198)
- Artistic (literary) works, where 'it is important to reproduce the individual particularities of the literary text' (1953: 256, trans. Nune Ayvazyan)

This is somewhat similar to the three basic text types described by the German translation teacher **Katharina Reiss** (1971/2000).

Reiss's simplest text typology

- Informative (the translator privileges content)
- Expressive (the translator privileges form)
- Operative (the translator privileges communicative effect)

Reiss later added the 'audio-medial text', where the factors go beyond language and basically anything can happen.

Why should there be just *three* kinds of text and therefore three ways to translate? Reiss was working explicitly from the German psychologist and linguist Karl Bühler (1934/1982), whose three functions were ultimately based on the three linguistic persons: some discourse expresses the self ('I'), another kind seeks to have an effect on the receiver ('you'), and other uses of language talk about the world ('it, she, he'). The basic categories behind the text types are in the linguistic persons we use every day!

The notion of there being three ways of translating was further developed by the German translation scholar **Michael Schreib**er (1998). His beautiful

trichotomy does not refer to text types as such, but instead depends on the different relations between the text and the context (as we saw in Gutt in the previous chapter). He relates those relations to where the invariants should be.

Schreiber's three translation methods

- *Text-restricted translation* (*Textübersetzung*), which prioritizes invariants that are *internal* to the text, on the level of either form or content.
- *Context-sensitive translation* (*Umfeldübersetzung*), which prioritizes invariants that are *external* to the text, notably the originally intended meaning (in the case of corrections to the text) or the original text function (in the case of culturally domesticating translations).
- *Interlingual adaptation* (*Interlinguale Bearbeitung*), which does not prioritize invariance at all, instead placing value on variants or 'intentional modifications'.

The third type is actually not called a 'translation': the German *Bearbeitung* can be interlingual adaptation or re-working or edition or even re-writing. As the theorists of equivalence might argue, once you do not respect any invariant, you are not doing a translation. But translators can still get paid for doing it.

3.3 Four or five kinds of language?

We have seen that the three basic text types can be mapped onto the three linguistic persons. Now, they could also correspond to three basic elements in communication: the sender, the receiver, and the contextual referent. The Russian linguist **Roman Jakobson** (1960) did this but then famously added three further language functions to the list: phatic (focused on the channel, as in 'Can you hear me?'), metalinguistic (focused on the language or code being used), and poetic (where the message is focused on the message). This means Jakobson presented six language functions. I am not aware of any theorist who has applied all six to translation. But there is one who comes close.

   The Swiss-German theorist **Werner Koller** wrote a textbook on 'translation science' that went through nine editions and many reprints between 1979 and 2020. In it, he describes five frames for equivalence relations.

Koller's five frames for equivalence relations

- **denotative** (based on extra-linguistic factors)
- **connotative** (based on the way the start text is expressed)
- **text-normative** (respecting or changing textual and linguistic norms)
- **pragmatic** (with respect to the receiver of the target text)
- **formal** (the formal-aesthetic qualities of the start text)

The list does not quite match up with Jakobson, but it could be adjusted (only the 'phatic' function would have to be added). Koller then sees the translator as selecting the type of equivalence most appropriate to the dominant function of the text. Although Koller allows that translators actively *produce* equivalence, in the sense that equivalents need not exist prior to the translation, he does not consistently specify any criteria other than the start text for choosing between one equivalence relation or another.

Something different but similar comes from the East German interpreter and translation scholar **Otto Kade** (1968). He proposed that equivalence at the level of the word or phrase comes in *four* different flavours.

Kade's four kinds of equivalence relations

- *One-to-one*: For example, English *Lion* corresponds to German *Löwe*, at least for as long as neither culture has intimately different relations with lions. The surer examples are technical terms like the names of chemical elements, where it is a question of obeying authorities.
- *One-to-several or several-to-one*: An item in one language corresponds to several in the other language. For example, the Spanish term *competencia* (domain of activity exclusive to an administrative institution) could be rendered by 'responsibility', 'mandate', 'domain', 'competence', and so on. Unless an authoritative one-to-one equivalent has been established in a certain context (for example, *competencia* = competence), the translator will have to choose between the alternatives. The result will be 'choice-based equivalence' (*fakultativ* in German).
- *One-to-part*: Only partial equivalents are available, resulting in 'approximate equivalence'. For example, the English term *brother* has no full equivalent in Chinese, Japanese, or Korean, since the corresponding terms have to specify whether it is an older or younger brother. Whichever choice is made, the equivalence with be only 'approximate'.

- *One-to-none*: No equivalent is available in the target language. For example, most languages did not have a term for *computer* a century ago. When that term had to be translated, the translators could use a circumlocution (a phrase to describe the object), they could generate a term from within the target language (for example, French *ordinateur*, Iberian Spanish *ordenador,* or the Chinese 计算机, 'counting machine'), or they could borrow the form of the English term (e.g. German *Computer*, Danish *computer*, Bulgarian *компютър*, or Latin American Spanish *computadora*). Some cultures prefer to import or represent foreign terms; others seek to generate new terms from their own existing resources.

This kind of analysis probably has more to do with terminology than with the translation of full texts. The options are nevertheless important for the more developed typologies that we will meet very soon. First, though, we should consider an alternative way of approaching the same problem.

3.4 Only one aim for translation?

Something rather different was happening among the **scholars working in Russian**, some of whom I have already mentioned. Table 3.1 sketches out a possible development of their terms for translation solutions. It is not

Table 3.1 Possible development of solution types in Russian translation theory

Batyushkov (1920)	Smirnov & Alekseev (1934)	Fedorov (1953)	Retsker (1974/2007)	Barkhudarov (1975)
Adequacy	Equivalence	Transliteration Componential		Transliteration Componential Explanation
	Substitution	Similar function	Synonyms	Approximate
		Permutation Grammatical restructuring Modification Adaptation	Differentiation Specification Generalization Logical development Antonyms Holistic transformation Compensation	Permutation Substitution Addition Omission

Source: cf. Pym 2016a: 48.

useful to go into all the items here – there are some general features that are much more intriguing. What you see is, first, that the sense of equivalence as 'matching' disappeared, as noted in the previous chapter. Second, more and more terms were found for the various transformations that translators make, in the general area of what House called 'free translation'. And third, most importantly, from the beginning and throughout, there is just one term for what a translation should attain under normal conditions, usually 'adequacy' (*adekvatniy*). I will not insist too much on this English term as a great translation of the Russian, but it is good enough for my purposes (cf. Vasserman 2021: 123). The point here is that, in this tradition, **there is ideally just one aim for translators**, and then a set of solutions that translators can use to get there. This is rather more subtle than 'literal' versus 'free'.

What is this 'adequacy'? **Batyushkov** (1920: 9) explains that it can only really be an aim when the two cultures are at about the same level. Only then can the translator attempt to render 'not only the precise meaning of the original but also, as much as possible, to observe the form, searching out corresponding expressions that would meet the average understanding of the readers of the translation' (trans. Brian James Baer). Smirnov and Alekseev, along with Fedorov, describe this as 'full value' (*polnotsenniy*), an idea that seems to have continued through to Torop's concept of 'total translation' (1995/2000). **Fedorov** elaborates the idea as follows:

> A full-value translation implies exhaustive accuracy in the transfer of the semantic content of the original and full functional-stylistic correspondence. […] A full-value translation means transferring *a specific relation between the content and form in the original* by reproducing the features of the form or creating functional correspondence to those features. […] A full-value translation presupposes a certain balance between the whole and the parts, and especially between the general character of the work and the degree of proximity to the original in the transmission of each particular segment.
>
>   (Fedorov 1953: 114, trans. Nune Ayvazyan, italics mine)

That sounds a very long way from 'free translation': the translator has obligations to accuracy, function, relations between parts and whole, and adjusting the receiver's 'proximity'. Hard to do! But then there is a whole bag of tricks at the translator's disposal. Intriguingly, Edmond Cary (1957: 182) translated this 'full value' into French as 'pleine équivalence', 'full *equivalence*', but that is not quite what the Russians were saying.

Fedorov's particular bag of tricks is presented in Table 3.1 as having seven main types of translation solutions. His writings are rather more complicated than that, since he accounts for text types as well, as we have seen – I have extracted the list from different parts of his text. Sets of seven or so solution types were to become quite popular in translation theory. It seems about

the number of concepts that a teacher can reasonably expect students to remember. The general model is worth considering in some detail.

3.5 Seven or so solution types?

What happened to the way the Russians were thinking? The first part of Fedorov's 1953 *Введение в теорию перевода* (Introduction to the Theory of Translation) was rendered into Chinese in 1955. It then informed a 1958 textbook by **Dianyang Loh** (that is how his name appears in the book, 陆殿扬) where 'adequacy' is affirmed as the one aim of translation: 'faithful to the original text and yet expressive in the second language' (Loh 1958: 2.77). Loh also produced a similar typology for translation between English and Chinese (in Table 3.2). That typology then informed the work of Zhang Peiji et al. (1980) and from there became the basis for a whole string of pedagogical textbooks for Chinese-English translation (see Zhang Meifang 2001).

What you see in Table 3.2 is that different language pairs seem to require different kinds of solutions. Chinese and Russian both have non-Latin scripts, so the typologies have to include options for different kinds of transcriptions (leave the Latin script, transcribe the phonemic values, or build a new word in the target language). But then, in 1958, Chinese was importing a whole lot of new technologies, particularly from Russian. Translators had to think about how to create new words for new things, which is why Loh has so many solution types in the top half of the table.

What else is different? In the middle of the table, I have put Fedorov's category for cases where the two texts have a 'similar function' and the translator does not have to do anything special: just translate what is there and make sure the rules of the target language are obeyed. That would be 'literal translation': it appears as such in many typologies for translation between

Table 3.2 Possible correlations between Fedorov and Loh

Fedorov (1953)	*Loh (1958)*
Transliteration	Transliteration
Build from components	Semantic Translation
	Symbolic Translation
	New characters
Similar function	?
Permutation	Omission
Grammatical restructuring	Amplification
Modification	Repetition
Adaptation	Conversion
	Inversion
	Negation

European languages. However, when going from English into Chinese, from an explicit, hypotactic language into an implicit, paratactic language, especially in the 1950s, there were going to be few cases where that kind of literalism was possible. In some language pairs, almost every sentence must be recast, so there are more solution types involving textual transformation. (Apart from that, Loh also taught rhetoric and was a big fan of rhetorical repetition, so he has more solutions in that part of the table.)

We can also compare those two typologies with one that has informed much of the work done on translation between European languages and beyond (Hasegawa 2011 adapts it to translation between English and Japanese). As mentioned in the previous chapter, **Vinay and Darbelnet**

Table 3.3 Vinay and Darbelnet's general list of translation solutions

	Lexis	*Collocation*	*Message*
1. Loan	Fr. Bulldozer Eng. Fuselage	Fr. science-fiction Eng. à la mode	Fr. five o'Clock Tea Eng. Bon voyage

2. Calque	Fr. économiquement
	   faible
	Eng. Normal School
		Fr. Lutétia Palace
		Eng. Governor
		   General
			Fr. Compliments
			   de la Saison
			Eng. Take it or
			   leave it.

3. Literal
   translation
	Fr. Encre
	Eng. Ink
		Fr. L'encre est sur
		   la table
		Eng. The ink is on
		   the table
			Fr. Quelle heure
			   est-il?
			Eng. What time
			   is it?

4. Transposition	Fr. Expéditeur:
	Eng. From:
		Fr. Depuis la
		   revalorisation
		   du bois
		Eng. As timber
		   becomes more
		   valuable
			Fr. Défense
			   de fumer
			Eng. No smoking

5. Modulation	Fr. peu profond
	Eng. Shallow
		Fr. Donnez un peu
		   de votre sang
		Eng. Give a pint
		   of your blood
			Fr. Complet
			Eng. No Vacancies

6. Correspondence
   (*équivalence*)
	Fr. (milit.) la soupe
	Eng. (milit.) tea
		Fr. Comme un
		   chien dans un
		   jeu de quilles
		Eng. Like a bull in
		   a china shop
			Fr. château
			   de cartes
			Eng. hollow
			   triumph

7. Adaptation	Fr. Cyclisme
	Br.Eng. cricket
	Am.Eng. baseball
		Fr. en un clin d'œil
		Eng. before you
		   could say Jack
		   Robinson
			Fr. Bon appetit!
			Am.Eng. Hi!

Source: My translation from Vinay and Darbelnet 1958/1972: 55.

worked from non-translated examples to define seven general 'procedures' (*procédés*) that translators could use (Table 3.3). There is no indication that the French linguists had read Fedorov – they took many of their terms from Malblanc (1944/1963) and the Swiss linguist Charles Bally (cf. Pym 2014) – and there is nothing to suggest that they knew about Loh or that Loh knew about them, even though their books were both published in 1958.

The seven solution types each come with examples on three levels of discourse, not all of which are very illustrative. Let me focus on the main features. Here you can see 'literal translation' almost in the middle of the left-hand column. It would correspond to Fedorov's 'similar function' and to the question mark in Loh. It is where French and English allow you to translate more or less word for word: 'The ink is on the table' has exactly the same word order in French. In fact, it is not very different in Chinese: 墨水在桌子上 (the position descriptor goes to the end). In the case of French and English, Vinay and Darbelnet suggest that literalism is where the translator should start. Loh did not suggest that because Chinese and English are so different that you usually have to start lower down on the table.

When you are searching for solutions, you can then go upwards from literalism, towards the start language, where in this case there are only two solutions offered: 'loan' (the French term 'bulldozer' was borrowed from English) and 'calque' (the English term 'Secretary General' uses French syntax). Alternatively, you can head downwards from literalism, towards the target language and culture, where each step introduces increasing degrees of transformation. At the end of that path, we have French bike-riding translating English cricket, since both are summer sports – non-language culture was not excluded! Vinay and Darbelnet describe this progression as going from the easiest to the most difficult, which makes some sense if you consider that the situations lower down are the ones where the translator probably has the most options to choose from and therefore perhaps the most work to do.

Such lists of solutions tend to make perfect sense when presented alongside carefully selected examples, as above. However, when you analyze a translation and you try to say exactly which solution types have been used where, you usually find that several types explain the same solution, and then some solutions seem not to be happy in any one type. Vinay and Darbelnet recognize this problem:

> The translation (on a door) of PRIVATE as DÉFENSE D'ENTRER [Prohibition to Enter] is at once a transposition, a modulation, and a correspondence. It is a transposition because the adjective *private* is rendered by a noun phrase; it is a modulation because the statement becomes a warning […], and it is a correspondence because the translation has been produced by going back to the situation without bothering about the structure of the English-language phrase.
>
> (1958/1972: 54; my translation)

If three types can explain the one phenomenon, do we really need all the types? Or are there potentially as many types as there are translation solutions? This is a problem we will meet in the chapter on uncertainty (6.2 below).

There are numerous typologies of this kind. Many of them are adapted to particular language pairs and intellectual traditions. When I attempted to write their history (Pym 2016a), I was intrigued by the extent to which the scholars' cultural and political ideologies informed the typologies, not just in the examples but also in the ways the options were presented. Vinay and Darbelnet, for example, were very much trying to defend French against incursions from English, so they glory in the solutions further down the list ('Yes, that's how you say it!') and they warn against the consequences of mixing languages at the top of the list. For example, if global English takes hold, 'one fears that four-fifths of the globe will live exclusively on bad translations and intellectually starve on slop for cats' (1958/1972: 54). No one could accuse them of being neutral!

The typologies also speak to some general debates. I have noted that **Schreiber** (1998), who has a very elaborate and well-documented typology, includes a category for 'interlingual adaptation', for something that goes beyond translation in a narrow sense. His reasons for doing so will be touched on in the next chapter.

3.6 Solution types for many languages?

The purpose of this book is not to present my own theories – I invite you to explore everyone else's. At this point, though, I risk presenting the results of my travels in the world of translation solutions. After surveying the typologies that have been developed for quite a few language pairs (Pym 2016a), I took a step back and tried to see what they all had in common. Which solution types might work most generally, across numerous language pairs? Here is what I found.

First, translating is such a complex process that it makes little sense to try to name *everything* that happens. Not all of the translating process involves problem-solving (there is a lot of basic grunt work as well), which means that the solution types are only useful for when a big juicy problem is encountered. That is, the purpose of a typology of seven or so solutions cannot be exhaustively descriptive; it must function more as a tool for teaching translation. It should say to the struggling novice who is confronted by a translation problem that they do not know how to solve: here are a few tricks you might like to think about. If we can do that, it might be useful theorization.

In Table 3.4 you can see one large category at the top: 'cruise mode'. This is for all the solutions that would seem to come from straight, unexciting translation, applying literalism, matching terms, doing habitual syntactic reordering, and so on. As long as translating can be done like that, there are no major problems to be solved and therefore no need for marked solution types. Think of an airplane cruising at altitude: all goes well until there is a

Table 3.4 A typology of translation solution types

Cruise mode (normal use of language skills, reference resources, parallel texts, intuition, literal translation – anything prior to bump mode – so no special solutions are needed)		
Copying	Copying Words	Copying sounds: 咖啡 (coffee) Copying morphology: 足球 (foot + ball) Copying script: iPhone (in Chinese) …
	Copying Structure	Copying sentence structure: 我来了，我看见了，我征服了 (Veni, vidi, vici) Copying fixed phrases: 他不是我那杯茶 ('Not my cup of tea') Copying text structure: rap in Chinese …
Expression Change	Perspective Change	Changing semantic focus: 一切皆有可能 ('Everything is possible') Changing sentence focus: 此门不通 as 'Please use the other door'. Changing voice: Changes between the intimate and formal second person Renaming an object: 'Senkaku' vs. 'Diaoyu'…
	Density Change	Generalization / Specification: 著名的寄宿学校, a prestigious boarding school Explicitation / Implicitation: 他就读于英国著名寄宿学校伊顿公学 ('He goes to the famous boarding school in England, Eton College') Multiple Translation: 三严三实 'The three guidelines and the three rules: the campaign to foster ethical integrity among Chinese officials'. Joining/cutting sentences Explanation elsewhere in text (notes, paratexts) …
	Resegmentation	The main sentence structure in English has one predication; the main Chinese sentence structure can have several. So you cut up sentences with going into English.
	Cultural Correspondence	Corresponding idioms: 掌上明珠 'You are the pearl in my palm'. Corresponding units of measurement, currency, etc.: RMB / dollar Relocation of culture-specific referents: 雨后春笋 (spring up like bamboo shoots / mushrooms
Material Change	Text Tailoring	Correction / censorship / updating Major omission of material (paragraph level or above) Major addition of material (paragraph level or above) Major reorganization of material …

Source: Adapted from Pym et al. 2020.

'bump', attention is required, and something needs to be done (cf. Mossop 1995: 4). What can you do? There are basically three things: the left-hand column says you can *copy* something from the start text, *change* (transform) the way the start text is expressed, or make *major changes* to the start text itself (usually at paragraph level or above). That last option, 'text tailoring', corresponds to Schreiber's 'interlingual adaptation', when no invariant is required for the parts of the text being worked on. That is, it may or may not be considered a translation.

Let us now look at the seven items in the middle column, which roughly follow the order of Vinay and Darbelnet's presentation. Note that 'literal translation' has been moved up to 'cruise mode', since it does not require a lot of work – machine translation handles it well enough, and we are interested here in solving problems that automation does *not* do well on. I am using Chinese and English as the language pair, but other language versions of the table can be found online. Just a few words on each solution type:

Copying words: This is 'transcription' in the broadest sense. It is when items from one language are brought across to another. This can be on the phonetic level, morphology, or script. Different solutions can be combined, as when 'Starbucks' is rendered 星巴克, where the first character (*xīng*) means 'star' and the other two characters (*bā–kè*) copy the sound of 'bucks'.

Copying structure: Syntactic or compositional structures are brought across from one language to another and are *seen as being foreign*. A common example is 'skyscraper', which was coined in American English in around 1883 and has been imitated in many other languages. Examples at word and phrase level seem quite rare, but the solution can certainly be found at sentence level, as when 'Veni, vidi, vici' is rendered literally as 我来了，我看见了，我征服了, applying the Latin syntax in Chinese. This is called 'calque' in Vinay and Darbelnet.

Perspective change: Something is seen from a different point of view: 'Nothing is impossible' in English becomes 一切皆有可能 ('Everything is possible') in Chinese, or '20% off' can be rendered as 八折 ('discounted to 80%'). This is called 'modulation' in Vinay and Darbelnet. Here the category is extended to include changes in footing (e.g. between the formal and informal second person) and non-obligatory switches between active and passive structures.

Density change: This is when there is a *marked change* in the textual space used to present a set of information, beyond the different numbers of words that are made obligatory by grammar. Translators can reduce textual density by using solutions that spread information over more space. For example, to translate the English name 'Eton', one might adopt generalization (著名的寄宿学校, 'a prestigious boarding school'), occupying more textual space. When this involves making implicit knowledge explicit, it is called *explicitation*, as in 他就读于英国著名寄宿学校伊顿公学 ('He goes to the famous boarding school in England, Eton College'). An alternative solution is multiple transla-tion, combining a literal rendition with explanatory information, as in 三严三实 rendered as 'The three guidelines and the three rules: the campaign to foster

ethical integrity among Chinese officials'. Explanations given in translator notes and prefaces can also be seen as forms of density change, since they spread the information over more text and thereby decrease density. And most forms of 'compensation', where a solution is given in a different place in the text (for example, in translator notes or in a preface), can also be seen as types of density change whenever more textual space is used to convey the information.

Resegmentation: The breaks between sentences and paragraphs can be changed. Not all language pairs are excessively affected by this, but since the rules for Chinese and English sentence structures are very different, this is an important solution to include for that language pair. The splitting and joining of sentences might also count as a special kind of density change: when a sentence is split into two, the text often expands slightly and the syntactic complexity is reduced, usually making the information easier to process.

Cultural correspondence: Different elements in different cultures are presented as carrying out similar functions. This is the case of corresponding idioms, as when 'You are the apple of my eye' becomes 掌上明珠 ('You are the pearl in my palm'). Cultural correspondence can also apply to culture-specific items like currency units and measures of weight and distance. The category broadly covers what Vinay and Darbelnet termed *équivalence* and adaptation. When there is no corresponding expression to work with, this solution type is not applicable. So when 'To carry coals to Newcastle' is rendered as a non-idiomatic explanation like 浪费时间('To waste one's time'), that is just normal cruise-mode translating.

Text Tailoring: Material in the start text is deleted, updated, reordered, or added to on the levels of *both* form and content, as when *whole scenes* are deleted from a film, *whole paragraphs* are censored in a novel, dates and places are *corrected*, an instruction manual is *updated* by the translator, or segments of a website are moved up or down in order to cater for the interests of the foreign user. Such changes are not constrained by invariance.

Scarcely original in themselves, these categories are at least of a number that can be adjusted to teaching needs. For more focused work, there are open-ended lists of sub-types in the right-hand column, where the three dots indicate that even more detailed columns could be added to the right of that. As we are seeing, translation is a complex activity.

Note that none of these typologies tells you *which* solution type to select in any particular situation. Those choices mainly depend on what the particular purpose is, which requires a different kind of theory.

3.7 Some virtues of solution types

There are a couple of good things to say about the theories of solution types:

- The typologies can widen the learner's awareness of how to solve problems. If you think there are just two ways of translating, you might be translating like singers sing a duet. If you are aware of seven major types and

then many tricks within each of them, then you are playing with a much fuller orchestra.

- When analyzing solution types, these researchers went out and collected examples, either from non-translated parallel texts (as in Vinay and Darbelnet) or from the actual work of translators. The resulting analyses are much richer in examples than the limited typologies would suggest.
- Most of these lists are arranged in order of increasing complexity, which might correspond to having more alternatives to choose from and thus to increasing effort on the part of the translator. Although very few of the theories go into assessing what that effort involves and why a translator should decide to work more on some problems rather than others, space was at least opened for process-oriented research on such questions.
- When some theorists tie translation solutions to text types, they are opening space for all the things that tend to be associated with a text type: a general communicative purpose, receivers of a certain kind, a category of probable clients, and perhaps even a general rate of pay (technical translation tends to be paid better than literary translation, for example). In that sense, the notion of text types opened space for the more action-based and sociological approaches that would come later.

3.8 Frequently had arguments

Since the business of identifying solution types is deceptively technical, there are fewer heated debates here than can be found with respect to equivalence as such. One could nevertheless indulge in the following.

3.8.1 The translator should be on one side or the other

The seven-item typologies can be accused of obscuring the basic decisions that translators have to make. We have seen this idea in Schleiermacher, where the translator is supposed to privilege either the start side or the target side, and there is only an 'unhappy middle ground' between the two – closed nationalisms talk about traitors as wandering around in a no-man's-land. Many theorists use the big binary categories in something like this way, recognizing both sides but then preferring one side more than the other. Often this involves reducing the other side to a caricature, creating a 'straw man' debate. Theorists like Schleiermacher, Benjamin, Berman, or Venuti (at least on my reading of Venuti 1995) would favour the 'foreignizing' side; others like Cicero, Nida, and Vinay and Darbelnet generally support the 'domesticating' option. And even when the Russian tradition insists that there is just one aim (be it called 'adequacy' or anything else), that aim is generally most appropriate for literary and philosophical texts and is strangely accused of being 'linguistic' and thus 'foreignizing', in opposition to the more 'domesticating' artistic tradition associated with the Russian critic and translator Ivan Kashkin (cf. Ayvazyan and Pym 2016). Binarisms are hard to get rid of! This

is a long underground reductive debate that simplifies how we want cultures to relate to each other. When translation is happening within our multilingual cities, it can no longer be a question of loyalty to one side or the other.

3.8.2 Translation solutions should protect the target language

We have seen that one of the motivations behind Vinay and Darbelnet's typology was to protect the French language from interference from English. The use of the more creative 'domesticating' solutions can do this. The idea of protecting a language is common not just in French but also in many smaller languages that policymakers seek to develop from the language's own resources. Opposed to this is the idea that languages need to develop by borrowing from more prestigious languages, according to which translators should opt for the more 'foreignizing' solutions. This way of thinking has been strong in German, for example, and might be traced back to the medieval hierarchy of languages. One attempt to bring the two approaches together was nevertheless formulated by the German polymath **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe** (1819/1827): a first translation should be more domesticating, the next translation can be set in the foreign culture but with references to the target culture, and subsequent **retranslations** can come closer and closer to the foreign text, since the readership will have learned how to negotiate and appreciate its differences. Although this was a great idea, historical studies of retranslations tend to find that cross-cultural relations are much more complicated than that (see 5.9 below).

3.8.3 The selection of translation solutions depends on the directionality

If people in a society accept the idea that in-coming translations should protect the target language and culture, it may follow that out-going translations should *project* that same language and culture onto other languages. This could mean that in-coming translations should use cultural correspondence, implicitation, and omission, while out-going translations might use copied words, explicitation, and added notes (cf. Habib 2000; Pym 2021b). Alternatively, if a society wants their texts to be read and appreciated in other cultures, for example to win a Nobel Prize for Literature, the outgoing translations might be more on the domesticating side, sacrificing some of the cultural specificity that the society nevertheless wants others to recognize. This is where translation theory blends into marketing.

3.8.4 All binarisms stem from the 'regime of the sign'

The French theorist and translator **Henri Meschonnic** (1973, 2003) argued that the major binary oppositions depend on a more primary opposition between form and content, or on the separation of the **signifier** and the

signified as parts of the Saussurean sign. This could be taken all the way back to Paul the Apostle's distinction between the 'letter' and the 'spirit' of the Christian gospels (giving the distinction between *verba* and *sensum* used in Jerome and others). Meschonnic considers that these separations are not valid, since texts function on both levels at the same time, as discourses marked by rhythm: 'a way of thinking [*une pensée*] does something to language, and what it does is what is to be translated. And there, the opposition between *source* and *target* is no longer pertinent' (Meschonnic 1999: 22). This critique breaks with binarism by staking out a particularly demanding kind of constraint (the reproduction of discursive effects), well suited to the translation of sacred, philosophical, and literary texts. Meschonnic's attack is on numerous translation theorists, especially Nida. I hasten to add that Fedorov, for one, saw that the thing to be translated is 'a specific relation between the content and form' (1953: 114).

3.8.5 *The categories do not work in the space of reception*

This one is not really a frequent discussion, but it should be. It is often assumed that a major strategy like 'foreignization' can be described as such because it appears strange or alienating to the receiver, and 'domestication' will then have the opposite effects. Zhong (2014) tested this by selecting two very different translations of the novel *Gone with the Wind* and then asking 143 readers a series of questions about the way they felt when reading the translations. Even though translation scholars had previously identified one translation as being domesticating and the other as foreignizing, Zhong found that the effects on the readers were far more mixed: the 'foreignizing' version 'did not strike them as more unfamiliar than the domestic one' (2014: 270). The more we find out about reception, the less confidence we should have in the simple binary categories (cf. Hu 2022).

3.8.6 *Text tailoring is not translation*

This one is indeed frequent. When some theorists allow solutions that do not require invariance (as in Schreiber's 'text adaptation' or my 'text tailoring'), others will retort that the solution does not concern translation. It is a question not just of the limits of translation, but also of how quality is assessed. For example, when simultaneous interpreters make **omissions**, should each omission be regarded as an indicator of low quality or as a legitimate solution in some circumstances? There seems to be no consensus on this point, although we will find reasons for potential consensus in the next chapter.

3.8.7 *Translating is more than problem solving*

This is a criticism that comes from cognitive process studies. Muñoz Martín and Olalla-Soler (2022) rightly point out that the translation process involves

many things that are not strictly problem solving: translators manage technologies, do post-editing, apply formatting, check terminology, repair text coherence, and so on. A focus on problem solving is therefore very reductive. The point is well made: solution types only concern a part of what translators do and what they must learn to do. They are nevertheless pedagogically useful.

A second problem here is that the reference to 'cruise mode' translating is process-based, whereas these typologies are all product-based, categorizing solutions. So what happens when a translator goes into 'bump' mode, considers a broad range of possible solutions, and then ultimately decides on the most literal one (my thanks to Juliana Da Silva for the question)? For the theories in this chapter, the *result* is what categorizes the item. Process studies will then have different stories to tell.

Summary

This chapter started by raising serious doubts about the very common reduction of translation to just two kinds: 'literal' versus 'free'. That distinction comes from a millennial tradition of ideological binarisms that would place the translator on one side or the other of a cultural divide. We have seen that what appears to be 'free' can be analyzed in several different ways. Some theorists have seen that the way one translates depends on the kind of text one is translating, traditionally recognizing just three main text types. Others have produced typologies based on language functions (Koller) or the ways terms match up (Kade). An alternative tradition, strong in Russian, proposes that there is just one common aim in translation (thus avoiding the problem of placing the translator on one side or the other) and that this aim can be achieved by transforming the text in a limited number of ways. There are many language-specific typologies with seven or so solution types, which seem to be useful in teaching situations. Their basic terms are worth learning.

Sources and further reading

Many generations of translation students have been taught Vinay and Darbelnet (remarkably few can remember the names of the solution types!), so the categories are repeated in numerous textbooks. The English translation was published in 1995. The French linguists have nevertheless disappeared from Venuti's *Translation Studies Reader* (2021). The Russian tradition has been generally overlooked by writers in other European languages, making Brian Baer's 2021 translation of Fedorov a major step in the right direction. Key texts by Cicero, Horace, and Schleiermacher are in the main anthologies, although intriguing texts like Kade's are almost impossible to find. Reiss was translated into English in 2000, almost 30 years after the German text. It is nevertheless sobering that none of the current plethora of translation studies handbooks and encyclopedias seems to find space for a whole chapter

on solution types. Şerban (2020) does mention them among the swathe of linguistic approaches, and in doing so perhaps touches on the heart of the problem: linguistics as such has become unfashionable in translation studies, and the solution types are described in linguistic terms. Yet someone, somewhere, might still want to discover how to translate – and indeed how to talk about language. When you have searched everywhere else, my *Translation Solutions for Many Languages* (2016a) traces the history of how theorists have tackled the technical and ideological problems of translation solutions.

Suggested projects and activities

1. Take any of the typologies of solution types, make sure you understand the categories, then find any translation, compare it with its start text, and see how many of the categories you can identify. What goes wrong? Are there some features that are specific to your language pair? Can you suggest improvements to the list of solution types?
2. Translate the sentence 'The first word of this very sentence has three letters' into a language other than German or Dutch (and possibly others where the catch does not work) (example from Burge 1978). The English sentence is true, but is your translation also true? How many letters or characters does its first word have? Does this mean that there are only just two ways of translating? Or can you create more than two?
3. Take a short technical passage in a specific field (medicine, for example) and have one group of translators work on it with standard dictionaries, give another group access to an authoritative parallel text (a non-translational target-language text on the same topic as the start text), and instruct a third group to post-edit a machine-translation version. Then compare the terminology in the three results. Are there cases of Kade's categories (one-to-one, one-to-several, etc.)? Is the machine translation more literal in its terminology or closer to the authoritative parallel text?
4. Check the different names for the international television gameshow *The Price is Right*. How many solution types can you identify? Which of the typologies presented in this chapter can best account for the different types?
5. Jerome (Hieronymus) claimed that he translated sense-for-sense except in the case of the Bible, where he worked word-for-word because 'even the syntax contains a mystery' (395 CE/1958: 137). Did he really do this? Check to see what his Latin Vulgate has for the Hebrew term *'almah* in Isaiah 7:14. Compare this with other available translations of that passage. Why do some translators choose 'girl' and others opt for 'virgin'? What does 'sense' mean in such cases?
6. Take the titles of some famous books or films and see how many of the seven or so main solution types have been applied in them. For example, the title of the Spanish film *Cria cuervos* (Saura 1976) could be rendered as 'cria cuervos' (copying words), 'raise ravens' (copying the alliteration), 'raise crows and they will pick out your eyes' (density change, rendering

the implicit Spanish idiom), 'ungrateful children' (perspective change, indicating what the film is about from the perspective of the children), 'bite off the hand that feeds' (cultural correspondence), or perhaps 'sense of loss' (text tailoring, indicating what the film is about on a deeper level). Creative translators can usually come up with at least five or so possibilities. And the marketing people who translate film titles sometimes take 'free translation' very literally.

4 Purposes

This chapter looks at a group of theories that are superficially opposed to equivalence. These theories all insist that a translation is designed to achieve a purpose. If that purpose is to repeat the function of the start text, then the purpose could be to maximize equivalence of some kind. However, if the target-side purpose is *different* from that of the start text, we are dealing with a whole new set of ideas. For the German translation theorist Hans Vermeer, the target-side purpose (which he called *Skopos*) is the dominant factor in a translation project. Vermeer thus claimed to have 'dethroned' the start text and to have taken translators beyond equivalence. This approach accepts that the one text can be translated in different ways to carry out different functions. The translator therefore needs to know about the specific goals the translation is supposed to achieve, and this requires extra-textual information of some kind, usually from the client. In this way, the social frame of equivalence-based theories becomes much wider, bringing in a series of relationships with clients and end-users. Several different theories can be fitted into this extended interpersonal frame. Holz-Mänttäri focuses on the translator's status as an expert in cross-cultural communication, working alongside people who are experts in other fields. Hönig and Kussmaul consider how much information the receiver of the translation really needs and how a translation can be adjusted accordingly. The chapter closes with an approach that is much closer to the translation industry. For Daniel Gouadec, translation concerns not so much texts as *projects*, understood as sets of materials and information, including clients and the clients' instructions. Like all the theories covered in this chapter, Gouadec picks up many factors that were overlooked or side lined in the classical theories of equivalence.

The **main points** covered in this chapter are:

- The *Skopos* theory developed by Hans Vermeer broke with theories of equivalence by giving priority to the target-side purpose to be fulfilled by the translation.

- For *Skopos* theory, equivalence assumes that the functions of the start text and the translation are the same; however, they are only the same in special cases.
- This approach allows that the one text can be translated in different ways to achieve different purposes.
- Holz-Mänttäri's concept of 'translatorial action' sees the translator as an expert in cross-cultural communication who can be called upon to do more than translate.
- Hönig and Kussmaul's 'principle of the necessary degree of precision' (the 'good enough' theory) states that the translator should give the details that the reader needs, which may be more or less than the information in the start text.
- Gouadec's approach to project analysis is based on the purpose as defined by the client, but it assumes that complete information in the pre-translation phase will resolve most translation problems.
- Although these purpose-based theories are compatible with theories of equivalence at many points, the opposition to equivalence-based theories was largely institutional within the context of the 1980s and 1990s in Germany and Austria.

4.1 *Skopos* as the key to a new kind of theory

A point of rupture in European translation theory can be dated from 1984, at least as a symbolic point. That year saw the publication of two books in German: *Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie* (Foundation for a General Theory of Translation) by Katharina Reiss (also written Reiß) and Hans Vermeer, and *Translatorisches Handeln. Theorie und Methode* (Translatorial Action. Theory and Method) by the German-born Finnish translation theorist Justa Holz-Mänttäri. Both books, in different ways, directly challenged the idea that a translation always has to be equivalent to an original. They both initiated a partial break with the idea of equivalence.

Those books were very slow to become known outside of German: the first was translated into Spanish in 1996 and into English in 2013; the second has not been translated out of German as far as I know. General texts on translation theory do nevertheless carry frequent references to **Skopos theory**, the theory of *Skopos*, a Greek word for what I will more broadly call 'purpose' (it could also be translated as 'aim', 'goal', or 'intended function'). Whether in the strict *Skopos* theory of Vermeer and his followers (the ones who used the term *Skopos*) or in the many fellow travelers who referred to purposes in a more everyday way (who would be part of the wider category of 'theories of purpose'), the basic idea is that the translator should work to achieve the communicative purpose of the translation rather than just follow the start text.

This '*Skopos* rule' means that the translator's decisions should probably be made, in the last instance, in accordance with the reasons why someone asked the translator to do the translation. It could also mean that the dominant factor is what the *end-user* wants the translation for. Then again, the determining factor might be what the translator *thinks* the purpose *should* be. In terms of the general idea, all those interpretations are possible and have proved mildly revolutionary, given that none of them is on the side of the author or the start text. The theories thus invite the translator to look in a new direction.

Vermeer's *Skopos* rule

Vermeer formulates the *Skopos* rule as follows:

> An action is determined by its goal [*Zweck*] (it is a function of its goal [*Zweck*]). (Reiss and Vermeer 1984: 100)

This would be a general principle of action theory. What it means for the translator is described in the following terms:

> The dominant factor of each translation is its purpose [*Zweck*]. (Reiss and Vermeer 1984: 96)

Note that both these formulations use the normal German term *Zweck* ('goal', 'aim', or 'purpose') rather than the technical neologism *Skopos*. Why the Greek term is necessary remains unclear. Perhaps the slight opacity of the Greek reminds us we do not know exactly what it refers to?

Vermeer later gave a more elaborate explanation of what this approach entails:

> Each text is produced for a given purpose and should serve this purpose. The *Skopos* rule thus reads as follows: translate/interpret/speak/ write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function.
>
> (Vermeer 1989: 20; trans. Christiane Nord)

Here the end-user seems to call the shots. The important point at this stage is that the *Skopos* rule does not say *how* a text should be translated. It simply tells the translator where to look for indications about how to translate. In each case, the translator must figure out what the purpose is. Vermeer is clear on this point:

> What the *Skopos* states is that one must translate, consciously and consistently, in accordance with some principle respecting the target text.

The theory does not state what the principle is: this must be determined separately in each specific case.

<div align="right">(Vermeer 1989/2021: 234)</div>

The relative novelty of the approach lies in what it does *not* say. The translator's choices need *not* be dominated by the start text and a search for equivalence, unless of course invariance with respect to the start text happens to be stipulated as essential for the purpose. A legal agreement, for example, may be adapted to target-side textual norms if and when it is to be governed by the laws operative in that society, or it may be rendered with the start-text form if and when the translation is for purposes of understanding, or again, it may be translated in an almost word-for-word way if, for instance, it is to be cited as evidence in court. The start text is the same in all those cases. What is different is the *purpose* that the translation must serve. The one text allows for many possible translations, and the key factor determining each actual translation is the purpose, the *Skopos*.

That idea is simple enough. It has led theorists to considerations of what purposes are, how they are defined in relation to clients (a dimension wholly absent from theories of equivalence), and how they turn translations from texts into projects. The move to this new approach was nevertheless complicated by several factors.

First, the *Skopos* idea was presented by Hans Vermeer in a book of which he was the co-author (although he had announced the basic principle in articles as early as 1978). The other co-author, Katharina Reiss, was working within a less radical paradigm: she was talking about equivalence to the basic functions of text types, as we saw in the previous chapter. This means that two kinds of theory were at work in the one book.

Second, Reiss and Vermeer were in Heidelberg; Holz-Mänttäri was working in Tampere, Finland, where her work was published. This means that the two books published in 1984 came from distant contexts and had rather different approaches.

Third, Vermeer was undoubtedly the one who did his publicity best and made sure his term (*Skopos*) became the company logo. The German-language scholars who followed the general theory have nevertheless been quite free in selecting from the ideas of Reiss and Holz-Mänttäri, as well as from Vermeer. This means there is a rather more complicated story to tell.

Some key terms in *Skopos* theory

- *Skopos*: The purpose or aim of the translation; the function it is supposed to carry out in the situation of reception.
- **Brief**: The instructions the client gives to the translator; *Auftrag* in German; sometimes also called 'commission' in English. In actual

> translation practice, the more normal terms would be 'instructions' or 'job description'.
> - **Translatorial**: Adjective to describe qualities of *translators*, as opposed to the adjective 'translational', used to describe qualities of translations.
> - **Translatorial action**: All the actions carried out by a translator or interpreter, one of which may be translating or interpreting.
> - **Translatory**: Adjective to describe the translation *process*.

4.2 Origins of the *Skopos* approach

One of the problems with *Skopos* as a revolution is that the idea of translating for a specific purpose was not at all new. Translators have long known that you translate to satisfy the requirements of clients and of someone on the target side, especially translators working beyond the strictures of the Western translation form. Examples abound. When Clagett (1953) studied the Latin translations of Euclid, it was clear that some manuscripts were for practical application (without the proofs), others were for use as schoolbooks, and others were for mathematicians – different translations for different purposes. Or when Lu Xun (1931/2021) was deciding what kind of language to use, he first thought about what kind of effect he wanted to have on what kind of reader. Such things would seem to be on the level of common sense.

So perhaps the German scholars were simply recalling some home truths that had been forgotten? But even then, there were a few precedents within formal theory. In 1950, Sobolev noted that the degree to which a translation is 'precise' varies in accordance with 'the *purposes* of the translation [цели перевода], the nature of the start text, and the reader for whom the translation is intended' (1950: 143, italics mine). Fedorov used the same word in 1953: the translator has to 'take into account the actual conditions and the *purposes* [цели] for which the translation is carried out' (1953: 99, italics mine). The term is цели, tsel' (purpose), which is the standard Russian translation for the Greek σκοπός (purpose, goal, target, *Skopos*). But then, granted, none of the Russians undertook to 'dethrone' the start text. None of them used the concept of purpose to attack equivalence. So why should the Germans have picked that particular fight?

As I have noted, the concept of equivalence was prominently represented in German by **Werner Koller**'s textbook from 1979. Koller had formulated a complex set of equivalence-based solution types that was based on five text functions. That amounted to saying that the way you translate (the kinds of solutions you seek) depends on the **function** of the text or fragment you are translating. If the text you are working on mainly refers to things in the world, you should make sure those references are exact (and probably

updated if necessary). If a poem is functioning primarily on the level of form, then you should primarily seek equivalence on the level of form, and so on. For Koller, as for Reiss and most people at the time, *the way you translate depends on the kind of text you are translating*. That idea was pluralist, functionalist, and start-oriented. That view was dominant among translators and translator teachers working in German. That is what was challenged.

As the ideas of Vermeer and Holz-Mänttäri gained prominence, they came to be called **'functionalist' approaches**, since they privileged the function of the translation over all else. That was misleading because Koller and Reiss and others were also highly functionalist in their approaches. The one difference was that Koller and Reiss were looking toward the start side to find solutions to problems, while the purpose-based theorists were looking toward the target side. But they could all be called 'functionalists'. And not every functionalist was entirely happy to look in just one of two directions. In **Christiane Nord** (1988/1991), for example, we find an extensive description of how start texts should be analyzed before translating, so that translators can then ascertain the function of those texts with exactitude. In very Germanic fashion, Nord's analysis comprises some 76 questions that students should be taught to answer before translating. The analysis, says Nord, should first be of the instructions for the target text and then of the start text, and then you locate the correspondences and differences between the two. But the start text is still part of the deal! Nord is also aware that in professional trans- lation processes, these analyses become largely automatic: no one really asks all 76 questions. On the level of theory, Nord certainly recognizes that translations can have new functions, yet the main weight of her actual analyses has always tended to fall on the start side. In her comments on her co-translating of Biblical texts, for example, Nord (2001) first isolates the 'intended function' of problematic passages and then considers how that function can be reproduced or modified to emphasize 'otherness' with respect to modern-day readerships (which in this case was the 'intended function' of the translation). **Mary Snell-Hornby**, at that time director of the large translation school in Vienna, named a similar 'functionalism' at the heart of her influential 'integrated approach' (1988). The basic message underlying all these theorists was that you should translate the functions of texts, not the words or sentences on the page. Of course, that message can be traced back as far as Cicero, at least, since it is essential for any con- cept of transformational equivalence. In itself, the call to 'functionalism' should have been nothing new.

What is strange is that both Nord and Snell-Hornby *opposed* their func- tionalism to theories of equivalence, especially as represented by Koller (cf. Nord 1988/1991: 23, 25–26; Snell-Hornby 1988: 22). In hindsight, that was rather ungenerous. Nord and Snell-Hornby somehow equated equivalence with straight formal equivalence or with literalism, whereas the concept of

transformational equivalence had been developed precisely so that the more complex solution types could work alongside the strictures of literalism.

Consider a chestnut example like ***Mein Kampf*** (1925–26), which was Adolf Hitler's autobiographical manifesto outlining a future program for his Nazi Party in Germany. What is the function of this text? In some parts it is certainly expressive, manifesting a strong first-person character, as befits an autobiography. In other parts, it gives a vision of history and is thus referential. Finally, its overall function is undoubtedly to convert readers to the cause of National Socialism, so Reiss might classify it as 'operative' or 'appellative', a 'call to action'. How should we translate the text? The mixing of functions is not the real problem (functionalism never promised pure categories, beyond its carefully selected examples). If we analyze the text, if we refer back to what we know about the author's intentions and the effects on the first readers (as Nida would like us to do), we should probably translate *Mein Kampf* in such a way as to convert even more readers to National Socialism. That could be the outcome of straight start-text functionalism. However, many publishers and perhaps most translators would feel unhappy about that kind of goal. In most contemporary situations, it could make better political sense to translate the text as a historical document, adding footnotes and references to events that happened after the text was written. Some translators might also decide to tone down the most rabble-rousing prose, just in case the reader starts believing the text instead of regarding it as a partial explanation of why others became Nazis.

Theories of equivalence cannot discuss the reasons why a translator might want to change the function of the start text. But the concept of *Skopos* can. For Vermeer, the translator of *Mein Kampf* would have to give priority not to how the original German text functioned, but to **the effect the text is supposed to have on the target reader**. Those two functions can be quite different, and in this particular case they probably *should* be very different. Even in instances of what Vermeer calls 'functional consistency' (*Funktionskonstanz*), where the *Skopos* requires the start-text function to be maintained, significant changes may be required. In fact, maintenance of text function (which is one kind of equivalence) is probably the principle that requires the most textual shifts. The first right-wing translators of Hitler into English wanted to have him accepted by the new readership in Britain and thus toned down the rhetoric and tried to make Mr. Hitler sound like a quite rational politician (cf. Baumgarten 2009). In such cases, it is not enough to tell the translator to do whatever the client wants. There are serious ethical considerations at stake.

Vermeer's idea of giving priority to the *Skopos* or purpose seems to have radicalized a functionalism that was already there, not only shifting its focus from the start to the target but also bringing in pragmatic factors like **the role of clients** and the importance of having **clear instructions** before translating. Those are all good ideas. They were not particularly troubling in themselves, given that they called on common sense and a dash of existentialist liberalism

(each translator ultimately has to decide for themselves). In hindsight, it is a little difficult to grasp why the ideas sounded revolutionary.

The problem could have been this. As long as you are analyzing modes of equivalence, you are doing **linguistics** of one kind or another. But as soon as you must choose between one *purpose* and another (for example, between different reasons for translating *Mein Kampf*), linguistics will not be of much help to you. You could be engaged in applied sociology, marketing, the ethics of communication, and a gamut of theoretical considerations that are only loosely grouped under the term 'critical cultural studies'. Theories of equivalence could be formulated in linguistic terms, and translators could therefore be trained in faculties of language and linguistics. The more radical versions of target-side functionalism, on the other hand, justified the creation of an entirely new academic discipline. They could move translator training away from the clutches of the more traditional language departments; they could set up whole new schools and faculties just for the training of translators and interpreters. Translation theory surreptitiously became a debate about **academic power**. Equivalence was on one side; 'functionalism' on the other; and they were opposed institutionally, even when, as theories, they could seem quite compatible.

The **institutional context** was not ephemeral. Germany and Austria at that time had a handful of very large translation schools offering full degree programs. Those student numbers represented many academic jobs, real demand for research, and consequent publication space. Those are the sources of academic power, and theorists can fight to get those things. Further, after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, there was a struggle for the translator-training schools in central and eastern Europe, with Mary Snell-Hornby quite logically seeking an 'integrated approach' in part by insisting that translation teachers in the East should 'cut the umbilical cord with the departments of Modern Languages' (1994: 433). The new approach seemed set to create a small empire in Europe.

One can also follow the geography of the theorists themselves. **Koller** was at Heidelberg but moved to Bergen, Norway, in the late 1970s. **Reiss** was also at Heidelberg until 1969, when she moved to Würzburg; **Vermeer** was at nearby Germersheim, where he coincided with translation researchers including Hönig, Kussmaul, and Kupsch-Losereit. The Germersheim connection also enabled contact with the anthropologist Göhring, who provided significant support for the broader cultural view. Vermeer then moved to Heidelberg in the mid-1980s, where his approach influenced **Christiane Nord** (whom I thank for these details). Nord moved to Hildesheim and Vienna where, with **Snell-Hornby**, 'functionalism' became the order of the day. And Nord later moved to Magdeburg, in former East Germany. Saarbrücken, meanwhile, long remained faithful to applied linguistics as its frame, as indeed have many scholars within all the institutions mentioned. The result, throughout the 1980s and into the 1990s, was a series of institutional tussles that are best forgotten. I recount the political games merely to point out that translation theories are not always about translations.

The thrust of *Skopos* theory, with its various internal differences and debates, found a home in the Heidelberg journal *TextconText* from 1986, under Vermeer's editorship and initially with editorial input from Holz-Mänttäri. The group recruited many fellow travelers in those pages, publishing work from cultural anthropology, from growing areas like community interpreting, translation history, and deconstruction, which seemed to fit in with the critique of equivalence and the empowerment of the individual translator. As such, the journal became a fruitful meeting place, leaving a mark on German-language theorizing for several decades.

4.3 Justa Holz-Mänttäri and the theory of the translator's expertise

While all of this was happening, Justa Holz-Mänttäri was working in Finland, relatively distanced from the feuds, possibly enjoying creative independence. Her project was quite simply to rewrite the entire translation process from the perspective of **action theory**, which was also of some importance to Vermeer. To do this, she felt the need to change the terms that are commonly used to describe what translators do. Part of this was already happening: for example, the German loan word from English *Translation* had been adopted to cover both written translation (*Übersetzen*) and spoken interpreting (*Dolmetschen*). Holz-Mänttäri (1984) went much further. Her name for 'text' was *Botschaftsträger* (message-bearer); translators, who were called upon to do many things beyond translating, had their general profession described as *Texter* (on the model of a 'writer' who writes, a 'reader' who reads; so a 'texter' is someone who 'texts'), and so on. Coupled with impressive syntactic density, the neologisms make Holz-Mänttäri's book a monument to all the translators who say they cannot understand translation theory.

Holz-Mänttäri's guiding ideas are not too difficult to grasp. She starts from a functionalist view not just of texts but also of society (drawing on action theory and sources like the Polish anthropologist Malinowski's theory of different social institutions fulfilling comparable social functions). Within this frame, **functions are manifested in actions, each of which is guided by its aim**. The communication of messages is an action like any other, ruled by the function the message is to fulfill. Different social groups, however, are experts in carrying out different kinds of actions, and indeed at communicating different kinds of messages. When a message is to cross into another culture, the people sending that message will require help from an **expert in cross-cultural communication**. That expert should be the translator, who can be called on to do many things as well as translate. They can, for example, give advice on the foreign culture, write a new text based on information provided by the client, work on terminology, review and format translations, and carry out project management. These days we would insist that they can also pre-edit for machine translation, post-edit the results of machine translation, and authorize the final outputs of corrected machine translation, as well as give advice about the use of new translation technologies.

It is easy to see how Holz-Mänttäri's theory fitted in with the dominance of the target-side function. Taken individually, most of her ideas seem unlikely to upset anyone. The notion of actions achieving aims was a mainstay of pragmatics as a branch of linguistics and indeed of most kinds of sociology; it was also working in the same way as Vermeer's *Skopos* rule. Holz-Mänttäri's arguments against the simple determinism of 'when X in the source, then Y in the translation' amounted to a non-mechanical view that was also common enough within theories of equivalence. What did rankle, however, was the idea that a translator could write a new text and still be called a translator. That was stretching definitions a long way! Nonetheless, if you look at the terms carefully, Holz-Mänttäri and others were talking about '**translatorial action**', which is a term for the range of actions carried out by translators (and other 'texters'); her interest was not limited to the physical facts of translations. This view finds a place in schemas like Figure 4.1, which is from Nord.

Here we see '**translatorial action**' in the middle (where the adjective 'translatorial' refers to the person, the 'translator'). Reading upward from that point, the action can be categorized as 'mediated cross-cultural communication'. Reading downward, it becomes properly 'translational' (this adjective refers to the thing, the translation) when it is with respect to a start text, although there are several other kinds of translatorial actions that translators can be involved in. You can also see that the attempt to repeat the same function as the start text (at the very bottom) is just one possible aim of translating: translators can legitimately attempt to set up new functions. You could try to extend the branches further at the bottom of the tree, asking
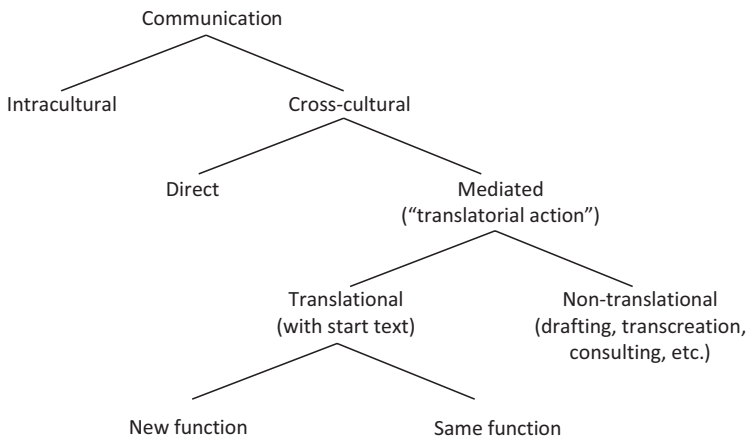

Figure 4.1 Translation as a form of mediated cross-cultural communication.

Source: Adapted from Nord 1997/2018.

which kinds of equivalence or solution types would fit under 'new function' or 'same function', but that will tend to depend on each specific translation situation. For the theorists we are talking about here, the above terms form a loose topography in which the work of the translator can be located.

Seen in this way, both Holz-Mänttäri and Vermeer were not just producing critiques of traditional equivalence-based definitions of translation. As noted, they were also challenging the established role of linguistics in the training of translators. At the same time, they were quite possibly speaking on behalf of changes in the translation profession, at least to the extent that translators were increasingly being called on to do more than translate.

That did not mean, however, that translators could do whatever they liked.

4.4 Purpose-based 'good enough' theory

An important consequence of these theories is that the translator can give *more* information than is in the start text if necessary, and *less* information if so required. That possibility was partly recognized within the theories of equivalence, although never fully condoned. Nida, for example, talked about 'addition' as something a translator could do with a text, but he immediately explained that 'there has been no actual adding to the semantic content of the message, for these additions consist essentially in making explicit what is implicit in the source-language text' (1964: 230–231). Similarly, what Nida called 'subtraction' 'does not substantially lessen the information carried by the communication' (1964: 233). The idea of equivalence generally does not legitimize cases of outright addition or omission, where the translator does not care about invariance (cf. Pym 1992/2018: 88ff.). For example, an equivalence-based theorist like **Gerardo Vázquez-Ayora** could discuss 'paraphrase' as something that translators are occasionally called upon to do, but he issued repeated warnings that such solutions do not belong in the domain of translation: 'To translate does not mean to explain or comment on a text, or to write it as we see fit' (1977: 288; my translation). Lying beneath this general refusal to allow additions or omissions, we might find the Biblical prohibitions of modifying the sacred text (cf. Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Revelations 22:18–19). More generally, an age of strong authorship tends to respect the integrity of all texts. On the other hand, in an age where many texts are relatively authorless (brochures, webpages, and instruction manuals usually do not carry the name of any one author), the weight of the start text can be diminished and there seems to be greater translatorial liberty. Not all texts are sacred.

Just how far can a translator go? One answer to the question was formulated by the German theorists and translation teachers **Hans Hönig** and **Paul Kussmaul**. Influenced by *Skopos* theory in the 1980s, Hönig and Kussmaul (1982/1996) came up with what they call the '**principle of the necessary degree of precision**' (it might sound better as the 'necessary precision principle'). This proposes that the appropriate degree of precision is

determined by the required function of the translation. That would seem to be a simple formulation of the *Skopos* rule, saying virtually the same thing that Sobolev had said back in 1950. Its illustration is nevertheless a little more challenging.

Hönig and Kussmaul discuss the question of how to render culture-specific terms like 'Bachelor' or 'Master's' degrees, which tend to occur in relatively authorless texts like a curriculum vitae. They recognize that the translator cannot tell the reader *everything* about the studies and degrees in the foreign institution. On the other hand, it would not be fair to leave the reader totally in the dark about the ways the basic terms and structures differ. As Hönig puts it in a later text (1997: 11), 'there has to be a cut-off point where translators can safely say: "This is all my readers have to know in this context" '. In the European Union, that cut-off point has since been determined by the Diploma Supplements that are attached to degrees, with fixed translations in all European languages. In most other cases, translators have to decide.

Where the cut-off point lies depends on the specific function of the translation, so there is no further principle to be announced on the level of pure theory. What remains of interest is the way this is explained. Here is Hönig's 1997 account of an example that incited discussion and debate (cf. Hönig and Kussmaul 1982: 53):

> The principle of the necessary degree of precision is by no means limited to culture-specific terms, and indeed not to the meaning of words alone, but it can best be illustrated by this type of translation problem. For instance, the term 'public school' implies such a large amount of culture-specific knowledge that it is impossible to render its meaning 'completely' in a translation. Within a functionalist approach, however, the function of a word in its specific context determines to what degree the cultural meaning should be made explicit. In a sentence such as
>
> *In Parliament he fought for equality, but he sent his son to Eton.*
>
> the translation will have to be different from translating the identical term 'Eton' in the sentence:
>
> *When his father died his mother could not afford to send him to Eton any more.*
>
> The following translations would be sufficiently detailed:
>
> *Im Parlament kämpfte er für Chancengleichheit, aber seinen eigenen Sohn schickte er auf eine der englischen Eliteschulen.*
> *(…one of the English elite schools)*
>
> *Als sein Vater starb, konnte seine Mutter es sich nicht mehr leisten, ihn auf eine der teuren Privatschulen zu schicken.*
> *(…one of the expensive private schools).*

> Of course, there is more factual knowledge implied in the terms 'Eton' or 'public school' than is expressed in the translation, but the translation mentions everything that is important within the context of the sentence, in other words, the translation is semantically precise enough.

I note here that the translator has made certain assumptions about the readers' knowledge of English institutions and has given information accordingly. To that extent, the solutions are determined by the target-side situation, and thus by the assumed purpose of the translation, as the *Skopos* rule would have it. There is no question of the translation being exact or perfect; there is no need for excessive work to go into any kind of strategic analysis or componential semantics; the rendition is simply 'good enough' for the situation concerned. The translator can then assume that 'this is all my readers have to know' and no more need be said. For example, Hönig does *not* reproduce the translation offered in an earlier book (Hönig and Kussmaul 1982: 53):

> …konnte es sich seine Mutter nicht mehr leisten, ihn nach Eton zu schicken, jene teure englische Privatschule, aus deren Absolventen auch heute noch ein Großteil des politischen und wirtschaftlichen Führungsnachwuchses hervorgeht.

> […his mother could not afford to send him to Eton, the expensive English private school that still today produces a large part of the political and economic elite.]

That amount of added information is now considered excessive. In the context of the mother's financial difficulties, the reader only 'needs to know' that Eton is expensive. (The story is not quite finished: we will return to the Eton example in 4.7.2 below.)

Note that in the above citation, Hönig does not speak about the relation between the translation and the reader. He refers to 'the function of a word in its specific context', and this is later glossed as 'the context of the sentence'. Further, the two different translations of the term 'Eton' are not really presented as adding or taking away anything that is in the start text. When all is said and done, those translations are *making explicit* a few semantic values that English-language readers of the start text are assumed to activate. Despite the best principles of target-side functionalism, the actual practice suggests that we are not too far away from the basic principles of equivalence, in this case supporting simple density change (explicitation).

At this point, we start to see one of the basic problems of the wider theory. If the nature of the start text can determine the function that has to be translated (as it seems to do in Hönig's example), are we always certain there are no other purposes to be respected? And how can we be sure what the purpose is anyway?

4.5 Who really decides?

Despite doubts about how radically new some of the functionalist approaches were, Hans Vermeer saw his *Skopos* rule as effectively 'dethroning' the start text. For him, the translator's decisions could no longer be based solely on what was in the text. Once you accept that principle seriously, a whole new dimension opens up. Suddenly there are numerous social actors involved: the paying client, the person giving the job (perhaps a translation company or agency), the translator, occasionally several translators working together, a series of experts potentially helping the translator, editors controlling the translator, and hopefully a final receiver or end-user of the translation. German-language functionalist theories are full of diagrams connecting all those agents and describing their numerous possible roles. Together all those people and factors are somehow supposed converge in the one *Skopos* or purpose, the thing that the translation is supposed to achieve. We might say, for example, that a child-like suicide note is undoubtedly an expressive text (as Reiss's text typology might classify it), but when rendering it in a courtroom situation the translator should work with absolute philological exactitude since the new purpose is to decide if the note was written by the child (an authentic example, taken from Mayoral 2003). In this case, the function of the start text is quite different from that of the translation, and the change responds to a new purpose.

That kind of analysis works well for as long as everyone agrees on the purpose of the translation. But what happens when there is no clear agreement? Imagine, for example, that a neo-Nazi party has asked you to do a new 'dynamic' equivalence translation of *Mein Kampf*, or the defence lawyer insists that the suicide note is to be translated in an equivalent-effect way that arouses no suspicion of forgery. How should the translator decide in such situations?

When I read the functionalist theories closely, I find remarkably little agreement on such questions. The start text may have been dethroned, for some, but who is the new monarch?

For Holz-Mänttäri (1984), **the properly trained translator is the expert** in things translational, and so should be left to decide such issues. Authors and clients, on the other hand, tend to be experts in their respective fields, and so should be left to decide things like field-specific terminology and the desired effect on the reader. Holz-Mänttäri describes a world of complementary expertise, full of mutual respect, and with a prominent and well-defined place for the properly trained translator, who is sovereign in properly translational matters.

Vermeer's position is rather more difficult to pin down. We have seen him describe the translation process as making a text 'function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function' (1989: 20). This appears to make the end-user sovereign. However, we also find Vermeer describing the translator as a

respected expert (1989: 40), a professional who 'acts translatorially' (*handelt translatorisch*) (1989: 42), and whose ethical responsibility is to fulfill the goal of the translation as well as possible (1989: 77). Who decides what that goal is? The answer must lie somewhere in the following: 'The highest responsibility of the translator is to transmit the intended information in the optimal manner' (1989: 68, my translation). Who then decides what information is intended (intentions are not usually available for analysis) and who determines what 'optimal' means here? On the second question, at least, Vermeer does give a clear answer: 'optimal' is '*aus der Sicht des Translators*', 'in the eyes of the translator' (1989: 68). So here, as in Holz-Mänttäri, the well-trained translator is the one who ultimately decides.

Here we come up against one of the major problems of *Skopos* theory. For some decisions, the theorists seem to say, we cannot really help translators, who must ultimately act in their own name in each specific situation. As in basic existentialism, this places huge responsibilities on the shoulders of individuals, along with considerable liberties. According to Margret Ammann (1994), the old categories of equivalence and eternal binary choices had sought to **repress the translator's individuality**, whereas Vermeer's *Skopos* theory emphasizes precisely that individuality, at once **liberating** and **empowering** the translator. Other theorists, however, have seemed less anxious to travel down that road. Reiss never renounced the priority of start-text functions, and Hönig and Kussmaul's seminal principle, as we have seen, was far from ignoring the start text. In Nord, on the other hand, one finds more emphasis on the **client's instructions** (brief, commission, *Auftrag*). For example, Nord states that the *Skopos* is 'determined by the initiator's needs and wishes' (1997/2018: 108); she consequently defines a 'translation error' as 'anything that obstructs the achievement of [the] purpose' (1997/2018: 68); and she later insists that 'the translation purpose is defined by the translation brief, which (implicitly or explicitly) describes the situation for which the target text is needed' (2001: 201). For her, the *client* has the final say, although she does later add that 'the actual procedures are up to the translator' (1997/2018: 108). Perhaps because she worked as a teacher rather than as a professional translator, Nord seems less inclined to let translators make the big decisions.

Who are we to believe? Much depends on the words one uses to describe the instructions the translator receives (or does not receive) from the client. Writing in English, Vermeer prefers the term '**commission**', which might conjure up the image of a portrait painter getting very broad instructions but basically being left to carry out a creative task. When editing the first edition of Nord (1997/2018), I accepted the imagery of the client's '**brief**', which vaguely suggests a defence lawyer who receives information from the client but is ultimately responsible for the success or failure of the case. Later we will see the French theorist Daniel Gouadec using the term '**job description**', in which as many technical details as possible are agreed upon in advance, as if the translator were helping the client build a house. This is one of the many

points on which translation theory has had to rely on more or less explicit metaphors, selecting comparisons in accordance with the assumptions of each individual theorist. Further, it is rarely clear whether the theory describes what *always* happens, or merely what *should* happen in the best of possible theoretical worlds.

Christiane Nord has sought to add a prescriptive human dimension to these relations. She claims that the translator has ethical obligations not only to texts (a traditional focus of one kind of 'fidelity') but more importantly to people: to senders, clients, and receivers, all of whom merit the translator's '**loyalty**' (Nord 1997/2018). Nord sees this loyalty as a general relationship of solidarity that should somehow override any conflicts: 'If the client asks for a translation that entails being disloyal to either the author or the target readership or both, the translator should argue this point with the client or perhaps even refuse to produce the translation' (2001: 200).

Interestingly, when she herself was criticized as the co-translator of New Testament documents (Nord 2001), Nord's response was not particularly in terms of loyalty (why should she not have been loyal to the translation critics?) but in terms of *marked* functionality as a question of being honest. If the translators' preface says the purpose of the translation is to work in a certain way, then, says Nord, the translation cannot be criticized for working in that way. If you do what you promised to do, that is the purpose, it seems. Note that here the *Skopos* principle is not protected by the relatively hierarchical power structures of the translation class; Nord cannot use it to tell students to think beyond the surface of the text. In this more exposed situation, Nord ultimately claims that translators have the right and responsibility to do what they see fit. At that point, she would rejoin the sovereign translator of Holz-Mänttäri and Vermeer.

4.6 An extension into project analysis

I close this chapter with a brief look at an approach that extends the notion of purpose in a very practical way. The French translation teacher **Daniel Gouadec** (2007) had virtually no intellectual association with the German-language theorists. His thinking developed from the training of technical translators, working in cooperation with industry. In his pedagogical texts, Gouadec sees translation in terms of large-scale projects that involve not only clients and companies but also teams of translators, terminologists, and other communication specialists. He argues that special attention should be paid to clients' instructions, which he terms '**job specifications**'. If the specifications are as complete as possible, the translator will know exactly how to translate. And if the specifications are not complete enough, the translator should be able to seek further details and negotiate how to translate before taking on the job.

Much of this sounds close to what the purpose-based theorists were saying: pay attention to instructions, work with other experts, and achieve

the purpose that you are being paid for. If you look a little closer, though, you find that Gouadec's client is providing a lot more than a few sketchy instructions: in-house glossaries, parallel texts, previous translations done in the same field, perhaps the contact details of an expert in the field, delivery arrangements, and financial matters, and we should these days add translation memories, probably details of which translation memory suite to use, and a policy on the use of machine translation. For Gouadec, all these elements are reviewed and negotiated in an elaborate '**pre-translation**' phase. In that phase, there are many questions on which translators are probably more competent than their clients, particularly concerning such things as text format and forms of address (the formal or informal second person, for example). Translators should decide on these 'optional' elements and then present a list of proposed decisions to the client for signing-off. Pre-translation therefore does as much as possible to remove all sources of uncertainty. It effectively establishes the purpose, the approach, the solution types, and some equivalents before doing the job. This all makes so much practical sense that one wonders how theorists could have been arguing over the exact same things. One also wishes that more clients would learn from Gouadec: the norm in many parts of the industry is still for clients to send a text to the translator with just one job description: 'It's urgent'. So much for theory.

If we now compare Gouadec's approach with German-language *Skopos* theory, several differences emerge. Most obviously, Gouadec sees the translator as a language technician able to follow explicit instructions as part of **a team of communicators**. Holz-Mänttäri and Vermeer, on the other hand, tend to see the translator as an expert who has been trained to take decisions and to be responsible for them. Their ideal translator would perhaps be a consultant on cross-cultural communication, able to advise clients about how to present themselves in a different culture, not a freelancer working for a localization company. In keeping with this different status, Gouadec does everything possible to establish agreement and thus reduce the margins in which the translators must decide for themselves. Plurality is his enemy. For German-language *Skopos* theory, on the other hand, the plurality of possible purposes is a liberation from equivalence, and thus invites an ethical confrontation with uncertainty.

4.7 Some virtues of purpose-based theories

Let me now knit together these various strands. The following would be principles with which most of the German theorists would agree:

- The translator's decisions are ultimately governed by the purpose of the translation.
- The purpose of what translators do ('translatorial action') can be to produce equivalence to various aspects of the start text, or to engage in rewriting, or to give advice, or anything in between.

- The one text can be translated in different ways to suit different purposes.
- A key factor in defining the purpose of the translation is the client's job description or instructions.
- In the last analysis, the purpose of the translation is defined by the individual professional translator, working in relation with all the other social actors involved.

This general approach has several strong points that distinguish it from theories of equivalence:

- It recognizes that the translator works in a professional situation, with complex obligations to people as well as to texts.
- It liberates the translator from theories that would try to formulate linguistic rules that govern every decision.
- It forces us to see translation decisions as involving many factors, rather than as linguistic work on just one text.
- It can open up ethical issues in terms of free choice.

These are all good things. In its day, this general approach was exciting and apparently put paid to the fundamental force of equivalence.

4.8 Frequently had arguments

Although there have been several broad critiques of *Skopos* theory, few of them have received serious answers. When Vermeer responded to a series of objections (most accessibly in Vermeer 1989/2021), he did so at a straw-man level. One might argue, for example, that not all actions have aims or purposes (since we never know the complete outcome of an action before undertaking it), to which Vermeer answers, quite correctly, that we nevertheless *orient* our actions in terms of intended aims and purposes, and that all actions thus envisage purposes by definition (since that is the way he defines 'action'). The debates have stayed on that level of tautology, without scaling too many philosophical heights.

The following are some of the arguments that might be engaged in.

4.8.1 We translate words, not functions

All the theorists of purpose stress that one should translate what texts are supposed to do, their intended function, not the actual words on the page. Even when they disagree on who is intending the function, they all agree that function has priority over words. The British translation critic **Peter Newmark** (1988: 37), with typically phlegmatic pragmatism, retorted that words are 'all that is there, on the page', so words are all that we can translate. This debate should serve to indicate that functions are always *constructed* by us on the basis of the information available (which usually involves words

outside the page as well, as when instructions are received). Functions, like intentions, no matter whom they are attributed to, are not immediately available. Contexts, of course, are also interpretative constructions, largely built on the basis of words. When you think about it, language might be the only way we can conceptualize anything at all about a function or a situation.

Newmark's critique reminds us that texts have to be interpreted before they can be translated, and *Skopos* theory has remarkably little to say about that. That brought them into historical conflict with yet another camp, the proponents of hermeneutic approaches to translation (see 6.5 below).

4.8.2 Purposes are identified in the start text

A slightly different version of Newmark's critique argues that there is no function or intention that is not expressed in words, so it is impossible to avoid some kind of linguistic analysis of the text. In this line, **Kirsten Malmkjær** (1997: 70) picks up **Hönig's 'Eton' example** and claims that, in Hönig's analysis, 'what is necessary depends far less on the function of a translation than on the linguistic context in which a problematic expression occurs'. For example, if the main verb of a sentence is 'afford' (as in 'his mother could not afford to send him to Eton'), then the term 'Eton', no matter what the language, is likely to be invested with the value 'expensive', so there is no need to spell this out for the foreign reader and therefore no reason for claiming 'function' to be a new paradigm. This would seem to be a valid comment on Hönig and Kussmaul's general approach, but it cannot be applied to cases where the one text can indeed be translated in several different ways (as in the case of the apparent suicide note mentioned above).

4.8.3 The concept of purpose (or Skopos) is essentialist

This is a more philosophical version of the same critique. The importance of the objection will perhaps only be clear when we come to talk about uncertainty. For the moment, let me simply note that if textual meaning is considered to be unstable and always open to interpretation, the same can be said of any assumed purposes or functions. The *Skopos* approach would want to undo the assumed stability of the start text but somehow cannot see that the same critique can be applied to its own key terms: the statements on both sides can be deconstructed. There is no reason why any greater stability should ensue from a shift of focus from the start to the target.

4.8.4 The Skopos theory is unfalsifiable

This is a rather simple piece of reasoning. If every translation is dominated by its purpose, then the purpose is what is achieved by every translation. To separate the two, we would have to look at 'bad' translations where purposes are somehow *not* achieved, thus complicating the notion of what a

translation is. However, if the purpose is ultimately defined by the translator, as Vermeer would suggest, then how can we consistently accuse translators of not fulfilling the purpose that they themselves have defined? Some appeal might be made to a principle of internal contradiction ('one part of the translation goes one way, another part goes the other way, so it is bad…'). But who said a translation can only serve one purpose? Why can't different parts have different purposes? The longer one continues that line of argument, the less the *Skopos* rule seems to be saying.

4.8.5 *The theory does not address invariance as an underlying default norm*

This argument posits that, in our societies, the dominant concept of translation requires that the translator aims to achieve some degree of invariance, unless there are special indications to the contrary. The analysis of purpose would then simply concern those special cases, and the linguistic analysis of equivalence and solution types can carry on regardless. A counter-argument might be that there are many forms of translation, including dialogue interpreting and localization, where the default norm of invariance is now non-operative. That is, the profession has changed so much that equivalence itself has become the special case. No empirical studies, to my knowledge, have tested those claims either way. In fact, when you look at it, there is only anecdotal evidence to support any of the propositions formulated by *Skopos* theory.

4.8.6 *Purpose analysis is mostly not cost-effective*

This kind of criticism focuses on the extreme rigour with which these theories are formulated. Do translators have to do so much conceptual work before they even begin to translate? We might think here of Nord's 76 questions to be asked of the start text (and potentially another 76 of the target text as well). Translators, it could be argued, mostly cut corners by adhering to the prevailing norms of their profession, without extensive thought about specific purposes. That is, they are instinctively working in 'good enough' mode anyway, with or without the theoretical backup. The reply to this might be that a lot of translations would be much better if they were done in terms of specific purposes rather than by following endemic norms. That reply, however, would change the nature of the theory, taking it from a descriptive stance to an overtly prescriptive positioning. The critique brings out the very ambivalent status of the whole purpose-based approach, which does have a strong pedagogical aim beneath a thin veil of descriptivism.

4.8.7 *The well-trained translator is a self-serving notion*

As I have intimated, the descriptive illusion seems to be maintained by focusing only on the 'good' translator, or on what translators do when

they are properly trained experts. This enables the descriptive position to be prescriptive at the same time, particularly when one realizes that these theories have been used to modify translator-training curricula, thus effectively helping to produce the 'good' translators that the professors themselves define as 'good'. The ultimate risk is that we end up institutionalizing no more than the theorists' opinions.

4.8.8 The theory cannot resolve cases of conflicting purposes

When a theory tells individual translators that they must make their own choices in many cases, this could be seen not only as liberation and empowerment but also as a limit of where the theory proves useful – there would seem to be no ethical guidelines beyond those of the mercenary soldier ('fight for the side that pays you'). If the author wants one purpose and your client wants another, what do you do? Follow the orders of whoever pays you more? In this context, Nord's appeal to multilateral 'loyalty' does not really resolve dilemmas. It is nevertheless a very welcome opening to discussions that concern relations between people and not just between texts. It also points to a human quality that the individual translator might develop. In this, it could cover some aspects of the Confucian virtue of *xìn* (信), 'prudence and sincerity' (one of the five constant virtues), which appears in much of the theorizing inspired by Yan Fu (1901/2004: 69): it is the first of his 'three requirements to fulfill', often translated as 'faithfulness' but hopefully understood as being a relation to more than a text. I do not want to suggest that loyalty and *xìn* are the same thing. I merely note the shared call to introduce human virtues into a field dominated by references to texts. Later discourses on translator training have developed these into 'interpersonal skills'.

4.8.9 The theory contradicts the ethics of truth and accuracy

Newmark (1997: 75) reduced Vermeer's approach to the notion that '**the end justifies the means**', which he describes as 'a kind of brutalism that excludes factors of quality or accuracy'. In thereby opposing what he saw as 'the ideal of the commercial *skopos*', Newmark affirmed his belief that 'translation is a noble, truth-seeking activity, and that it should normally be accurate' (1997: 77). This is rather like the way Mossop (2016) later claimed that most translators seek invariance. In taking that stance, Newmark was certainly traditionalist, willfully unsophisticated, and technically wrong: Vermeer could define quality in terms of target-text function, and he allowed that there should be as much accuracy as required – although he did indeed write 'the end justifies the means' (Reiss and Vermeer 1984: 101). Newmark, like Mossop, quite probably expressed the beliefs of most people who employ translators, not to mention the professional ethics of a good many translators themselves.

4.8.10 Translators should only translate

An obvious extension of the above debate is the claim that anything that goes beyond equivalence or invariance is not really a translation, so *Skopos* theory is therefore not a theory of translation. As indicated above (4.3), this could be technically true according to some definitions but the theorists of purpose have never been particularly worried about it. The whole category of 'translatorial action' allows that translators do more than translate, and the inclusion of 'adaptation' and 'text tailoring' among translation solutions further condones more than invariance. When you go through history, almost all translators have had at least one professional activity in addition to translation (Pym 1998a), so there is nothing new here. This in turn might suggest that the training of translators should concern transferable skills and the rather wider issues of multilingual communication.

   As might be clear, the move from equivalence to purpose gave rise to numerous debates, some of which proved eminently useful when translation theorists got together to consume alcohol (even more arguments are in Nord 1997/2018). Most of those discussions are now more or less in the past, at least in the West. We have sobered up: *Skopos* theory has entered mainstream discourses and is now on the menu in almost all programs for training translators. What once seemed revolutionary has now become part of the status quo. More worrying, these theories were mainly pedagogical in intention: they were designed for the training of translators, without a developed empirical research component that might have kept feeding in new data and thereby updating the principles. Without research, by the end of the 1990s there was not much new to say. Nord (1997/2018) does list a few research initiatives, but they are not substantial. She rather hopes that theorists of literary *adaptation* might enter the fray to help rejuvenate debates, but I am not aware of that happening to any great degree.

Summary

This chapter has presented a set of theories that are based on a simple idea: a translation need not be equivalent to its start text. The various theories differ with respect to the degrees to which translations can break with equivalence, but they all focus on the target-side purpose that the translation is to achieve. This means that, in theory, the one text can be translated in different ways to achieve different purposes. The translator therefore needs information about the purpose, and that information should ideally be in instructions provided by the client. Translators are seen as being in a social situation where they must negotiate with all the parties involved, possibly including the client, the receiver or end-user, and the author. For Vermeer, the translator is the one who ultimately decides the target-side purpose (*Skopos*) of the translation. For Holz-Mänttäri, the translator's role in these relationships is as the expert in cross-cultural communication, which means that translators can re-write

or give advice, as well as translate. For Nord, the ethical component of the person-to-person relationship is 'loyalty', rather than the 'faithfulness' that would characterize the relationship to a text in the classical theories that led to equivalence. This general view can be extended to include the work of Gouadec, who emphasizes that technical translators work in teams and that complete information from the client in the pre-translation phase should determine many of the translator's decisions.

Sources and further reading

The Translation Studies Reader (2021) has a programmatic text by Vermeer. Munday et al. (2022) have a chapter on 'functional theories of translation' where the main ideas are placed alongside start-text analysis, which might be a different kind of functionalism. The best introduction is still Christiane Nord's *Translating as a Purposeful Activity* (second edition 2018), although the original editor's name has disappeared from the text. Nord's introduction contains the main citations, diagrams, and criticisms. Vermeer and Nord are to be preferred to some of the secondary accounts that have not benefited from extensive readings of the German texts. The foundational text by Reiss and Vermeer (1984) was translated into Spanish in 1996 and into English in 2013 (almost 30 years later!), while Holz-Mänttäri (1984) seems not to have been translated and remains a challenge in German. Gouadec's large compendium of recommendations and checklists for technical translators is available in English as *Translation as a Profession* (2007).

Suggested projects and activities

1. This is an activity in five parts, not all of which work every time. Some experimentation will be necessary:

   a) In groups, select texts from three very different genres (say, contracts, advertising, or poetry, but also wonderfully mixed genres like self-descriptions from online dating services or the homepage of a computer company). Translate fragments of them in such a way as to respect the different genres.
   b) Once you have completed that, find or invent names for the dominant solution types used in each of the translations. Any classification will do. If the solution types are too hard to identify, use points on a scale between domestication and foreignization, or anything like that.
   c) Now try to apply the dominant solution types you have used for one text to the other two, and vice versa. For example, you might try to translate a contract in the same way you have translated an advertisement, or you could translate an instruction manual using the kinds of solutions you have used for a novel.

   d) Considering what you have done, is it true that the one text can be translated in many significantly different ways? Are there really so many different reception situations?

   e) On the basis of this exercise, do you find that the main differences between your initial translations are due to the nature of the start texts or the nature of the purposes for which the translations have been carried out?

2. This is a simpler version of the above. Take a text in a genre that has different formats in different cultures (recipes are too easy but could be a good place to start; obituaries of not-too-famous people tend to work better, especially if they include a photograph). Different groups in the class are given different translation purposes: translate for a newspaper, for a history book, for a collection of photographs, for young people, for people who have reading difficulties, for example. When the final translations are compared, does the class agree that the one text can be translated in different ways for different purposes?

3. Find or invent transcriptions of mediated medical encounters (for example, a conversation between a doctor and a patient via an interpreter) and delete the interpreter's renditions. Students do written translations of what the interpreter had to interpret. They then act out the scenes, producing spoken translations. Finally, they compare the written translations with the spoken ones, and then with what the interpreter did. Which translations have the most invariance or are the most literal? Which are the closest to functions? Why?

4. Translate these two sentences: (a) 'In Parliament he fought for equality, but he sent his son to Eton', and (b) 'When his father died his mother could not afford to send him to Eton anymore'. Now consider Newmark's argument that 'to translate 'Eton College' as 'one of (!) the English elite schools' or as 'one of the expensive private schools' suggests that the translator is unaware of Eton's importance as a British institution, and underrates or fails to enlighten the likely readership' (1997: 76). In what circumstances would you consider Newmark's criticism to be correct? Would it make you change your translation?

5. For the same two sentences, consider Malmkjær's argument that 'the presence in the [second] sentence of 'could not afford' effortlessly activates the EXPENSIVE sense of 'Eton' for the English reader. It would of course be possible for a German reader to attach the appropriate senses to 'Eton' by means of conscious inference and possibly some research, even if the place/school name had been left to fend for itself in the [target text]' (1997: 71). Can a similar argument be made for the sentence 'In Parliament, he fought for equality, but he sent his son to Eton'? Consider the function of 'but'. Does this mean that linguistic analysis alone can identify whole text functions? Does it mean that cultural terms sometimes require no special translation strategy, since syntax and semantics tell the story?

6. Find three published translations (websites are good for this). Imagine you are the client who ordered the translations and write appropriate job descriptions.

7. Extend the previous activity as a role-play. Some groups in the class are translation companies, others are translation teams that compete for contracts from the companies. The companies give out a start text and some elaborate instructions. The translator groups work on the text and then do a presentation of their work to the clients, each of whom awards a contract based on how well the instructions are reported to have been carried out. This activity works well in mixed-language classes where the clients do not know the languages the translators have worked into. Students learn how to explain what translators do, but they tend to learn more when they are playing the role of the clients.

8. For philosophers: If all translations are dominated by their purpose, how can we define a bad translation?

9. Ask some professional translators about the kinds of instructions they receive from their clients. Which metaphor (order, commission, brief, job specification, etc.) best describes that communication (if indeed there is any communication)? If you find that professional translators receive no such instructions, is the theory therefore wrong, or should we change professional practice?

10. Vermeer proposes that translators should be trained to become 'intercultural management assistants' or 'consultants' (1998: 62). Is this a realistic aim? Or should translators be trained to become competent technicians able to negotiate and then carry out instructions (as in Gouadec)? What happens when you only have a two-year training program and something has to be sacrificed? Should these different roles be developed at different stages of a translator's professional career?

11. List the possible ways we could translate the German term *Skopostheorie* (literally 'skopos theory') into English as a term to be listed in a glossary, paying attention to the use of italics and capitals (in German, all nouns begin with capitals). What different purposes could be associated with the selection of one translation or another? What purpose might lie behind my preference for the term '*Skopos* theory' (i.e., using the German term in an English text)? Is there any neutral option?

5   Science

Many people have sought to describe translations – there is nothing fancy in that. In fact, the task might be considered too banal to be taken seriously by scholars. Some of the most significant concepts in Western translation theory have nevertheless ensued from attempts to describe translations and their contexts in a more or less rigorous way. Various appeals to descriptive 'science' have involved seeking clear categories and replicable methods that are able to produce apparently objective descriptions. Those categories and methods are where the theories have come from.

The basic idea of adopting a scientific approach to study language and literature can be traced at least back to the Russian Formalists at the beginning of the twentieth century. It connected with later translation theorists in four broad regions and for rather different reasons: in socialist countries, the dominant ideology of Marxist-Leninism was supposed to be scientific in itself, so official theories were by definition scientific; in other countries, structuralism was trying to apply a less ideological kind of science right across the humanities. The first line of development was in what was then the Soviet Union, where work done in Russian and Ukrainian in the 1920s can be traced through to major texts by Fedorov, Sobolev, and others, meeting up with the early linguistic work done on machine translation. The second link was with the work done in Prague, Bratislava, and, more loosely connected, Leipzig, where there was some awareness of what was happening further east. The third link was with what is sometimes called the 'Tel Aviv school' around Even-Zohar and Toury, with the development of polysystem theory and Descriptive Translation Studies. And the fourth link was through the Netherlands and Flanders. In these last two areas, there was little reference to anything from the Soviet Union, thus setting up a parallel history. The difference between East and West can be seen in different ways of approaching translation studies as a scientific discipline. A proposal for some kind unified translation studies can be located in Russian in 1958, emerging from an acrimonious conference where linguists and literary scholars apparently debated over who should study translation. According to Cary (1959), the idea emerged that both sides could work together. A quite different proposal was

formulated as literary scholars from the more western links met and discussed their projects at a series of conferences in the field of literary studies, leading to James S. Holmes's 1972 proposal for translation studies as a scientific field. The two proposals had different dates and came from very different parts of the world, but they both responded to the basic idea that translation could be studied scientifically. That history is important because it meant that very few of these theories overlapped with those mentioned in previous chapters. This chapter focuses on the main theoretical concepts developed by the more western kinds of descriptive studies, particularly from Toury: translation shifts, systems, and polysystems, 'assumed translations', a focus on the target side, norms, translation tendencies, and some proposed laws of translation, with a brief comparison with Russian developments at points along the way. In historical retrospect, the business of describing translations turned out to be anything but simple.

The **main points** covered in this chapter are:

- Rather than prescribe what a good translation *should* be like, scientific approaches try to say what translations actually are in their various cultural and historical contexts.
- When selecting texts to study, translations can be considered facts of the target culture only, as opposed to the start-culture context that is predominant in theories of equivalence.
- Translators' performances can be seen as being regulated by collective 'norms' that are based on informal consensus about what translators are expected to produce.
- Comparative studies of novice and experienced translators can locate some of the norms that translators learn.
- A few proposed 'tendencies' or 'universals' of translation describe ways translations tend to differ from non-translations.
- A tentative 'law of translation' describes how translations correlate with relations between cultures.
- Translations can play an innovative or conservative role in the development of cultural systems.

5.1 What happened to equivalence?

Equivalence went out of fashion. For German-language theories of purpose, as we have seen, it became 'functional consistency', a special case, a small thing. At almost the same time, other theorists were dismantling equivalence in precisely the opposite way. For this second group, **equivalence was a feature of *all* translations**, simply because someone thought the translations were translations, no matter what their linguistic or aesthetic quality (Toury

1980: 63–70). In principle, scientists do not ask whether an object is good or bad: they are interested in how it is put together and what it can do in different contexts. That changed everything. If equivalence was suddenly everywhere in translations, or almost, it could no longer be used to support any linguistics that would help people produce *better* translations – that was what Nida (1964) was trying to do with his highly evaluative 'science of translating', which was a very different beast. Once equivalence was everywhere, the theorizing of translation was moved into a realm that is relatively unprotected by any parent discipline: separated from linguistics and not positioned entirely in literary studies (since many kinds of texts are involved), translation scholars began to envisage their own discipline. More than pure theory, however, this approach emphasized the need to carry out **research on translation in different contexts**. That research would help it evolve quite independently from the concerns of training translators. It was therefore in an institutional context quite different from *Skopos* theory, which had little research but plenty of pedagogy. Here I trace the adventures of that historical development.

5.2 Main theoretical concepts

The attempt to study translations scientifically was not easy. We have seen that Fedorov and others recognized that the way you translate depends to a large extent on the kind of text you are translating. So if there are countless kinds of text and each requires its own translation solutions, how could one ever find general scientific principles that would apply to them all? That is what literary-cultural scholars tend to say: the human spirit is so diverse that it cannot be reduced to science. Similarly, Vermeer recognized that beyond a few general principles, the translator's decisions depended on each particular situation (see 4.5 above), making scientific principles difficult to apply. The Russian tradition had handled part of this diversity by claiming there was a common aim for all translations, but here is Fedorov confronting the problem more directly in 1953:

> That is why one is so surprised at Prof. A. A. Reformatskiy when he asks, in his article 'Linguistic problems of translation' [1952], 'Is a science of translation possible?' and he answers, 'No, such a science is impossible; translation practice can use the knowledge of many sciences but cannot have a science of its own. This is the consequence of the diversity of translation types and genres'. The argument is completely groundless. Yes, it can be very difficult and complex to systematize and generalize the different forms (формы) adapted by the correlation of regularities (закономерности) between two languages when working with different genres (жанры) and different types of material, but that does not mean it is impossible to carry out that task.
>
> (1953: 15, trans. Nune Ayvazyan)

Difficult, but not impossible. Fedorov's reference to science has continued through an important strand of Russian-language translation theory, to the extent that 'science of translation' (наука о переводе), alongside 'translation theory', is used in Russian to describe translation studies as a whole (Garbovskiy and Kostikova 2012: 50). The same thing in German, where the discipline is generally called *Translationswissenschaft*, 'translation science'. In the following sections, I will nevertheless be mainly focusing on how scholars in Western Europe and Israel worked on the same problem and developed a set of concepts that have been loosely described as 'Descriptive Translation Studies'. With apologies, only a few reports of Russian-language developments will then be picked up in relation to more recent contacts with cognitive science.

A shortlist of concepts in the development of a scientific approach

Here are some of the ideas and scholars who were instrumental in the development of a scientific approach. Many others could be added; most should be associated with far more than one idea:

- The study of translation requires scientific data on the history of language, literature, and culture (Fedorov).
- All texts are translatable (Fedorov); all texts received as translations have equivalence (Toury).
- The relations between start and target texts can be described in terms of transformational 'correspondences' (Retsker, Barkhudarov, Shveytser) or 'translation shifts' (Levý, Miko, Popovič).
- The innovative or conservative position of translations within a cultural system depends on the system's relation with other systems and can correlate with the kinds of solutions in the translation (Batyushkov, Even-Zohar, Holmes, Toury).
- Translation studies should be an empirical discipline with a structured research program (Fedorov, Holmes, Toury).
- When selecting texts to study, one should first consider translations to be facts of the target culture (Toury).
- To understand not just translations but all kinds of 'rewriting', we must consider the social contexts, especially patronage (who pays?) (Lefevere).

5.3 Translation shifts (big and small)

The most obvious way to analyze translations is to compare start and target texts. That idea is as simple to understand as it is difficult to apply.

An early methodology for doing this can be found in **Yakov Retsker** (1950) when he sets out to compare the actual 'correspondences' that translators create, rather than look at general language usages (as Vinay and Darbelnet did in Canada). A 'correspondence' could be any of the solution types we have seen. What is interesting is that Retsker uses 'закономерные' to describe the correspondences, an adjective that can be rendered as 'regular' but might also be extended to 'rule-governed'. The suggestion is that scientific analysis of the data should lead to the discovery of some kind of pattern or rule, as it does when the linguist discovers grammar. In the Soviet work from the 1950s to the 1970s (for example Retsker 1974/2007; Barkhudarov 1975; Shveytser 1973/1987), these correspondences are usually analyzed as 'transformations', a term that came not from American transformational grammar but from the Soviet work on machine translation, with the prime reference being Revzin and Rozentsveyg (1964). In this context, 'science' meant doing hard linguistic science, dedicated to the discovery of the kind of rules that would eventually help machines translate. As we now know, the task was difficult but not impossible.

Rather less theorized comparisons were the mainstay of the linguistic approach of **John Catford**, whom we have met as a theorist of equivalence. In Catford, 'translation shifts' are described as 'departures from formal correspondence' (1965: 73), which sounds clear enough, although it contradicts the way the Russians were talking about 'correspondences'. If formal correspondence is what we find between *Friday the 13th* and *viernes 13* (Friday the 13th in Spanish), then any other rendition will be a 'shift' of some kind. This means that any translation solution except literalism could be described as a shift. This gives us a basic scientific method, in both East and West: compare the texts, collect the differences, then try to organize the various kinds of shifts in the hope of finding patterns or even rules.

There are at least two ways of approaching this task: **bottom-up analysis** starts from the smaller units (usually terms, phrases, or sentences) and works up to the larger ones (text, context, genre, culture); **top-down analysis** goes the other way, starting with the larger systemic factors (such as the position of translations within a sociocultural system) and working down to the smaller ones (categories like solution types). In principle, it should make no difference where you start: all roads lead to Rome, and there are always dialectic loops and jumps between levels. And yet, perhaps surprisingly, the difference between bottom-up and top-down has a lot to do with the role of theory.

If you start working bottom-up and you collect all the differences between a start text and its translation, or between several translations, you quickly finish up with so many shifts that there is not much that can be said: the process is methodologically murky and rarely reaches firm findings at any higher level of analysis. Since translating is an inherently complex activity, bottom-up analysis usually leads to more data than we can handle. Lists are not

science. At the end of the day, the research requires orientation from a few organizing ideas, that is, theories. If you are working in linguistics, you tend to get your theories from the linguistic categories at hand (hence Catford's analyses of ranks). But if you want to do something more than linguistics, something on the level of whole literatures and cultures, then you need other kinds of ideas. That is one of the reasons why science requires theorization.

The scientific approach in central Europe tended to operate in a more top-down way. In Leipzig, **Otto Kade** (1968) explicitly argued that a bottom-up approach ('induction') had to be accompanied by top-down analysis (a 'hypothetico-deductive' approach) if theoretical results were to be achieved. In Bratislava and Nitra, the analysis of '**shifts of expression**' was also happening in roughly the same years as Catford (cf. Popovič 1968/1970; Miko 1970) but the approach did not assume any simple desire to maintain equivalence. Shifts could thus be approached in a top-down way, starting from major hypotheses about why they might exist and how they could form regularities.

Anton Popovič, for instance, started from the idea that there are 'two stylistic norms in the translator's work: the norm of the original and the norm of the translation' (1968/1970: 82). That seems so simple as to be obvious. Yet consider the consequence: as soon as the two '**stylistic norms**' are announced, the multiplicity of shifts is already theorized in terms of potentially coherent patterns: some can be attributed to the author, others to the translator. The approach also connects with the study of literary style, where one might see the two interacting 'norms' as the voices of author and translator. On another level, shifts could be patterned differently because of historical factors (the nature of the receiving system, patronage, new text purpose, different ideas about what translation is, etc.). Or again, some shifts might come about simply as a result of the translation process as such (these would later be dubbed 'translation tendencies' or 'universals'). On all those levels, the top-down approach was seeking **causal factors** (the reasons for the shifts) that were quite different from those of the equivalence theories and were often at the level of entire cultural systems or social communication policies. The early scientific approaches could always join forces with the bottom-up analyses carried out by linguists, but their theoretical frame was fundamentally different. In effect, these were theories about possible causes (personal, institutional, and historical) that could explain why people translate differently.

As an example of top-down analysis, consider the basic problem of **how to translate a text that is in verse**. This is analyzed in a seminal paper by **James S. Holmes** (1970). In some cultures (notably in French), foreign verse is almost always rendered in prose. So the problem is solved: translators know what to do (translate into prose) and readers know what to expect. That would be one huge kind of shift, and it has remarkably little to do with equivalence of any linguistic kind. In other cultural situations, however, alternative shifts can be deemed appropriate. Holmes formalizes these in terms of four available options (in addition to the rendering of verse as prose): translators can use a form that looks like the start text ('mimetic form'); they can select a

form that fulfils a similar function ('analogical form'); they can develop a new form based on the text's content ('organic form'); or they can come up with their own individual solution ('extraneous form').

Now for the theoretical part. Holmes sees these options as being appropriate to **different historical situations**. Mimetic form tends to come to the fore 'in a period when genre concepts are weak, literary norms are being called into question, and the target culture as a whole stands open to outside impulses' (Holmes 1970: 98). This might be the case of German in the first half of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, 'the analogical form is the choice to be expected in a period that is in-turned and exclusive' (Holmes 1970: 97), such as eighteenth-century France. As for the use of 'organic' form, Holmes sees it as being 'fundamentally pessimistic regarding the possibilities of cross-cultural transference' (1970: 98) and he associates it with twentieth-century Modernism. 'Extraneous' form is then described as having 'a tenacious life as a kind of underground, minority form […] resorted to particularly by metapoets who lean in the direction of imitation' (1970: 99).

Holmes's analysis here suggests that translators' decisions are culture-bound, give or take a few unruly 'metapoets'. When asked how any decision should be made, science of this kind will always be able to say: 'It depends on the situation'. But then, how many different things can a decision depend on? Is there any way to model the huge range of variables covered by phrases like 'the translator's situation'? Scientific approaches have made use of at least three concepts to try to get a handle on that problem: systems, norms, and (for want of a better term) target-sidedness.

5.4 Systems and polysystems

What Holmes does in his brief study of verse forms is systematic: he identifies and classifies the available options and he gives them a certain logical symmetry, largely thanks to some blunt distinctions between form, function, and content. One must be careful about what this means. What Holmes does is **systematic** (ordered, thorough, complete) but not necessarily **systemic**.

If we are talking about a language system, we know a speaker produces a string of words in which, at each point, there is a *restricted* set of words that can follow. If you say the article 'the', the next word will be selected from all the adjectives or nouns in English, but *only* the adjectives or nouns. The language system limits the choices that can be made. The same is true of the translator as a language producer, of course, since the target language imposes sets of choices. Now, does the same kind of rule-governed decision concern how to render a foreign verse form? In Holmes's analysis, perhaps: the translator could see a foreign verse form, mentally evaluate all the ways it could be rendered, then select the one most appropriate to their historical context, which would therefore be operating as a system, like a language. Mostly, though, the kind of choice outlined by Holmes **cannot be considered a psychological reality and is unlikely to be rule-governed**, at least

not in the same way as the language system governs the way we speak. If the translator was working into German at the beginning of the nineteenth century, all kinds of social and cultural factors not only made the use of mimetic form appropriate but also made Holmes's alternatives relatively unthinkable. Germanic culture, without a state, was prepared to draw on other cultures to develop. Translations of Homer brought hexameters into German, and translations of Shakespeare brought in blank verse. That is one possible reason why, lecturing in 1813, Schleiermacher saw this capacity to draw from other cultures as the key to foreignizing translations, regarded as being a particularly Germanic strategy. A literary translator trained in that cultural environment would then see 'mimetic form' or 'foreignizing' as the *normal* way to go about translation. The translator might even see it as the true or correct way in which *all* translations should be done, in *all* sociocultural environments. Prescriptive theorizing may result ('All translations should use mimetic form!'); some structural oppositions might be proclaimed in theory ('German mimetic form is better than French translations into prose!'); but the choices are not made within an abstract system comprising purely translational options. So where is the system?

As Toury would later clarify, the kind of system elaborated by Holmes belongs to the level of the theorist (the options *theoretically* available), which is to be distinguished from the alternatives available to the translator at the time of translating, which are in turn quite different from what the translator actually does. Toury distinguishes between three levels of analysis: 'all that translation CAN, in principle, involve', 'what it DOES involve, under particular sets of circumstances', and 'what it is LIKELY to involve, under one or another array of specified conditions' (1995/2012: 15). The abstract theory part is at the level of everything that could possibly be done; the descriptive part then sees what happened; and in between those two there is something else, probabilities, of the kind 'solution X tends to prevail in situation Y'. What started off as a science of systems thus becomes a **science of probabilities**.

When Holmes tries to explain why a particular option is associated with a particular period, he cites a range of quite profound phenomena: 'genre concepts', 'literary norms', 'cultural openness/closure', 'pessimism/optimism about cross-cultural transfer', and so on. These are all things that are considered to be in the *target* culture. Holmes mentions them in a fairly offhand way; they seem to be quite separate, isolated phenomena. However, it is possible to see such things as being bound together to some extent, as different aspects of the one culture. In other theorists, particularly those more closely in touch with the legacy of Russian Formalism, cultural systems can impose quite strong logics. Lotman and Uspenskiy (1971/1978), for example, talk about entire cultures being 'expression-oriented' or 'content-oriented' (along with various more complex classifications). The stronger the logic by which the system is presumed to operate, the more that system can be seen as determining the nature of translations. But then the science is of cultures, not translations themselves.

When the Israeli culture scholar **Itamar Even-Zohar** analyzes the relationship between translations and cultures, he uses the term '**polysystems**'. The 'poly-' part means 'many' or 'plural', indicating that a culture is a system made up of many other systems (linguistic, social, legal, economic, political, military, culinary, etc.). Thanks to this plurality, the internal logics of a literary system need not be determined by everything that can be done within a whole culture; there is relative freedom *within* cultures. For Even-Zohar, translated literature can be seen as a sub-system occupying a position within the literary polysystem that hosts it. Translations can sometimes become a key element in the literature (and therefore hold an 'innovative' or 'central' position); they may be secondary or unimportant ('conservative' or 'peripheral' positions); or they can occupy positions in between. On this view, translation is seen as a way in which one polysystem 'interferes' with another, where the verb 'to interfere' does not carry any pejorative sense – this science is supposed to be neutral. Even-Zohar proposes that translations play an **innovative or central role** when

> (a) a polysystem has not yet been crystallized, that is to say, when a literature is 'young', in the process of being established; (b) when a literature is either 'peripheral' (within a large group of correlated literatures) or 'weak', or both; and (c) when there are turning points, crises, or literary vacuums in a literature.
>
> (1978: 23)

These three situations are compatible with a proposed 'law of interference' that we will explore below (5.5, 5.9).

Even-Zohar's way of thinking here goes well beyond Holmes's attempt to explain translated verse forms. The idea of polysystems being dynamic and plural allows him to ask what translations can *do* within their target cultures, and how they evolve from relations between cultures. Even-Zohar's general finding is nevertheless rather negative since he concludes that 'the "normal" position assumed by translated literature tends to be the secondary [peripheral] one' (1978: 25), that is, translations tend to have a conservative, reinforcing effect rather than a revolutionary, innovative one. That kind of finding is not popular among those who would prefer to see translations as a hidden and unappreciated cause of change. Even-Zohar nevertheless stresses that translation is essential for the understanding of *any* cultural system (since no culture is an entirely independent entity) and that translational processes occur *within* polysystems as well as between them.

The term 'system' thus varies in meaning and importance from theorist to theorist. In each case, you have to read the descriptions closely, paying particular attention to the verbs and the agents of the verbs (who is supposed to be doing what). In strong systems theory, you will find that the systems themselves do things, as if they were people. In other approaches, people are portrayed as doing things within systems of constraints. That is a big

difference, bearing on fundamental issues such as human agency, deterministic history, and of course the possible effects of translations.

While on the terminological difficulties, I note a related problem with the term '**function**'. For theories of systems, the 'function' of a translation is generally described as its **position within its corresponding system**. When we say that, within a cultural system, a translation is relatively '**central**' or '**peripheral**', this means its function is either to change or reinforce the receiving language, culture, or literature. The function is what the translation does in the system. For theories of purpose, on the other hand, the 'function' of a translation is generally conflated into the *Skopos*, the action that the translation is supposed to enable in a specific situation, just as the function of a start text is assumed to be the action in which the text is used (to teach, to express, to sell, etc.). Although both approaches claim to be 'functionalist', the word 'function' means one thing in relation to systems theory (a position and role within a large-scale set of relations) and something else in relation to purpose theory (an action within a situation comprising various agents). There obviously must be common ground between the two usages, but only a few theorists have sought it. One attempt to bridge the gap might be **André Lefevere**'s view of systems (1992), which includes factors very close to the translator (who pays for the translation?, what do editors and publishers do?). Another attempt in recent years has been the use of **actor-network theory** to study the same close relations sociologically (we will meet it in our chapter on cultural translation). And a third avenue might be the concept of **translation culture** (Prunč 1997), which would basically be the system of interrelations between all participants in the production of translations. The broadest and most basic bridge has nevertheless been the concept of translation norms.

5.5 Norms

We have seen that Toury distinguishes between the abstract theory of everything a translation 'can be' and the descriptive level of what translations 'are likely to involve' (1995/2012: 15). That second level is where he describes translation 'norms', positioned somewhere between abstract possibilities (such as Holmes's alternatives) and what translators do in each situation (the kinds of pragmatic considerations that *Skopos* theory deals with). For Toury, norms are

> the translation of general values or ideas shared by a community – as to what would count as right or wrong, adequate or inadequate – into performance 'instructions' appropriate for and applicable to concrete situations.
>
> (1995/2012: 63)

The term 'performance instructions' might suggest that a norm is the same thing as a client's job description. It could also misleadingly be associated

with a set of rules or official regulations. For Toury, though, the term *norm* operates at a wider, more social level. For example, we could say that in the nineteenth century the norm for translating foreign verse into French was to render it into prose. There was no official rule stating that this *had* to be done, but there was certainly an informal collective agreement and expectation. When translators approached the foreign text, they would accept as a matter of course that their work was not to imitate what the text looked like or sounded like. When publishers hired translators, they expected them to render verse as prose. And when readers approached a literary translation, they would similarly accept that foreign poetry simply had to be in prose. That said, the norm was not respected by *all* translators: norms are not laws that everyone has to follow. Norms are more like a common practice in terms of which other types of practice are seen as being special or, in linguistic parlance, 'marked'.

Why did the norm of 'verse into prose' exist? On several different levels, it no doubt embodied the general idea that French culture was superior to other cultures. It conveyed at least that much of French society's 'general values and ideas'. Given this internalized superiority, there was no reason to accept any foreign influence on the existing system of literary genres. The theoretical relationship can be found way back in **Fyodor Batyushkov** (1920): 'In cases where the translator belongs to a nation that stands or thinks it stands higher in terms of artistic development than the nation that has produced the original [eighteenth-century France is the example given], then inaccuracy is elevated to the status of a principle' (1920: 7, trans. Brian James Baer, to whom my thanks). The reverse is held to happen when the cultural asymmetry is the other way around. In Even-Zohar's terms, we would say the perceived prestige of the target system allocated translation a peripheral role and hence a very conservative range of acceptable forms. Further, if we follow Toury, there would be some kind of social (though not legal) penalization involved whenever a translator did not adhere to the norm. For instance, a text that differed radically from the established genres might be considered peculiar, ugly, or simply not worth buying. In every culture, the nature of a good translation is determined by such norms, since 'bad translations' are penalized in some way, even if only by hurling adjectives like 'bad'. By the same token, a norm-breaking translation might be condemned by some but be seen as innovative and ground-breaking by others. The theory of norms allows for both possibilities.

The idea of norms covers quite a few related but different things. Toury (1995/2012: 82) makes a basic distinction between '**preliminary norms**', which concern the selection of the kind of text and the mode of translation (direct/indirect, etc.), and '**operational norms**', which would include all the decisions made in the act of translating. However, as our 'verse into prose' example shows, norms also concern what translators *think* they are supposed to do, what clients *think* translators ought to do, what text-users *think* a translation should be like, and what kinds of translations are *considered*

reprehensible or especially laudable. **Chesterman** (1997) organizes these various aspects by distinguishing between '**professional norms**', which would cover everything related to the translation process, and '**expectancy norms**', which are what people expect the translation to be. If translators in a given culture usually add numerous explanatory footnotes, that might be a professional norm. If readers are frustrated when such notes do not appear or when they are in an unusual place, then that frustration will be in relation to expectancy norms. Ideally, the different types of norms reinforce one another, so that translators tend to do what clients and readers expect of them. In times of cultural change, the various norms can nevertheless be thrown out of kilter, possibly resulting in considerable tension. In systems that promote self-induced change, a logic of the avant-garde may mean that all text producers, including translators, set about *breaking* norms, and text users therefore expect norms to be broken. That is, norm-breaking can become the norm.

   The idea of norms and norm-breaking has been important for the way scientific approaches relate to other kinds of translation theory. If we apply the concept of norms seriously, we should probably give up the idea of defining once and for all what a good translation is supposed to be in all places and at all times (although it is perhaps still possible to say what a good or bad *social effect* might look like, and thus evaluate the way norms work). The very notion of what a translation *is* then becomes very 'relative', which means that there are no absolute values and everything depends on context. When Fedorov was told that there could be no science of translation, the accusation was that everything in translation is relative so no scientific principles could ever be identified. Some degree of this relativism is indeed recognized in most scientific approaches to translation. It would be a major point of compatibility with purpose-based theories (and indeed with the theories of uncertainty we will meet in the next chapter) where the nature of a translation ensues from the situation in which it is carried out, to the extent that it matters little whether a text is considered a translation or a liberal re-write. At the same time, this relativism would run *counter* to much of the linguistic work done in theories of equivalence: when a linguist analyzes a text to see how it can or should be translated, the basic assumption is not only that the answers will come from the nature of that text, but more importantly that the nature of translation itself is a very clear thing. There is not much relativism involved. In many of the scientific approaches we are looking at here, though, such idealist assumptions are not made. This gives rise to a problem: How can a science possibly determine the borders between translations and non-translations if the distinction depends on each individual case? Toury's solution is to turn to norms, which are different in each place but about which we can gain general knowledge. The notion of norms thereby seems to solve one of the long-standing problems facing theories of translation. People in a culture decide when a translation is really a translation, and scholars describe what they say and when they say it.

When you stand back and compare these sets of theories, some basic relations are quite intriguing. Let me mention a few before we re-join the escapades of norms. First, the theories that appealed to science generally opposed what they saw as the *prescriptivism* of equivalence-based theories. That was also a methodological difference: theories of equivalence invited analysis to begin from the *start* text and its role in the *start* situation, whereas Toury (1995/2012: 103), for one, explicitly recommended **beginning analysis from the translation**. He thus opened space for later research that would take no account of the start text at all. For example, you can simply compare different translations, or compare translations with non-translations within the target system. That kind of full-frontal opposition helped make Toury the *enfant terrible* of his day. It also, by the way, fitted in with the move to the target side that was being carried out by the *Skopos* theories in the same years.

The notion of norms is nevertheless tricky because it allows a kind of pre-scriptivism to be introduced into descriptive studies, almost through the back door. Even if the role of science is not to tell translators how to translate, a descriptive approach can identify the norms by which a translation may be considered good by people in a certain place and time. That opens the way for an application of descriptive studies in the **training of translators and interpreters**. Toury (1992) suggested, for example, that students be asked to render the same text according to *different* norms (for instance, translate as one might have done in eighteenth-century France). The student will thus become aware that there are many different ways to translate, each with advantages and disadvantages. Of course, the same kind of exercise can be recommended within the purpose-based approaches: translate the one text in different ways to achieve different purposes. Different theories can lead to the same kind of learning activity.

Another kind of compatibility is proposed by **Andrew Chesterman** (1999), who suggests that the study of norms will enable the teacher and learner to *predict* the **relative success of one solution type or another**. No teacher can tell any student there is only one way to translate (since many norms are available) but empirical research can make it possible to *predict* success or failure when dominant norms are violated. Chesterman (1999: 14) formulates this as follows:

> Statements like 'In principle, in authoritative and expressive texts [original metaphors] should be translated literally' (Newmark 1988: 112), or 'translations should aim to have the same effect on their target readers as the source texts had on the source readers', or 'translators should translate transgressively, not fluently' can be paraphrased approximately like this: 'I predict that if translators do *not* translate in the way I prescribe, the effect will be that readers will not like their translations / that the publisher will reject the text / that intercultural relations will deteriorate' or the like.

Such predictions are an application of norms, which thereby help to bridge some of the gaps between descriptivism and prescriptivism.

The empirical discovery of norms has increased our historical understanding of the way translations operate. The fundamental concept is nevertheless not as clear-cut as it may seem. Consider, for example, the way the German sociologist **Niklas Luhmann** (1985: 33) describes legal norms as '**counterfactual expectations**', in the sense that they do not take account of the way people actually behave. When expectations are defeated (for example, we find that some people are criminals), the legal norms do *not* adapt accordingly (criminals will still be punished, no matter how many criminals there are). Many norms concerning translations would seem to be of that counterfactual kind. For example, no matter how often we find that effective translations are non-literal, court systems still insist and expect that they *should* be literal. If norms are working in this counterfactual way, then the bottom-up counting of facts and frequencies will perhaps never connect with the social understandings of what is acceptable or unacceptable. That is another reason why a scientific approach requires theoretical concepts. It is also why the study of norms as seen through corpora is fraught with conceptual difficulties (cf. Hermans 1999/2019: 85).

Whenever theorists tell us about norms, we should ask exactly *how* they have discovered the norms. If bottom-up, the numerical patterns may not all have equal status as psychological or social facts. And if top-down, then we should ask where the theorist found the categories of analysis, and why.

5.6 'Assumed' translations

Here is a theoretical problem that cuts to the heart of scientific methodologies. It is another response to relativism. If we set out to discover the historical and cultural diversity of translation norms, can we pretend to be sure from the outset what is meant by the term 'translation'? If so, exactly what criteria should we use for collecting a set of things called 'translations'? And if not, how can we possibly avoid imposing our own translation norms on other cultures and periods? This is one of the classical aporias that tend to worry researchers in Western cultures.

Toury's initial solution to the problem was to leave the defining to the people we study. For him, 'assumed translations' are 'all utterances in a [target] culture which are presented or regarded as translations, on any grounds whatever, as well as all phenomena within them and the processes that gave rise to them' (Toury 1995/2012: 27). In other words, we wait to see what each culture and each period has to say about what is or is not a translation. The solution uses the concept of 'assumed translations', which simply means that **a translation is a translation only for as long as someone assumes it is one**. This principle can become useful when, for example, we come across a **pseudotranslation**, which is an original text that is presented as a translation. For instance, some scientific texts that were written in Latin

in the twelfth century were presented as translations from Arabic, since that way the authors sought to protect themselves against accusations of theological heresy. Should we see them as translations or not? Toury's answer is that we should consider them translations for as long as people assumed they were translations since that gives us information about the translation norms that were operative at the time. But once the church discovered that they were not translations, then we analyze them as original texts.

The appeal to 'assumed translations' nevertheless runs into logical difficulties. For instance, if each language has different words for 'translation', how do we know those words are translations of each other? To select the words, we would surely need our own concept of translation, if not some clear ideas about what good and bad translations are. The debate over that issue has been one of the most recondite activities in translation studies (cf. Gutt 1991/ 2014; Toury 1995; Toury 1995/2012; Hermans 1997, 1999/2019; Halverson 2007; Pym 1998a, 2007a). For some, the problem is basically without solution, since if we use our normal terms to describe another culture's term 'we naturally translate that other term according to our concept of translation, and into our concept of translation; and in domesticating it, we inevitably reduce it' (Hermans 1997: 19). At the other extreme, we might argue that the empirical data are so diverse and so unruly that we are forced to make some initial selection, simply to get research moving (Pym 2007a). We should be honest and self-critical about our initial principles and criteria, and open to the discovery of new concepts that may arise in the course of the research process. As different as these two options may appear, they both accept that concepts of translation are culturally and historically relative and can be described in explicit terms.

What makes a translation a translation?

One of the features of scientific approaches is that theorists try to be as explicit as possible about their procedures. You cannot simply say 'everyone knows what a translation is'. This is where research enters a theoretical mode. Toury (1995/2012: 28) says he recognizes an 'assumed translation' because three things are held to be true about it:

- The source text postulate, which holds that 'there is another text, in another culture/language, which has both chronological and logical priority' over the translation and 'is also assumed to have served as a point of departure and a basis for the latter' (1995/2012: 29, italics in the text). (Note that the first edition had 'the departure point'.)
- The transfer postulate: 'the process whereby the assumed translation came into being involved the transfer from the assumed source text of certain features that the two now share' (1995/2012: 29). This

would pick up the notion of 'invariance' we saw at the beginning of the chapter on equivalence.

- The relationship postulate: 'there are tangible relationships that tie [the assumed translation] to its assumed original' (1995/2012: 30). Thanks to these relationships we can talk about translations being more or less literal, functional, adaptive, and so on. This is the relation that allows the identification of solution types.

Chesterman (2006) finds something like these three features in the words that many languages have for 'translation', but he claims that modern Indo-European languages give more weight to the 'relationship postulate' (as a 'similarity' dimension). He suggests that this may be why so much is made of 'equivalence' in Western theories but not in other parts of the world. This leads me to suspect that Toury is in fact unpacking a Western form of translation.

I have proposed (Pym 2004a) that there are just two 'maxims' operating when translations are received as translations, both of them part of the Western translation form:

- *The maxim of translational quantity* holds that a translation represents an anterior text quantitatively. If the start text is longer, so is the translation.
- *The maxim of first-person displacement* holds that the discursive first person of the text ('I') is the same first person as the anterior text, even when the two texts are at the same time held to have been produced by different people. In other words, translators can use the 'alien-I'. If you are translating and you write 'I am lonely', you are not the one who is lonely: the author is.

The first maxim is broken when the receiver thinks the translation is too short or too long; the second is broken when the receiver thinks the first person of the text is the translator. In both cases, the breaking of the maxim produces meanings from the limits of translation.

There are many other attempts to define translation in a formal way, particularly as a version of reported speech (Bigelow 1978; Folkart 1991). Almost all that work is overlooked by theories of 'cultural translation', where virtually anything can be seen as a translation (see 8.5 below).

5.7 Target-side priority

As noted, **Toury** upset linguistic studies of translation not only by opposing prescriptivism but more profoundly by insisting that translations should be

studied in terms of their *target* contexts rather than in relation to the start side. This led to an extreme position: in Toury's words, 'translations are facts of target cultures' (1995/2012: 23). The idea should be understood as part of a specific research methodology; it does not mean that translations somehow never have start texts (which would absurdly imply that all translations are pseudotranslations). Toury's argument is that the factors needed to describe how translations work can all be found within the target system. This is based on the assumption that translators 'operate first and foremost in the interest of the culture into which they are translating' (1995/2012: 6), either to reinforce the norms of the target culture or to fill in perceived 'gaps'.

The principle of target-side priority is not obvious to everyone. It is not hard to find cultures that do translations for export (it is a norm in contemporary China, for example). And one might more generally object to the methodological separation of cultures, which makes it impossible to see translators working in the overlaps of cultures (Pym 1998a). More generally, as with the problem of defining translations, the binary opposition has been increasingly criticized from indeterminist perspectives, as we shall see later. Toury's position nevertheless made sense as a provocative reversal of the kind of thinking that underlay theories of equivalence.

5.8 Translation tendencies or 'universals'

If translations can be studied scientifically, then the ultimate purpose would be like that of all science. We thus find various proclamations that the aim of research is to discover principles that can in some way account for *all* translations.

What I am calling 'translation tendencies' here are elsewhere known as 'universals of translation'. They are features that **tend to be found in translations more than in other kinds of texts**. The basic idea, and the term 'tendency', came from the Czech translation scholar **Jiří Levý** (1963/2011), who looked for solution types in literary translations and found that translators tend to opt for solutions that are more general, more neutral, and have less variation than do the corresponding start-text items. He also found that the translations tend to be more logical and explicit. Those features are the basis for his consideration of translations as a specific text genre ('*eine Kunstgattung*', 'an artistic genre', is in the title of the German version of his main book). They are also more or less the features that later researchers have hypothesized to be 'universals'.

The term 'universal' makes sense in that it implicitly proposes that some tendencies hold for all translations, regardless of the different language pairs. It thus means 'universal to all language pairs'. However, it is potentially misleading on two counts. First, the features named by Levý could be found in all kinds of texts, so there is no way that they would be specific to just translations and it is highly unlikely they will be found in *all* translations (if and when 'universal' also means 'universal to all translations'). And second,

the term has nothing to do with the sense of 'universals' used in linguistics (as in Chomsky 1986), which would concern the principles underlying all language production. Hence my use of 'tendency' here, which might be slightly less misleading.

Following Levý, potential tendencies were studied empirically by scholars associated with the Tel Aviv school in the 1980s. I present a few of their findings.

5.8.1 Lexical simplification

Simplification can be defined as 'the process and/or result of making do with *less* words' (Blum-Kulka and Levenston 1983: 119). This means that translations tend to have a narrower range of lexical items than do non-translations, and they tend to have a higher proportion of high-frequency lexical items. The language is usually flatter, less structured, less ambiguous, less specific to a given text, more habitual, and so on (Toury 1995/2012: 303–306). In statistical terms, if you select a non-translation that has 1000 words (tokens), it might include 393 different words (types). If you select a *translation* with 1000 words, it could have something like 323 different words. This means translations will tend to have a lower type/token ratio, in theory.

5.8.2 Explicitation

Explicitation is undoubtedly the most widely studied translation tendency; it has been detected in a range of language pairs. The term was defined by **Blum-Kulka** (1986/2004) as a particular kind of simplification that occurs due to the greater 'redundancy' of translations. The full hypothesis is as follows:

> The process of interpretations performed by the translator on the source text might lead to a TL [target language] text which is more redundant than the source text. This redundancy can be expressed by a rise in the level of cohesive explicitness in the TL text. This argument may be stated as '*the explicitation hypothesis*', which postulates an observed cohesive explicitness from SL [source language] to TL texts regardless of the increase traceable to differences between the two linguistic and textual systems involved. It follows that explicitation is viewed here as inherent in the process of translation.
>
> (1986/2004: 292)

In practice, this means that translations tend to use more syntactic markers than do non-translations. In one of the clearest examples, Olohan and Baker (2000) find that the optional English reporting *that* (as in 'She said [that] she would come') is more frequent in a corpus of English translations than in a

comparable corpus of English non-translations (I will return to this example below). Translations tend to be more explicit than non-translations.

5.8.3 Equalizing

Shlesinger (1989) coined the term 'equalizing' for the way simultaneous interpreting reduces the extremes of the oral-literate continuum (where texts at one end have many of the qualities of spoken language, while those at the other end have all the qualities of written language):

> Simultaneous interpretation exerts an equalizing effect on the position of a text on the oral-literate continuum; i.e., it diminishes the orality of markedly oral texts and the literateness of markedly literate ones. Thus, the range of the oral-literate continuum is reduced in simultaneous interpreting.
>
> (Shlesinger 1989: 2–3; see Pym 2007b)

Shlesinger (1989) found the equalizing tendency to be more powerful than the evidence of Blum-Kulka's 'explicitation'. Although formulated only for interpreting, the hypothesis might also hold for written translations.

5.8.4 Unique items

The Finnish researcher Sonja Tirkkonen-Condit (2004), well beyond the Tel Aviv school, claims that linguistic elements that are features of the target language but not of the start language tend *not* to appear in translations. Or better, such 'unique items' are less frequent in translations than in non-translations, since 'they do not readily suggest themselves as translation equivalents' (2004: 177–178). This has been tested on linguistic structures in Finnish, Swedish, Spanish, German, Norwegian, Czech, and Croatian, at least. It might also apply to something like the structure 'to be [past participle]' in English (as in 'they are to be married'), which we would expect to find less in translations from languages where there is no corresponding tense (cf. Chesterman 2004). The hypothesis is compatible with the general thrust of simplification, although not reducible to it.

The study of translation tendencies has developed significantly thanks to corpus studies that compare large collections of translations and non-translations and can identify statistical differences. This is because the tendencies involve *quantitative* hypotheses that corpus technology can test. However, despite what is now a considerable body of research, no one can claim that any of the above hypotheses holds in *all* cases. Explicitation, for example, has been shown to prevail in a healthy number of studies, but translations also exhibit **implicitation** (the reverse of explicitation), and in some cases there is more implicitation than explicitation (Kamenická 2007).

For all that, the hypothesized tendencies give one of the few kinds of research results that translators might find genuinely surprising and interesting. Most translators are unaware that they are doing these things. And the results need not be neutral, even when scientific: Levý regarded the tendencies to clarify and explain as *reducing* the aesthetic function of literary texts. That is, he implicitly identified the tendencies in order to oppose them, quite prescriptively. Perhaps similarly, when I first read Olohan and Baker's report on the predominance of optional reporting *that* in English translations, I started to delete optional *that* whenever I translated (some of my own translations were in the corpus they used). This means the very reporting of the research can compromise any presumed universality.

On the level of theory, the whole issue of tendencies becomes more nebulous the more you look at it. It is not clear, for example, if simplification, explicitation, and equalizing are separate things or just different manifestations of the same underlying phenomenon (Pym 2008). No one is sure if the tendencies are really specific to translation or occur with similar frequencies in other kinds of interlingual communication, whether they can also be found in processes of 'retelling' within the one language, or whether the frequencies of linguistic items have any automatic correspondence with anything of social or psychological importance. Many researchers are merely counting things in translations, without looking at other forms of communication and without seriously considering causes.

I note that many of the more empirical studies on translation tendencies have been on non-literary texts, in contradistinction to the early studies by the first proponents of scientific approaches. Perhaps for this reason, the researchers tend to forget about the radical options available to translators throughout history. They overlook schemata like Holmes's four options for the rendition of verse. That is, all the apparently 'universal' tendencies could be dependent on specific large-scale social contexts. If researchers do no more than count words, no one is sure.

5.9 Laws

Gideon Toury assumed that 'sciences are characterized by an incessant quest for laws' (1995/2012: 295), so that was enough reason for him to seek some. But what would laws of translation look like? If norms are for specific places and times, and tendencies hope to describe the specificity of translations no matter where and when they are done, what is left for laws? In Toury's formulations, laws would have the following form: 'if X, then the greater/ the smaller the likelihood that Y' (1991: 186, cf. 1995/2012: 312ff.). That is, they point to probabilistic tendencies that relate **at least two variables** (X and Y), whereas a norm and a tendency would only concern one variable at a time (translations are expected to have X, or they have more of X than do non-translations). Sometimes the relations in Toury's tentatively formed laws (1995/2012) can look pretty obvious, even tautological. In other cases,

the relation is less than obvious and would seem to suggest something like a social causation. That is, if sanctions or rewards of some kind locate norms, while numbers of some kind locate the tendencies, the laws should be able to relate those findings to something in the society, the culture, or the psychology of the translator.

Why a theorist should consider more than one variable is fairly obvious from the shortcomings of some of the research on tendencies. Work based on comparable corpora, in particular, can compare translations done into English with non-translations originally written in English. This method is certainly economical (no need to waste time learning languages or cultures, or thinking about alterity), but it is fundamentally unable to say *why* translations should be different. In the study I have cited on the high frequency of optional reporting *that* in translations in English, the researchers propose that the phenomenon has a psychological cause, 'subconscious explicitation' (Olohan and Baker 2000). However, since the corresponding connectors in the *start* languages must have been overwhelmingly non-optional (English is special in this regard), the cause could also have been straight interference from the start texts. Or it could be the effect of 'equalizing', removing the orality of implicit *that*. Or it could be avoidance of optional reporting *that* as a relatively unique item, as a special case of interference. On the level of tendencies, it is impossible to say. In order to say something about possible causes, at least one other variable is required, on some other level.

The term 'laws' is found in **Even-Zohar** (1986 and elsewhere) and especially in **Toury** (1995/2012), from within the same Tel Aviv school where the early testing of tendencies was done. A simple but still intriguing law of translation might be the one we have seen in **Batyushkov** (1920) when he proposes that translations tend to play an innovative cultural role when the target culture feels itself to be inferior to the start culture. We can see this innovative function as a certain set of translation norms: translators might use Holmes's 'mimetic' form; they would adopt copying solutions, importing elements from the source text. On the linguistic level, they might use *less* simplification, explicitation, adaptation, and equalizing than would be the case otherwise. In Toury's format, a version of the law might then run something like, 'the more the target culture feels inferior, the more it uses copying solutions'. On one level, of course, this is just common sense: you imitate people you admire. As a research tool, though, it is a clear proposition that can be tested: you collect a lot of translations, you classify them according to the felt inferiority of the target cultures, and you check to see whether more felt inferiority correlates with more copying solutions. Will that have isolated a cause? Of course not, since the translations themselves could always help *cause* the inferiority complex and there will always be many more factors involved. But it is a productive formal way to start asking about the relations between translations and their social contexts.

Toury proposes two laws of translation. The first is a general '**law of growing standardization**' (1995/2012: 303ff.), which brings together some

of the translation tendencies we have just seen. Toury proposes that, when compared with their start texts, translations are simpler, less structured, less ambiguous, less specific to a given text, and more habitual. The relational part of the law is then formulated as follows:

> […] the more peripheral [the status of translation in a culture], the more translation will accommodate itself to established models and repertoires
>
> (Toury 1995/2012: 307)

This could mean that translation tendencies are especially present when translations are not particularly important or active within a culture. Of course, if found to be a law, the relationship should beg the question of how 'universal' a translation tendency can be.

Toury's second law is the '**law of interference**' (1995/2012: 310ff.). One part of this says that translators tend to bring across structures that are in the start text, even when those structures are not normal in the target language. That seems to be nothing to get excited about. However, Toury makes two interesting claims about the tendencies involved. He posits, first, that **interferences tend to be on the macrostructural level** (text organization, paragraphing, etc.) rather than on the smaller levels of the sentence or the phrase. That is, translators tend to work on transformational equivalents for the small things but use copying solutions for the big things. Once again, this sounds like common sense: it is often too much work to recast a contract so that it fits the standard format used in the target culture. Toury then posits that 'tolerance of interference […] tends to increase when translation is carried out from a "major" or highly prestigious language/culture' (1995/2012: 314), which would be a formulation of the relation proposed by Batyushkov (1920). We might think, for example, that English-language cultures feel themselves to be so superior that they tolerate no interference from any other culture. We might then look at a few translations of French cultural and literary theory, where there are all kinds of tell-tale syntactic interferences such as sentences beginning 'For X cannot be held to be …' or high proportions of cleft sentences. Since the start culture ('French theory') is held to be prestigious for some strange reason, the interferences are tolerated.

One area in which a possible law has been investigated with relative enthusiasm is known as the **retranslation hypothesis**. This broadly states that successive translations of the same text into a particular language will tend to come increasingly closer to the start text (Berman 1990, working from Goethe 1819/2010). A somewhat similar **concatenation effect hypothesis** (Hadley 2017) posits that translations done from a mediating language ('indirect translations') tend to be more domesticating than direct translations and are more frequently presented as pseudo-originals. Numerous studies have tested the retranslation hypothesis, most of them finding that there are many other factors involved (as in Paloposki and Koskinen 2004). Does that

mean we should give up on laws? Not really. Toury himself recognized the improbability of discovering any complete causation: 'There seems to be no single factor which cannot be enhanced, mitigated, maybe even offset by the presence of another' (2004: 15). This amounts to saying that contexts are multiple and irreducible; there may be no simple laws. As Fedorov recognized at the beginning, science was never going to be easy.

For many translation scholars with a literary background, the fact that a proposed law does not hold universally need not be a major problem. The trip is more interesting than the destination. That is, the writing of history and the exploration of cultures are probably sufficient goals in themselves: in the humanities, one might argue, any apparent law or universal must ultimately be dependent on context.

5.10 Reports of science in Russian

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, Russian-language translation theory has tended to travel along different paths. It would seem to have been marked by a more acrimonious split between 'literary' and 'linguistic' approaches, with the science happening on the 'linguistic' side, whereas in western Europe the *literary* scholars were the ones trying to do much of the science. This meant that Fedorov's recognition of fragmentation as a problem remained, but so did the belief that the problem could be solved.

Surveying Russian theories of translation, Besler (2019) describes the 'scientific' approach as being dominant in the second half of the twentieth century, developing through input from machine translation research and then from studies on conference interpreting – which further west was becoming a separate field. Those developments favoured a certain change in the object of analysis. The systems studied by the Russian Formalists at the beginning of the twentieth century were those of not just texts but also literatures, languages, and discrete cultures. From the end of the twentieth century, however, the systems under study tend to be more textual and cognitive, based on the text as a bearer of complex information and the ways in which translating translators and receivers interact with that information. That is, the object of knowledge became the text and its interpretations, rather than wider cultural systems. Garbovskiy and Kostikova (2012: 62) talk of a 'new cognitive paradigm'.

Kazakova (2014) presents a range of Russian theoretical approaches that do indeed point in that general direction, although they are not all of the same ilk. Some are strongly marked by **semiotics,** where the analysis of meaning processes is carried beyond natural language into all kinds of sign systems, and by **information theory**, where the information in a system is variously described in terms of entropy, negentropy, and complexity – terms that hark back to the work of Lotman and Uspenskiy in the cultural field but that here seem more focused on text organization and reception. Kazakova (2014) mentions in particular the work of **R. K. Min'jar-Beloruchev (1996)**

on how information is distributed in the text in terms of different 'logical capabilities', allowing that in translation some capabilities may be lost and others occur in a situation of surplus, **Leonora Chernyakhovskaya** (2009), who analyzes 'sense' in terms of relations with the reader and the 'cognitive, psychic and emotional experience caused by such interrelation' (2009: 39, trans. Kazakova), and **Nadezhda Ryabtseva** (2013), who explores sense-text as a cohesive whole, thereby extending the frame of reference into cognitive linguistics. I mention these reports merely to indicate a general scientific approach that seems to have become increasingly interdisciplinary.

A rather more complete and complex view is in **Yuriy Sorokin** (2003), who adopted a hermeneutic approach allied with psychology and semiotics. Sorokin's theorizing identifies textual elements that break with expectations, either by creating acceptable discomfort or by working as 'damaged structures' ('destructema'), both of which are considered normal results of the translation process. Sorokin (2012) also works on the lacunae shown by translation and comparative linguistics, and the ways they are dealt with. In doing so, he named a string of hybrid sciences: 'psychosemiotics', 'linguaculturology', 'lacunology', and 'somatology', for starters.

To judge by these few examples, the will to science has remained strong in Russian.

5.11 Systems and laws in translation process studies?

Scholars situated more to the west have approached science in rather more prosaic terms, as a much less theorized frame for experiments rather than pure concepts. Cognitive translation studies use descriptive tools to try to capture the thought processes of the translating brain. All this seems a long way from problems like the rendition of verse form or the effects of asymmetric prestige between cultures – Western cognitive studies more usually draw their models and methods straight from cognitive science. Aspects of the general approach can nevertheless be seen as an extension of descriptive translation studies on several counts: translation process research overtly aspires to the ideals of scientific description (specifically Holmes's ideals, if one is to believe Xiao and Muñoz Martín 2020); it sometimes aims to describe what is universal to all translation processes; and some of its findings are formulated rather like Toury's laws.

As an example of where this might lead, consider what process studies have found out about how learners become translators. **Birgitta Englund Dimitrova** (2005) presents a summary of studies that compare the performances of novice and expert translators (the definitions vary). The studies used a variety of tools: think-aloud protocols, keystroke logging, screen recording, and eye tracking. All their findings can be written in the form, 'the more experience the translator has, the more/less the tendency to X'. Now, if we know what X is, we might know something about what is acquired as students become translators.

Working from Englund Dimitrova and with considerable help from Bei Hu, here I present a rough research-based guide to a few skills that have been identified in a selection of studies in this vein, many of them now quite dated. So, with increasing experience, translators tend to…

- use more paraphrase and less literalism as coping strategies (Lörscher 1991; Kussmaul 1995; Jensen 1999);
- focus on larger translation units (Lörscher 1991; Tirkkonen-Condit 1992; Jääskeläinen 1999; Angelone 2010, Amirian and Baghiat 2013; Muñoz Martín and Apfelthaler 2021);
- spend longer reviewing their work in the post-drafting phase but make fewer changes when reviewing (Jensen and Lykke Jakobsen 2000; Lykke Jakobsen 2002; Englund Dimitrova 2005);
- read texts faster and spend proportionally more time looking at the target text than at the source text (Lykke Jakobsen and Jensen 2008);
- use top-down processing (macro-strategies) and refer more to the translation purpose (Séguinot 1989; Tirkkonen-Condit 1992; Künzli 2001, 2004; Göpferich 2009; Peng 2009 on consecutive interpreting);
- incorporate the client and the translation situation into their uncertainty management (Künzli 2004; Ehrensberger-Dow and Massey 2014; Hunziker Heeb 2016);
- rely more on their own knowledge and extra-linguistic information than on checking a lot of words (Tirkkonen-Condit 1989; House 2000; Enríquez Raído 2014; Olalla-Soler 2018; Zheng 2014; Cui and Zheng 2022);
- express more principles and personal theories (Tirkkonen-Condit 1989; Jääskeläinen 1999);
- have a wider range of problem-solving strategies and greater cognitive flexibility (Chang 2011; Liu 2009 on interpreting; Tiselius 2013 on interpreting; He and Wang 2021 on sight translation);
- are able to postpone decisions (Tirkkonen-Condit 2000);
- take more risks when managing uncertainty (Hansen 2003; Alves and Gonçalves 2004; He and Wang 2021 on sight translation, contradicted by Künzli 2004);
- automatize some complex tasks but also shift between automatized routine tasks and conscious problem-solving (Krings 1988; Jääskeläinen and Tirkkonen-Condit 1991; Englund Dimitrova 2005; Göpferich 2013; Massey and Ehrensberger-Dow 2014); and
- display more realism, confidence, and critical attitudes in their decision-making (Künzli 2004; Tang and Li 2017 on explicitation in interpreting).

One notes the impact of Chinese scholars in more recent publications in this field. I cite these examples to bring out the more general point that research requires theorization: each finding tests a concept-laden hypothesis, initially of the *Skopos* kind and more recently concerning efficiency in uncertainty management. Many of these suggestions concord with what experienced

translators say, yet they are not all just common sense, and the empirical methods allow the researchers to propose general conclusions that go beyond individual experiences. Further, the set of conclusions could be eminently useful even if not universal: they can help us select what kinds of cognitive skills and aptitudes we should be fostering in our training programs, if and when we want to turn novices into professional translators.

Translation process research has gone in many different directions, especially studying human-computer interactions ('The more technology, the more …') and the situated cognition of translators in specific workplaces. As Séguinot (2017) notes, it has become less 'essentialist' (trying to say what *all* translators do) and more 'situational' (observing what happens in relation to specific contextual variables). Sun et al. (2021: 9) observe that the field has grown in part thanks to 'the borrowing of research methods and techniques, often used elsewhere' and 'the adoption of theories, perspectives and concepts from other disciplines'.

Fedorov's fundamental problem has probably not been solved: there are many possible kinds of science, each looking at its own variables, that here struggle to congeal into just one universal approach or unified set of findings. Needless to say, the research would seem to be moving away from equivalence as a core concern of translation theories and closer to the more interdisciplinary concerns of complex cognitive modeling.

5.12 Some virtues of attempting science

I will now gather up a few general observations concerning this series of attempts to study translation scientifically. The following points would generally be considered positive:

- The research has started to reveal the historical variety and vitality of translation, even when those things were not what it set out to find.
- The general approach has played a central role in the development of translation studies as an academic discipline. That was clear in the Soviet tradition, although Fedorov's kind of science was long accused of being overly 'linguistic', and more than clear when Holmes (1972/1988) set out a plan for translation studies as a scientific discipline.
- The attempts to study the relationship between translations and systems involved the formalized study of cultural factors. Anyone who has read the work of the early theorists (Popovič, Miko, Holmes, Even-Zohar) will know there was no real need for any later 'cultural turn'.
- The research has created knowledge that is potentially useful for all aspects of translation studies, including the prescriptive approaches it originally opposed. The findings of cognitive studies, for example, should be of direct use to translator-training institutions, as can the research methods (Pym 2009a).
- Thanks to a strong concern with empirical methodology, these theories have been very useful as the grounding for countless theses and dissertations.

Perhaps most of the knowledge produced by research students has been more in the descriptive camp than anywhere else.

- The scientific concern with how one does research, rather than with a static set of concepts, has produced a certain openness to translation as a changing object of knowledge. Toury's framework of assumed translations and ubiquitous equivalence might, for example, stand a chance of assessing the results of neural machine translation (Asscher 2022), although some reception analysis would also help.
- The scientific approach broke with many of the prescriptive opinions of the equivalence approach, unfortunately at the expense of creating its own illusions of disinterested objectivity.

5.13 Frequently had arguments

The counterweight to these positive points is a series of arguments about the possible failings of aspiring to science.

5.13.1 Scientific descriptions do not help train translators

The basic argument here is that translation theory should help people learn about translation, and for this we need rules about what *should* be done. That is, we need prescriptions (for good translations), not descriptions (of just any old translations). Various scholars have responded on this point. Toury (1992) pointed out the usefulness of descriptions in the training situation since one can always present alternative ways of translating, none of which is ideal or perfect (in Toury's words, 'everything has its price'). We have seen how Chesterman (1999) also argues that research should reinforce training, since it can be used to predict the success or failure of certain ways of translating. And translation process studies should ideally provide an empirical basis for saying what the development of expertise looks like.

5.13.2 The target side cannot explain all relations

This is a widespread critique even among the theorists in this camp. By no means everyone would agree with Toury (and Even-Zohar) that 'translations are facts of target cultures'. The target-side focus certainly cannot explain the ways translations work in postcolonial frames, where the distinctions between cultures are increasingly blurred, or wherever power asymmetries are so great that the start side is actively *sending* translations to target cultures. As I have noted, many researchers retain the importance of the start side, and many more are prepared to question whether there are just two cultures at stake. For that matter, one might point to the role of cross-cultural relations in the explanatory parts of Toury's laws. If translations are ultimately explained by *relations between cultures*, they can hardly be facts of just one culture only.

5.13.3 *The theories all concern texts and systems, not people*

This is a general critique that might be made of virtually all scientific approaches to cultural products in the twentieth century, including theories of equivalence. It can be attributed to the power and fascination of structuralism and the twentieth-century opposition to soft humanism. On the other hand, Toury's abstract concepts of norms and laws are offset by his serious interest in how translators become translators (1995/2012: 277ff.). There are also plenty of flesh-and-blood people being studied in the process research. And later moves within the descriptivist project were toward the incorporation of sociological models, particularly **Bourdieu**'s concept of 'habitus' (Simeoni 1998; Hermans 1999/2019) and **Luhmann's** theories of systems (particularly Hermans 2007; 1999/2019). This would meet up with calls for 'translator studies' (Chesterman 2009) and moves to write the history of translation as a history of translators (Delisle and Woodsworth 1995; Pym 2009b).

5.13.4 *The focus on norms and universal tendencies promotes conservative positions*

This argument supposes that descriptions of translation norms and tendencies can only help to *reproduce* those norms and tendencies, without attempting to improve translation practices. The basic response is clear enough: you have to understand a situation before you can set about improving it (if and when it is possible to believe in disinterested understanding). A slightly better response is invested in the idea that norms can be taught as a series of viable alternatives (as in Toury and Chesterman above), so the discovery of norms becomes a way of empowering translators by adding to their repertoires of solutions. As for the apparent promotion of conservatism, I have noted that Toury (1992) proposed that we train students how to *break* norms, as indeed he himself did within translation studies. The problem is not in the descriptions themselves, but in the way they are used.

5.13.5 *Descriptive theory cannot say how norms emerge*

When Toury introduced the concept of norms, he picked up the model from fairly behaviourist sociology and brought it across to translation studies. When this kind of transfer is done, the model enters with all the authority of the external science: 'It's sociology, so it must be right.' But if you rummage around in various human sciences, you find numerous models of norms, some of which might do better at explaining how such things come about and how they work. Norms can emerge from the theory of cooperation games (Axelrod 1984, 1986), from negotiation theory (Keohane 1984: 57–64; Pym 1998b), from risk management (Hu 2020), from the sociology of law (Luhmann 2008), and from social psychology (Kahneman and Miller 1986; Robinson 2020), for example. When Toury says that norms exist because

bad things happen when they are not complied with, it is a very thin kind of behaviourist description (little better than a response to a stimulus). A wider view of different kinds of scientific inquiry, with a little less genuflection to just one external authority, can offer richer explanations of how norms might be working.

5.13.6 *The definition of 'assumed translations' is circular*

As we have seen, Toury initially refuses to define what a 'translation' is, saying that the definition is made by the people who produce and use translations. I noted that this raises the technical problem of how the different terms for 'translation' are assumed to be translations of each other. This means that, in the end, the researcher needs criteria for the selection of those terms, and those criteria must effectively constitute a theoretical definition of translation. So, who is doing the assuming and/or the defining? The most worrying thing here is that many theorists and researchers seem not to want to take responsibility for their initial definitions. They prefer to pretend that everything comes from the object of study.

5.13.7 *Scientific theory is unaware of its historical position*

This argument follows on from the previous one and sees the whole scientific approach as an exercise in positivism. The theories assume belief in neutral, transparent, objective knowledge about translation, and they hope that progress will come by accumulating that knowledge. A great deal of conceptual armour is built around that stance. However, the armour cracks at several of the points we have seen: in the problem of defining translations, in the question of how to use descriptions of norms and tendencies, in the possibility that the various levels of description are themselves translations of a kind (check the way Toury uses the term 'translation' to describe norms), and in the general emphasis on the role of context (if translations depend on context, why should this not also be true of the way one describes translation?). At all these points, some attention is required to the role of the observer, the person doing the describing. The scientific approach used in translation studies did not rise to that challenge. The role of subjectivity in the constitution of knowledge is better handled by the many scientific approaches that incorporate degrees of reflexivity – as in the sociologies of Bourdieu and Luhmann, for example. We will soon meet some of these as theories of uncertainty. As for the wider senses of 'translation', we will also meet them soon under the guise of 'cultural translation'.

5.13.8 *Scientific descriptions create an illusion of causation*

Cohen (2018) argues that the scientific quest for regularity and laws makes translation scholars see causes where there may be none. That is, there is

an 'illusion of causation' that comes from ignoring data that do not speak to the hypotheses being pursued. Cohen concludes that 'retrospective explanations of translations should pay far more than lip service to the notion of chance' (2018: 3; cf. the similar but wider generalization about Western thought in Meylaerts and Marais 2022). This critique indicates that the problem of doing science with a complex object of knowledge, recognized in Fedorov, has not at all been resolved. I nevertheless note in passing that Otto Kade (1968) wrote on '*chance* and regularity in translation' (*Zufall und Gesetzmäßigkeit*) and that risk management involves a pact with chance. The issue will be picked up in my comments on cultural translation (8.4) since it is addressed in the work of Deleuze and the mission of deconstruction.

5.14 The future of science-based theories

Where are these science-based approaches headed? As noted, there have been calls for some kind of alliance with disciplines better equipped to handle contextual variables: cognitive science on the one hand (especially in Russian), perhaps sociology on the other. **Theo** Hermans (1999/2019), as noted, points to the sociologies of Bourdieu and Luhmann. And so one turns that corner and what do we find? Usually a plethora of data, on numerous levels, with very few categories able to organize the data in terms of cross-cultural communication. The great modernist sociologies hail from the same structuralism that helped shape scientific translation studies, albeit now with more scope for reflexivity (the sociologist can do the sociology of sociologists). Further, the great sociologies of Bourdieu and Luhmann are overwhelmingly of single societies only, of systems in the 'one side or the other' sense. They fit in so well with the target-side orientation that they risk bringing in little that is new. (We will later see that there are other kinds of sociology on offer.)

Some alternative ways forward might be sought in the copious work of **Douglas Robinson** (for example, 1991, 2001, 2023) who has provided rich modelling of the ways translation norms (or indeed any kinds of consensus) evolve through interactions between the social and cognitive levels, with workings that are primarily affective. Despite his trenchant critiques of Toury in particular, Robinson is exploring questions that were opened up by the descriptive approach, drawing on numerous other sciences.

A great deal of empirical research has been motivated by the general appeal to science. There are countless studies on norms and translation tendencies, then a growing body of research that integrates various social actors, plus all the empirical work using corpora, think-aloud protocols, key-stroke recording, and eye tracking. One should add all the empirical work done on interpreting, classically studying the cognitive dimensions of conference interpreting and more recently bringing in the social and political dimensions of community interpreting. Along the way, we have a good deal of research

on translation and gender studies, translation and postcolonial studies, translation and censorship, translation and minorities, translation and education, translation and technologies, and especially translation history, now all in rows of encyclopaedias and handbooks, most of which can be seen as seeking inspiration from some kind of science.

As this happens, one of the major blind spots has started to be addressed. The classical theories looked at the *production* of translations but had little to say about the **ways translations are received**. This is despite reception being a key point in the notion of assumed translations (assumed by whom?), in expectation norms (expected by whom?), and indeed in the operation of equivalence beliefs (believed by whom?). The reception studies that have begun over the past decade, perhaps from Kruger (2012) to Cadera and Walsh (2022), are applying the scientific approach to a new object of investigation.

That said, none of these numerous avenues of research seems to have come up with major new statements on the level of translation theory as such, much less on the level of laws. There is certainly a lot of knowledge production and much theorizing, but many of the concepts come from other disciplines and are *applied* to translation, making translation theory an importer rather than exporter of ideas.

In that respect, the appeal to science, which once offered the most powerful and careful theorizing of translation, has not remained dominant. Other aspirations have taken the lead.

Summary

This chapter has sketched out a set of theories that oppose theories of equivalence by aiming to be scientifically descriptive rather than pedagogically prescriptive. They tend to be like purpose-based approaches in that they emphasize the target-culture context and the *function* of translations within that context. They nevertheless differ from purpose-based approaches to the extent that they see functions in terms of the positions occupied by translations within the target *systems*, rather than with respect to a client or a job description. The scientific approaches surveyed here also tend to concern what translations are *usually* like in a particular context, rather than the ways in which particular translations might differ. They are therefore interested in the *norms* that inform the way translations are produced and received. The approach is nevertheless relativistic in that it is very aware that what is considered a good translation in one historical context may not be rated so highly in a different context. The research based on those concepts has done much to reveal the diversity of translation practices in different historical periods, different cultures, and different types of communication, and has informed countless studies on written translation, interpreting, and translators' cognitive processes. The general approach has nevertheless remained positivistic in its inability to conceptualize the position and role of the theorist and researcher.

Sources and further reading

The fourth edition of *The Translation Studies Reader* (Venuti 2021) has fundamental texts by Toury, Even-Zohar, and Lefevere, while Holmes was in previous editions. Munday et al. (2022) deal with the approach under 'systems theories', although there would seem to be more than systems involved. A more solid account can be found in Theo Hermans' *Translation in Systems* (second edition 2020), with detailed and informed reflection on the recent history of the approach. The English translation of Fedorov (1953/2021) is a long-overdue opening to an alternative kind of science. The proceedings of the conferences in Bratislava in 1968 (ed. Holmes, de Haan, and Popovič, 1970) and Leuven in 1976 (ed. Holmes, Lambert, and van den Broeck, 1978) are full of ad hoc insight into how this mode of theorization developed, although the books are hard to find. The same could be said of the seminal collection *The Manipulation of Literature* (ed. Hermans 1985), which is rather more profound than its misleading title. Anyone undertaking empirical research on translations should have tackled Gideon Toury's *Descriptive Translation Studies and beyond* (1995/2012), if only as a point of reference for methodological issues. A more entertaining descriptive approach to literary translation is André Lefevere's *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992). Toury's use of norms is analyzed critically in Halverson and Kotze (2022), who suggest that the linguistic component has been unduly side lined. Not by chance, the Western scholars in this chapter were mostly coming from literary studies, not linguistics, while the Russian scholars would seem to have branched out from linguistics.

Suggested projects and activities

1. Consider all the language situations you participate in on a typical day, not only with social media, websites, and television but also in shops, banks, and public services. How much of the linguistic material must have been translated in one way or another? (Consider news events that happened outside of your languages.) How much of that material is marked as being a translation? Why so little?
2. Where do translators and interpreters work in your town or city? How did people become translators? What laws or policies orient their work? Would those laws or policies indicate translation norms in Toury's sense? If not, where else might norms come from?
3. Look up translations in your language of John 1. Here are a few (taken from Nord 2001, with the Chinese added):

    a) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

b) Au commencement était le Logos; et le Logos était près de Dieu, et le Logos était Dieu.

c) En el principio existía el Verbo, y el Verbo estaba con Dios, y el Verbo era Dios.

d) Al principio era el Verbo, y el Verbo estaba en Dios, y el Verbo era Dios.

e) No principio era o Verbo, e o Verbo estava com Deus, e o Verbo era Deus.

f) In principio era il Verbo, e il Verbo era presso Dio e il Verbo era Dio.

g) 太初有道，道與神同在，道就是神 [In the beginning there was the Dao, and the Dao was with God, and the Dao was God]

h) Im Anfang war das Wort, und das Wort war bei Gott, und Gott war das Wort.

i) Zuerst war das Wort da, Gott nahe und von Gottes Art.

Which translations make sense? Which do not? Could these differences be described in terms of norms? Why would the Chinese render John's logos (Λόγος) as Dao or Tao (道)?

The last-listed German translation (i) is from Berger and Nord (1999) and could be translated into English as 'First the Word was there, near God and of God's kind'. This radically changes the widely memorized phrases of the Lutheran version (h), which might be rendered as 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word'. What might be the reasons for such a change? Could those reasons be described in terms of norms? Why was Luther the only one to make God the subject of the last phrase?

4. Find out about the Mexican interpreter La Malinche (also called Malineli Tenepatl or Doña Marina). What social systems would she have been operating within? What was her position in the systems? What norms would have regulated her work? Are the systems and norms different depending on whether her story is told by feminists or by Mexican nationalists? (The same exercise can be done for any number of high-profile translators, preferably working in situations of conflict.)

5. The Chinese translator Yan Fu 严复 (1854–1921) is famous for his 'three requirements' that a translation should fulfill: faithfulness, comprehensibility, and elegance' (译事三难：信达雅) (1901/2004: 69). The triad has been much commented on in Chinese translation theory, especially since it allows a break with Western binarisms. Luo (2002: 204) presents an example from Yan Fu's translation of Thomas Huxley, where we find Yan Fu translating in the third person ('Huxley sat alone in his study…'), removing circumstantials, adding explanations, and deleting ideologically inconvenient references, all in a Chinese that is virtually incomprehensible for today's readers. If Yan Fu's translation *norms* can be so radically different from contemporary norms for Chinese translation, how might we explain the persistence of his theorizing?

6. Find a code of ethics for translators. Could any of the principles be described as norms? If so, what kind of norms are they? How would they relate to an empirical study of what translators do? (For a critical analysis of codes of ethics, see Chesterman 1997.)

7. Find an authoritative history of your favourite national literature (French literature, Russian literature, etc.). Are translations part of the history (as Rosa 2013 asks)? Are they mentioned in a separate chapter? In the index? Should they be? Would the inclusion of translations make any sense in the case of minor literatures in major languages (for example, Australian literature)? Can periods of great change, such as the Italian Renaissance, really be written without reference to translations?

8. Find out about *The Poems of Ossian* (1773). Could this text be described as a translation? If not, what is it? Should it be analyzed within translation studies? Are there similar cases of pseudotranslations in the cultures you know? What would their cultural function be? Why were they presented as translations?

9. Use a concordancer (or even the readability tools in Word) to analyze the frequency of linguistic features in a text and two different translations of it. Do the numbers suggest different norms? What is the problem when you do this in two different languages?

10. Use the same tools to compare a translation with its start text. Do your findings support any of the proposed translation tendencies?

11. Use your phone or computer to record translators (perhaps your classmates) talking about their work as they are translating (you should ask them to talk about everything they are doing, producing think-aloud protocols) or when they are discussing a translation they have done, or when they are disagreeing. What expressions seem to indicate the existence of norms?

12. Look at an online forum where readers discuss books (Amazon and Goodreads, for example). Use a filter to gather comments on translations of well-known books. As in the previous activity, try to identify expressions that indicate the existence of norms. If you can identify a norm, can you also identify the punishment for non-compliance (since, in theory, norms are defined by the existence of sanctions)?

6 Uncertainty

This chapter deals with theories that in some way address the idea that translators cannot be entirely certain about the meaning of the start text, or indeed any other meaning, so a start-text unit cannot be seen as determining in any mechanical way its possible translations. This is seen as a principle of 'indeterminacy', which here operates as a view of uncertainty: *the text does not determine its translations*. There are several quite different ways in which this principle has been incorporated into translation theory, giving a range of interconnected insights that are hard to organize in any chronological order. Here I first survey theories that *accept* indeterminacy, sometimes as a claim of untranslatability, and that then pursue some degree of similarity or re-enactment rather than equivalence: this covers semiosis, game theory, and the translation as an event. A second set of theories more actively use indeterminism as a way of *exploring* texts, digging down into the details of language as a set of clues: here we find Heidegger, Benjamin, and Derrida, with extensions into post-structuralist views of translation as transformation. A third approach is then to see the translator's active interpreting of the text as a constrained way of entering into *dialogue* with a cultural other: we look briefly at extensions of Gadamer's hermeneutics into the field of translation. Fourth, there is a set of ideas that try to explain how *understandings* can be reached through translation despite indeterminism: illumination, consensus, and shared experience enter here. Finally, cooperation, risk management, and trust are proposed as more commonplace ways in which translators accept uncertainty and still communicate successfully. In all, the survey is a haul along some very winding roads, yet it touches on some of the major intellectual concerns of Western thought over the past century or so. Hopefully, there are stimulating ideas for all tastes.

The **main points** covered in this chapter are:

- There are good reasons for doubting any cause-effect relationship between start texts and target texts.
- The same reasons can be extended to uncertainty about meanings in general.
- Some theories posit that a start text is untranslatable because it is unique in the way it puts form and content together. Similarity is the best that the translator can aim for.
- Other theories more radically question the meaningfulness of *all* texts and emphasize that translators must actively interpret the text, reflecting on their subjective position as they do so.
- Deconstruction is an indeterminist approach that resolves the problem of uncertainty by accepting that all meaning production, including all translation, involves transformation.
- There are several ways to explain how translation is still possible in a world of uncertainty. Illumination, consensus-oriented dialogue, social constructivism, game theory, and risk management are some of the approaches that can be used.

6.1 Why uncertainty?

Equivalence had a certain heyday in the 1960s and 1970s. Why did it then become unfashionable among theorists? One might say, based on our last two chapters, that equivalence was undermined by two new kinds of theory: German-language *Skopos* theory and scientific descriptivism. That, however, would only be partly correct. Notions of function and purpose were already within some theories of equivalence, and all *Skopos* theory did was restrict equivalence to special cases, which might turn out to be quite general cases. As for Toury-inspired descriptive studies, they saw equivalence everywhere. As we have noted, the newer approaches did not do away with equivalence: they just made it narrower (in *Skopos* theory) or wider (especially in Toury).

Seen in this light, the basic tenets of equivalence can still underlie much of the work done on translation today. It is still the dominant assumption in most linguistic approaches, especially when it comes to terminology and phraseology. In fact, the concept of equivalence might be expected to gain a new lease of life in our era of usable machine translation, where the databases comprise matching pairs of supposedly equivalent sentences. Equivalence is by no means dead. But it has certainly been questioned.

There are at least two underlying reasons for dissatisfaction with equivalence: technological changes in what people are translating from, and a general

intellectual climate of scepticism. Both those reasons are more powerful than anything that has happened in translation theory.

Reasons for doubting equivalence

- *Instability of the 'source'*: In the pre-print age, texts were manuscripts that were constantly being copied, modified, and rewritten, as well as translated. They were not stable points of departure to which any translation could be considered equivalent. Something similar can be found in our own technocratic age, where software programs, websites, and user manuals are constantly being updated. There is no one 'source' from which all meanings spring. That is one reason for talking about 'start texts'.
- *Epistemological scepticism*: The intellectual climate of the humanities was changing quite dramatically from the 1970s. Various forms of structuralism had assumed that scientific study would produce stable knowledge in a world of relations between objects. However, philosophers had long been questioning that certainty. The relations between things could not be separated from relations within language, and language could not be assumed to be transparent to those things. In literary studies and cultural philosophy, structuralism gave way to post-structuralism and deconstruction. Those movements asked serious questions about equivalence. How can we ever be certain we have located invariance? If one piece of language was supposed to be equivalent to another, who has the right to say so? Is equivalence simply an exercise of authority? Those questions concern epistemology (the study of the ways knowledge is produced) and they are generally asked from a position of scepticism (whatever knowledge is produced, we are not entirely sure about it). The challenges to equivalence thus came from the general position we can call 'epistemological scepticism': the knowledge provided by equivalence might not be wrong, but we are not entirely sure about it.

In this chapter, I will be concerned with the various ways epistemological scepticism has affected translation theory. To grasp these theories in at least part of their complexity, we will meet a few ideas from beyond traditional translation theory.

6.2 The uncertainty principle

If you are told that *Friday the 13th* is equivalent to *martes 13* (Tuesday the 13th), you might accept the fact. Most professional translators would

probably say the two are functionally equivalent and they might then appeal to some kind of authority to prove it: maybe a dictionary, a passably bilingual person, or probably themselves. But we might remain sceptical no matter what the authority.

'**Scepticism**' means that we are unsure about something. You might sit there and stare at the unknown word and get nervous about how little you know, or you might decide to adopt a more active kind of scepticism. You would then want to ask more questions about the word. Even if you believe you will never be certain, you can still try to get more knowledge. You could send translators mad by asking precisely what situations the equivalence holds in, when the equivalence started to be produced, why some formal difference persists, or how long the equivalence will remain valid. (Surely we should get the Spanish to adopt English superstitions about Friday, or vice versa?) Those kinds of questions will not help translators at all. But they do lead to important questions about the **kinds of authorities** that theories of equivalence ultimately rest upon.

This active kind of scepticism need not be just for fun. Even if you believe the questions can *never* be answered in any final way, you might still consider it a duty to doubt the authorities (teachers, dictionaries, experts, translators) that stop others from asking questions.

Epistemological scepticism has been a functional part of Western science since at least the early years of the twentieth century. It is most conveniently attached to the physicist **Werner Heisenberg**, whose work on quantum mechanics (the relations between sub-atomic particles) famously concluded that it was impossible simultaneously to observe the speed and position of a particle: 'The more precisely the position is determined, the less precisely the momentum is known in this instant, and vice versa' (1927: 172). This is Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, also known as the **principle of indeterminacy**. It has come to influence all kinds of science.

In the humanities, the point generally made is a weaker one called the **observer effect**: *each observation is affected by the position of the observer*. Something happens – let us say a car accident – and each observer's account of the event will be different. Each person was standing in a different position; they have different backgrounds and thus different interests in the accident, particularly when it comes to laying the blame. The uncertainty is simple enough in such cases, as is the epistemological scepticism of someone trying to investigate the accident. We can never trust any isolated observation absolutely. We might say that the thing observed – the accident – never fully causes (explains, justifies, or accounts for) a person's actual observation. Or we could say it never fully *determines* the observations. **Indeterminism** is the general belief that events and observations are related in this way. Similarly, we could say that a text never fully determines what a receiver makes of it. Each receiver brings a different set of conceptual frames, so the reception process is an interaction between the text and those frames. The same would then hold for translation: no text fully

determines its translations, since translations rely on observations and interpretations.

The idea of indeterminism does not suit theories of equivalence. If we say that text A is equivalent to text B, we assume there is a stable understanding of both texts, at least to the extent that they can be judged to have the same function or value. This position can be termed '**essentialist**', since it is like Plato's belief that all things represent essential ideas or forms. Indeterminism, as part of the general uncertainty principle, means that there are no essential ideas or forms and that stable understanding can therefore never simply be assumed. The opposite of indeterminism is generally essentialism.

Indeterminism should also be an unwelcome guest for purpose-based theories, at least to the extent that they assume that there is one clear purpose that is seen in exactly the same way by all participants in the translation act.

And indeterminism can be a problem for any kind of science that seeks direct causal relations of the kind 'if A in X, then B in Y' or assumes that the elements in a system are all related in one stable way. When the connections or nodes in a system allow for multiple alternatives, then there is indeterminism and we can say that the system has a degree of complexity. Norms and laws of tendency try to avoid indeterminism by seeking middle paths, averages, and normal behaviour. Other theories, though, have dealt with indeterminism in more creative ways.

6.3 Quine's principle of the indeterminacy of translation

In the late 1950s, the American philosopher of language **Willard Van Orman Quine** set out to find to what extent indeterminacy affects language and meaning. To do this, he proposed a thought experiment involving translation.

Quine's thought experiment on the indeterminism of translation (1960)

A 'jungle linguist' arrives in a village where people speak a completely unknown language. The linguist sets out to describe the language. A rabbit runs past. A local points to the rabbit and exclaims, 'Gavagai!' The linguist writes down '*gavagai* = rabbit'. An equivalent translation is produced.

Now, asks Quine, can we be sure *gavagai* means 'rabbit'? It could mean, 'Look there, a rabbit!', or perhaps, 'A rabbit with long legs', or 'Tonight's dinner!', or even, 'There is a flea on the rabbit's left ear', and so on. Quine argues that numerous interpretations are possible and that no amount of subsequent questioning will ever produce absolute certainty that *gavagai* equals 'rabbit'. Even if the linguist spends years with the people learning their language, there will always remain the possibility that each speaker's use of the word carries unseen individual values.

For translators, this means that **indeterminacy will never completely go away**. Quine posits that the one text (*gavagai*) can give rise to many different renditions ('rabbit', 'flea on rabbit', etc.), all of which may be legitimate and yet 'stand to each other in no plausible sort of *equivalence* relation however loose' (1960: 27, my italics). Whatever relation there may be between the translations, it is not certain. That idealized certainty was what Quine, along with almost everyone else at the time, associated with 'equivalence'. In a later formulation of his indeterminacy principle, Quine (1969) claims that **different translators will produce different translations**, all of which could be correct, and yet none of the translators will agree with the others' renditions. If the previous example of the jungle linguist seems far-fetched (ethnolinguists have far more subtle modes of conducting fieldwork), the claim that translators disagree with each other's translations seems uncomfortably close to home, especially when there is an element of authority or prestige at stake.

Indeterminacy accounts for those kinds of differences and disagreements; the concept of equivalence does not. That is one good reason for incorporating indeterminacy into a theory of translation. Indeterminacy, however, is not a term used in many translation theories, at least not beyond Quine and the tradition of analytical philosophy. For the most part, its nagging doubts have worked their way into translation theory through a variety of intermediary disciplines and movements.

Quine's principle of the indeterminacy of translation

'Manuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways, all compatible with the totality of speech disposition, yet incompatible with one another. In countless places they will diverge in giving, as their respective translations of a sentence of one language, sentences of the other language which stand to each other in no plausible sort of *equivalence* however loose.' (Quine 1960: 27, italics mine)

For some, the basic claims of indeterminacy are banal. The linguistic philosopher **Jerrold Katz** (1978: 234) argued that if two different translations are both correct, then their differences must be insignificant and not worth bothering about. The American linguist **Noam Chomsky** regarded Quine's principle as simply saying that 'theories are underdetermined by evidence', in the sense that a phenomenon can be accounted for by more than one theory (since a theory is ultimately like an observation, or like a reading, or like a translation). This, says, Chomsky, is 'true and uninteresting' (1980: 14, 16). That is, **so what?** There is little doubt that different grammars can be written to describe the same language, and all of them will be adequate to some degree and yet different from each other. In literary theory, texts are accounted for by a succession of approaches (philology, New Criticism, structuralism,

Marxism, deconstruction, psychoanalysis, gender studies, postcolonialism, ecology, etc.), none of which can be said to be wrong. In fact, in all sciences, both natural and human, one might argue that the twentieth century saw a general divergence between the production of theories and the gathering of evidence. In all fields of inquiry, you can come up with a new theory on the basis of old facts (or a new translation of an old text). The study of translation is no different in this respect: many different theories can all be correct to one degree or another.

Since Quine used translation as a metaphor, as an illustration of a more general principle, he was in fact arguing that **indeterminacy can be seen in all communication**, across the board. Although its workings are clearer when illustrated *between* languages, it also applies *within* languages. Whatever we say will be only one of many possible variations on what we think we mean, and what others make of our words will be only one of many possible interpretations. Indeterminism says we cannot be sure of communicating anything, at least not in any exact sense. In other words, we cannot assume there is a meaning that is encoded on one side and then decoded on the other. The essentialist opposite of indeterminism might then be a theory that assumes encoding and decoding, or transmission, or meaning transfer, or a start-to-target conduit (all those metaphors have been used) that is somehow able to guarantee equivalence. All students in the humanities should spend at least a few sleepless nights worrying that they will never be fully understood, then a few more nights concerned that they will never fully understand anyone else, then about five minutes accepting that they do not understand themselves either.

Why did Quine use translation to illustrate the more general principle? One reason could be that when different languages and cultures are concerned, the people communicating share fewer referents and have less experience of each other, and so the effects of indeterminacy become clearer than in most other situations. Students of translation should probably invest some supplementary afternoons in existential preoccupation.

6.4 Accepting similarity

When surveying theories of equivalence, we noted Dante's pre-print claim that 'nothing which is harmonized by the bond of the Muse can be translated from its own language into another' (Alighieri 1307/1887: 28). A version of this idea has continued in **Modernist aesthetics**, which in Europe can be dated from the late nineteenth century. In the work of art, we are told, form and content are inseparable (cf. Meschonnic 1973). Each set of words has meaning precisely because of what they are and the way they have been put together: 'that which is to be communicated is the poem itself', said the Modernist poet **T. S. Eliot** (1933/1975: 80). In other words, the poem would not convey any 'meaning' that existed prior to the poem. It follows that translation cannot be governed by equivalence, since

there is no separable meaning that can enter into equations. The poem is its meaning.

This position touches on indeterminism when it accepts that a text can only give rise to *partial* representations of itself, of which there can be many. **Andrew Chesterman** (1996, 2005) captures this logic when he argues that the relation between translations and their start texts can be understood in terms of **similarity** rather than equivalence. He points out that although translations are commonly supposed to be 'like' their start texts, those start texts are not usually held to be 'like' their translations. This is strange. The relation 'to be like' can be thought of in two ways. On the one hand, the same quality is considered to be equally present on both sides, so *Friday the 13th* in English is like *martes 13* in Spanish, and the same relation can be seen the other way around. On the other hand, we can say that a daughter is like her mother (in the sense that she 'takes after' her mother), but we would not usually say that a mother is like her daughter (chronologically, it is unlikely that she would 'take after' her daughter). In this second case, which is what we are calling 'similarity', the relation is *asymmetric*, with different roles and expectations being placed on the two sides.

One way of applying the idea of similarity to translation is to consider the nature of translation errors. In terminology and grammar, a piece of language can be right or wrong, and the difference between the two is often the object of a rule. On the other hand, in the parts of translation that do not concern terminology or grammar, complaints about errors are more likely to take the form of 'It's right, but …' or 'It's wrong, but …' (Pym 1992). Similarity means that a translation can be not wholly right or not wholly wrong. When translating *guanxi*, for example, the English phrase 'social network' might grasp a core referent but not express the Chinese specificity. To use the Chinese term in English might give the specificity but not enlighten the novice reader. And to give the Chinese term plus an explanation could convey enough information but might fall foul of space constraints. These would all be 'right, but …'. Similarity has a certain virtue in explaining the sort of decisions that translators must make.

In aesthetics, perhaps the clearest formulation of a similarity-based translation theory is by the Italian philosopher **Benedetto Croce** (1902/1922: 73) when he describes

> the *relative* possibility of translations; not as reproductions of the same original expressions (which it would be vain to attempt) but as productions of *similar* expressions more or less nearly resembling the originals. The translation called good is an approximation which has original value as a work of art and can stand by itself.

Like Chesterman, Croce describes the 'similarity' or 'approximation' as a '**family likeness**'. Of course, that metaphor was to become rather better known through Wittgenstein (1958: 32), who talked about 'family likenesses'

(Anscombe translates it as 'family resemblances') to describe the relations between the elements of semantic sets. From there, the metaphor has served in descriptivist projects to portray the way translations are different yet belong to the same set (cf. Toury 1980; Halverson 1998). However, for Modernist aesthetics, where form cannot be separated from content, the sense of 'family likeness' is more negative: a likeness is the best that translation *could ever* hope to achieve, given that no absolute equivalence is possible. As Holmes (1988a: 53) put it, ' "equivalence", like "sameness", is asking too much'. **Translations will never replace originals.**

Does this mean that translators should give up on invariance? Is all equivalence dead? That is sometimes seen as the consequence. A more positive conclusion, at least in the field of literary translation, is that the translation simply has to function as a literary work in its own right, as a work of art that, as Croce proposes, 'can stand by itself'. It will still have a relation of similarity with the previous text like the daughter resembles her mother, but it can also live its own life as a new union of form and content.

There are many problems with that position. Within theories of equivalence, we saw Nida claiming that the translation could 'stand on its own' at least in terms of *equivalence effects*: the translation should have the same effect on its reader as the start text had on the start-culture reader, and it can only do that if it can stand on its own. That might work in very broad terms: someone was converted then, so someone might be converted now. But in terms of uncertainty, when the native points to the rabbit, we have no firm idea of what that original effect was. Accepting indeterminism means we have to think beyond simple solutions.

Here I survey a few ways in which theorists have accepted similarity as a basis for some kind of translation.

6.4.1 Semiosis as a forward movement

What happens when we accept that we do not have access to any intention or meaning behind an utterance? Let us say, we have the word *gavagai* and we want to know what it means. We are asking what the word 'stands for'; we are treating it as a 'sign'. However, we can only produce *interpretations* of whatever it stands for, and those interpretations will be further signs, which will then be subject to further interpretations. At no point can we be sure our intention corresponds to anything that was there before the sign was produced (our idea of 'rabbit', for example). Our renditions thus constantly move meaning onward, rather than move back to anything in the past. In the terms of the nineteenth-century philosopher **Charles Sanders Peirce**, what we are involved in can be called '**semiosis**':

> By semiosis I mean an action, an influence, which is, or involves,
> a cooperation of three subjects, such as a sign, its object and its

interpretant, this tri-relative influence not being in any way resolvable into pairs.

(Peirce 1931/1958: 5.484)

There are several ways of understanding Peirce, but here it is clear that he is not talking about the classical binary sign (form and meaning, or signifier and signified). There is a third player in the mix: the '**interpretant**' acts as the interpretation of the previous sign and then itself becomes the object of further interpretations. Semiosis is therefore the process by which signs 'grow', as Peirce puts it, potentially in an unlimited way. For example, if you look up a word in the dictionary, you find that the 'meaning' is a set of further words. So you could look up the meanings of those words, and so on *ad infinitum*, until the dictionary is exhausted, the language itself will have changed, and you have to start again.

Eco (1977: 70) describes the interpretant as assuming many different forms, of which 'translation into another language' is just one. Other theories have been inclined to see translation as operating within all types of interpretation, indeed as the interpretant itself. The important point is that, at least on my reading, the very nature of semiosis accepts similarity rather than equivalence, and this is what makes the processes keep moving through history. And that is what translation, in the widest sense, could be doing in the world.

The Russian linguist **Roman Jakobson** was paraphrasing Peirce's concept of semiosis when he wrote that 'the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further, alternative sign' (1959/2021: 156). This effectively reverses most traditional translation problems: rather than represent a previous meaning, translating would be the active *creation* of new meaning, and this would hold for all kinds of messages. Jakobson recognizes translation as operating in a very wide sense. He finds it both between languages and within them, as well as between different kinds of signs (as when a painting represents a poem, for example, or a picture tells us not to walk on the grass).

Theories of semiosis are not always as revolutionary as they might appear. For instance, Jakobson announces a theory of translation in the widest of possible senses (the creation of meaning itself) and then talks about just one kind of '**translation proper**', which would be restricted to interpretations across languages. We find the same reduction to 'translation proper' in Eco (2001) when he opposes translation to the many other kinds of 'rewriting'. Neither Jakobson nor Eco wanted to lose the specific sense of translation that remains in touch with texts and languages. For Jakobson, 'equivalence in difference is the cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics' (1959/2021: 157); for Eco, each text has its own 'intention', which is what should be translated (cf. Eco 2001). I suspect these statements mean they were not willing to abandon all hope of certainty. Indeed, from the very beginning, the idea of semiosis was present within the discourse of thinkers (including Peirce, Jakobson, and Quine) whose prime search was for

certainty, for a sure grounding of thought. For them, the principle of semiosis suggested dissipation rather than liberation. Yet there were other ways of seeing semiosis.

6.4.2 Game theory: open or closed semiosis?

Something like semiosis can be seen in translation history. When you line up the successive **retranslations** of any major text – Buddhist sutras, the Bible, or *Robinson Crusoe*, for instance – you can see each as projecting different meanings back on a source that becomes ever more distant. In so doing, each new translation enters into implicit relationships with the previous translations, projecting values back on *them*, sometimes in an active and oppositional way, other times simply adding new readings as the target language and culture change. Evangelical Bible translations, for example, not only seek to provide new understandings of Christianity as being close to the reader (and for that reason the Luther Bible is constantly updated) but also challenge the more formal, distanced language of previous translations. We can see this kind of semiosis happening in history, over and above the religious certitudes of the translators involved. Thus seen, uncertainties about the start text do not mean it is untranslatable. On the contrary, that indeterminacy is the very reason why there can be an **open-ended number of different translations**.

Let us now zoom in on just one point in that ongoing chain of semiosis. How will the translator decide to create the interpretant? Which way should the process be nudged? If there is no certitude back in the past, the translator must consider various possibilities in the present.

The Czech translation theorist **Jiři Levý** (1967/2000), whom we have already met with regard to equivalence and descriptive approaches, looked at **game theory** to address this problem in literary translation. He saw the start text as comprising some points that require major decisions. Because the text is a text, all those points presumably have something to do with each other, so semiosis can be working through the text as the translator or receiver reads. Now, a translation decision made at one point will have consequences for the decisions made at other points. Those multiple relations must be taken into account – this would also be the dialectic between the parts and the whole in Fedorov (1953). Levý explains this by using the example of the Brecht play *Der gute Mensch von Sezuan*. The title of the play is sometimes rendered as *The Good Woman of Sezuan*, since the main character is a woman. The German word *Mensch*, rendered as 'woman', more normally means 'man' (the word has masculine gender) but also 'person', sometimes 'soul', perhaps even 'guy' (it can have a colloquial register), and much more. The gender ambiguity becomes functional in the play since the main character is a woman who pretends to be a man. The standard translation in English is 'person', as it is in Chinese (四川好人) since there is no grammatical gender involved in those languages. Other languages, though,

have gendered nouns and thus more difficult decisions to make. In Spanish, the rather happy solution is 'el alma buena de Sezuan' (the good *soul* of Sezuan), which combines a feminine-looking noun with a masculine article and is grammatically correct. Now, according to Levý, the way the translator chooses to render *Mensch* in the title will have repercussions for a whole string of decisions throughout the text, particularly given the gender work in the play. **One decision becomes a factor framing the others**. The result is that the translator not only follows the start text but at the same time negotiates a way through the patterns formed by the translator's own decisions. Levý thus sees translating as being akin to playing a game like chess, where each move sets up and restricts the possibilities of all further moves.

Awareness of indeterminism should probably take us further than Levý's example. Is translating really like playing chess? On the chessboard, every move does theoretically have some consequence for all future moves, but the rules are well-defined in advance. There are only so many squares and each piece can only do so many things. That might hold for Levý's example: the set of genders is expanding but is still limited, and there are only certain points in the play that are affected by the decision concerning the title. Levý therefore assumes the translator is playing a game with **finite information**: we know everything there is to know about how to play. In Quine's *gavagai* example, on the other hand, indeterminism means that there is no end to the possible interpretations: the translator would be playing a game with open-ended information. That is an important difference.

The Russian translation scholar **Aleksandr Shveytser** (1987) had a slightly different take on game theory. He described the translating translator as searching for 'an optimal decision that fits with many variable functional criteria. This is not a single-mission process. It is a trial-and-error method that approximates to the optimal decision step by step choosing between a number of possible variants' (trans. Kazakova 2014: 3). That is, the game can be replayed many times, and there is no guarantee that complete information will ever determine a completely optimal solution.

James S. Holmes was very much in the tradition of similarity rather than equivalence. And he was highly aware that translation problems could be solved in different ways: we have already seen his set of possible solutions for translating verse (5.3 above). Like Levý, he also saw the translator of poetry as playing a game that has 'full information' and two basic rules: (1) there must be enough invariance for the resulting text to be accepted as a translation, and (2) the translation 'must be of such a nature that it will be considered a poem' (Holmes 1988b: 50). Further, '[a]s the translator moves further into the game, each choice limits further choices' (Holmes 1988b: 50). Who is the game played with or against? For Holmes, the translator is playing with and against the translator. What is more interesting here is *why* Holmes, like Levý, assumes the game has full information. Van Luxemburg-Albers (1991) argues that it is because he was trying to solve the problem of verse translation empirically, by looking at actual

examples rather than just discussing abstract aesthetics, where no solution is ever reached. Thanks to this empiricism, Holmes sets up a limited set of possible solutions and reasons from there. Van Luxemburg-Albers then argues that, because the options are by no means watertight, and since the historical predominance of one or the other is only a matter of variable degrees, Holmes's use of game theory was ultimately compatible with Quine's principle of indeterminacy. I am not so convinced: Holmes and Levý were thinking in a structuralist way, playing games with structures in texts, without the nagging doubt of what *gavagai* could mean in an actual situation involving people. For Quine, the game has open information because there is indeterminism not just in the translator's decisions, but in the start text itself. If Quinean translators are playing a game, it would be more like the stock market than chess: who knows where it will lead? After all, the translator calculates risks and takes chances without really being aware of how the elements will fit together in the mind of the end receiver. Indeterminacy ultimately means the translator has no certainty that *all* possible options have been seen, nor that future decisions will be entirely determined by the previous ones.

This opens up to risk management, which we will meet soon.

6.4.3 The translation as an event: don't look back

A third way of thinking about indeterminacy at the source is to see understanding as being based on *events* rather than on linguistic signs. There are elements of this in Meschonnic (1999: 22) when he talks about translating what happens when 'a way of thinking does something to language'. That is, there is an event of some kind in the start text, and another event is instigated by the translation. The idea can be exploited in several different ways.

For some theories, the event in the past has to be recreated by some *similar* event in the present. This could be what **Gutt** (1991/2014) was getting at in his discussion of closing the back door (in 2.4 above): the start-side language users had to interpret communicative clues back then ('Why is someone telling me the door is open?'), so contemporary readers should interpret similar clues now. The idea of making the receiver work in this way could be seen as ensuring that the reception process is, at least, eventful. The idea connects with a long critique of translations for being unexciting, boring, all-too-clear, 'over-translated' (Mounin 1963; Levý 1963/2011), which has indeed been attested by studies of 'universal' tendencies where translations apparently have more boring features (I summarize) than other kinds of text (5.8 above). Stop trying to make everything simple for the receiver! That is, create an *event* by inviting active involvement in the reception process. Such an approach goes part of the way to enabling the text to 'stand on its own'. Gutt, though, being a believer, does ultimately assume there is an original intention expressed in the source and that it can be recuperated. Not all theorists of the event make that assumption.

The French communist philosopher **Alain Badiou** (1988) proposed that collective events, like the Modernist work of art, have no meaning beyond themselves. They offer an experience in which people become involved, and that involvement creates beliefs, commitments, and behaviour change. Although Badiou is not a translation theorist, his ideas prop up the idea that the anterior text of a translation is of little importance beyond serving as a pretext for the current event, which will create its own truth. This radical claim has been used by the American translator and theorist **Lawrence Venuti** to outline a mission for the translator to aspire to: 'the translation that sets going an event introduces a linguistic and cultural difference in the institution, initiating new ways of thinking inspired by an interpretation of the source text' (2013: 4). Does it matter that there is uncertainty about the anterior text? Not much. That text here becomes quite distant: it only enters the act as the occasion for the translator's interpretation of it, and that interpretation is then only the 'inspiration' for whatever happens in the translation as event. Therefore, says Venuti, translations 'should not be faulted merely for exhibiting features that are commonly called unethical: wholesale manipulation of the source text, ignorance of the source language, even plagiarism of other translations' (2013: 185). So out goes invariance, and out go concerns about uncertainty: all you have to do is put on a good show and change institutions.

A logical application of this position is to insist that a translation is always based on no more and no less than **the translator's individual interpretation** of the start text. On one level, this is a truism and a useful reminder: the text must be read and we all read differently. On another, it can become a claim to infallibility: this is the way I interpreted the text, the translation is the trace of that experience, so the translation cannot be wrong. (It's my translation and I'll cry if I want to.) That sense of the event can explain why a translator might not want to correct errors when they are later pointed out; it might elucidate why Venuti can regard 'wholesale manipulation' as being okay. Like an impressionist watercolour, it is true because it captures the experience of the moment and can become an inspiration for further events.

Entertaining examples of translations based on an individual reading experience are provided by Clive Scott (2012), who uses the resources of concrete poetry, onomatopoeia, and choreographic notation to convey in English his personal interpretations of a poem originally written in English. This takes the notion of the reading-based translation through to a very logical conclusion, although the event could surely also be taken beyond the printed page. Scott's translating is also great fun.

I nevertheless want to go back to Venuti's claims here, especially since they are presented as being ethical. There is a problem with the assumed individuality of the interpretation, since translators tend not to work entirely alone (there are other translators, reference works, databases, editors, and publishers) and events are usually collective (requiring distribution, receivers, and networks of further interpretations). The individual reading seems to be

a precarious claim to sovereignty. And then, once again, Venuti's ideological justification for the event is that it 'introduces a linguistic and cultural difference in the institution, initiating new ways of thinking' (2013: 4). There can be no doubt that some translations have done precisely that: political ideologies and artistic movements (almost any you care to name) have moved from language to language partly through translations, changing institutions. This is despite Even-Zohar (1978: 25) concluding that translations are generally conservative, 'non-central', reinforcing acquired cultural norms, which also fits in with the general finding from 'universal tendencies' that translations tend to be clear, boring, and rather non-eventful. *Some* translations can nevertheless exert change by becoming parts of events. Just a few doubts remain, however. First, strategically, it is not clear that translations stimulate change independently of their antecedents. The authority of the projected but distant original is a powerful tool when organizing revolutions, and declared translations are particularly well-equipped to do that: 'hear what the great Buddha/Jesus/Marx/Gandhi/Mao said …' If you abandon the claim to represent an author in some way, you forfeit much of that strategy – your event might as well be a non-translation. And second, there is no guarantee that the change will be good or bad. Badiou sought non-rationalized belief in the event – 'there is no proof of the event; nor is the event a proof' (1997: 48) – in which he was explicitly inspired by Paul the Apostle telling converts that they should believe in Jesus because he said: 'My grace is sufficient for you' (Corinthians II.12.1). Just believe. No test or proof is needed.

Mass public events have been used to foment some of the major historical atrocities of our era, from the Nuremberg rallies to Mao's Cultural Revolution, with parallels in all our cultures. More careful thinkers have been wary of leaving everything to the excitement of lived experience.

6.5 Using indeterminacy as a way of translating

Perhaps somewhere near the opposite of faith in events is an attitude that seeks certainty by burrowing into language, deep into language, and using multiple rationalities to eke out hidden truths. This is where we bring in a few big guns.

6.5.1 Heidegger and productive indeterminacy

The German philosopher **Martin Heidegger** took a productive stand on indeterminacy: he used it as a way of developing thought. Heidegger generally postulates that words convey knowledge within their own language and that etymology contains and conceals that knowledge. Rather than just admire the previous work of art or of thought, he exploits the differences between etymologies and languages to tease out meanings. This is where we find his main reflections on translation. To take one of his more elaborate examples, the Latin philosophical term *ratio* would have as its normal equivalent the

German term *Grund* (ground, reason, or cause). That equivalent nevertheless suppresses many other possible interpretations. *Ratio* could also be rendered as *Vernunft* (reason) or perhaps *Ursache* (cause). In Latin, we are told, *ratio* also means 'reckoning', 'calculation', and it works as a translation of the Greek term *logos* (as in 'In the beginning was the logos …', John 1). So in philosophy, *Grund* would be the translation of *ratio*, like *Friday the 13th* is the translation of *viernes 13*,

> but this statement is a commonplace [*Gemeinplatz*] and will remain as such for as long as we do not think about what translation actually means in this and similar cases. Translation is one thing with respect to a business letter, and something quite different with respect to a poem. The letter is translatable; the poem is not.
>
> (Heidegger 1957: 163; my translation here and throughout)

Given his disdain of anything as banal as a business letter – just as Schleiermacher (1813/1963: 62) had looked down on commercial translating or interpreting (*Dolmetschen*), where 'the object is present' – Heidegger's attention is drawn to precisely what is **not translatable, the remainders, the non-equivalents** that are somehow covered over by the 'commonplaces' of official equivalence. Rather than focus on family likenesses (similarities are supposed to be nice, as are families), Heidegger seeks out the productive conflict of differences. Then he uses them as a mode of inquiry and indeed of producing philosophical discourse.

Heidegger's use of translation in the *ratio* example cannot happily be attributed to indeterminism in Quine's sense, since here the translator (actually the philosopher reading old philosophy) is not primarily looking for the intentions of any speaker. Translation is confronting the text as an object where form (morphemes) and meaning (possible uses) are bound together, inviting not so much a recuperation of meaning as an ongoing production of possible meanings. The differences speak from collective history, from a mode of knowledge that is stronger and much older than any individual:

> A word will have multiple references, therefore, not primarily because in talking and writing we mean different things by it at different times. The multiplicity of referents is historical in a more fundamental sense: it stems from the fact that in the speaking of language we ourselves, in accordance with the destiny of all beings' Being, are at different times differently 'meant' or 'spoken'.
>
> (1957: 161)

How is this so? For Heidegger, we do not speak a language, **the language speaks us**. We become vehicles for the words and concepts that have been handed down to us across the centuries; the ideas of our cultural ancestors

pass through us. The idea is rather like what biological evolutionists say about us being vehicles for the transmission of genes, rather than the genes being ways in which we transmit ourselves. In this context, Heidegger insists that a translation (*Übersetzung*) is not just an interpretation of a previous text but also **a handing-down**, a question of legacy (*Überlieferung*) (1957: 164). He thereby implicitly gives the past more value than the present, and the task of translation – like that of philosophy itself – would be to seek out knowledge that has been lost, suppressed, or concealed. The problem of uncertainty is thereby generalized: texts only give clues that require quite massive reinterpretation.

6.5.2 *Walter Benjamin and the fall from certainty*

A similar placing of value in the past is at stake in the work of the German Jewish thinker **Walter Benjamin**. His 1923 essay 'The Task of the Translator' plays with the millennial idea of a 'true' or 'pure' language (*reine Sprache*), of which the current languages would be partial representations. Here is Zohn's translation:

> All suprahistorical kinship of languages rests in the intention underlying each language as a whole – an intention, however, which no single language can attain by itself but which is realized only by the totality of their intentions supplementing each other: pure language. While all individual elements of foreign languages – words, sentences, structures – are mutually exclusive, these languages supplement each other in their intentions. […] the words *Brot* ['bread' in German] and *pain* ['bread' in French] 'intend' the same object, but the modes of this intention are not the same. It is owing to these modes that the word *Brot* means something different to a German than the word *pain* to a Frenchman, that these words are not interchangeable for them. […] As to the intended object, however, the two words mean the very same thing.
>
> (Benjamin 1923/2004: 78)

From this, it follows that the texts we find in different languages are parts of what the pure language could express. They are like '**fragments of a broken vessel**', as Benjamin puts it, and to translate them into each other would be to help reveal their fragmentary nature and perhaps to start to put them back together – discovering hidden knowledge, as in Heidegger.

Much has been written on Benjamin's essay and its translations, particularly about the way these 'broken fragments' are supposed to connect with each other, perhaps ideally in the past, perhaps even more ideally in the future, or most probably not at all (see Jakobs 1975; de Man 1986; Gentzler 1993/2001; Bhabha 1994/2004; Vermeer 1996; Rendall 1997). What interests me here is the way Benjamin, like Heidegger, effectively **turns the indeterminacy of translation from a problem into a virtue**. Although there

is apparently no way that the words *Brot* and *pain* can be full equivalents, the attempt to translate them into each other must produce knowledge not only about the thing they signify but also about their different modes of signification. Translation thus draws knowledge from the differences between languages, rather than jumping over them; it creates its own passing knowledge of that difference. Benjamin makes the interesting claim that **translations themselves are untranslatable**, 'not because they are difficult or heavy with meaning, but because meaning adheres to them too lightly, with all too great fleetingness' (my translation from Benjamin 1923/1977: 61; cf. Benjamin 1923/2021; Rendall 1997: 199–200). The act of translation would be like quickly opening a window onto differential signification, then seeing that window close as the subjectivity of the translator disappears and history moves on. Benjamin does not actually say if the correct names exist in *any* language, past or present. If there is a 'family likeness', as Croce and others would put it, it is not because any *text* is the parent, nor is it because one of the contemporary terms is better than the other. It has more to do with the way the passage from one word to the other, the jump across languages, enables a glimpse of similarities and differences that are otherwise hidden.

What this means for actual translating is far from clear. Within a tradition that dates from German Romanticism, Benjamin would be seeking translations that are very close to their start texts, presumably in the hope that the reader is made aware of differences between the languages. Benjamin's text was written as a preface to his renditions of Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* (a section of *Les Fleurs du mal*), the study of which might entertain a bilingual reader and could indeed suggest interstices awaiting a fuller language, but there is little to qualify it is a perfect or perfectionist translation (cf. Rose 1997: 41–49). To bring things very much down to earth: the text is so firmly set in Paris that the French *pain* might fairly be rendered as *baguette* (as an English word) or even *French bread*, allowing few glimpses of any pure meaning of bread. And as it happens, the only bread in Baudelaire's *Les fleurs du mal* comes from Christian tradition ('bread and wine' in the poem *La Bénédiction* and 'to earn your daily bread' in *La Muse vénale*) and that common Christian tradition gives French and German shared expressions (yes, equivalents) at both those theological points. Benjamin's theoretical text has nevertheless been much more successful than his example. I will return to it when discussing 'cultural translation' (8.2 below).

All these theories posit a strong, almost unknowable relation between expression and meaning at the source. They thereby do away with the idea of encoding something in one language and decoding it in the other. As we have seen, some of these theories rather pessimistically retain the possibility of translation as similarity, while others revel in possible differences as producing potentially endless strings of transformations, knowledge-productions, and insights.

6.5.3 *Jacques Derrida and the picking apart of essentialism*

Many of the theories dealt with in this chapter could be associated with what is generally called 'deconstruction', a set of critical ideas based on the work of the French philosopher **Jacques Derrida** (see Davis 2001). Deconstruction is a highly indeterminist practice that sets out to **undo illusions of stable meaning** of any kind – it opposes essentialism. Whereas many of the other approaches retain within them an earnest search for truth, for a moment of full determinacy, deconstruction proposes that the way to live with language is to accept it as not being transparent to the world and to undo illusions of any such transparency. Deconstruction thus does not present itself as a theory (since a theory is supposed to have stable concepts and terms). For Derrida, it is instead a *practice*, an ongoing use of language on language, revealing the gaps and displacements ('differences') by which semiosis keeps going. Uncertainty was a problem for other approaches and could be turned into a search for knowledge in others. Here it becomes something to be demonstrated by working on language and not allowing any fuzzy thought or loose consensus. Deconstruction is sometimes akin to friendless nitpicking, of the kind that we will see leading Locke to despair (in 6.6.4 below).

Perhaps the easiest way into deconstruction is through the notion of writing (*écriture*). Derrida (1967) notes that the Saussurean sign only has two parts: the signified (the meaning) and the signifier (the spoken form). Where, asks Derrida, is the *second* signifier, the *written* form? That simple question breaks open the binary sign and shows that there are *three* parts, as in semiosis, and the work of the written form is to carry the sign into new situations of use, new contexts – writing carries utterances across lands and through time. Here we find the **text re-use problem of automation** (see 7.1 below) elevated to a general principle. This displacement of utterance introduces difference into language, with the consequence that at no stage, for Derrida, is there ever a full situational meaning, no 'transcendental signified': some parts of language have always come from somewhere else. Derrida then argues that this constant displacement of meaningfulness also occurs without the physical fact of writing – it is part of what *all* language does. Much as it would have been convenient for Derrida to describe writing as translation, he chose not to go there. He was more engaged in the practice of undoing the illusions of essentialism.

A facile example of the kind of critique that this leads to is when Derrida (1985) criticizes **Jakobson**'s otherwise anodyne distinction between three kinds of translation (interlingual, intralingual, and intersemiotic) because the first is described as 'translation proper'. So how can the others be translation as well? For Derrida, Jakobson's description posits that the meaning of the term 'translation' is stable in one place (what is 'proper', usually defined by something like equivalence) and not in another (the rest). The use of terms like 'translation proper' is seen as essentialist, as relying on the false assumption that words have true meanings (their 'essences') somehow embedded in them.

In enacting this critique, deconstructive practice necessarily sees **translation as a form of transformation** rather than any kind of meaning transfer. Like Heidegger in this regard (and continuing the same philosophical tradition), Derrida seeks out the 'surplus', the potential significations that are omitted in the process of equivalence-based translation.

A similar kind of critique was at work when the early Derrida (1968) analyzes translations of Plato. He notes that the Greek term *pharmakon* could be rendered in French as either *remède* (cure) or *poison* (poison), but not both at the same time (an ambiguity perhaps approximated by the American-English term 'drugs', which can be good or bad for the body). This is seen as a problem not just for the translations into French, but for the movement from everyday Greek to philosophical Greek. The end product of deconstructive practice is not a decision concerning any correct translation of the Greek term, but an exacting demonstration of the possible translations. In one of his painstaking analyzes of different ways of translating Kant, Derrida (1990: 368) recognizes that indeterminacy is never removed: 'l'équivoque demeure', equivocation remains. The aim is not to resolve problems but to allow the plurality of interpretations to flourish. This appeal to 'equivocation' finds an intriguing echo in anthropology (see Viveiros de Castro 2004): rather than impose just one interpretation, Quine's jungle linguist could have simply written out all the ways he found that *gavagai* might be interpreted. In the same spirit, one might give literal translations plus annotations on their indeterminacy (Appiah 2000/2021).

Derrida often uses translation to investigate the plurality of texts, here in a sense of revealing their semantic richness. His oft-cited phrase '*plus d'une langue*' expresses this plurality. It could be translated as 'more than one language' or as 'let us have no more of one language', and both readings are in the French text. Note that in doing this, Derrida does not seek to remove the special status of the start text. Indeed, he shows a good deal of reverence for enshrined authors. In a 1999 text, we find him asking how it is possible that Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* could make sense – any kind of sense – well beyond its original historical and cultural place of production. He attributes this to qualities of the text that make it productive of multiple meanings across history. This apparent mode of productive translatability is called '**iterability**', attributed not to anything semantic but ultimately to the literary institutionalization of certain meaning effects (see Davis 2001: 30–35).

I note in passing that the concept of iterability allows a certain rejoicing in the possibility of multiple different translations. It thus provides a coherent response to theorizing that seeks to oppose Modernist **untranslatability** to a strawman view of translation where everything somehow becomes immediately clear and understandable. Emily Apter (2013) manipulates this opposition in her critique of world literature as an intellectual project. Untranslatability has long been an operative concept used to win points in arguments (Pym and Turk 1998), but it struggles to score highly when opposed to the work of the world's translators. First, epistemologically, you

do not know an untranslatable unless you have translated it in some way. Second, more substantially, if a word like *guanxi* can be translated in many ways, that obviously does not mean it is untranslatable. On the contrary, it shows that it can spawn an open-ended number of translations and that, in the spirit of deconstruction, we should engage in exploring it and adding to that number.

Derrida's most perceptive comments on translation are nevertheless more metaphorical than engaged, notably in the texts where he investigates entities that are at once present and absent. This is the context in which we find the discussions of ghosts, after-life, survival ('living-on'), and the apparently permeable border between life and death (this was a long reflection, carried across Derrida 1979, 1982/1985, 1985, 1993, at least). The concept of translation, as a process more than as a product, here becomes a model of how a voice can cross a border and continue, transformed. For this, Derrida picks up the notion of **'after-life'** (*Fortleben*, 'prolonged life') that Walter Benjamin (1923/2004: 76) used to describe the way a translation can continue the life of the text. That was a suggestive idea, among several others, and one to which I will return when discussing cultural translation (8.3 below).

On the other hand, when Derrida comes to the discussion of actual translations, he is frustratingly conservative. In some early texts, he **reduces translation** to 'a technique in the service of language, a *porte-parole*' (1967: 17–18; cf. 1972: 226). When analyzing the *pharmakon* example, he takes delight in challenging the 'official translations' and indicating how they should be improved (1972: 80). Even when looking at the French translations of *Hamlet* (1993: 42–47), Derrida is again remarkably traditional and prescriptive, finding no translation to be on the level of the original and hence preferring the most literal version. For as much as his theorization went one way, his authoritarian stance tended to prevail when in contact with actual translations.

The Brazilian theorist **Rosemary Arrojo** has perhaps been the most consistent in her applications of deconstruction to translation theory. In a sense, she developed the translation theory that Derrida should have applied. Arrojo enlists deconstruction (along with concepts from psychoanalysis and postmodernism) not just in her attacks on all assumptions of meaning transfer (Arrojo 1993) but also against many feminist approaches to translation (1994), against ideal symmetrical relations (1997), and generally against all forms of essentialism (1998). Like Derrida, she sees deconstruction not as a set theory but as a practice, a way of using language to analyze language, and thus as a way of using language to translate. For example, Arrojo (1992) proposes the Brazilian term ***oficina de tradução*** to translate the American term *translation workshop* (the practice class where students work together on literary translations, perhaps with a writer and/or translator present). The translation is then shown to come under the category of 'right, but …'. The Brazilian *oficina* is a standard equivalent of *workshop*, but the word also has the values of 'place of work' or 'place for the exercise of a profession

(*ofício*)'. Arrojo (1992: 7–8) says *oficina* can also mean 'laboratory', 'place for the machinery or instruments of a factory', and 'place where cars are repaired' (*workshop*, indeed). If we translate *workshop* as *oficina*, we are thus bringing slightly different meanings, different images, new questions, to the initial concept. Interestingly, the Brazilian poet and theorist Haroldo de Campos (1962/1976) had previously called for a 'text laboratory' where linguists and artists would work together on translations. But an *oficina* is not quite the same thing as a *laboratory* (not even in Brazilian Portuguese). As Quine might have predicted, both can mean *workshop*, but they maintain a dynamic difference. Arrojo's translation can thus continue to produce meaning, moving the semiosis on. It uses indeterminacy as a means of production, with the very attentive focus remaining on the details of language.

The basic lesson of deconstruction might be that **translation always involves transformation of the start text**. That would seem a logical consequence of indeterminacy. The task of the critic would be to make readers aware of this. And that task requires a picking apart of what appear to be comfortable translation matches. That position is a long way from the 'events' that would be justified in terms of no more than the translator's personal interpretations and the desire to have a political effect. Arrojo, we have seen, gives us an extended discussion of *oficina* vs. *workshop*, presenting materials that the reader can then work with, just as Heidegger does with *ratio* vs. *Grund*, or Derrida does with *pharmakon*. Rather than provide ready-made solutions, this kind of textual practice uses indeterminism to make readers think.

That appears to be the way deconstruction operates in the discourse of philosophy or in a teaching situation. What lessons might indeterminism hold for actual translators, who mostly cannot dialogue quite so freely? Here I move backward in time to theories of how texts are interpreted by someone other than the enlightened deconstructionist.

6.6 Hermeneutics and dialogue with the other

Benjamin and Heidegger, along with many others, were writing against the backdrop of German Romanticism and post-Romanticism. One line of that tradition has been particularly concerned with the basic idea that texts are not immediately meaningful and need to be actively interpreted. The general field is known as **hermeneutics**, from the Greek *hermeneuō*, meaning 'to interpret' or indeed 'to translate'. The nineteenth-century development of European hermeneutics was closely linked to ways of making sense of the Bible, especially in view of the growing scientific knowledge about the historical contexts in which the original texts were produced. Prior to that knowledge, it was possible to adopt literal interpretations of what was supposed to be God's word. With that knowledge, the texts increasingly came to be seen as utterances-in-situation. That meant their meaning was to be sought not just in literalism or etymologies, but in the relation between text and context – that is what Gutt (1991/2014) was really arguing about in his

discussion of the pragmatics of open doors (2.4 above). Hermeneutics was originally developed to guide that kind of reading practice. Since the way you translate a text is obviously connected with the way you understand it, it is not surprising to find Christian thinkers like Schleiermacher intimately concerned with both hermeneutics and translation.

In the twentieth century, hermeneutics became more general in its application through the work of Edmund Husserl, who sought certainty but did not find it, and more especially through **Hans-Georg Gadamer** (1960/2013), who gave a measured positive value to the reader's subjective involvement in the text, described as a necessary kind of 'prejudice' (*Vorwurf*). Gadamer (1960/2013: 403, 405) regards translation as an 'extreme case' of interpretation (in the sense of trying to understand a text) not because the different cultures make understanding more difficult, but on the belief that the translator is especially constrained to represent the words in the text and cannot, says Gadamer, speak about it 'truly':

> The hopeless inadequacy of all translations shows this distinction very clearly. One who 'understands' is not bound by the constraints of a translator – where one must give a word-for-word rendition of an assigned text. Rather, [in seeking understanding] one takes part in the freedom that comes with true speaking, with saying what is meant or intended.
>
> (Gadamer 1994: 42)

This is a part of Gadamer that theorists of translation hermeneutics do not want to know about, since it adopts a very restrictive translation concept. Many hermeneutists would prefer to talk only about the translator's subjective involvement in text construal, in translation as a personal experience (as in Robinson 2013: 59). But on that score, too, Gadamer is remarkably conservative. He distrusts references to 'lived experience' (*Erlebnis*), which he regards as an invitation to essentialism:

> That is what the concept of experience states: the structures of meaning we meet in the human sciences, however strange and incomprehensible they may seem to us, can be traced back to ultimate units of what is given in consciousness, unities which themselves no longer contain anything alien, objective, or in need of interpretation.
>
> (1960/2013: 56–57)

For Gadamer, such references to experience are wrong. Instead, everything is open to interpretation, and in this, he would accept Quine's fundamental indeterminacy. His concern, however, is with how interpretations are actually carried out.

There is a group of mainly German-language translation theorists who explore the possibilities of hermeneutics. **Radegundis Stolze** (2003) draws on

old and new hermeneutics to discuss the ways in which translators approach the start text. She surveys the various types of context, rhetorical categories, procedures for deciphering figurative language, the ethics of taking responsibility for one's interpretation, and especially mediation as a form of solidarity with the other. Significantly, this approach starts from the literary and philosophical texts that concerned the philosophers and then increasingly incorporates the broad range of texts of interest to translator training. Her work on these last texts draws out something of Gadamer's ethical stance against indulgent personal interpretations. **Larisa Cercel** (2013) offers a broad review of the various sources of hermeneutic thought and seeks several ways forward, interestingly by attempting to build bridges with cognitive studies. The dynamic group around these scholars gains justification by opposing equivalence theories and *Skopos* theories, both of which might fairly be accused of being essentialist. The publication of the *Yearbook of Translational Hermeneutics* since 2021 extends the focus to include scholars outside of German. The 2023 yearbook is on, not wholly surprisingly, 'translation as event', seeking connections with performance studies.

With respect to the problem of uncertainty, the general claim within translational hermeneutics would be that, instead of trying to be scientific and objective about the text to translate, translators should actively recognize the ways they are personally positioned with respect to the text; they should be able to reflect on whatever desires and aims they have in carrying out their task. Subjective involvement need not be a bad thing; it can become a source of motivation for work, with implications about which the translator should be as aware as possible. This approach nevertheless builds up a picture of the hermeneutically aware translator as a humble figure, seeking to understand a cultural other (the author, the foreign text, the foreign language and culture). Perhaps because these scholars are connecting a philosophical discourse with the day-to-day concerns of translator training, their position is nothing like the sovereign ego that would enact Venuti's translations as events. Hermeneutics is supposed to make you careful, humble, and self-reflexive.

Some of the concerns of hermeneutics connect with what might be called the '**philosophy of dialogue**', a set of ideas about the way human relationships should be formed. Writings by **Buber, Marcel,** and **Levinas** describe an ethical relationship between the self and the 'other' (here the person you are communicating with) as being open, dialogic, and respectful of difference, without imposing your own desires. Applying this mode of thought to translation, **Arnaud Laygues** (2006) argues that the translator should not ask 'What does this text mean?', as the classical hermeneutic tradition would have us ask, but '**What does this *person* mean?**' The uncertainty remains, but here the doubts about texts are turned into an ongoing dialogue with the people behind the text. The problem of indeterminacy is thereby humanized. We are no more certain of what a text means than we are of the absolute nature of the people around us, and yet we keep interacting with those people, and we do not

try to make them sound like ourselves. The practical message here would be that we should keep interacting, without domesticating the text or otherwise reducing it to what 'sounds right' for us.

The general view of translation as a mode of interpersonal dialogue underlies much of the work of the French translator and theorist **Antoine Berman** (1984/1992, 1985, 1995). Particularly in his study of German Romantic and hermeneutic approaches to translation, Berman (1984/1992) maintains constant awareness of the difficulties of rendering great literary and philosophical works. He insists that the ethical translator should *not* adapt the foreign text to the target culture but should respect and maintain the specificity of its foreignness. If we try to 'make sense' of the foreign text, we turn it into *our* sense, *our* culture, which could only lead to what Berman calls '**ethnocentric translation**'. For Berman, 'the ethical act consists in recognizing and receiving the Other as Other' (1999: 74). This particular hermeneutic approach meets up with the 'foreignizing' side of the dichotomies we met in our discussion of directional equivalence, but now with a developed ethical content.

Perhaps the best-known theorist in the French hermeneutic tradition is **Paul Ricœur**, who has written with subtlety on how relations between the self and the other construe identity. When he comes to translation, Ricœur (2004) is keenly aware that there is no encoding-decoding at stake and that great texts will always retain their untranslatable secrets. His findings sound provocatively all over the place: 'one must conclude', writes Ricœur, 'that misunderstanding is allowed, that translation is theoretically impossible, and that bilinguals must be schizophrenic' (2004: 29). When you look closely, these dichotomies belong to the binarisms of equivalence theory and to the structuralist theories that long ago posited that translation was impossible simply because they could not explain it. Ricœur is great on how to relate with the other but he is perhaps not the most profound translation theorist that hermeneutics has to offer. Maitland (2017) has conscripted his rich thought on self-other relations into what she terms 'cultural translation', in a usage of that term that would appear idiosyncratic.

6.7 Ways of seeking understandings

The theories we have been surveying all deal with uncertainty but are not quite of the kind where one can say 'so what?', as Chomsky implicitly said to Quine. They question the nature of translation, and sometimes its very possibility. And yet translation continues to exist as a social practice. Its mere existence as something that people use and trust would suggest that some of the theories might have overstated the case or have basically been talking about other things.

Now, is it possible to accept indeterminacy and still recognize the viability of translating as achieving some kind of invariance? Let me briefly touch on a few theories that propose some kind of answer to that question.

6.7.1 Theories of experience and illumination

The fourth/fifth-century theologian **Augustine of Hippo** (Aurelius Augustinus) offers in *De catechizandis rudibus* (2.3. 1–6) an intriguing analogy that would explain why translations can be different and yet still talk about the same thing. Here the process of communication goes from ideas to 'traces' or 'vestiges' (*uestigia*) and only then to language. This is a very beautiful passage where Augustine argues that language conveys thought imperfectly:

> […] the idea erupts in my mind like a rapid illumination, whereas my speech is long and delayed and not at all like the idea, and while I speak, the thought has hidden in its secret place. The idea has left no more than a few vestiges imprinted in my memory, and these vestiges linger throughout the slowness of my words. From those vestiges we construe sounds, and we speak Latin, or Greek, or Hebrew, or any other language. But the vestiges are not Latin, nor Greek, nor Hebrew, nor of any other community. They are formed in the mind, just as a facial expression is formed in the body.
>
> (c.400/1969; my translation)

What is happening here? The indeterminacy of language is clear enough. Ideas come as light, and language is no more than a weak trace of that light, as when you close your eyes immediately after seeing a bright object. Yet Augustine does not abandon communication altogether. What is communicated is *anterior* to language and is therefore potentially available to all. Our words are indeterminate but can still have sense for someone who has experienced the same light. This means our texts do not communicate messages as such; they help receivers recall the **illuminations** that they have previously found for themselves, through experience.

Douglas Robinson (1991, 2001) has developed an elaborate theorization of the ways language is associated with experiences where conscious analytical thought is primed and guided by feeling. He sees the translator as gradually learning through experience, gaining skills in a mode of habitual, complex, intelligent decision-making that works rapidly and accurately in background mode, with preferred and rejected wordings and phrasings marked through 'somatic' response – a 'feeling' of rightness or wrongness. At one point, Robinson describes himself translating a text on chainsaws into Finnish: 'While he translates, subconsciously he recreates in his mind scenes from his life in Finland, memories of cutting firewood with a chainsaw' (Robinson 2003: 56; cf. 2013: 59). That daydream then gives him the Finnish words he is looking for. This somatic theory of translating comes close to Augustine in that it is grounded in accrued experience, such that somatic responses guide thought and effectively diminish the sense of uncertainty a translator may feel in choosing this word or that. One might see this as a rich account of how memory and learning interact, without anything specific to

translation, or indeed to language. Yet in our context here, it remains a way of diminishing uncertainty: translate with your internalized experience, not just with your rationalizing mind.

That general approach is not short of potential allies. Contemporary **theories of education,** after all, stress that we learn through experience, by actually doing things and discovering knowledge for ourselves, rather than by passively or rationally decoding someone else's words. And **relevance theory** of the kind Gutt (1991/2014) applies to translation can accept that language is hugely indeterminate (meaning is created by breaking maxims) but that there is still some kind of mystic access to intention, as a pre-linguistic experience of the communicative situation. Are such things only for religious epiphanies? One need look no further than the debates in 2021 over Amanda Gorman's poem *The Hill We Climb*, where translators were sacked because their former experience as humans did not fit in with the racialized experience of the author (see Kotze 2021).

Previous experience can overcome the indeterminacy of language, apparently.

6.7.2 Constructivism

Hermeneutics started from the problems of interpreting texts in a situation that usually involves just one reader or translator. However, some compatible ideas have come from quite different areas of the sciences, where the problem is not so much how an individual makes sense of a text as it is how social groups make sense of the world.

The fundamental idea of constructivism is that our knowledge of the world is not simply given or passively perceived. Long-standing experiments in the **psychology of perception** show that we actively 'construct' what we see and know of the world. We have all seen the picture of the vase that is also an image of two faces, depending on how your brain wants to construct the image. The message is that any interpretative process is a constant interaction between both the objective (the world beyond the person) and the subjective (the person's mental frames). These basic tenets are highly compatible with indeterminism: everyone constructs a different perception. Constructivism could be seen as a general epistemology: it has informed areas of psychology, sociology, and philosophy. Yet constructivism has built a fiefdom within the psychology of education, particularly in the American tradition, and it is from there that it reaches translation theory.

What does constructivism have to do with translation? The Germany-based American translator educator **Donald Kiraly** (2000) argues that constructivism should be opposed to the entire 'transmissionist' model of encoding and decoding. In theories of transmission, knowledge is something that can be moved from one receptacle to another, like water being dished out into buckets. Some knowledge would go into one text and is then syphoned to another (others talk about the 'conduit' metaphor, where meaning flows

through some kind of tube from one language to another). Translation is erroneously seen as one kind of such transmission. As it happens, one of the Latin verbs for translation is *vertere*, to pour, which gives the idea of equivalence as the same amount of water occupying vessels of different shapes: the same stuff but in different texts. For Kiraly, transmissionism is at the base of the way many translators are trained. A teacher, like a start text, possesses knowledge that can then be poured into the minds of passive students, who are lined up like so many empty vessels. Constructivism says that knowledge simply is not acquired that way. Translators actively construct the text they produce, just as students actively participate in their learning processes. Kiraly's main concern is with the consequences of constructivism for **translator training**: translators have to be trained through doing activities, discovering for themselves, creating their own experiences. In education theory, Kiraly's ideas connect with a string of movements like learner-centred education, autonomous learning, and action research. In translation theory, there are obvious connections with hermeneutics, perhaps with Augustinian illumination, and with Robinson's somatic approach. Needless to say, Kiraly's general theory is quite compatible with indeterminism and incorporates a view of translation based on that principle.

6.7.3 Spirit channelling

We saw that in Derrida's darker period (I'm not sure there was ever a light one), the model of translation was used to theorize modes of half-presence, with much talk of ghosts and phantoms. The idea of a spirit communicating with people is not just the stuff of philosophical metaphors, however. It has been a mainstay of Christian theology ever since Paul the Apostle's claim that 'the letter [γράμμα] kills, but the Spirit [πνεῦμα] gives life' (2 Corinthians 3:6). This Spirit is 'pneuma' both in Paul and in the Septuagint: the same word meant 'breath' in Ancient Greek and was seen as the life-giving driving force of the body in Greek and Roman medicine. If the letter of the text kills the meaning, then there is not much reason to be worried about the letter being uncertain or indeterminate. The spirit will speak through the text, overcoming uncertainty. Problem solved.

Parts of this theory inform the translation of Christian texts, making Christianity a culture of perpetual retranslation (as opposed to the theological untranslatability of the Torah and the Qur'an). If the spirit can communicate, then there need be nothing lost in translation. The legend of the Septuagint, the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, says that 72 translators worked in isolated cells and all produced identical translations, in clear defiance of anything like Quine's problem with *gavagai*. How was it possible for them to overcome linguistic indeterminacy so miraculously? Presumably, because they were not just any old translators: they were rabbis, with faith, and divine spirit thus guided their words. Others have also seen pure belief as a guarantor against indeterminacy. **Martin Luther**

stated that 'a false Christian or a person with a divisive spirit [*Rottengeist*] cannot translate the Scriptures with truth' (1530: b2v, my translation): it is not just about having the right experience or personal background: you need the right faith, which might also be the capacity to receive the right spirit. There are many degrees to which these ideologies associate faith with spirit; few of them want to abandon the letter entirely. And then, 'speaking in tongues' has long been a cheap thrill. Nevertheless, in the preface to most versions of the Bible you still find some passage saying that the translators were 'united in their faith' – something mysterious brought them together and guided the translation.

Douglas Robinson (2001) has investigated the millennial discourse on translation as **spirit-channelling**, which extends well beyond the religious domain. As an entertaining example (not in Robinson), the classicist W. F. Jackson Knight claimed that the ghost of Virgil answered his questions when he was translating the *Aeneid* (Knight 1973: 427, 463–464). How could such a translator ever be uncertain?

6.7.4 *Theories of consensus*

A third way of living with indeterminacy, almost the opposite of illumination and spirit-channelling, emphasizes the role of **dialogue and consensus,** and not just as an abstract opening to the other. The seventeenth-century English philosopher **John Locke** certainly had a transmissionist model of communication, based on encoding and decoding:

> When a Man speaks to another, it is, that he may be understood; and the end of Speech is, that those Sounds, as Marks, may make known his Ideas to the Hearer.
>
> (1690/1841: 281, section 3.2.1)

That formulation is so fundamental that the corresponding view of language is sometimes called 'Lockean'. Locke also has famous examples like the following:

> I was at a meeting of very learned and ingenious Physicians, where by chance there arose a Question, whether any Liquor passed through the Filaments of the Nerves. The Debate having been managed a good while, by a variety of arguments on both sides, I (who had been used to suspect, that the greatest part of Disputes were more about the signification of words, than a real difference in the Conception of Things) desired, That before they went any farther on this dispute, they would first examine, and establish amongst them, what the word Liquor signified. […] They were pleased to comply with my Motion, and upon Examination found, that the signification of that Word, was not so settled and certain, as they had all imagined; but that each of them

made it a sign of a different complex Idea. This made them perceive, that the Main of their Dispute was about the signification of that Term; and that they differed very little in their Opinions, concerning some fluid and subtle Matter, passing through the Conduits of the Nerves; though it was not so easy to agree whether it be called Liquor, or no, a thing which when each considered, they thought it not worth the contending about.

(1690/1841: 343, section 3.9.16 'On the imperfection of words')

This is a case where language is not fully determined by its referent, nor by its terms (the word 'Liquor' only produces confusion). Nonetheless, that indeterminacy is reportedly overcome through dialogue and consensus, plus no doubt the experience of looking at bodies. Indeterminacy is not quite removed; it is somehow exhausted, considered 'not the worth'. It becomes of less value than something else.

In the end, does it matter if we use 'Liquor' or some other word? The important point is that language enables us to keep talking about language (Locke's anecdote has probably justified some three centuries of philology) and it is through those exchanges that some sense of understanding is reached. Or better, the parties reach 'an understanding' on certain points, as tends to happen after years of marriage. Seen in this way, a Lockean theory need not exclude initial indeterminacy. It might even teach us how to live with it. Keep the dialogues going and consensus might ensue!

Can that help translators? Few equivalence-bound translators are allowed enough time to conduct dialogues about language. And even though it has been proposed (in Brislin 1981: 213) that **conference interpreters** should be allowed to stop debates when there are misunderstandings based on words, not many job profiles give them that power. There are nevertheless practices that point in that direction. Nabokov (1955: 512), for one, called for translator footnotes 'reaching up like skyscrapers to the top of this or that page'. Some of Spivak's translations of Devi have more commentary and conversation than translation: footnotes, glossaries, essays on the text, and dialogues with the author. Online video material now comes with spaces for commentaries that elaborate and criticize translations in viewers' comments, timed comments, danmaku comments, sometimes with the participation of fansubbers (some of which is captured in O'Sullivan 2018). Online sales forums also allow for ongoing discussions about translations, as well as exchanges in which translators should probably participate more than they do. Beyond that, the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic taught many policymakers that straight translation is not nearly enough for behaviour change. In many cities, vaccination messages, in particular, were eventually re-narrated in many languages by doctors and community leaders, gaining trust through dialogue rather than through the presentation of officially translated information (Pym and Hu 2022). Locke might have been onto something.

6.7.5 Theories of empathy, charity, and passing theories

Quine's original *gavagai* problem was not just about a hypothetical equivalence relation. It also portrayed an ongoing conversation of sorts, which was later analyzed in the following way:

> In the field linguist's case it is *empathy* on his own part when he makes his first conjecture about 'Gavagai' on the strength of the native's utterance and orientation, and again when he queries 'Gavagai' for the native's assent in a promising subsequent situation.
>
> (Quine 1990: 42, italics mine)

That is, there is a human attitude involved in trying to translate: activating *empathy*, the linguist attempts to see the world from the perspective of the other – 'What would I say if I were there?' And in an ongoing conversation, one would hope that the other would activate similar empathy, attempting to see the world from beyond the self. Thanks to their capacity to empathize, people can have a conversation across cultural divides. In sum, this is rather like the 'cooperative principle' that **Grice** (1975: 45) assumed people use when orienting a conversation in accordance with 'the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged'. Much of pragmatics has been built on that kind of assumption. But one somehow doubts that the jungle linguist and the rabbit-pointing informant are having a nice English chat. One forgets too easily why translation, precisely translation, is used to illustrate the problem of indeterminism. The shared assumptions and principles are far fewer in intercultural situations; conversations are more difficult to pursue.

In Quine, the appeal to empathy remains an untried universalism, American optimism, a rather naïve belief that all people are basically the same. It shies away from the radical other that is completely different from the self and that remains unknown, the one for which the French use *autrui* (rather than *l'autre*) or for which translators employ the capital in 'the Other'. Not all thinkers have been so self-assured in trying to say how understandings come about.

The American philosopher of language **Donald Davidson** makes slightly fewer idealist assumptions. His version of Quine's empathy would be '**charity**' (which is also in Quine but here it is 'across the board'), which he defines as the principle that we 'make maximum sense of the words and thoughts of others when we interpret in a way that optimises agreement' (Davidson 2001: 197). When in doubt, go for the option most likely to create common ground of some kind, since 'easy communication has survival value' (2001: 169). That seems a laudable recommendation, if and when agreements are possible (which is certainly not always the case). But does that simply make the indeterminacy disappear? In part, yes – Davidson is not interested in the parts of language that do not fit in with a potential agreement. But then again, not

entirely, since the way messages are interpreted is hugely under-determined by any linguistic evidence.

Davidson (1986) handles indeterminism by positing that the people engaged in a conversation are interpreting each other all the time. They start from 'prior theories' about how they are expected to interpret the other. But those normally prove to be wrong. They then give way to a series of transitory '**passing theories**', momentary expectations, as the exchange advances: Where is this heading? What are the other's intentions? How am I expected to respond? As in hermeneutics, an understanding is reached when those passing theories converge to some extent. For Davidson, this means that understandings are *not* reached through the conventions and codes of language at all but through skills in the production and testing of passing theories: 'for intuition, luck and skill play an essential role here as in devising a new theory in any field, and taste and sympathy a larger role' (2001: 279). All those things can help overcome uncertainty.

In the end, for Davidson, understandings are reached through what sound like complex negotiation skills, replete with sensitivity to the other, of a kind that does indeed sound like the interpersonal skills we might ideally find in experienced translators. And those passing theories, the transitory expectations made as one advances in an exchange, could be very much the way translators construe the text as they translate (Malmkjær 2020: 51ff.). The translation games are not played alone.

6.8 Cooperation theory

Davidson leaves us with a mixed bag of human capacities and attributes that can be used to reach understandings and agreements. Is there any way that they can be formalized and be made to speak to the concerns of translators?

At the risk of hubris, let me briefly note how my own thinking on indeterminism has turned to the way the problem is addressed in some neighbouring disciplines, especially economics: cooperation theory, for the aim of translation; risk management, for the way decisions can be made in situations of uncertainty; and trust theory, for the affective relations necessary for cooperation to work (Pym 2021a). Here I will relate those ideas to some of the theories we have just seen.

6.8.1 Cooperation

A loose sense of cooperation is more or less what Davidson would like language users to achieve: understandings and agreements. It is also the attitude that Grice assumes to be the precondition for conversation. One might then propose that something like cooperation could be an ethical goal for any cross-cultural exchange: we can have conversations, understandings, and agreements across cultures. But that is still a very vague ideal.

In economics and neo-classical negotiation theory, the idea is a little more precise. The principle of cooperation (adapting a famous note in Adam Smith 1776/2000, 4.2) states that a communicative exchange is successful when each participant (translator, author, reader, client, etc.) pursues their individual goals and yet gets more out of the exchange than they put into it. In a 'zero-sum game', if I win, you lose. In cooperation, we can both win something (although rarely in equal amounts). Now, if the goal of translation is to enable cooperation, there is no need to worry excessively about any indeterminacy at the source – as long as all parties gain something, the communication is good enough. And there is no need to worry about defining individual aims in any essentialist way: each participant defines or feels their own goals; each assesses whether they are getting more out than they put in; each decides when cooperation is not working for them and the communication should be abandoned. You might think of when you are watching a film that becomes boring: at some point, you decide to give up, but that point is not defined in any way before you make that decision.

For example, Zürcher (1959/2007) describes the entry of Buddhism into China in the second and third centuries as a complex series of negotiations where quite different translation solutions initially responded to the demands of very different readerships: cultural adaptations to Chinese ways of thinking were designed to please Sinocentric institutions at the beginning, then there were borrowings from Indian languages for more scholarly receptions by different audiences. The use of a certain kind of solution can in each case be seen as enhancing cooperation with a particular audience. This could be understood in terms of straight *Skopos* theory, except that here there must also be benefits for the translator, who is also pursuing individual aims – as elaborated in translational hermeneutics. For example, in the Buddhist sutra translations, the work of each translator provided solutions that could be used and developed by later translators. Nattier (2008: 5) describes these as 'translation policies' that formed 'literary lineages'. This would indicate distinct forms of cooperation were also formed *between translators*, crossing generations and in some cases quickly jumping over territories, in addition to the cooperation with different audiences.

If cooperation can be seen as a non-essentialist general aim of communication, what kind of cooperation might be in some way specific to translation?

6.8.2 Risk management

In communication that involves *different* cultures, there is in principle less shared experience and thus fewer grounds for consensus than in cases *within* a culture – as Augustine and Locke might tell us, along with Nida. This means that the probabilities of non-cooperation are greater in translation than in other kinds of communication. In other words, there are significant risks of failure.

How might translators manage those risks? The message of the various 'tendencies' or 'universals' of translational language is that translators tend

to **avoid risks** by making their texts clearer, more elaborate, and so on (as noted by Mounin, Levý, and the many studies on 'universals'). On other occasions, translators may **transfer risks** by consulting with clients or citing authorities, as noted by *Skopos* theory for the clients and perhaps by spirit channelling or authority-based equivalence for the rest. Or translators may decide to **take risks**, as would happen in solutions that are close to adaptation, in adaptation itself, in event-based translation or when translators heed appeals to have 'more courage' when translating (Nord 2014). When a translator takes high risks, the act should theoretically be in the hope of producing high rewards. Mixed strategies then take the form of **trade-offs**, where one risk is taken in order to offset another risk that is perceived to be greater. In our repeated example, a rendition of *guanxi* as 'social network' in one situation might run the risk of ignoring Chinese specificity in order to avoid the greater risk of confusing the reader about irrelevant details, while in another situation it might be rendered as '*guanxi*, a specifically Chinese network of social obligations' so as to seek an inversely weighted trade-off. That second translation explicitates information and thus runs the risk of being wrong (all explicitation runs risks) but avoids what might be perceived as the greater risk of leaving the reader entirely in the dark. The more complex translation solutions usually involve trade-offs. There is, however, a gap between all these things that *can* happen in theory and what kinds of risk management translators deploy on the ground. In its current state, the theory cannot claim that its abstract recommendations (such as 'work hard when the stakes are high') correspond to any kind of reasoned practice, although some evidence for that particular principle is found in He and Wang (2021).

Marco Neves (2019) sees the main problem of risk management as being the translator's inability to assess fully the probability of future events. In principle, the theory need make no claim to a complete objective analysis of probabilities, given that the assessment of risk is always in the mind of the people making the decisions on the ground. Yet Neves underscores that the translator remains 'completely exposed to the uncertainty related to unknown events' (2019: 30), which is true, by definition. Very rare events cannot be planned for, but they will certainly happen over the collective lifetimes of a group of translators: computer malfunctions, the loss of a client, legal problems ensuing from a translation, and so on – yes, those things do occur. Neves describes this exposure as the translator's '**fragility**'. He presents a series of 'antifragile' strategies for coping with that uncertainty: insurance, savings, hedging, risk distribution, flexibility ('optionality'), back-ups ('redundancy'), reduction of complexity (another name for trust), and the mixing of high-stakes and low-stakes options ('barbell'). These are all sound life lessons. But they can all be found in financial risk mitigation, for example, so it is not immediately clear that they invalidate risk management as a general approach. And they could make translators even more risk-averse.

These basic concepts of risk management invite exploration in many situations. When tested on evidence of actions in situations, they can sometimes explain why translators and interpreters make decisions that seem entirely contrary to established norms and ethics (Pym 2016b; Pym et al. 2023). But we should be careful: the concepts cannot be seen as explanations of what *all* translators *always* do, much less as models of what translators always *should* do. The approach instead concerns asking creative questions about why a translator *might* act in a certain way in a certain situation. **Goldfajn** (2020), for example, looks at all the humility tropes that abound in translators' prefaces, where translation is typically seen as inevitable loss. She finds a possible explanation for this in the psychology of '**loss aversion**' (Kahneman 2011), where the pain of losing something is found to be more powerful than the pleasure of gaining something. This might fit in with other evidence for generalized risk aversion among translators. One of the hopes invested in my own use of risk-management theory is nevertheless that translators will see that substantial rewards can come from *taking risks* and that **more risks need to be taken**.

In the present context, the main takeaway is that cooperation and risk management handle uncertainty by privileging interpersonal relations, incorporating chance, and subjectively weighing up relative probabilities.

6.8.3 *Trust as a response to uncertainty*

Andrew Chesterman (1997/2016: 179) states that translators 'must be trusted by all parties involved, both as a profession and individually. […] Without this trust, the profession would collapse, and so would its practice'. Why should anyone trust a translator? Because when you are dealing with anything that is foreign, particularly with a language you do not know, there is uncertainty everywhere, of a complexity that you cannot fathom. That explains why, when people seek the services of a translator, it can be to reduce that uncertainty in some way. For the German sociologist **Niklas Luhmann** (1968), the prime mechanism for reducing complexity is trust, which can therefore also become 'a solution for specific problems of risk' (1988: 95). How do receivers and clients reduce uncertainty? By trusting a translator, in effect by transferring risks to them.

Trust is necessary for cooperation since each participant must decide whether the other person's promises of future action can be trusted. At a certain point, the weight of accumulated lies and betrayal may make cooperation unviable. Trust can also be sought between any and all of the participants in a communicative exchange. But when you trust a translator, it is not usually the same as when you trust a family member. In the case of your family, long-term familiarity enables you to predict actions or to have long discussions (as Locke would suggest) – this would be 'thick trust' (adapting Hosking 2014: 46–49). A translator is more likely to be trusted because of their professional status ('thin trust') and because the probable negative consequences

of *not* trusting are greater than the risks of trusting – how else will you communicate?

Once again, there is much to be explored when seeing translation from this perspective. Trust varies historically (Hosking 2014) and the forms of translation may well vary with it. That is one reason why a project has been launched to see translation history from the perspective of trust (Rizzi et al. 2019). For our present purposes, it is enough to appreciate that trust is necessary for cooperation, that it is a way of responding to risk, and that it is one way that readers of translations handle uncertainty. They trust us. Problem solved?

6.9 So how should we translate?

If you are deeply worried about uncertainty, you would presumably be happiest with translations that have long explanatory prefaces and abundant footnotes on linguistic variants and possible interpretations – anything that can make you feel more certain and can open to ongoing dialogue. You would possibly also like translations that talk about translating, as philosophers and teachers tend to prefer. Failing that, you might seek some awareness of indeterminacy in the more complex and hybrid solution types that translators sometimes use. And then, you might appreciate the translator's outward trappings of professionalism or anything else that could signal trustworthiness. Unfortunately, most of the theories we have seen here are not overly helpful in any of those regards. Model examples do not abound in them, and there might be a good reason for that. In the end, from the perspective of all these theories, **translation decisions are for the translator to make**. After all, if there is no certainty, how can a theorist presume to tell translators what to do?

If we try to extract proposals about the way to translate, we find that the general drift of these theories is broadly compatible with a few prominent ideas also found elsewhere. I have mentioned that Mounin and Levý regretted the tendency for translators to become too easy to read, too clear, and one also finds this when Venuti (1995, 1998) argues against 'fluency' in translations. Indeterminist theories see easy reading as a shortcoming; they tend to favour **foreignizing** strategies, the ones that make the reader aware that the text is a translation. The most developed notion of this preference is perhaps **Philip E. Lewis**'s concept of '**abusive fidelity**' (1985/2004), derived from Derrida's work on translation. Lewis values translations that do *not* adopt the norms of the target culture and that instead follow the text so closely (hence 'fidelity') that the result will sound strange to most readers. This, says Lewis, should be done only at points in a text where there are meanings to be explored ('a decisive textual knot', 1985/2004: 263).

Awareness of indeterminism might be considered in some way **internal** to translators and those who can compare texts in different languages. **External** knowledge, on the other hand, would characterize a reception process in which few doubts are raised about the way the translation represents an

anterior text, simply because there is a lack of knowledge on which to base such doubts. Seen in those crude binary terms, awareness of indeterminacy would be well served by any mode of translation that is able to extend internal translation knowledge as far as possible into the external sphere. The practice of 'abusive fidelity' can potentially bring the receiver into that space where languages overlap; receivers are made aware that there is no meaning transfer as such. The result would be akin to what **Marylin Gaddis Rose** (1997) calls 'stereoscopic reading', taking place in an 'interliminal space', which remains in need of clear definition.

Beyond all those quite plausible lessons, there is also an appeal to not care too much about uncertainty. This is in the 'So what?' response, in the aesthetics of the event, in the pointing to life experience, in Nord's appeal for more courage, and in my own hope that, once we can judge the risks, translators will take more of them.

Beyond that, translators are remarkably on their own.

6.10 Some virtues of indeterminist theories

The theories surveyed in this chapter are extremely heterogeneous, brought together in some cases by no more than their ability to deal with indeterminism in some way, no matter what the name used for the problem. If there are virtues shared by the theories, they might be along the following lines:

- There is certain *honesty* involved when one admits to a degree of perplexity or non-understanding. Professional translators rarely have that privilege, given that overt doubts can sit poorly with attempts to be trusted. These theories might speak to what translators feel inwardly more than to what they say out loud.
- The awareness that all texts need to be construed, interpreted, and made meaningful is a major blind spot in theories of equivalence and, for that matter, purpose. It also tends to be overlooked by the more wilfully scientific approaches.
- The appeals to non-linguistic or pre-linguistic experiences serve to humanize translation, reminding us that language only works when it is used by people who are interacting with people.
- The relations with the other and appeals to dialogue open an ethical dimension that is not limited to the translator confronting a text.
- These theories oppose any idealism of the perfect, definitive translation, allowing translation to be seen as an eminently creative process.
- Many of these ideas are part and parcel of general intellectual history, drawn from arenas in which translation theory could have far more to say.

There are also shortcomings, as should be clear from some of my accounts (I am not neutral). In particular, most of these theories are built on anecdotal evidence, at best, and some make appeals to an anti-rationalism that can be

dangerous politically. But then there is the beauty of clever thought, which always deserves at least aesthetic appreciation.

6.11 Frequently had arguments

Given how important the principle of indeterminacy has been in twentieth-century Western thought, one might be surprised at how *little* debate these theories have sparked within translation studies. Part of the explanation could be geographical. Deconstruction has been particularly important in literary studies in the United States, a country where translation studies was very slow to develop. Across the world, university departments of literature or cultural studies have tended to take their lead from the United States and have thus paid much attention to deconstruction and rather less to translation. For example, when the American scholar of French literature Emily Apter compares her approach with European theories of translation, she sees the latter as being concerned only with 'the measurement of semantic and stylistic infidelity to the original literary text' (2006: 5), as if nothing had ever happened in Europe since prescriptive equivalence. In quite a different network, the many institutions across the world where translators are trained have tended to take their lead from **Europe and Canada**, where translation is necessary for the workings of multilingual governance. Indeterminacy is not especially what those societies want to know about. Few translation analysts or translation teachers have read hermeneutic or post-structuralist theory, and even fewer have seen value in its complexities. With isolated exceptions, the problematics of indeterminism have mostly been allowed to go their separate way.

One remarkable exception is an exchange between **Rosemary Arrojo and Andrew Chesterman** (Chesterman and Arrojo 2000). Arrojo generally represents deconstruction; Chesterman offers something like philosophically aware descriptive studies. In their joint article, the two agree on a remarkably long list of things that could and should be done in translation studies. They show that an academic discipline can allow for debate. At one point, however, Chesterman argues that the relation between a translation and its start text cannot be characterized by difference alone, since meanings have *degrees* of stability and thus there must be degrees of difference and degrees of similarity, as in the 'family likeness' metaphor. Arrojo does not accept this: 'Meanings are always context-bound', she argues. 'Depending on our viewpoint and our circumstances, we may perceive them to be either "more" or "less" stable but all of them are always equally dependent on a certain context' (Chesterman and Arrojo 2000: Ad.10). There is no question of Arrojo buying into the 'more or less'. For Arrojo, for consistent deconstruction, to analyze degrees of similarity would mean accepting the ideal of possible sameness ('more or less' with regard to what?) and thus falling into essentialism. At this point, the two approaches touch but separate: there is no cooperative conversation.

A more fruitful meeting of these networks might be possible in the **Chinese training institutions** that have broadly adopted Western theory since the massive

influence of Eugene Nida. The increasing calls to develop new approaches 'with Chinese characteristics' finds relatively fertile ground in theories that accept indeterminism. The less rigid categories that come from thinking not in twos but in threes (as in semiosis) at least appear compatible with something like the '*three* requirements' of Yan Fu: faithfulness, comprehensibility, and elegance (1901/2004: 69). Not by chance, when the Chinese translation scholar Leo Tak-hung Chan (2020) writes on 'Western theories in East Asian contexts', he argues for an extended sense of translation that includes adaptation and rewriting, with an explicit appeal to 'family likenesses' rather than equivalence.

Beyond such calls for syncretism, there has long been a hum of behind-the-scenes comments, mostly against the role of indeterminism and often without informed knowledge of the positions concerned. A few general complaints can be summarized as follows.

6.11.1 The theories are not useful to translators

As noted, theories of uncertainty or indeterminacy offer few guidelines that seem to be of practical use to translators. They could appear to be **theories for theorists,** or for philosophers, or even for nitpickers. Translators, it is sometimes argued, have little time for such things and they are rarely paid for showing their problems to the world. One might nevertheless concede that awareness of indeterminism should be of some practical consequence for the way translators are trained, if only because we all have doubts and should be able to talk about them.

6.11.2 The theorists are not translators and do not care about translation

This is a rather crude version of the above. Many of the thinkers cited in this chapter are philosophers or literary theorists more than they are translators. However, when Heidegger traces differences between German, Latin, and Greek, or when Derrida teases out the various gaps found in translations, who is to say they are not using translation as a way of doing philosophy? Who can say they are not translating?

6.11.3 The theories lead to a lack of rigour

A fairly common complaint about **deconstruction** is that it leads to situations where 'anything goes'. Clever critics can locate any meaning in any text whatsoever, proving nothing but their own cleverness. Part of the problem is that post-structuralist writing is relatively easy to imitate, and pretentious third-raters can display a thousand trivial interpretations, filling their texts with unbearable puns along the way. There is quite a difference, though, between gratuitously playing with texts and the kind of close, careful reading one finds in a master like Derrida, marked by punctilious attention to detail and careful tracings of myriad possible

interpretations. If anything, Derrida's practice errs by an *excess* of rigour. Nevertheless, like translation itself, deconstruction has practitioners at all levels. There is no need to discredit the entire approach because of the abundance, in some quarters, of facile parodies.

6.11.4 Indeterminism is of no consequence

A further debate might surround the 'So what?' response we have met with respect to Quine. Here the criticism is that, no matter what games the theorists play, their concerns have no effect on the actual practice of translation. True, indeterminism quite possibly does not interfere with the everyday practice of translation, but it should nevertheless concern any search for certainty, and thus most kinds of theorizing. When we make selections between various possible translations, we should realize we are mostly dealing with problems that are more complex than 'right' versus 'wrong' and that the game does not have a fixed number of options.

6.11.5 These theories are merely oppositional

This criticism would take some indeterminist theories to task for being too ready to expose the inadequacies of all other theories. As I have indicated, you cannot simply assume all theories of equivalence to be 'transmissionist' or 'essentialist'. You cannot categorize all theories prior to Derrida as somehow 'determinist', 'prescriptive', or 'authoritarian'. Theories that incorporate indeterminacy have been around for a long time, and they interact in quite subtle and contradictory ways with the other theories available. Simple opposition is reductive and contrary to the spirit of indeterminism.

6.11.6 Deconstruction prescribes what translations should be like

This is a rather strange criticism made by Raymond van den Broeck (1990: 54), who views Derrida (1985) and Lewis (1985/2004) as calling for a particular kind of 'deconstructive translation'. Van den Broeck thereby sees deconstruction as opposing Descriptive Translation Studies. The critique seems to be a misunderstanding since the theories we have seen do far more than prescribe one ideal way of translating. In fact, as noted, they are frustratingly light on recommendations. If 'abusive fidelity' is a mode of translating well suited to deconstruction, that does not mean that indeterminism cannot be found in all modes of translating across the board.

6.11.7 These theories take us beyond what a translation is expected to be

Many of these theories do indeed extend the field of translation into what other approaches would see as adaptation, re-writing, re-narration, and the like. That kind of extension can create problems for the more restrictive translation

concepts. But no one owns the one true definition of 'translation'. Indeed, one might see the more post-structuralist theories as working hand-in-hand with moves to the much wider concept that we will soon meet as 'cultural translation'.

None of these arguments seems strong enough to diminish the importance of recognizing indeterminism. Whatever kind of translation theory we choose to develop, we must learn to live with uncertainty.

Just as they have been attacked, so theories of indeterminism have been able to attack rival approaches to translation. Deconstructionists like Rosemary Arrojo (particularly 1998) tend to see all traditional translation theory as being based on equivalence, which they criticize for being essentialist. That critique is easy to make. But it could be extended into the other approaches as well. When *Skopos* theory names its dominant factor as this *Skopos* I have called 'purpose', is that not also an essentialism, an assumption of stable meaning? And when Descriptive Translation Studies presumes to be doing science by separating the object of study from the subjectivity of the researcher, is that not a similarly untenable and essentialist divide? Thus extended, a theory that recognizes and incorporates indeterminacy could claim to be the only satisfactory way to proceed.

That is not quite the turn that history has taken.

Summary

This chapter started with the idea that translators cannot be absolutely certain about the meanings they translate. This was then seen as a problem of indeterminism, in the sense that the start text does not fully cause (or 'determine') its translations. We have identified many theories that recognize this indeterminism and come to terms with it in some way. Some theories assume that the (great) text is full of inherent meaning to which translations will always be inadequate to some degree: the best we can hope for is similarity. Other theories, however, assume indeterminism to be a feature of all communication and exploit it in their language work, adopting various hermeneutic approaches. We have identified several ways in which translators can at least live with uncertainty. You can, for example, trust that religious faith or shared experience will guide you; you can enter into extended dialogues in order to reach social consensus about meaning; you can accept that your position influences what you find in a text, sometimes with the idea that your interpretation is all that really counts; you can deconstruct the text so that the points of indeterminacy are revealed rather than hidden; and you can see translating as a game in which we place bets and make moves, in a world where we learn to cooperate, manage risks, and trust translators, all despite uncertainty.

Sources and further reading

The *Translation Studies Reader* (Venuti 2021) has key texts by Benjamin, Jakobson, Berman, and Derrida – Quine and Lewis were in earlier editions.

On the other hand, Munday et al. (2022) have a chapter on 'philosophical approaches' that includes the non-philosophers George Steiner and Ezra Pound. The best general introduction to deconstruction in translation is still Davis (2001). There are numerous commentaries on Walter Benjamin's essay 'The Task of the Translator', which has been fetishized by English-language literary criticism. Students are advised to tackle Benjamin's text before and after reading the commentaries. The major works done in German on translational hermeneutics seem not to have been translated into English but a way in is through Cercel, Stolze, and Stanley (2015), much of which is in English. Rosemary Arrojo's books in Portuguese (1992, 1993), along with her articles in English, are a constant demonstration of the way deconstruction can reveal contradictions and inconsistencies in other theories of translation. Numerous other authors in the deconstruction camp are more interested in translation as a metaphor able to question stable meaning, making translating itself into deconstructive practice. At that point, the approaches blend into cultural translation.

Suggested projects and activities

The activities listed here are designed to make students aware of uncertainty in ways that take them beyond the binarisms of right vs. wrong translations.

1. Return to a translation you have done in the past, in prose and preferably not highly technical. Select a longish start-text sentence and rephrase it, in the start language, in as many different ways as you can. Now, look at your previous translation of that sentence. Did your translation follow the form of the original start sentence or the form of one of the variations you have now produced? If the former, why? (This test is one way of checking to see whether form and content are separable when translating.)
2. Try the same experiment for a line of verse, and again for a sentence from a highly technical text. What is different between these cases? Could we say that the language is more determinate (more fixed, or less open to interpretation) in some cases than in others?
3. Working in small groups, students write two sentences: one they think cannot be misinterpreted (i.e., is relatively determinate) and one they think needs to be interpreted (i.e., has ambiguities or is otherwise relatively indeterminate). They then have other groups translate those sentences into a target language, then back into the start language, in each case by a student who has not seen the original or the previous translations. The operation can be repeated for as many languages as are available, with the starting point for each successive translation always being the last translation, not the original start text. (The activity is easy online, but in class you will need something like a sheet of paper that is folded over like a concertina to hide the previous translations.) The groups then see what has happened to their original sentences. They can

use this information to answer questions like the following: (a) Did the most indeterminate text undergo the most changes?; (b) So does equivalence apply to some texts more than others?; and (c) Is indeterminacy a feature of all language use?

4. Repeat the previous activity, with the same start texts, but use machine translation for the translations and back-translations. What do you find? At what points do human and machine translations reach a level where the successive translations introduce no new modifications? Why?

5. Activities 3 and 4 are versions of a game called 'telephone' in the United States. Look up the other names this game is known by around the world. Why should the game have so many different names? Should some of the names be changed? Is this a case of similarity and semiosis, or are there correct and incorrect names for the game?

6. Does the form of a text affect its content? If it does not, then meaning can be separated from a text and re-expressed in another language. But consider the names of the heroes and the villains in films or comics. Could the names be changed or are some sounds well suited to villains, and others are appropriate for heroes? Why are 'Darth Vader' or 'Voldemort' such great names for evil characters? Do these strangely appropriate sounds work the same way in other languages? If not, how should they be translated?

7. Walter Benjamin says that the French and German words for 'bread' cannot translate each other, since they evoke different kinds of bread. Is that true? Find a sizeable literary text online and search for the terms for 'bread'. How often do those terms refer to a kind of bread that is found in one culture only? Are they so difficult to translate? Or are there established equivalents? What does this tell us about the linguistic or cultural units that translators work on?

8. Do a web search for texts presented as translations of Rimbaud's poem 'Voyelles'. Can you find any that you would not call translations? At what point does a version cease to be a translation? What does this say about translation as a constant creation of new meanings?

9. For any text, compare the translations done in class, noting the points where the solutions are all the same and where they are different – Campbell (2001) calls this 'choice network analysis'. What is the relation between indeterminacy and the points with many different translations? Are the points 'decisive textual knots' (Lewis)? Are they the most difficult translation problems?

10. Some theories of languages as worldviews suggest that translation is impossible. But how can anyone know there is a worldview that is not like their own? Find out about the research done by Benjamin Whorf on the Hopi language in the United States. In the course of his research, do you think he used translation to learn the time system of Hopi? So is the time system of Hopi untranslatable into English?

11. Do a web search for 'Margaret Mead' and the word 'hoax'. With luck, you will find a reference to Freeman (1999) and the claim that the American anthropologist was lied to by the young Samoan girls who were her 'native informants'. Is this like Quine's *gavagai* example? Was the hoax due to indeterminacy? What does this say about ethnography as a kind of translation?

12. Consider the following passage from the American philosopher Richard Rorty:

> The thought that a commentator has discovered what a text is really doing – for example, that it is *really* demystifying an ideological construct, or *really* deconstructing the hierarchical oppositions of western metaphysics, rather than merely being capable of being used for these purposes – is, for us pragmatists, just more occultism.
>
> (in Eco et al. 1992: 102–103)

Is this a fair criticism of the way deconstruction has been applied in translation analysis? On the basis of the description in this chapter, would there be any profound differences between 'constructivism' and 'deconstruction'? Do a search for these terms and try to characterize the different academic fields they are used in.

13. In a speech by Xi Jinping on the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), the Chinese idiom '桃李不言,下自成蹊' has been translated closely as 'peaches and plums do not speak, but they are so attractive that a path is formed below the trees' (Hu 2022: 9–11). Can you make sense of the idiom in terms of the context? If so, how else would you translate it? Are you sure of what it means? (Chinese literary scholars tell me they know exactly what it means – or does it mean whatever readers interpret it to mean?)

14. Rosemary Arrojo refuses to discuss whether meanings are 'more or less' stable. Is she right to do so? Here is her argument on this point:

> Meanings are always context-bound. Depending on our viewpoint and our circumstances, we may perceive them to be either 'more' or 'less' stable but all of them are always equally dependent on a certain context. A proper name such as the University of Vic, for example, only makes sense to those who are familiar with the explicit and implicit context to which it belongs and which makes it meaningful. The same certainly applies to notions such as democracy, which may be perceived by some to be less stable. If we ask Fidel Castro, or Augusto Pinochet, for instance, what 'democracy' is, their answers will certainly indicate that there is nothing 'unstable' about their definitions of the concept, no matter how different they may end up being. Both

Castro and Pinochet will be sure that each of them has the right, true 'definition' and that the other one is wrong. The implications of such statements for translation are certainly essential and far-reaching and they may be summarized as follows: no translation will ever be definite or universally acceptable, no translation will ever escape ideology or perspectivism.

(in Chesterman and Arrojo 2000: Ad.10)

How might this position relate to what can be discovered in activities 1, 2, and 3 above? Do you agree with Arrojo?

7 Automation

This chapter explores some of the consequences of automation, understood as what happens when non-humans carry out language tasks with little help from humans. Rather than draw on academic translation theories, the chapter looks at concepts that have mostly evolved from the language industry. In particular, the basic ideas of 'localization', 'internationalization', and 'text re-use' can be attributed to the ways language automation has changed translation workflows. In part, this means looking for translation theories in a discourse that is fundamentally interested in other things: companies use automation to make money out of translation; they are engaged in trial and error until profits are maximized. Their concepts nevertheless have a lot to say about how translation can be defined and what its aims can be. I then look at the translation technologies that are based on language automation, particularly translation memories and machine translation, along with the effects they have on the ways translators work. The end of the chapter asks how the industry discourses relate to the translation theories we have seen in previous chapters. Is there anything really new?

The **main points** covered in this chapter are:

- Language automation responds to the problem of uncertainty by creating *artificial* languages and cultures.
- Localization is the preparation of a product for a new locale.
- What makes the idea of localization a new theory is the key roles played by *internationalization*, understood as the preparation of decontextualized material so that it can be translated quickly and simultaneously into many different target languages, and *text re-use*, understood as the repetition of a translation regardless of changing contexts.
- New translation technologies enhance the role of internationalization on many levels, seeking to recycle language solutions through text re-use.

- One effect of translation technologies is a tendency to *non-linear* modes of text production, use, and translation.
- Localization theory may be seen as a partial return to a certain kind of equivalence in that it uses fixed glossaries and promotes decontextualized translation.
- The opposition between 'standardization' and 'adaptation' as localization strategies recalls the binarisms of equivalence theory.

7.1 Automation as a response to uncertainty

You are downloading some files. There is a little counter saying: 'You have 5 files remaining'. All is well. Then you get to the last one: 'You have 1 files remaining'. The information is clear but the grammar is not. Try it in any other language that modifies nouns for plurality: same problem. So we accept it and move on, unless that last file takes a very long time to download and you have no choice but to contemplate what has happened to grammar.

Why do we get errors like that? Why does the error appear in numerous languages for the same piece of software? Is this a translation problem? Or could it be something entirely different?

In this simple case, it is easy to see that the sentence has been produced automatically, by a set of rules: 'In language L, take the words for "you have N files remaining" and replace N with the number of files remaining.' Is this a translation? Yes, the words in the rule have probably been translated by a human at some stage. But no, the translations have been put into a database of some kind and are being called up when needed – this is 'text re-use'. And then, no, because the number in the sentence comes from a different set of algorithms and is inserted automatically, so there was no complete 'start text' in the first place. Imagine if it were a translation in the traditional sense of equivalence. Stop the download! Write a message about how many files are remaining; send the message out to a different translator for each target language; wait for them to reply; have their work revised, and then… No, the world of technology moves too fast for that traditional workflow. And there seems to be an easier solution: half a page of code might be able to fix the problem for most languages in one fell swoop (Kuczmarski 2013). In the meantime, translation would seem to have been changed by automation.

Some chapters ago, I described a set of theories based on equivalence. Since those theories assumed fixed values, equivalence was seriously challenged by the principle of uncertainty, one of the major intellectual problems of the twentieth century. From that conflict, translation theorists developed at least three ways of responding. Purpose-based approaches, including *Skopos* theory, responded by moving theory closer to practice, reducing equivalence to a special case and, at best, insisting that translators and their clients negotiate in order to decide how to translate. In parallel, the more science-inspired

approaches made equivalence a quality of all translations, no matter how good or bad, and set about describing the many shifts and transformations that translations produce. A third response would then be the theories of indeterminism, particularly deconstruction, which set about undoing the many illusions of equivalence as a stable semantic relation. Now we meet a *fourth* kind of response. In practices that use automation, huge sets of rules theoretically do away with uncertainty (they are not like the natural languages we speak every day), and databases store pieces of text in different languages that, in theory, match up exactly. In the sentence about the file being downloaded, there is no doubt at all about how to translate the noun 'file': فلم in Arabic, ファイル in Japanese, and I am dead sure about that because the Microsoft glossary is socially and economically powerful enough to impose those equivalents on all its translators, both human and non-human. Does this take us back full circle to good old equivalence? Almost… but a few things are new.

7.2 What is localization?

If there is a translation theory that incorporates automation, it is probably the set of ideas known as 'localization'. Unfortunately, 'localization' is a term that is widely misunderstood. Some courses on it only teach students how to use a series of translation technologies. The training can involve post-editing, pre-editing, controlled authoring, translation memories, software localization tools, website management, and terminology management, with perhaps a dash of content management and project management tools thrown as well. All those tools are instances of *automation*. But they should not be confused with *localization* as such. The tools are there; they are all used in the localization industry; but automation can be present without any kind of localization going on, and localization can be carried out independently of the tools. Localization is one thing; automation is something else, and the fact that localization uses tons of automation should not make the terms synonyms. Some historical explanation is required.

Back in the 1980s, the American company Microsoft was developing software for the North American market and then having it translated into the main languages of other markets (English to German, English to French, English to Spanish, and so on). That was fine for as long as there were just a few foreign markets. However, as the number of markets grew, the **language-to-language translation** model was found to be inadequate and expensive (Brooks 2000). The software required not just replacement of the pieces of language in the menus, dialogue boxes, and Help files visible to the user, but also attention to a long list of apparently minor details like date formats, hotkeys, punctuation conventions, diacritics, and right-to-left languages. Some of those problems concern translation; many of them can be handled by a degree of automation; others require the technical expertise of a product engineer; still others need telecommunications technicians, terminologists,

marketing experts, and perhaps lawyers in some cases. Together, those tasks are ideally carried out by teams, of which translators are a part. The entire process is then called 'localization', of which translation is a part.

Automated tasks in the localization of software

Manuals for the localization of software give lists of problems and tasks like the following, all of which involve automation in that they are solved by writing algorithms (instructions for the computer to carry out):

- Time conventions: Different cultures have different ways of presenting the time and calendars: 11.04.23 means November 4th, 2023 in the United States and the 11th of April 2023 in virtually everywhere else in the English-speaking world; and China puts the year first.
- Numbers: Different cultures use different punctuation in the presentation of numbers, so the English number 1,200.01 becomes 1.200,01 in Spanish, and even good translators forget this.
- Currencies are different, as are the ways in which they are presented.
- Hotkeys may be reallocated (for example, in English Control+O opens a document, in Spanish, it is Control+A (for 'Abrir'). But then we must make sure that the command Control+A is not being used for something else. In fact, the complications are so great that the more professional Spanish programs just stay with Control+O (accepting partial localization).
- Products also must be adapted to local standards concerning telecommunications, measurement units, paper sizes, and keyboard layouts.
- Other tasks are not normally helped by automation:

  > Examples and colours need to be adapted to local tastes.
  > Products must conform to local legal, fiscal, safety, and environmental requirements.
  > Some languages go right to left.

Localization can involve a wide range of tasks; it usually concerns information technology and marketing, as well as language skills. The definitions of the term reflect this by talking about **products rather than texts** and by describing the processes in terms of the 'preparation', 'tailoring', or 'adaptation' of the product for a new situation. That terminological change is important. Another significant term is this small word '**locale**', which refers to a set of linguistic and cultural settings defining the context of end-use.

You can probably find a locale on your computer just by going to language settings somewhere. Here is what Australia looks like:

How Australia is defined as a locale:

- Language: Australian English
- First day of the week: Sunday
- Calendar: Gregorian
- Time format: [Option for 24-hour clock]
- Temperature: Celsius
- Measurement units: Metric
- Number separators: grouping [,], decimal [.]
- Currency: Australian dollar ($)

And that's it! You might object that there is a lot more to Australian language and cultures than that. And you would be right. But those are the only items the computer needs to know about – that is all the Australian-ness you need for localization tasks in this case. Automation means the rules are set so that language appears on your computer in accordance with those conventions. 'Locale' thus becomes a nice short term to replace expressions like 'target language and/or culture' found in many translation theories. It also implicitly recognizes that translators rarely work for entire languages or cultures; many of our audiences are quite local – marketing companies commonly extend the list of settings to include gender, age, and disposable income. Then you have a pretty good idea of whom you are translating for.

Key concepts of localization

- **Localization** (L10n) involves taking a product and adapting it linguistically and culturally to the target locale (country/region and language).
- **Internationalization** (i18n) generalizes a product so that it can handle multiple languages and cultural conventions. Internationalization takes place when the product is being designed, prior to localization.
- **Globalization** (G11n) includes the business issues associated with selling a product internationally through the integration of localization and internationalization into product design, marketing, sales, and product support in the world market. This meaning is more specific than the general process of economic globalization.

Note that the term 'localization' is abbreviated as the letter L, then 10 letters, and the letter N. The other terms follow this rule, although the first letter of the abbreviation for 'internationalization' is generally written in lowercase so as not to confuse it with the numeral 1 and the upper-case L of L10n.

Other terms:

- **One-to-many**: A term for translation processes that go from an internationalized version to many target-language versions. It is not to be confused with the term 'one-to-several' coined by Kade within his theory of equivalence to describe the way one start-language item can correlate with many target-language items (see 3.3 above).
- **Partial localization**: A localization process in which not all the user-visible language is translated, usually to save costs when working into a small locale.
- **Reverse localization**: A localization process that goes from a minor language into a major language (working on the normalizing assumption that most localization projects go from major to minor languages).

7.3 What is internationalization?

This far, there might appear to be nothing new in localization: the term could simply be referring to traditional translation plus a certain amount of 'adaptation'. It would just be a tech-savvy version of *Skopos* theory. There are nevertheless several things that are genuinely different in localization theory.

Let us go back to the American software program that has to be localized for a series of European markets (French, Spanish, German, and so on). In many instances, those individual localization projects are going to face the same difficulties, in the same places in the programs, even though their solutions will often be different. Those particular places are mostly of the kind listed above: date formats, currency references, number presentations, and so on. Those are also the places where the start text (the American software, in our example) turns out to be specific to American cultural preferences. At those points, there is no real need to translate each time from the American version into all the different target versions. That would involve negotiating a huge number of cultural differences and running enormous risks of error. Greater efficiency comes from **taking the American-specific elements *out* of the program** and replacing them with generic placeholders, as far as possible, which is where the algorithms will adapt text automatically.

What happens when this is done? In traditional translation, we move from a start text to a target text, with invisible translators somewhere between:

| START | ⟶ | TARGET |

In localization, we move from the start to a general intermediary version. The production of that intermediary version is called '**internationalization**', and the object produced can be called the 'internationalized' version. The general model now looks like this:

| START | ⟶ | INTERNATIONALIZED | ⟶ | TARGET |

That is, internationalization has prepared the product before the moment of translation. This makes the actual translation processes easier and faster. Most importantly, localization can work directly from the internationalized version, without necessary reference to any previous text in the original culture. This brings greater efficiency, with many localizations happening at the same time, producing many different target versions in parallel.

INTERNATIONALIZED	⟶	TARGET
	⟶	TARGET
	⟶	TARGET
	⟶	TARGET
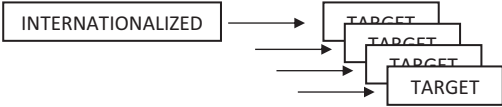
This simultaneous production of target versions has its logic. Economic globalization means that major products are released at the same time in many locales across the globe, making use of similar marketing formats and publicity campaigns. The age of '**simultaneous shipment**' requires rapid localization, not just of the products but also of the marketing material. It tends to work from internationalized versions, without returning to anything like a 'source'. Can anyone remember seeing Microsoft Word 1.1?

As a general concept, internationalization can take several forms. At one extreme, it can involve putting **more information** into the product, since that is what the progress of microchip technology has allowed. The localizer then only needs to use the part of the information that is needed. Perhaps the most successful model of internationalization of this kind is the development of **character encoding**. Back in the days when software existed in English and little more, the 7-bit ASCII encoding was enough: it allowed for 128 different characters. However, when IBM started to distribute internationally, it found that an 8-bit set was needed to cover all the accents and symbols of Romance languages: this allowed for 256 different characters. Nowadays, Unicode encoding allows over 149,000. All characters are now encoded in the more complex way, including those that had simple encoding in the previous systems. The code carrying the information thus expands enormously,

allowing the scripts of potentially all locales to be represented. This would be the technological logic of internationalization: **expand the product**, so that all localization possibilities are allowed for.

At the other extreme, internationalization may make the language **simpler**, reducing surface-level variation through the use of **controlled authoring**. When a document has a limited number of syntactic structures and a completely standardized multilingual terminology, as in the case of 'Caterpillar English' for heavy machinery, the localization process can happen almost automatically, basically through the use of machine translation plus light post-editing (correction) (Lockwood 2000).

Both these kinds of internationalization depend on language automation. One is hidden from the user and has no real consequence for translation; the other is a form of automated translation in itself, shifting human input to the authoring and checking side. It is important to note that both these kinds were being developed in the 1990s, when machine translation was not really on the horizon. Later I will come back to various modes of internationalization between these two extremes.

Thanks to internationalization, the fundamental novelty of localization is not just that products need to be adapted to new users in different cultures, as a process that occurs after the product has been developed. The inclusion of *internationalization* means that those adaptations have to be **thought about from the very beginning** and planned for at every stage of product development. Translation is usually considered to be something that comes later, after the text has been produced. Localization, on the other hand, calls for a complete rethinking of the way products and texts are produced.

This general restructuring of processes is sometimes called '**globalization**', since it is designed to address a global market. A company might decide to 'go global' (cf. Sprung 2000) by introducing processes of internationalization and localization. Some care should be taken with this term, however. 'Globalization' more generally refers to powerful economic processes that cross national boundaries. And just to confuse the issue, Microsoft uses the term 'globalization' to refer to what others call 'internationalization' – apparently their power is not quite absolute. Here I will stay with the few terms so far described: within a company that has been **globalized**, products are **internationalized** so they can then be **localized** quickly and simultaneously, and yes, part of that localization process is still called **translation**.

A localization project can involve numerous tasks, from the moment the material is received through to the 'post-mortem' discussion with the client. Those are the things that project managers have to consider. Translation is usually presented as just one of those steps, so the industry discourse logically sees **translation as a small part of localization**. Seen in terms of the lists of tasks, that is entirely correct. In software localization, translation is the replacement of user-visible natural-language strings (that is, the bits of non-code that users of the product will have to interact with).

Tasks in the localization of software

The following steps can be taken when localizing software:

- Analysis of received material
- Scheduling and budgeting
- Glossary translation or terminology setup
- Preparation of localization kit (materials sent to the translators)
- Translation of software
- Translation of Help files and documentation
- Processing updates
- Testing of software
- Testing of Help files and publishing of documentation
- Product QA and delivery
- Post-mortem with client

The real costs (and the real profits) are in the tasks that are wider than simple translation: product internationalization, the identification and extraction of translatables, structuring hierarchies of target languages in terms of market priorities, organizing complex language-service teams, drawing up schedules, testing localized products, post-editing translations, creating cooperative working relations between specialized service companies, using or developing appropriate software for localization, working with controlled authoring, and relations with clients all along the way. In short, no matter how reduced or extensive the localization workflow you choose, translation is going to look like a minor part. The breakdowns of budgets often rate it at about a third of the total costs, at best, with the remaining two-thirds split between 'product re-engineering' and 'project management'.

This operative reduction of translation lies behind a new sense of 'artificial' equivalence. It also effectively separates translation from the wider fields of action sought by theories of purpose, even when the fundamental concept of localization would be in agreement with those approaches. Needless to say, it has no place for uncertainty and little time for descriptions of different kinds of translation solutions. Localization brings translation back to basics.

7.4 Standardization and adaptation in localization projects

Internationalization takes much of the cultural specificity out of the product, and yet the term 'localization' suggests that the product and the language are being adapted to the target locale, potentially bringing in massive cultural specificity on the receiving side. So which of these two approaches prevails?

Although a good part of the industry discourse insists on the 'adaptation' part, the benefits of automation mean that what happens in internationalization can carry over into the final results. This means that **standardization** is a strong option in many parts of the industry. Here the terms tend to come from the language of marketing: when launching a campaign to sell a product in many languages, should one standardize or adapt?

Standardization means that the multilingual contents are strongly codified, centralized, and then reproduced at the same time in all target languages and across all media. This is where internationalization is not just the first step in the workflow: it informs all steps. The advantages are firstly **economic**: the more you use automation in this way, the less you have to pay people who know about the target cultures. When computer software reduces cultures to a few simple pre-set parameters, they are using a high degree of standardization of this kind. Another advantage is a high degree of **control**: the company's central office can track and correct what is going on. And in a marketing campaign, a further advantage is that all the multilingual material can be **prepared and released at the same time**, creating synergies in publicity and feedback. For some companies, the most important advantage is nevertheless **branding**: the company keeps the same image and discourse across all languages and all media. The software company Apple is a prime example, perhaps because it was created by a control freak.

Adaptation, on the other hand, limits the use of automation and tries to bring the product and language as close to the end user as possible. This will inevitably include modes of translation in which equivalence is certainly *not* the order of the day. **Addition and omission** are legitimized to an extent not envisaged in classical theories of equivalence, and when significant new content is created some might prefer to call it 'transcreation'. Further, cultural adaptation may require degrees of transformation that go well beyond the classical limits of translation but can easily be justified within theories of purpose. Far more can happen within localization than was contemplated by the standard theories of equivalence. A prime example of adaptation would be the multilingual websites of Coca-Cola, which change text and image in each target locale – despite apparently having the same basic product and a limited set of company logos. The catch, of course, is that the adapting tends not to be done by people employed wholly as translators. This is where translation blends into marketing.

The choice between standardization and adaptation, along with the hybrid positions in between, tends to be for company policy. There are no rules that might concern translation theory as such. **Reinhard Schäler** (2006) nevertheless notes that the localization industry is marked by a strong directionality, moving from the central languages toward the more peripheral languages. So strong is this directionality that Schäler calls movements in the other direction '**reverse localization**'. For example, we might find translations *into* English for (1) specialist sectors that require information on other cultures, including feedback on consumption patterns, and

(2) easy exchange into third cultures, in a situation where the central language becomes a kind of '**clearing house**' (a Romanian bank will announce investment opportunities in English; French philosophy is sold in English in eastern Europe; for that matter, Newton wrote in Latin, still the clearing-house language for scientific production in his day). Only the second of these reasons bears a close relation to localization, where it functions as yet another kind of internationalization. Note, however, that these examples of 'reverse localization' do not have the initial one-to-many configuration that would seem important for the use of automation. On the contrary, such examples suggest a preliminary pattern of 'many to one' before the stronger sense of localization can begin.

It is interesting to see how often cases of reverse translation (the websites of Romanian banks, for example) use standardization and very little adaptation, while most adaptation goes the other way. I am aware of no research on why this should be so.

7.5 Is localization new?

If it were only a process of cultural adaptation, localization would not add anything new to existing translation theory. On the other hand, once we see **internationalization** as a key part of localization processes, we find something passably new, with much of it based on the possibilities opened up by automation. Now, is internationalization, or anything like it, found in any other kind of translation theory? One could perhaps argue that the notion of taking out or reducing culture-specific elements can be described by theories of natural equivalence, where a neutral *tertium comparationis* or underlying kernel was once sought as a guarantee that the same thing was being said (see 2.3 above). However, you would have to scour many hundreds of pages to find whole process that is conceptualized from the outset as being **one-to-many**. That, I suggest, is a new element of theory.

That is not to say that one-to-many work cannot be found in the practice of translation. For example, in thirteenth-century Castile a text called *La Escala de Mahoma* (The Miʿrāj or Ascension of Muhammed) was rendered from Arabic into Castilian, and then from Castilian into Latin and French, from where elements reportedly made their way into Dante's *Inferno*. This means that the Castilian translation could be considered an 'internationalized' version, at least to the extent that a good many Islamic references were removed. But that was a one-off historical occurrence. More systematically, the use of **relay interpreting** repeats something like the two-step model. In international conferences, for example, speeches in Chinese or Arabic may be rendered into English, and then interpreted into other languages from that intermediary version. That system, though, does not require any particular changes to the way the texts are produced from the outset, and it need not pay special attention to cultural adaptation. Something closer to internationalization-plus-localization occurs in **audiovisual translation**.

A blockbuster film will usually *not* be translated (for dubbing or subtitling) from the original screen version or from the original script. The translations are increasingly done from a script especially prepared for translators across the globe, which incorporates glosses on culture-specific items, necessary cross-references within the film text, and indeed any other kind of information that can avoid translation mistakes before they happen. Those prepared scripts might count as internationalized versions.

Similarly, many Bible translation projects are nowadays carried out by referring not only to the Hebrew and Greek texts, but to the Paratext software that brings together those texts, other translations into many languages, explanatory glosses, and sophisticated concordancing (basically cross-references to all occurrences of a term in the Biblical texts). That might be an instance of internationalization (expanding the text) plus localization. To be sure, that system does not use theoretical concepts like 'internationalization' and 'localization', and there are clear theological reasons for not accepting that the 'source text' has somehow disappeared. Nevertheless, these current practices provide interesting comparisons with software localization.

The models can be taken further still. Consider the way **international news** is put together and translated. An event occurs, producing initial reports; those texts are then gathered and put into the format of an international news service like Reuters; those 'internationalized' versions are then localized by media outlets, some with interlingual translation, others without interlingual translation, all with adaptation. The terminology of localization can describe the overall process. Similarly, **multilingual websites** have to be developed in such a way that the various language-specific localizations are thought of from the outset, in the initial design and engineering. The localizations then necessarily work from an internationalized version – no one can remember what the original website looked like. And even within literary translation, the notion of internationalization is not completely lost. Popular romance novels, for instance, may be produced for many different cultures by the one multinational company, with different rules that have to be observed for each locale. The Canadian-based publisher Harlequin, for example, can put out the same novel in some 24 languages and about 100 locales, in each case not just translating but also editing the text to suit local expectations about length, morality, and narrative conventions (cf. Hemmungs Wirtén 1998, who proposes the term '**transediting**' for what might also be called localization).

There is a whole range of translation practices that operate in ways like internationalization. Not all localization practices are new; only the recent ones incorporate automation in any major way. Hopefully, the use of localization theory to describe those processes is not only new but also useful.

7.6 Automation and the imposition of the paradigmatic

I now want to consider the effects that automation can have on the translation process, both within localization and more generally. To do this, I will

distinguish between the 'syntagmatic' and the 'paradigmatic' axes of language. The distinction dates from Saussure (1916/1974). The syntagmatic simply refers to the flow of language as it is spoken or written, where one word follows another in accordance with the rules of syntax. The paradigmatic, on the other hand, is the axis where words are selected from: in English, if I say 'the', the next word must be a noun or an adjective, and so I have to select from all the nouns and adjectives that are possible in that sentence (as noted in 5.4 above). If the syntagmatic is pictured as being horizontal, the paradigmatic is vertical.

It is possible that, in general, **the technologies of automation impose the paradigmatic on the syntagmatic**, interrupting the flow of language. Let us see how this works in a few simple cases.

7.6.1 Automatic text generation

Perhaps the clearest imposition of the paradigmatic is in XML (eXtensible Markup Language), which is a standard coding used to exchange content. Information is tagged so that it can be retrieved later:

> <item>
> <title>Pride and Prejudice</title> was written by <author>Jane Austen </author> in <year>1813</year>.
> </item>

Here you can see tags like 'item' and 'year' placed between left- and right-angle brackets These tags enable us to extract just the information on authors, for instance, for a textbook on literature. We might also retrieve information on dates, perhaps for use in a chronology of publications between 1800 and 1850. XML is a way of authoring texts so that their elements become available for automatic re-use in later texts.

The tagging can also be used the other way, to generate texts automatically from a database. For example, the various genealogy websites use all the dates, places, and events put into them to automatically write up the life story of each person. Nobody authors those stories in a linear way, sentence by sentence; the stories are the results of rules and databases. They have been automated. Similarly, there are online websites for writing contracts: put all the relevant details into paradigmatic boxes and the app produces the contract as a flowing text, much to the annoyance of many legal translators. The same technologies are used when databases of details on your publications and employment can be used to automatically generate your curriculum vitae in various formats. And then, weather reports can be generated automatically from the constantly updated information on observations. GPT technologies generalise this practice and add deep learning. In all these cases, text production proceeds from the paradigmatic (the database) rather than the syntagmatic (the flow of text).

How does this affect translation? In all these cases, the language itself is highly standardized, so a translator is only needed to render the sentences once, then those translations are repeated in all future texts. That is, one translation for all the lives in the genealogy database; one translation for all the contracts of a certain kind in a certain language; one translation for all the curricula vitae of the entire staff of a university. The translators who once made a living out of contracts are definitely not happy – their model of translation has been surpassed. Their work now should be to check, correct, and authorize the results of automation.

There are considerable advantages to automatic text production. To continue with the example of contracts, in the past it was considered too laborious to change the order of the clauses in a contract to suit target-culture norms; now it is easy to do so. And when I print out my curriculum from a database, I can select not only the language but also the length and format, to suit the various levels of officialdom that seem to need the document. Not only that, but the same database that feeds the curriculum also selects some of the information for the university website, just as it receives information from the databases of publishers, who have received information from social media (for mentions) and from all the journals we publish in (for citations). You cannot say, 'Stop the data feed, I want to translate!' All of that happens so automatically that there is no time for a human to intervene, let alone a human translator.

In sum, automatic text generation might spell disaster for some kinds of professional translating. But it is great for traditional theories of equivalence, which see that all the doubts raised about different purposes and indeterminacy are now resolved by standardized language.

7.6.2 Translation memories

The idea of a translation memory is simple. As you translate, you record each sentence of your translation in a database where it is stored alongside its corresponding start-language sentence. The next time you have to translate the same sentence, or a sentence similar to it, the software brings up your previous translation so that you can re-use it or modify it. Commercial translation memories date from the early 1990s, which means that they evolved at more or less the same time as the localization industry. These days, they come with numerous added tools for quality control, revision processes, and project management, but the basic idea is still very simple.

The guiding assumption behind translation memories is that a sentence produced in one place and time may can the same value in another place and time. That is why it makes sense to look at your previous translations. And that assumption, that pieces of language can be re-used in different situations, is the foundation of a very essentialist notion of equivalence. Of course, the assumption need not be wrong. When I keep a separate translation memory
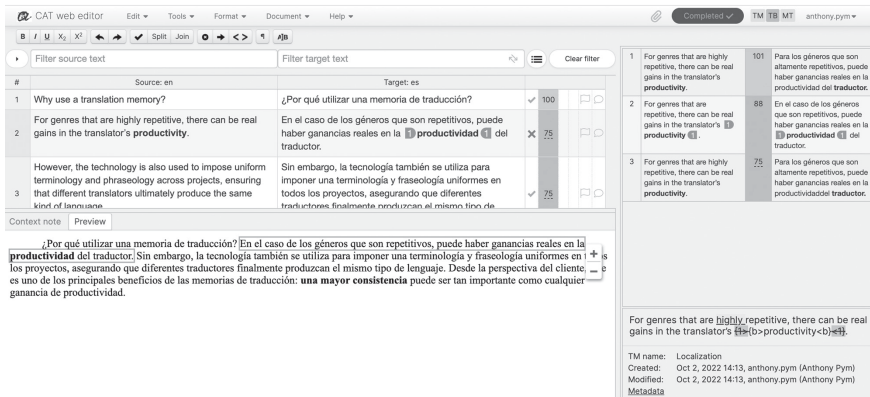
Figure 7.1 Interface of the translation memory suite Phrase.

database for each of my clients, I know that each client tends to produce texts in the one kind of situation or context. When the context is more or less the same, the previous translation can be more or less valid. And then, when the match is not exact or the situation has changed, you can adjust the translation. The kind of equivalence assumed in the creation of the technology is not new and not absolute as an assumption. What is new, at least with respect to previous theories, is that in this case, the technology makes the translator look at paradigmatic relations, thereby obscuring the flow of language and the corresponding critical awareness of context.

   Figure 7.1 shows a screenshot of the translation memory suite Phrase. You can see the start text has been divided into vertical boxes on the left; the translation is in corresponding vertical boxes in the middle; then data from a machine-translation feed and/or a translation memory is given on the right, again in vertical boxes. The translator's attention is drawn to paradigmatic relations, not to syntagmatic flow. Welcome to work with automation! True, software developers these days are aware of the cognitive risks of this way of working, so it is not too difficult to generate a view of the text as it is being translated, as can be seen in the translation at the bottom centre-left. But the design of the technology still imposes the paradigmatic.

   Why use a translation memory? For text genres that are highly repetitive (and the material of localization projects tends to be), there can be real gains in the translator's **productivity**. However, the technology is also used to impose uniform terminology and phraseology across projects, ensuring that different translators ultimately produce the same kind of language. From the client's perspective, and for many of the project managers coordinating the work of translation teams, this is one of the major benefits of translation memories: **increased consistency** can be just as important as any gain in productivity.

This means of control is further extended when the translation-memory suites are integrated with **terminology tools**. The translator receives not only the start text and the translation memory but also the terminology to be followed when translating.

When a text like a website or product documentation is being updated, the translation memory automatically isolates the parts that have been changed or are new. In this case, the non-linearity of the translator's workflow becomes extreme, as does their efficiency. I will consider this a little more closely.

7.6.3 Content management systems

Years ago, a team of translators might have been employed to render a whole software program or company website into a particular language. To understand that process, consider all the user-visible parts of the program or website as a text, then you assume that translators must translate the whole of that text, with each translator more or less aware of the overall product. In fact, ideally, everyone would be completely aware of the translation project. Nowadays, software and websites are rarely developed in this way. What you find tends to be a constant flow of **modifications and updates**, as one version gradually evolves into another. Even when we have a new version of the software or a new format for the website, much of the previous material is re-used, often in slightly modified or updated forms. Just as new translations of the Bible incorporate adjustments to suit language changes, so new localizations of software and websites make use of the material produced in previous localizations, using the various possibilities offered by translation memories. This means that, in these cases, translators no longer work on whole texts, not even on whole internationalized versions, but only on the **new additions and modifications**.

The result is a radical change in the way translators are made to think. What they receive is not a text in any sense of a coherent whole. It is quite frequently a list of isolated sentences and phrases, or sometimes new paragraphs, one on top of the other, once again as a set of vertically arranged items. As mentioned, the translator must render those items in accordance with a fixed glossary, which is another paradigmatic document, with items one on top of the other.

What is automation doing in these cases? Imagine a company that has countless documents on all its products and operations. The company markets its products in perhaps seven different languages, contacting its customers through a multilingual website, user manuals, and publicity material. When an updated version of a product is being prepared, the company is obviously not going to rewrite and translate the entirety of all its previous documents. It will produce and isolate the additions and modifications, then coordinate them so that the output is appropriate to all the media in which it is going to communicate. The real problem is not so much to get the translations done but to keep track of all the pieces.

To do that with any degree of efficiency, the company has its information ('content') broken down into units, usually of one or several paragraphs ('chunks'), in such a way that these units can be updated individually and combined in new ways to suit new purposes. **Content-management systems** allow this process to be controlled with some efficiency in one language; **globalization management systems** allow content to be coordinated in many language versions. A change introduced in an English-language segment might automatically signal that changes are needed in the corresponding segments in the other language versions.

The management system enables a project manager to prepare for each translator a set of texts to be translated and the glossary entries and translation-memory matches that are to be respected. The translator no longer has access to any global vision of the project. They have no possibility of carrying out the extra-translational tasks envisaged by *Skopos* theory since they have very few clues about what the communicative purpose is. In effect, all questions of strategic planning have moved to the project manager or perhaps to a marketing expert, while the global project as a set of texts is now held by the technology, in the management system, which offers the possibility of coordinated control. Perhaps the most developed example of this outside of large companies is China's 'international communication system', which manages foreign-affairs messaging for as many as nine languages. Translators are asked to respect standardized translations not just of key foreign-affairs phrases, but sometimes also of long, convoluted sentences, particularly those concerning state ideology. This means that those phrases and sentences are in effect *pre-translated* for the individual translators, who only have to insert them into the text. It also means that translators struggle to adapt the message to any particular target locale (Hu 2020).

Is this like internationalization? In terms of workflow, yes. The management systems convert all content into one large multilingual database, which plays the role of an internationalized version, ready to have its new and modified elements localized into many target languages. There are still texts to translate, but they are no longer 'source texts', as the terminology of equivalence would have it. That is the main reason why I have been talking about 'start' texts here: there are many sources that the translator works from. On the other hand, no, in most of these workflows there are still start-language texts to be translated, so the model of internationalization is only partly in evidence.

7.6.4 Non-linear authoring and reception

I want to suggest that automation has had a major impact not just on translation, but on entire text-based communication practices. Translation is just a part of what is going on.

When new texts are pieced together from chunks held in a database, the authoring process is no longer linear: the text producer does not start from a

beginning, move to a middle, and finish at an end, as Aristotle assumed in his *Poetics*. Texts become **reorganizations of re-usable content**. Similarly, many of the texts are not *used* in a linear way, starting at the beginning and moving toward the end. Think of how you use a software Help file, an operation manual for an appliance, a website, or even a long and detailed contract like the interminable 'user agreements' we are asked to sign for software. The use of these texts (no longer a 'reading' of the texts) also tends to be *non-linear*, based on indices, hyperlinks, or a Find function. This is not wholly new in itself. The paradigmatic links are basically like the concordances developed long ago for the study of Biblical texts. What seems new is the extent to which this is done.

When texts are regularly *produced* in a non-linear way and *used* in a non-linear way, it comes as no surprise that they are *translated* in a non-linear way.

Is this a bad thing? Sometimes. To take a fairly banal example, the translator might have to render the simple English term 'Start', which could be a noun or a verb, depending on the context. What happens when you can see no context? Do you translate the noun or the verb? This is where the relationship between localization and translation becomes problematic. Note, however, that the problem is *not* in the workflow of internationalization-plus-localization (ideal internationalization would have the term tagged with a grammatical function). It ensues from the complexity of the work process itself, more specifically from the nature of the technologies that attempt to handle that complexity.

The change is far-reaching: it touches the fundamentals of translation theory. Once upon a time, in the days of comparative linguistics and natural equivalence, translators were seen as working on terms, phrases, and sentences (see the examples in Vinay and Darbelnet, in 3.5 above). With the development of text linguistics and functionalist approaches, translators were increasingly seen as working on *texts*. With the contribution of the purpose-based approach, the translator was viewed as working on a *project* (text plus instructions, and perhaps plus information on a few cultural and professional contexts). This vision holds true in the field of localization, of course, since the projects are handled by specialized project managers. Now, in cases where the work involves an on-going series of updates and modifications, the translator might be engaged in a **long-term localization 'program'**, rather like the maintenance programs that we are supposed to use to have our cars serviced regularly. When that does happen, an ideal would be to have the same language workers deal with the same products or the same clients regularly, so they do indeed build up a general vision of where their work is going and what it is supposed to do. When that does *not* happen, translators often receive a set of one-off updates, without context or purpose. Their frame of work has moved from text or project right back to where we started from: translators work on terms, phrases, and sentences, as in the bad old days of comparative linguistics and close equivalence.

In some respects, this means that translators are going 'back to basics'. The more worrying news is perhaps that automation is doing a lot of the basics for us.

7.7 Neural machine translation

One advance in language automation with social impact has undoubtedly been the free online availability of neural machine translation since 2016. In many language pairs, this advance means that machine translation output is now considered good enough for many everyday purposes. It has been calculated that the number of words translated by professional translators is much less than 1 per cent of the words processed by online machine translation (Pym and Torres-Simón 2021). What consequences might that have for translation theory?

In technical terms, the difference between neural machine translation and the older approaches is **due to mathematics, not linguistics,** and involves more concepts than can be happily explained here. The systems apply co-textual recursive filters when selecting between candidate translations: the output is based on calculated probabilities not only that the selected translation fits the corresponding start-text item, but that it does so in conjunction with the probabilities for the text items on either side of that item, which in turn have their probabilities calculated by the items next to them, and so on, coupled with various modes of deep learning and domain adaptation (of which I do not pretend to grasp the details). The result is increased accuracy and fluency since the selection is based on constantly updated calculations of what is most probable. The result can also use omission in order to enhance fluency, sometimes of really important small words like 'no', and can very occasionally go completely off the rails and produce what are called 'hallucinations' (Raunak et al. 2021). That is, there are still grounds for a measure of uncertainty and prudent distrust.

An increasingly common way of translating is to take machine translation output and correct it, doing what is called **'post-editing'**. This requires skills not only pertaining to the target-language discourse but also regarding awareness of the most frequent limitations of machine translation and their probable causes. For example, cohesion devices and gendered pronouns are problematic, so you learn to check them. As a rule of thumb, you also double-check long sentences, since the more complicated the syntax, the more things can go wrong. Interestingly, the greater fluency of neural machine translation can make its errors harder to spot than was the case with previous avatars of machine translation, and this can actually increase the difficulty of post-editing (Yamada 2019). As such, post-editing is not like traditional revising, and it is certainly not the same as translating from scratch, but it is still something translators can do. It is intriguing to consider that, when post-editing is done *without* referring to the start text, then the post-editor's mindset is likely to draw on ideas from

the purpose-based approach. On the other hand, when the start text is involved in the comparisons, then the process is more likely to be governed by criteria of equivalence.

An alternative way to work with machine translation involves '**controlled authoring**' and/or '**pre-editing**', both of which prepare the start text in such a way that many machine-translation errors are avoided before they can occur (if you see what I mean). Controlled authoring is when the start text is written from the outset with a view to fixed rules and usually for easy readability (Miyata 2021). It can respond to far more than automation. On the other hand, pre-editing is when a previously written text is changed specifically to prepare it for machine translation. For example, gendered pronouns can be removed and long sentences can be chopped into syntactically simpler units. This can be done within the online machine translation systems themselves, so you can immediately see whether the machine-translation problems are solved. Pre-editing is somewhat akin to internationalization, at least in the sense that it prepares the text for automated language processing. It is not translating, but it is once again a task that translators can do.

7.8 Do we need to re-define translation?

I have been pointing to tasks that are not strictly translation but can be done by translators. This is a direct social consequence of automation: if part of your job is done by machines, then you learn to make the machine help you with the rest (post-editing) or you do something the machine is *not* good at (text authoring or adaptation, transcreation, project management, client relations, and so on), or you find work looking after the machine. Or you do all of those things at the same time – by using automation in creative ways, for example. This means that automation is not necessarily killing the translation profession. A little economic theory explains a certain logic behind this: automation increases productivity, which increases the demand for products, which can increase the demand for the non-routine tasks involved in producing those products (Bessen 2016: 2; Nedelkoska and Quintini 2018: 34–35). This is one reason why the translation industry has *grown* with automation, in addition to the constant growth it enjoys on the back of globalization (that is, thanks to the movements of products and people). The upshot is that automation is not reducing the number of translators; the signs so far are that it is *increasing* the number but changing what they do (Pym and Torres-Simón 2021).

This provides a new context in which to pick up old debates about the nature of translation. Do we want to talk about everything translators can be employed to do (as in *Skopos* theory) or are we sticking to work on texts sentence by sentence (as in equivalence theories)? And is the product of machine translation to be counted as a translation? Several considerations seem in order:

- First, from the perspective of localization projects, 'translation' is the rendering of user-visible language in another language. It makes no matter

who or what does it – machine-translation output is definitely translation. In a localization budget, the translation costs are classically no more than a third. That percentage is no doubt declining (machine translation is cheap), but translation is still there.

- From the perspective of *Skopos* theory, in which the translator is seen as adapting a message to suit the target purpose, all localization could be seen as translation, which then becomes a very wide set of communicative activities. This, however, stems from a misunderstanding of how localization projects work: it overlooks the huge role played by automation and particularly internationalization. That is, it misreads 'localization' as 'adaptation'.

- With respect to the validity of giving machine-translation output the same status as human translations, one should consider that almost all the translations in the databases were done by humans at some stage, and the algorithms are also human creations. It could be that the machine does not translate: it locates and combines the most probably suitable human translations that are in the database. The system is not unlike online dating services, I am told, which also fail to give the right match every time.

Given these points, one must conclude that translation, for the concepts informed by automation, is more or less what it was for theories of equivalence. Traditionalists will still complain about the errors of machine translation, but they complain about them as *translation* errors, not anything else – machine translation is translation.

As noted, the logic of automation is itself pushing translators to do other things with their languages, moving into non-routine tasks that require complex cognitive skills. On the one hand, we see the increasing importance of revision and review tasks, which run from post-editing to the authorization of the translation as being valid (the trusted translator should act as a notary in this regard and be paid for their trustworthiness). On the other, there are many non-routine tasks in managing automation, giving advice on communication, and doing the many creative language tasks that have not been automated. There are reportedly some 600 **job titles** for the various employees of language service providers (Bond 2018). Here, for instance, are a few of the names for people who work on clients' problems: *solutions architect, director of client solutions, solutions consulting and director of technology solutions, cloud solutions architect*, or *solutions manager for machine intelligence*. Six hundred job titles like that! Note that most of those jobs are not called 'translation' because they are not considered to be translation, but they do involve non-routine language skills and people trained as translators can do them. Somewhat more generously, translation tasks are being combined with other fields of communication to come up with new hybrid terms for cross-over occupations: journalation, transediting, transcreation, transadaption, and so on. Those are all movements into non-routine

tasks. And if you do not want to head down any of those roads, translation is still translation.

Another question is whether we *should* go along with a discourse that is generally upbeat about automation to the exclusion of all else. If translation is a minority part of localization processes, that does not mean it has suddenly stopped happening outside of those processes. Just consider the number of people that translate informally in speech or writing every day, within bilingual families, multilingual communities, in social services, the courts, business meetings, news services, as well as in literary translation, the larger conferences, and multilingual dreams. Those multiple forms of translation have not suddenly disappeared thanks to automation. What machine translation has done is make them even more general, even more part of the way our whole societies use languages.

7.9 Some virtues of automation studies

The good and bad of the ideas presented here are hard to separate from the good and bad of automation itself. On one level, as Mumford (1934/2010: 6) noted, technology 'exists as an element in human culture and it promises well or ill as the social groups that exploit it promise well or ill'. Some uses of it might be for the better. Here is a shortlist:

- Automation is with us, whether we like it or not. To decide what to do with it, or whether to do without it, *we have to know what it is*. These discourses help us with that.
- Automation enables the language industry to handle *the huge numbers of words* that are being translated each day, both with assistance from humans and without. The massive expansion in translation activity means that the language industry is growing, in good times and in bad. Automation and localization theory help explain why.
- Informed uses of automation can improve translation services across the board in terms of both *speed and quality*.
- Awareness of automation and the ability to control it is *empowering* for individual translators, who otherwise see the benefits of automation growing the profits of large language service providers.
- Awareness of automation can help calm nerves and challenge claims that machines spell the end of human translation. Economics and localization theory point to where non-routine human work is still very much needed.
- An informed awareness of automation can help with career planning. In fact, it should be a key part of any career planning.

7.10 Frequently had arguments

Although these dilemmas concern nothing less than the fundamental concept of translation, there has been remarkably little debate about localization

among translation theorists. This is partly because of the nature of industry discourse, which is the stuff of guru experts, new terms for new trends, hype about technological advances, and quick industry surveys that rarely hide self-interest.

Perhaps for the same reasons, academics have shown remarkably little inclination to take the language industry seriously, at least not in any sense that could threaten fundamental beliefs about translation. Rather more has been said about the consequences of translation technologies. Researchers generally agree that increased productivity is only part of the effects of automation, and that consistency and control are major factors as well. But there are more interesting things to argue about. Here are a few debates worth having.

7.10.1 *Automation kills good jobs*

Any experienced translator will proclaim, correctly, that they translate better than machine translation. And then they claim that automation is threatening their employment. A little theory can say why such conclusions are overstated. First, if you have a niche market for high-quality hand-made products, there is no reason why automation should touch that market. You have presumably won the trust of clients, and machine translation is still notoriously untrustworthy. Second, the debate should not be between complete automation and zero automation, but the many kinds of translating where the machine helps the human (glossaries, translation memories) or the human helps the machine (post-editing, pre-editing). And third, automation kills boring jobs and can create interesting non-routine jobs.

7.10.2 *Automation disempowers the translator*

This criticism brings together various aspects: the restricted sense of translation as segment-replacement, the tendency to ensure that (web-based) translation memories cannot be owned by the translators who produce them, the distribution of costs and financial rewards away from translators and indeed away from translation, and the extreme time constraints typically placed on group translation work. Some within industry claim that these are advantages: translators are now able to focus on what they hopefully do well (translation), without having to worry about all the technical aspects of product engineering and formatting, and without having to concern themselves with tasks better handled by marketing and engineering experts. On the other hand, voices within the industry also claim that translators have the intimate cultural knowledge that might ensure the trustworthiness and hence success of products in new markets – they should thus be listened to at more than sentence level. It is clearly not enough to talk about 'empowerment' or its opposite without clearly specifying the particular power involved.

Whatever the case, theorization of automation can create knowledge, and knowledge is always more empowering than is ignorance or fear.

7.10.3 Utterances cannot be recycled

Pragmatics tells us that an utterance is only meaningful in relation to its context of production (recall Gutt on open doors in 2.4 above). If this is true, then it makes no sense to take the translations done in one context and use them in another. But this is precisely what machine translation and translation memories do. Is that the reason why the results can be flawed? But then, translation memories are usually kept for *just one field or client*, where there is a relatively stable context, while neural machine translation effectively creates a probable context based on the co-occurrence of words and phrases, plus the use of 'fine-tuning' technologies (sometimes called 'domain adaptation') that are enhancing that capacity. Beyond that, all words are sound patterns that can be used on more than one occurrence, by definition. Recycling is what language has always done.

7.10.4 Localization is a part of translation

The localization industry generally sees translation as part of localization; purpose-based theorists tend to see the relation the other way around – for them, localization is just a special kind of translation. How can this problem be solved once and for all? It could be enough to have different speakers explain exactly what they mean when they use the term 'translation', as Locke would have us do (see 6.4 above).

7.10.5 There is nothing new in localization

This is the main attack launched by those who see localization as a part of translation. I have argued that the effectively new elements in localization are those that most benefit from automation: text re-use and internationalization (in its many forms and with its many technologies), with the consequent processes of one-to-many translation. Others argue, with considerable reason, that text re-use and some of the technologies are not specific to the translation industry. The imposition of the paradigmatic on the syntagmatic nevertheless changes the way translation works across the board. There is something new happening, and it may be having effects on language quality.

7.10.6 Automation reduces the quality of texts and communication

There are many kinds of complaints here. Many people in industry express concerns about the linguistic qualities of translations due to the use of team translating, translation memories, and post-editing. Others are more worried about the accumulation of errors in translation memories, errors that

translators have little financial motivation to correct. Still others focus on the relative invisibility of graphic text and the communication situation while the translator is working, assuming that this will lead to decontextualized communication. Some studies find that post-editing leads to translations that are generally more literal than fully human translations. But there are also reception studies that find no significant difference between the two, even in the case of literary texts (Guerberof-Arenas and Toral 2020). In sum, much depends on who is defining and judging 'quality'.

7.10.7 *Automation creates universal sameness*

This argument is based on disparate observations like the following. Most language pairs in Google Translate are processed through English as a mediating language (although not between Spanish and Catalan, for example). When using a keyboard, Chinese characters are typed by first writing the sound in Latin script and then selecting the character from a pop-up menu. Internationalization by definition attempts to remove culture-specific items. A standardization strategy actively imposes invariance on cultural differences. And so on. When you put those kinds of observations together, it is easy to claim that automation is moving us towards a world of drab, grey sameness – slop for cats, as Vinay and Darbelnet warned with respect to international English.

On the other hand, one could also point to the many less-spoken languages that are gaining electronic resources, thus enhancing their survival and development. The **entry of a language into electronic communication**, with standardized scripts and Unicode identity, with techniques for generating databases from limited resources, may well do more to enhance their longevity than will several hundred studies by well-intentioned cultural theorists. The very existence and relative prosperity of the localization industry could favour linguistic and cultural diversity, quite independently of the strategies adopted within individual projects.

At the same time, however, the major act of cultural change is no doubt the introduction of electronic communication itself, the consequences of which can be far-reaching and are quite possibly common to all the cultures concerned. A tendency towards non-linearity, for example, would seem to be written into the technologies and is a communication effect far more powerful than all the evils attributed to the use of English as a lingua franca. One might expect it to become a feature of certain genres in all societies that adopt electronic communication.

7.10.8 *More translation means less language learning*

Since automation vastly increases the number of translations being done in our societies, a logical conclusion would be that people have less motivation to learn additional languages, which will in turn lead to even more universal sameness. This argument sometimes concerns the status of

immigrants: if you give them more translations, they will have no reason to learn official host languages. There are several counter-arguments available here.

First, studies with immigrant communities (Pokorn and Čibej 2018; Pym 2021c: 29) indicate that yes, machine translation and machine interpreting are used a great deal by younger generations, but no, this does not reduce the motivation to learn host languages. More generally, beyond the immigrant context, increased knowledge of a foreign culture through translation can provide reasons to want to know it better, sometimes through language learning.

Second, especially in the field of literary translation, the greater the number of translations that are done *from* a language, the more authors can continue to write in the language rather than switch to a major language or lingua franca. On this logic, a high number of translations can enhance the number of languages in which creative works are written.

On most of these issues, the jury is still out.

7.11 Automation, localization, and the future of languages

A few final words might be appropriate on the possible long-term effects of automation. This particularly concerns the way that the benefits of automation are accruing most to the big players in the language industry, which means that the growth is at the top rather than among freelancers and small companies. That is one of the reasons why I have described localization as the 'showcase communication strategy of multinational capitalism' (Pym 2004b: 47). It is also why all translators should know about the effects of automation.

Even more concerning are the possible effects of automation on relations between languages. I will try to explain this step by step.

Globalization is the result of technologies that reduce the costs of transport and communication. This increases the mobility of capital, merchandise, and labour (although not to equal degrees), which requires massive crossings of cultural and linguistic boundaries (on the complexities, see Cronin 2013). Those crossings tend to require language learning (when the relation is long-term, as in the movement of labour) and translation (when they are short-term, as is increasingly the case in the movement of capital and goods). The **long-term relations** will tend toward the use of **lingua francas**, especially in the relations of production. Experts from different professions and different primary cultures will come together to work in a multinational space, where they will speak English, Chinese, French, Spanish, Russian, or whatever is the shared language of convenience. If you speak Ao-Naga and you want to use a computer, you currently learn enough English or Bangla to do so.

Short-term relations, however, are better served by **translation**. No one is going to learn a language just to sell one product over six months or just to

buy a product. The whole commercial logic of translation could be based on the calculation that, in the short term, it is cheaper to use translation than to learn whole languages.

We thus have some languages being learnt as second or third languages over the long term and by people from many different provenances. Those become the languages of globalized production. Then there are other languages that are used in strong and advanced relations of production on the national level, or that form large and/or wealthy locales. Those become languages of both production and consumption: end-users will accept products in their languages. Finally, at the extreme, some languages are virtually only learned by mother-tongue speakers and the occasional translator. Where they are not associated with enough wealth to form a viable market, those languages may effectively be excluded from the processes of consumption: products will not carry words in those languages.

This is the translational logic of what has been called the '**world language system**' (de Swaan 2002). The general picture is of a hierarchy of languages where some are central and used for production, others are semi-central and impose strong constraints on consumption, and still others are virtually excluded from the relations of production, consumption, and translation. We might recognize some of the dynamics and ideologies of the medieval **hierarchy of languages**. The profound asymmetries are by no means new.

Within the new hierarchy, translation tends to move from centralized production to semi-central consumption. This once meant going from English to all the major languages of the world, although there are some similar movements from Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, all major languages of production. Still, the logic of the one-to-many movement remains the same. Economic globalization can thus explain why the one-to-many configuration is so important and why a key role is played by internationalization as a set of automatized technological processes allowing that pattern. That is why the logic and ideologies of localization are pinned to the development of economic globalization. That is why localization is the showcase communication strategy.

More problematic, however, is what happens at the other end of the scale, with languages that are *marginal* with respect to both production and consumption. In software localization, for example, the larger locales receive **full localization** (meaning that all user-visible language is translated and items like hotkeys are adapted); secondary locales will have **partial localization** (perhaps the main menus are translated, but not the hotkeys or the Help files); still smaller locales receive products that are merely '**enabled**' (you can work in the local language with them but the menus and Help files remain untranslated). Then there are languages for which enabling is not yet possible, since the languages do not have standard written forms, or their written forms do not yet have a place in our character-encoding systems, or our technologies do not yet work on the basis of speech alone. Commercial logic means that the users who most need Help files and pop-up

explanations are precisely the ones who do not have those resources in their language.

In this way, localization configures relations between cultures quite differently depending on which part of the language hierarchy you are looking at. Between the central languages, a regime of successful yet artificial equivalence may reign, largely thanks to internationalization. Further down the hierarchy, directionality means that *equivalents* are imposed through calques or straight loans, as was the case with the downward directionality in the medieval hierarchy of languages. Further down still, decisions to localize or not play a role in the drama of language survival, which is one of the major tragedies of our age.

If localization simply followed economic globalization, all cultures might conceivably be caught up in the maelstrom of product internationalization – automation would lead to standardization, which would lead to cultural sameness all over the world. However, as noted, automation is giving electronic resources to smaller languages. Further, the localization industry itself has an active interest in the defence of linguistic and cultural diversity, in maintaining the strength of locales, since that is where it finds and expands its markets. Adaptation is a capitalist strategy. Rather than necessarily spreading a regime of sameness, localization can be used to promote difference.

No matter how fleetingly traditional translation theorists dismiss the consequences of automation, there are sound social and ethical reasons for taking them seriously, and for seeking out the good as well as the bad in the world that automation is creating.

Summary

This chapter has traced the effects of language automation through a series of concepts that are operative in industry discourses, particularly internationalization, localization, and text re-use. It has stressed that internationalization allows the one-to-many translation patterns that the language industry uses, and that without the technologies of automation it would be impossible to meet the needs of globalizing economic relations. Localization projects can then either incorporate high degrees of automation, leading to standardization, or instead rework content, leading to adaptation. Semi-automated text re-use is at the base of translation-memory and content-management systems, which enhance standardization to the detriment of situational specificity. Automation is thereby having far-reaching effects on the way we produce, use, and translate texts, imposing the paradigmatic on the syntagmatic. The actual way translators work is altered considerably: the more you interact with technology, the less easy it is to communicate directly with people. In terms of translation theory, these changes are nevertheless not cataclysmic, since the main concepts assume equivalence and view translation in a narrow sense, as only a part of localization.

Sources and further reading

Since automation brings effects that are typically fast-moving, there are few full-length accounts that come from industry: changes happen faster than books are produced, and many of the more extensive accounts are now seriously outdated. Munday et al. (2022) have only a few pages on 'digital technology'; Venuti's reader (2021) has nothing. Solid surveys of industry trends and research are nevertheless to be found in handbooks such as *The Bloomsbury Companion to Language Industry Studies* (ed. Angelone et al. 2019), *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Technology* (ed. O'Hagan 2020) and, despite the title, *The Human Translator in the 2020s* (ed. Massey et al. 2023). The basics of website localization are covered in Jiménez-Crespo (2013) and controlled authoring is explained in Miyata (2021).

Suggested projects and activities

1. Check your computer programs for the presence of 'locales'. How many can you find for your language? In Word, check for the available dictionaries and thesauri. Should we describe these locales as languages or cultures?

2. Is automation taking jobs away from translators? Look for reports on trends in the employment prospects for translators and in turnovers in the language industry. You might try the United States Labor Department, the Government of Canada Job Bank, China Language Service Industry Development reports, European Language Industry surveys, and similar reports in your country. How is it possible that the use of machine translation can grow while the employment of translators also grows?

3. Since the processing capacity of computers increases exponentially, we are near a point where it equals the processing capacity of the human brain and can potentially replace the human brain. That point is called 'the singularity' (Kurzweil 2005). It has been reached in the fields of chess and the game go, so has it occurred in translation as well? Some say our particular singularity is for the 2030s (van der Meer 2021). Any careful answer to that question must consider whether 'processing capacity' is all that is at stake (cf. Melby and Kurz 2021). Where do the databases come from? How are they kept clean? How many kinds of communication are replicable enough for pure processing capacity to be all that counts?

4. Explain the historical problem in the Catalan dialogue box in Figure 7.2 (you do not have to know Catalan to see it!). Would this error occur in a traditional translation process? How could you solve the problem? For how many languages should you solve it? (Microsoft solved the problem by using basic internationalization.)

Figure 7.2 Catalan calendar from Microsoft XP.

5. Look at the website of a large *international* organization or company (especially vendor sites like Ikea.com or organizations like the World Bank). Compare the different localized versions. What parts of the localization could be called translation? What parts go beyond translation? Are there any examples of partial or incomplete localization? Is the general strategy one of standardization or adaptation (see 7.4 above)? Can you tell which version was the start text for others?

6. Once you have completed Activity 5, select a *national* company or agency that has a multilingual website (most banks do). It will help if the national company is in the same economic sector as the multinational one. What are the differences in communication strategy between the national company and the multinational one? Is there more or less adaptation when translation goes from a smaller language to a larger one ('reverse localization')?

7. Write and define the full versions of the following terms: L10n, i18n, G11n, and GILT. What might the full version of t9n be? Can you find it anywhere? If not, why not?

8. Search for companies in your country that advertise 'localization' services (the local term is probably from English). Do they also offer 'translation'? How do they present the relation between 'localization' and 'translation'? What other services do they offer? Is 'transcreation' mentioned, or anything similar? What particular economic sectors do these companies seem to work for? Are there major differences between the large and small companies?

9. Look at the official website of your local town or city. If it is multi-lingual, have the different language versions been localized? Do they come straight from machine translation? If it is not multilingual, what languages do you think it should be localized in? Would you use raw machine translation? Would you translate *all* the content on the site, or would you select content that is of interest to non-residents? Would you add *new* content in some language versions?

10. Should a multilingual website use standardization or adaptation as its main strategy? Take a look at the language versions of Apple, Ikea, Coca-Cola, the World Bank, and the United States Government, for example. Which approach is more likely to bring about behaviour change? What might be the long-term effect on the world's cultures?

11. During the COVID pandemic in 2019–22, many governments used equivalence-based translation to render official healthcare messaging into numerous languages. When there was significant resistance to vaccination in some communities, in many places the strategy changed: the information was re-narrated in a range of languages by untrained but trusted community members. Can this change be described in terms of standardization and adaptation? What might it mean for the use of translation in behaviour-change communication?

8   Cultural translation

Localization theory came from industry and has adopted elements of equivalence theory, probably as a matter of course. At roughly the same time, a significant number of theories have been heading in precisely the opposite direction, away from equivalence. This chapter looks at several approaches that use the word 'translation' but do not refer to translations as finite texts. Instead, translation is seen as a general communicative activity that occurs between cultural groups. This broad notion of 'cultural translation' has been used to address problems in sociology, postcolonialism, migration, cultural hybridity, and much else. It has also engendered some ideas that could be of interest to translators who want to explore what their activity does in the world.

The **main points** covered in this chapter are:

- 'Cultural translation' can be understood as a process in which there is no start text and often no fixed target text. The focus is on cultural *processes* rather than products.
- The prime cause of cultural translation is the movement of people (subjects) rather than the movement of texts (objects).
- The concepts associated with cultural translation can complement other approaches by drawing attention to the intermediary position of the translator, the cultural hybridity that can characterize that position, the cross-cultural movements that form the places where translators work, and the problematic nature of the cultural borders crossed by all translations.
- There have been several prior calls for wider forms of translation studies and for close attention to the cultural effects of translation.
- Cultural translation can draw on several wide notions of translation, particularly as developed in (1) social anthropology, where the task of the ethnographer is to describe the foreign culture, (2) actor-network

---

theory ('translation sociology'), where the interactions that form networks are seen as translations, and (3) sociologies that study communication between groups in complex, fragmented societies, particularly those shaped by migration.

- The discourses around cultural translation help us think about a globalizing world in which it is no longer possible to assume that the 'source' and 'target' sides are stable and separate.

8.1 A new kind of translation?

For more than 20 years, a journal called *The New Centennial Review* has opened its programmatic statement as follows:

> The journal recognizes that *the language of the Americas is translation*, and that questions of translation, dialogue, and border crossings (linguistic, cultural, national, and the like) are necessary for rethinking the foundations and limits of the Americas. (italics mine)

The use of the word 'translation' here is difficult to understand in terms of the theories we have looked at so far. How can a language be translation? There seems to be no invariance involved, no goal-oriented communicative activity, no texts or even translators to describe, and nothing fixed enough for anyone to be uncertain about it. The meaning could be that colonial and postcolonial processes have displaced and mixed languages and people, and this displacement and mixing are somehow related to translation. But to call all of that 'translation' sounds merely metaphorical. It is 'as if' every word were the result of a translation, and 'as if' all the colonizers and colonized were translators. Something new and different seems to be happening here.

Numerous examples can be found of the word 'translation' being used in this way. The purpose of this chapter is to survey them to see if they might form anything like a coherent approach. I will start from the basics of postcolonial theory, specifically from the influential Indian literary and cultural commentator Homi Bhabha. This will map out at least one sense of 'cultural translation'. I will then step back and consider previous calls to study wider forms of translation, most of them direct extensions of the approaches we have seen in previous chapters. The survey also takes us through uses of the term 'translation' in ethnography (where the expression 'cultural translation' first surfaced), sociology, and a little psychoanalysis. Should the narrow sense of 'translation' really be extended in all these directions? The chapter will close with a brief consideration of the political questions at stake.

8.2 Homi Bhabha and 'non-substantive' translation

The idea of 'cultural translation' was most significantly showcased by **Homi Bhabha** in a chapter called 'How newness enters the world: Postmodern space, postcolonial time and the trials of cultural translation' in his book *The Location of Culture* (1994/2004). In discussing the novel *The Satanic Verses* by the Indian-born British novelist **Salman Rushdie**, Bhabha is concerned with what Rushdie's mixed discourse, representative of those who have migrated from the Indian sub-continent to 'the West', might mean for Western culture. He sets up two possible options: either migrants remain foreign throughout the process or they integrate into the host culture. One or the other. That kind of question is strangely reminiscent of the major binary oppositions in translation theory: should the translation stay close to the start text or should it function as part of the new cultural setting (see 3.1 and 7.4 above)? Bhabha's use of the word 'translation' might even be justified because of those traditional oppositions. However, his basic question more directly concerns the dilemmas faced by migrant families, especially in the second and third generations: which languages do we use in the home? Rather than take sides on such questions, Bhabha sets out to see how they are enacted in Rushdie's novel. You can see Bhabha reading and citing Rushdie, then commenting on other fragments of postcolonial experience, and doing all that with reference to translation, looking for some kind of solution to the basic cultural problems of migration. He does not, however, cite any translation theories apart from Benjamin's essay on translation (see 6.4.2 above) and Derrida's commentary on it.

Now, what does '**cultural translation**' mean here? By the time Bhabha gets to this chapter of *The Location of Culture*, he has talked about 'a sense of the new as an insurgent act of cultural translation' (10), 'the borderline condition of cultural translation' (11), the 'process of cultural translation, showing up the hybridity of any genealogical or systematic filiation' (83), 'cultural translation, hybrid sites of meaning' (234), and so on. In this chapter, a more sustained attempt is made to relate 'cultural translation' to translation theory of some kind. Bhabha is remarkably uninterested in the translators of *The Satanic Verses*, even though they were the ones who first bore the brunt of the *fatwā* or Islamic condemnation of the novel, before the tragic stabbing of Rushdie himself on 12 August 2022: Hitoshi Igarashi, the Japanese translator, was stabbed to death on 11 July 1991; two other translators, Ettore Capriolo (into Italian) and Aziz Nesin (into Turkish) survived attempted assassinations in the same years. No matter: Bhabha is more concerned with the novel itself as a kind of translation. What set off the *fatwā*, he claims, is the way the novel implicitly translates the sacred into the profane: the name 'Mahomed' becomes 'Mahound' and some prostitutes are named after wives of the prophet. Those examples do indeed look like translations; the blasphemy could fairly be described as 'a transgressive act of cultural translation';

there is some substance to the claim that a certain kind of cross-cultural writing can be translational. Then again, what kind of theorization can allow those few words to become representative of whole genres of discourse and the dilemmas facing many millions of migrant families around the world?

What Bhabha takes from translation theory is not any great binary opposition but the notion of **untranslatability**, found in Walter Benjamin's passing claim that 'translations themselves are untranslatable' (Benjamin 1923/1977: 61). Benjamin actually talks about this untranslatability as being due to the 'all too great fleetingness [*Flüchtigkeit*] with which meaning attaches to translations' (1923/1977: 61). Bhabha wants nothing of this 'fleetingness' (and thereby forgoes possible puns on *Flüchtling* as a 'displaced person', a 'refugee', an 'escapee'). For him, that untranslatable quality of translations is instead a point of **resistance**, a negation of complete integration, and a **will to survive** found in the subjectivity of the migrant. As such, it offers a way out of the binary dilemmas. And this, I suspect, is the great attraction of translation as a metaphor or way of thinking, here and throughout the whole of cultural studies: since a translation has something of *both* sides, you do not have to choose between two sides.

To get to the association of resistance with survival, Bhabha has to mix this 'untranslatability' with Benjamin's idea of translations extending the life of the original. Benjamin does say that translations give the original an '**after-life**' (*Fortleben*, 'prolonged life'), which, says Benjamin (1923/2004: 77), 'could not be called that unless it were not a transformation and a renewal of something living – the original undergoes a change'. This is good: translation instigates a process of change, and that could be enough to count as a solution to the migrant's dilemma. But to get from 'after-life' to 'survival', apparently you have to have read Derrida's commentary in *The Ear of the Other* (1982/1985: 122–123), where the claims are made that (1) Benjamin uses the terms *Überleben* and *Fortleben* interchangeably to mean 'living on', and (2) the one French term *survivre* ('survive', but literally 'on-live', 'to live on') translates both Benjamin's terms. Benjamin's 'prolonged life' (*Fortleben*/*Nachleben*) can thus become 'survival' (*Überleben*, *survie*) in the eyes of Bhabha, and both are related to being on, or in, the problematic border between life and death. In this chicane of interlingual interpretations, of course, a few nuances have been shaved off, with alarming certitude: what for Benjamin was 'fleeting' has become 'resistance'; what was a discussion of *texts* in Benjamin and Derrida has become an account of *people*; what was an issue of *languages* has become a concern within *just one language* (Bhabha writes as a Professor of English discussing a novel written in English); what was the border between life and death for Derrida has become the cultural borders of migration; and what was generally a theory of translation as linguistic transformation has now become a striving for new cultural identities. In short, all the previous theorization of translation has been boiled down to one word ('survival') and applied to an entirely new context. Bhabha knits this together as follows (take a deep breath):

If hybridity is heresy, then to blaspheme is to dream. To dream not of the past or present, nor the continuous present; it is not the nostalgic dream of tradition, nor the Utopian dream of modern progress; it is the dream of translation as 'survival', as Derrida translates the 'time' of Benjamin's concept of the after-life of translation, as *sur-vivre*, the act of living on borderlines. Rushdie translates this into the migrant's dream of survival; an *initiatory* interstices [sic]; an empowering condition of hybridity; an emergence that turns 'return' into reinscription or re-description; an iteration that is not belated, but ironic and insurgent.

(Bhabha 1994/2004: 324, italics in the text)

There is no explicit attempt here to relate the notion of survival to anything in theories of translations as texts. So perhaps we should not insist too much on Rushdie's use of blasphemous names as actual translations. In Bhabha's reading, there is no particular start text, no particular target, and no well-defined mission to accomplish anything beyond 'resistance'. All those things (start, target, purpose, life-and-death) surely belong more to the *fatwā* as a flying arrow designed to punish both author and translators. However, if Rushdie's resistance is indeed a kind of translation, it must also recognize the reading embedded in the *fatwā*, even if only to contest it. Indeed, it is only through negation of that reading that the object of cultural translation can properly be described as '**non-substantive translation**', as Bhabha himself is reported as calling it (in Trivedi 2007: 286). What we have, though, looks more like a diffuse kind of longing ('to dream') that comes from **the position of a translator**, situated on or perhaps in the **borders between cultures**, defined by **cultural hybridity**. From that perspective, something of Benjamin's 'fleetingness' can then be recuperated on Bhabha's next page, where it is related to the indeterminacy of the hybrid: 'The focus is on making the linkages through the unstable elements of literature and life – the dangerous tryst with the 'untranslatable' – rather than arriving at ready-made names' (Bhabha 1994/2004: 325). This is then generalized in the formula: 'Translation is the performative nature of cultural communication' (1994/2004: 326), which can perhaps only be understood in terms of Bhabha's closing winks to all kinds of borders between and within cultures, not just those due to migration but also those of all minority cultures: Bhabha mentions feminism, gay and lesbian writings, and something called the 'Irish question'. Wherever borders are crossed, cultural translation may result.

As a piece of critical discourse, Bhabha's text does not choose between the alternatives it presents. Should the migrant remain unchanged or should they integrate? What languages should be spoken in the home? How should mainstream Western culture react to cultural hybridity? Such questions are not solved; they seem to be dissolved. Bhabha simply points to this space between, elsewhere termed the 'third space', where possible solutions to

these questions can be sought. Once you see the workings of that space, the questions no longer need any kind of 'yes' or 'no' answer.

The sense of 'translation' here is far wider than the texts we call translations. The approach is quite different from the descriptive studies that look at the way translations have been carried out in colonial and postcolonial contexts. Bhabha is not talking about a particular set of translations but of a quite different sense of translation.

Does this explain why the American journal declared that 'the language of the Americas is translation'? The claim might now seem rather tame. In a world where major demographic movements have undermined deceptively stable categories like 'a society', 'a language', 'a culture', or 'a nation', any serious study requires new terms to describe its objects. 'Translation' is one of those convenient terms, on a par with 'emergence' (things are not simply present or absent; they are emerging and submerging in history), 'hybridity' (extending Bhabha, every cultural object is a hybrid), and 'minoritization' – which would recuperate the remainders excluded by the supposition or imposition of a linguistic or cultural system (Lecercle 1990). Translation is only one of a number of alternatives, but it became cool and seems to have remained that way for quite some time. Bhabha is only one of a number of theorists working in this field, but he has perhaps been the most influential.

Does this have anything to offer the other kinds of translation theory? Or is it just a set of vague opinions dressed up in fashionable metaphors and abstruse prose? Here I want to propose that, if we do accept Bhabha's use of 'cultural translation' as a theory of translation, it can reveal some aspects that have been ignored or side lined by other approaches:

- This view of translation is from the **cultural position of a translator**, not translations. Almost all the other approaches have started from the translator confronting a piece of language and/or a client. Here we start from the position of someone who produces language from the 'between space' of languages and cultures (one could also talk of 'overlaps').
- The focus on **hybridity** surely has something to say about the general position of translators, who ostensibly know at least two languages and probably at least two cultures. It might say something basic about the effects that translation has in opening one culture to others. Bhabha does not say that translations are hybrid: he finds a translatory discourse that enacts hybridity.
- The link with migration highlights the way translation ensues from **material movements**, not that Bhabha would want his view of translation to be bound to materialist determinism. Nonetheless, the framing of translation by the material movement of people seems to have been quite rare in other approaches.
- Bhabha sees that the movements cross the **previously established borders** and thereby question them. No other approach has so vigorously raised

the problem of the two-side border figured by translations (see 3.1 above), although theories that incorporate indeterminism have certainly been able to question the way borders produce illusory oppositions.

These are all good points, I suggest. They indicate important blind spots in other theories of translation; they justify seeing 'cultural translation' as a theory of translation. Perhaps more important, those points concern quite profound problems ensuing from the increasingly variegated nature of our societies and the numerous mixes of our cultures, not all of which are due to migration (communication technologies also play a powerful role). Further, these points are raised in a way that seems a little different from what we have called indeterminism: whereas Benjamin and Derrida, for example, were intimately engaged in reading and translating *texts*, attempting to bring out multiple potential meanings, Bhabha makes rather more programmatic statements about a wider world full of people. Rather than a hermeneutics of texts, cultural translation offers a way of talking about the social world.

Now for the down-to-earth questions. Do we really have to go through Rushdie, Benjamin, and Derrida to reach the tenets of cultural translation? Or have all these things been said before, in different places, from different perspectives? And are they being said in other places as well, as different but similar responses to the underlying processes of globalization?

Cultural translation and similar terms

Loosely following Bhabha, I associate the term 'cultural translation' with material movement, the position of the translator, cultural hybridity, and the crossing of borders. Used in this way, the term is not to be confused with several other formulations that sound similar but mean different things. Here I attempt some definitions:

- *Cultural translation (Bhabha)*: In the sense of Bhabha (1994/2004), a set of discourses that enact hybridity by crossing cultural borders, revealing the intermediary positions of (figurative) translators. This is the most general sense.
- *Cultural translation (ethnography)*: In the tradition of British social anthropology, a view of ethnography as the written description of a foreign culture. That is, the ethnographer *translates* the foreign culture into an ethnographic description.
- *Cultural turn*: A term proposed by Snell-Hornby (1990) and legitimated by Lefevere and Bassnett (1990) whereby translation studies should focus on the cultural effects of translations. For Snell-Hornby, the 'translation unit' (the unit taken for each analysis)

should move from the text to the culture. The thrust of this view does not challenge traditional uses of the term 'translation' and had long been a part of the intellectual background of descriptive approaches. Other versions see the 'turn' as the use of cultural variables to explain translations, which has also long been part of descriptive approaches.

- *Translation culture* (*Übersetzungskultur*): A term used by the Göttingen group (Frank 1989) to describe the cultural norms governing translations within a target system, on the model of *Esskultur*, which would describe the way a certain society eats (including the foreign cuisines and restaurants found in a city, for example). This concept applies to what a society does with translations and expects of them; it does not challenge traditional definitions of translation and it does not focus on the translator. The concept works clearly within scientific approaches to translation.
- *Translation culture* (*Translationskultur*): This is defined by Erich Prunč as a 'variable set of norms, conventions, and expectations which frame the behaviour of all interactants in the field of translation' (Prunč 2000: 59; cf. Pöchhacker 2001, who renders the term as 'translation standards'), considered a 'historically developed subsystem of a culture' (Prunč 1997: 107). This concept focuses on translators and associated social actors but seems to assume they are all within the target culture. Developed with clear sympathies with *Skopos* theory, the concept is basically descriptive.
- *Cultural Studies*: A diffuse set of academic studies that adopt a critical and theorizing approach to cultural phenomena in general, emphasizing heterogeneity, hybridity, and the critique of power. Bhabha's postcolonial use of 'cultural translation' fits in with this frame. The researcher is generally involved in the object of study (as is the case in Bhabha).
- *Culture Research*: Term preferred by Even-Zohar for the study of the way cultures develop, interact, and die. Cultures are seen as systems that need transfer (exchange) for their maintenance of energy and thus survival. The researcher generally adopts a non-involved stance, although no one likes to see a culture die.
- *Professional interculture*: A cultural place where people combine elements of more than one primary culture and do so in order to facilitate or carry out cross-cultural communication. For Pym (2004a), professional intercultures are the places where the borders between primary cultures are defined. They include most of the situations in which translators work. The concept is sociological.

8.3 Translation without translations: calls for a wider discipline

One of the things that discourses on cultural translation do best is move beyond a focus on translations as (written or spoken) texts. The concern is with general cultural processes rather than finite linguistic products. This is the sense in which one can talk about '**translation without translations**'. Was this wider view of translation invented by Homi Bhabha in 1994? Probably not. Previous approaches had envisaged projects for such a wider study of translation. I recall just a few.

8.3.1 Jakobson and semiosis, again

When discussing the development of hermeneutics with respect to uncertainty (6.4.6), I mentioned **Roman Jakobson**'s statement that 'the meaning of any linguistic sign is its translation into some further, alternative sign' (1959/ 2021: 156). This is the key point of a theory of **semiosis**, where **meaning is constantly created by interpretations** and is never a fixed thing that could be objectified and transferred. As I noted, rather than representing a previous meaning, translating would be the active *production* of meaning. This was in 1959, from within a kind of linguistics that at that stage wanted to become semiotics, the wider study of all kinds of signs.

Jakobson's 1959 paper attempts to draw out some of the consequences of semiosis. One of those consequences is his list of three kinds of translation, which he claims can be 'intralingual' (i.e., any rewording within the one language), 'interlingual' (rewording between languages), or 'intersemiotic' (interpretation between different sign systems, as when a piece of music interprets a poem). That is, once you decide that translation is a process rather than a product, you can find evidence of that process virtually everywhere. Any use of language (or semiotic system) that rewords or reworks any other piece of language (or semiotic system) can be seen as the result of a translational process. And since languages are based precisely on the repetition of utterances in different situations, producing different but related meanings, just as all texts are made meaningful by intertextuality, **all language use can be seen as translation**. The consequences of this view are perhaps far wider and more revolutionary than anything Bhabha has to say. That is why I have positioned Jakobson's insight on the threshold of deconstruction, and why he also merits a foundational place among theories of cultural translation.

Jakobson, however, did not want to travel too far down that path. His typology retains the notion of 'translation proper' for 'interlingual translation', and his description of 'intersemiotic translation' privileges verbal signs (like those of 'translation proper') as the point of departure. In this, he was preceded by the Danish semiotician **Louis Hjelmslev**, whose view of intersemiotic translation similarly privileged natural languages:

> In practice, a language is a semiotic into which all other semiotics may be translated – both all other languages and all other conceivable semiotic structures. This translatability rests on the fact that all languages, and they alone, are in a position to form any purport whatsoever […].
>
> (Hjelmslev 1943/1963: 109)

As we saw in 6.3.1, the Italian theorist **Umberto Eco** (2001) also classified translatory movements between semiotic systems, at the same time as he privileged the place of 'translation proper' as a finite textual product. Jakobson and Eco could both envisage a wide conceptual space for 'translation without translations', yet they did not want to throw away or belittle the translations that professional translators do.

Types of translation without translations?

Jakobson recognizes three kinds of translation (1959/2021: 157):

- *Intralingual translation* or rewording is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.
- *Interlingual translation* or translation proper is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
- *Intersemiotic translation* or transmutation is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign systems.

8.3.2 *Even-Zohar's call for transfer theory*

Jakobson's 1959 paper is one of the starting points for Itamar Even-Zohar's call to extend the scope of translation studies as an academic discipline. Since all cultural systems are in principle heterogeneous and dynamic, Even-Zohar proposes there are always movements of 'textual models' from one to another, and translation is only one type of such movements:

> Some people would take this as a proposal to liquidate translation studies. I think the implication is quite the opposite: through a larger context, it will become even clearer that 'translation' is not a marginal procedure of cultural systems. Secondly, the larger context will help us identify the really particular in translation. Thirdly, it will change our conception of the translated text in such a way that we may perhaps be liberated from certain postulated criteria. And fourthly, it may help us isolate what 'translational procedures' consist of.
>
> (Even-Zohar 1990a: 74)

The term 'transfer' here means that a textual model from one system is not just put into another; it is *integrated* into the relations of the host system and thereby both undergoes and generates change. Thus 'transfer […] is correlated with transformation' (Even-Zohar 1990b: 20). This maps out a kind of study in which there are many movements between systems, only some of them occurring as translations, and the same kinds of movements are crossing borders *within* systems as well.

The scope of this extension is comparable to what we have seen of Bhabha's 'cultural translation', except that:

- What is transferred here is limited to 'textual models' (although Even-Zohar's more recent work refers to 'goods', 'technologies', and 'ideational energy');
- In these formulations, there is no particular focus on the human element, on the position and role of the mediators, and thus no attention to anything like a third space;
- As a consequence, the model remains one of systems separated by borders, no matter how many borders (and thus sub-systems) there may be within each system; and
- As a further consequence, the human researcher remains external to the systems under investigation, with all the trappings of scientific discourse.

Perhaps because of these choices, Even-Zohar's proposed 'transfer theory' has had little effect on the development of translation theory. Many of those who have opened up the paths of cultural translation would perhaps be surprised by the extent to which Even-Zohar addressed similar problems well before them. I hasten to add that Even-Zohar's *Ideational labor and the production of social energy* (2008) does show great interest in human intermediaries: it is where he most consistently argues that transfer is necessary for cultural survival, not in Bhabha's sense of worrying about the identity of Salman Rushdie, but with respect to whole cultures disappearing for want of transfers from other cultures. That is a rather more perturbing sense of survival.

8.4 Translation across all sciences and beyond

Another take on cultural translation starts from no less than a critique of Western thought. Allow me to concoct an image to tell the story. Imagine Aristotle down at the port in Thessaloniki, in what was then Macedonia, somewhere around 350 BCE. He is looking at fish and classifying them, organizing them into species, putting like with like, and deducing the criteria by which they belong together, asking fishers for more evidence. To arrange things into categories, as Western thought has done ever since, requires that you disregard all the aspects that are different in all the fish within the one

presumed species, just as you disregard all the alternative ways in which the fish could be categorized. You are seeking the one definitive categorization, not a series of available alternatives. To that end, you are trained to look for sameness and to disregard difference.

This problem of categorization is one way of understanding the critique formulated by the French philosopher **Gilles Deleuze** in *Difference and Repetition* (1968/1994). Deleuze called for attention to paradox rather than to ideal categories, and for a dynamic pluralism in thought, questioning the regime of common sense and reason: 'I remake and unmake my concepts along a moving horizon, from an always decentred centre, from an always displaced periphery which repeats and differentiates them' (xxi). Deleuze did not talk about translation directly, but his critique had an enormous influence on other thinkers who did.

The French philosopher **Michel Serres** wrote *La Traduction* (1974) as part of a series of books on general communication. In it, he finds translation in the ways different sciences borrow and transform concepts from each other, upsetting their categories and generating new ones. He looks, for instance, at the ways philosophy is translated from formal languages, at how painting can translate physics (Turner translates primitive thermodynamics), and at how literature translates religion (Faulkner translates the Bible). Serres does not claim to be studying any set of texts called translations; he is more interested in translation as a process of communication between domains otherwise thought to be separate. His view of translation (which he never called 'cultural translation') would in turn influence the kind of sociology done by Bruno Latour and Michel Callon, who similarly sought to undo all presupposed categorical divisions by going back to communication as a process prior to categories. We will meet them very soon.

Jacques Derrida (1990) does something similar to Serres when he reads Schelling's analysis of the ideal Prussian university system as a series of interconnecting sciences in which each influences the other, all are the study of God, philosophy is in all of them, and the task of the university is to enable multiple crossings between them. Derrida describes this system of interdisciplinary relations as a theology of translation: 'What one calls translation is also what one calls the mission of the university' (1990: 394, my translation). Think about it. Or are we separating disciplines like Aristotle categorized fish?

An interesting reworking of this idea is in **Doris Bachmann-Medick** (2006, 2009) when she proposes that the task of undoing inherited divisions and instigating interdisciplinarity should not only be described as translation but could proceed by drawing on what is *known about* translation:

> We might begin that specification by dissecting what has become a rather vague term into its most important facets (transfer, mediation, metaphor, the linguistic dimension, and so on) and the most significant areas of enquiry to which it can contribute. One of these areas would be the

reinterpretation of situations of global cultural encounter. Another would be a reworked view of the academic landscape and research practices – it might, for example, be constructive to consider interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity as a translation problem, potentially enhancing our understanding of the contact zones arising in the transitions between disciplines.

(Bachmann-Medick 2009: 2)

Rather than import ideas from other disciplines, translation studies here might be able to *export* a certain translation knowledge, offering new ways to think about old problems. Instead of putting all similar fish into the one basket and supposing they are united by an ideal form, the study of translation could bring out countless differences between supposed forms, moving semiosis not just through cultures but also across all fields of inquiry (cf. Marais 2019).

To do that, of course, one would have to draw on views of translation that incorporate indeterminism, as did Deleuze. All the theories of equivalence, on the other hand, keep lumping fish together, assuming there are stable forms that make them species, and then sometimes become frustrated when they find that the categorizations done in different cultures do not match up.

Let us see a few of the sciences that have approached something like cultural translation.

8.4.1 Translation sociology

As mentioned, the work of Deleuze and Serres influenced a group of sociologists of science, especially Michel Callon and Bruno Latour, who developed what they called a 'sociologie de la traduction' (cf. Akrich et al. 2006), also known as '**actor-network theory**'. I render this here as '**translation sociology**' rather than 'the sociology of translation' in order to indicate that the 'translation' part refers to the method of analysis rather than the object under analysis (although the theory would reject this distinction). This is despite the fact that the term 'the sociology of translation' has long been used in English by these same sociologists (for example in Callon 1986). What should be made very clear here is that this group is not at all involved in explaining interlingual translations. Nor are they particularly interested in the historical and ethical issues of 'cultural translation' in the way Bhabha sees it. They instead use a model of translation to explain the way negotiations take place and how networks are formed between social actors, particularly with respect to power relations involving science. They have been doing this since at least 1975.

In a fascinating example, **Michel Callon** (1986) studies the way marine biologists sought to stop the decline in the number of scallops in St Brieuc Bay in France by influencing the social groups associated with the fishing industry. This involved forming networks and extending social discourses on

the problem. At each stage in the analysis, from the actions of the scallops to those of the social groups, of the scientists, and indeed of the sociologists, there is a common process by which one actor or group is taken to speak on behalf of ('translate') others. The result is a rather poetic levelling-out where the one process ('translation') applies to all, including the scallops – nature has a voice in this sociology. If translation is the process by which one person or group speaks 'on behalf of' or 'stands for' another person or group, the resulting view might be another version of Jakobson's semiosis, except that in this case the representation process is seen as forming social power relations. Here are Callon and Latour on something a little more general than scallops, namely the **social contract** sought by the seventeenth-century English philosopher Thomas Hobbes, which is described as 'merely a specific instance of a more general phenomenon, that of translation':

> By translation we understand all the negotiations, intrigues, calculations, acts of persuasion and violence thanks for which an actor or force takes, or causes to be conferred on itself, authority to speak or act on behalf of another actor or force: 'our interests are the same', 'do what I want', 'you cannot succeed without going through me'. Whenever an actor speaks of 'us', s/he is translating other actors into a single will [*volonté*], of which she or he becomes spirit and spokesman [sic].
>
> (Callon and Latour 2006: 279)

The word 'translation' in this citation has a footnote referring to Serres 1974 and Callon 1975.

Seen in those terms, translation becomes the basic building block of social relations, and thereby of societies, the object of sociology. This kind of sociology is exceptional in that it tries *not* to assume any pre-existing boundaries. It would simply follow the translations, the budding nodes in networks, in order to observe the actual institution of boundaries. There is no need to question what is being translated. Indeed, for **Bruno Latour** (1984/1988: 167), '[n]othing is, by itself, either knowable or unknowable, sayable or unsayable, near or far. Everything is translated'. Similarly, there is no 'society or social realm', only translators who generate 'traceable associations' (Latour 2005: 108). Translation becomes the process through which we form and de-form social relations.

Translation sociology would appear to be a hyper-empiricism that undoes all fixed categories and then builds them up again, translation by translation. This critique of hard science, of firm knowledge as being based on power relations, hails from the radical critiques found in France in the years around May 1968, when there was an attempt to organize a revolution by uniting students with workers. Derrida published major texts in 1967; Deleuze published in 1968 – such was the climate for a rethinking of everything. By the time the sociologists had done their highly theorized but provocatively detailed studies of how science moves through society, those ideas had become rather

less revolutionary. Note that 'translation studies' and 'translational research' are now standard terms in medicine for studies of the way knowledge moves from the laboratory to medical practice ('workbench to bedside') – a very down-to-earth version of the same thing, without the philosophy.

At the same time, not everything has to be undone. When you go down to the port of Thessaloniki to categorize the fish (or indeed the scallops in St Brieuc Bay), the one thing they will tell you is that there are fewer fish. Whatever the categories, we now know that all species, all parts of nature, are interrelated, such that if we introduce change in one area, even if just for the hell of thinking differently, it can set off semiosis reaching all others – generalized translation. Our intellectual work is itself part of the semiotic chains, sometimes a destructive part. We now know that semiosis is only theoretically infinite: the planet can fail to move meaning along. So we have to think again about joyous abundance. When knowledge of this is given absolute priority, as is the case of current climate science, then Bruno Latour (2018: 23), the former critic of categories and undoer of science, starts supporting public institutions: 'facts remain robust only when they are supported by a common culture, by institutions that can be trusted, by a more or less decent public life, by more or less reliable media'.

With respect to translations as texts, and indeed in the context of cultural translation, translation sociology has an appeal on several grounds:

- The **refusal to recognize pre-established social and cultural boundaries** is essentially what the discourses of cultural translation do when they position themselves in the in-between spaces of cultures. Translation sociology challenges the borders to manifest themselves, as indeed would the discourses of cultural translation.
- The emphasis on **translation as the formation of power relations** also fits in with postcolonial problematics, particularly as far as relations between cultural groups are concerned.
- If the building block of power relations is the process by which one social actor presumes to or is made to '**speak on behalf of another**', is this not precisely what all translations are presumed or made to do? This poses the intriguing question of why not all translators accrue the social power apparently gained by those who speak on behalf of science.
- The **networks** in which translators tend to work are so small, so intercultural and so marked by cultural hybridity that they are ill-served by the classical sociologies of societies or indeed sociologies of systems (cf. Luhmann) or structurally defined social groups (cf. Bourdieu). Translation sociology would seem well suited to such an object, as might similar concepts like 'micro-cosmopolitanism' (Cronin 2006).
- The recognition that **networks extend to and include the sociologist** (or any other analyst) fits in not only with the general sense of involvement found in theories of cultural translation but also with action research (influential in translator education) and indeed psychoanalytical approaches.

This does not mean that translation sociology talks about cultural translation – it does not. There have been many other things going on. The work of Callon and Latour has nevertheless responded to an increasing fragmentation of social categories, just as theorists like Bhabha have worked on the same thing from other perspectives. Attempts have been made to apply translation sociology to the networks in which translators operate (for example, Buzelin 2007) and much more can be done. It would be a sad mistake, however, to think that translation sociology should be applied to professional translators simply because the term 'translation' appears in the sociological theory. That kind of nominalist fallacy would potentially mean allowing our projects to be defined by all the definitions of 'translation' in the dictionary – and there are many, many more!

A more effective connection between translation sociology and cultural translation is found in a group of German-language sociologists and translation theorists. In the general line of translation sociology, **Joachim Renn** (2006) argues that postmodern societies are so culturally fragmented that translation can serve as a model of the way different groups are able to communicate with each other and ensure governance. His books published in 2014, 2016, and 2021 use many different theories, from performativity to discourse analysis, but carry the collective title 'sociological translations' (*soziologische Übersetzungen*). From this perspective, cultural translation (without the name) can be associated with the way personal differences are maintained and negotiated within complex societies, as both a view of the social institution itself and resistance to what a more standard sociology of systems would call 'boundary maintenance' (after Parsons 1951).

Since this kind of sociological translation generally involves the cultural displacements of people rather than any kind of text, it is just a few steps away from the view of migration itself as a form of translation (Cronin 2006; Vorderobermeier and Wolf 2008), which ultimately returns us to the postcolonial frame. The work of the scholars who write in German effectively bridges some of the gaps that initially separated the translation sociology of Callon and Latour from the kind of cultural translation we find in Bhabha.

8.4.2 Ethnography as cultural translation

None of the above approaches uses the term 'cultural translation'; none of them (barring passing winks to Jakobson) are usually mentioned by the theorists who do name cultural translation. Yet the ideas are certainly related. And a more powerful common antecedent can be found in the tradition of ethnology or 'social anthropology', which is where the term 'cultural translation' seems to have been coined.

The basic idea here is that when ethnologists set out to describe distant cultures (technically one could call them 'ethnographers', writers of descriptions), they are translating the cultures into their own professional language. In some cases, the translations are remarkably like the traditional

cases dealt with in theories of equivalence: they might concern a cultural concept, a place name, or a value-laden phrase. In other instances, we are dealing with issues that have more to do with the philosophy and ethics of cross-cultural discourse. In very basic terms, the ethnographer can suppose neither radical cultural difference (in which case no description or understanding would be possible) nor complete sameness (in which case no one would need the description). In between those two extremes, the term 'translation' finds something to say.

The earlier Western anthropologists were generally unaware of their descriptions being translations: they tended to assume their own language was able to describe adequately whatever they found and was thus transparent to the other culture (see Rubel and Rosman 2003). **Talal Asad** (1986) notes that in the British tradition, the task of social anthropology was nevertheless described as a kind of 'translation' from the 1950s. Asad presents a historical survey of this development and then goes back to Walter Benjamin (he would probably have been more sure-footed going to Schleiermacher) in order to argue that good translations show the structure and nature of the foreign culture. He thus announces a 'call to transform a [target] language in order to translate the coherence of the original' (Asad 1986: 157), especially in situations where there is a pronounced asymmetry in the power relations of the languages involved.

Note that the term 'cultural translation' here fundamentally means the **translation of a culture**, and translation theory (not much more than Benjamin) is used in an argument about how this should be done. This is not quite the same sense as we have found in Bhabha, where 'cultural translation' is more closely related to the problematics of hybridity and border-crossing. Asad's argument about a 'better' mode of translation certainly pushes cultural translation toward a more hybrid kind of space, opening the more powerful language to the less powerful language and to the cultures being described. One hesitates, however, to equate Bhabha's usage of 'cultural translation' with this simpler and more traditional sense of 'describing other cultures'.

Some translation theorists have taken note of the way the term 'translation' has been used in ethnography. **Michaela Wolf** (1997) allows that this is a kind of translation, but she notes that ethnographers are typically engaged in a two-stage mode of work, first interpreting the spoken discourse of informants, then adapting that interpretation for written consumption in the dominant culture. Such two-stage work can of course be found in mainstream translation history (the practice was common in Hispania in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries). The prime difference is that the ethnographer does not usually have a materially fixed text to start from. In this sense, ethnographic translation might yet fit under Bhabha's 'non-substantive translation'.

Some rather more interesting things have been done with reference to translation and encounters between cultures. **James Clifford** (1997) elaborates an approach in which **travel** becomes the prime means of contact between cultures, configuring the spaces where cultural translation is carried

out. Clifford's line of thought is extremely suggestive, connecting not only with travel writing and approaches to world literature based on mobility but also with tourism studies, which speaks to one of the largest industries in the world. The ways translations represent cultures through travel and for travellers raise numerous issues calling for new forms of theorization (Cronin 2000, 2003). From tourism studies, for example, we have concepts of 'authenticity' or the 'authentic experience' as what the traveller seeks (see, for example, Lovell and Bull 2018). Certain kinds of translations can help promote that same illusion, just as a sense of authenticity might be what most receivers seek in a translation.

A position closer to Bhabha is announced by **Wolfgang Iser**, who sees translation as a key concept not just for 'the encounter between cultures' (1994: 5) but also for interactions *within* cultures. Iser uses the notion of **untranslatability** not as the resistance of the migrant, as it is in Bhabha, but as the use of cultural difference to change the way descriptions are produced. In translation, says Iser, 'foreign culture is not simply subsumed under one's own frame of reference; instead, the very frame is subjected to alterations in order to accommodate what does not fit' (1994: 5).

At this level of generality, the references to ethnography as translation enter debates about how different cultures should interrelate, and any sense of translations as a specific class of texts has virtually been lost. When intellectuals opine in a room, they will almost always prefer foreignization.

8.4.3 *Political psychoanalytics as translation*

A few final strands should be mentioned here, before I move to an overall consideration of cultural translation. Quite a few authors have explored the relations between psychoanalysis and translation, although few of them have done so to make any original contribution to translation theory as such. The general idea is that translation can describe some of the terms Freud used for the workings of the unconscious. This effectively places translational processes anterior to meaning formation, much as Augustine claimed. None of this particularly concerns cultural translation of the kind we have been considering in this chapter. An intriguing bridge is nevertheless built by the way the Indian cultural critic and translator **Gayatri Spivak**, leaning on the psychoanalytical approach of Melanie Klein, describes a primal kind of translation:

> The human infant grabs on to some one thing and then things. This grabbing (*begreifen*) of an outside indistinguishable from an inside constitutes an inside, going back and forth and coding everything into a sign-system by the thing(s) grasped. One can call this crude coding a 'translation'.
>
> (2007: 261)

Translation, in this sense, would describe the way the infant enters culture and forms subjectivity; it is spatially a dynamic by which borders are enacted. In Spivak, this sense of translation can be applied to all subsequent entries into all further cultures. Translation is also the movement from indigenous cultures in Australia or Bengal to the standard cultures of those regions, or indeed of any of the other cultural movements involved in what we have seen as cultural translation.

Although Spivak openly avows that this is not the literal sense of the word 'translation' – 'a term I use not for obscurity, but because I find it indispensable' (2007: 264) – she does stretch it to include her own work as a translator of philosophy (notably Derrida) and literature (most interestingly the Bengali woman writer Mahasweta Devi). This is perhaps the closest we come to a psychoanalytical description of translation from the perspective of a translator:

> When a translator translates from a constituted language, whose system of inscription, and permissible narratives are 'her own', this secondary act, translation in the narrow sense, as it were, is also a peculiar act of reparation – towards the language of the inside, a language in which we are 'responsible', the guilt of seeing it as one language among many.
>
> (2007: 265)

The one primal narrative thus manages to account for the various senses of the word 'translation'.

Part of the interest of Spivak's view of translation is not just her experience as a translator but her preparedness to experiment with modes of translation that go beyond the reproduction of sentences. Her self-reflexive and informative prefaces and peritextual material not only make the translator highly visible but inscribe the context of a wider cultural translation. Spivak's is one of the few proposals that might relate some tenets of cultural translation to the actual practice of translators.

Spivak's message, however, is not univocal. As I have noted when commenting on Asad, the general view derived from readings of Benjamin is that translations should manifest cultural differences rather than standardize national cultures. Such would be the politics of identity as resistance. Spivak takes issue with this (just as she elsewhere reclaimed the right to use essentialism within deconstruction):

> The toughest problem here is translation from idiom to standard, an unfashionable thing among the elite progressives, without which the abstract structures of democracy cannot be comprehended.
>
> (2007: 274)

Any democracy requires shared understanding of some standard terms – 'a common culture' and 'institutions that can be trusted' as Latour (2018: 23) puts it – and a shared standard language can help achieve that aim. This is

one of the most important debates in which theorists of cultural translation should engage.

8.4.4 Ecology as translation

Spivak's work on postcolonial themes has given way to a concept beyond globalization: **the planetary,** by which she really means the earth, the environment, the physical place in which we live, which is an other of a different kind: 'The planet is in the species of alterity, belonging to another system; and yet we inhabit it, on loan' (2003: 22). The forces of economic globalization may wreak havoc in the world, threatening the diversity of languages and cultures, and translation theory can speak to that. But the real risk of imperialism and economic expansion is no longer there: the threat is to the planet; it concerns ecology. What does this have to do with translation?

We have seen that a certain psychoanalysis authorizes Spivak to see translation as a way of making the world meaningful, with all attendant guilt for doing so. When the translation is of another human, Spivak has a nuanced but fairly traditional sense of what is involved: she argues for careful attention to the other, for consideration of silences, for love. She is an attentive and creative translator, after all. The question then arises of what happens in this alternative alterity, when one seeks to communicate with the non-human, the alien, the planet, the other about whom we cannot begin to enter into the empathy or charity that Quine and Davidson sought. This is touched on in passing, where communication with nature is aligned with the contingency of non-translation (1992/2021: 333). Translation, in these cases, is met with silence from the other, with a corresponding reduction of the human place in the world: we learn to 'imagine ourselves as planetary accidents rather than global agents' (2013: 451).

In Spivak, translation and the planetary more or less run along separate tracks, surfacing occasionally from discursive wanderings. The two are nevertheless brought together in studies of fictional representations of humans attempting to communicate with aliens, where it is a question of translating from the non-human and translating the self for the non-human (see, for example, Ganguly 2019). These are the questions picked up more thoroughly by **Michael** Cronin (2017), who sees translation in the attempts at inter-species communication, efforts to understand animal communication, and then the wider problem of translating nature from the perspective of the Anthropocene, the human being of our current epoch where our activity has a devastating effect on the planet. Both Spivak and Cronin confront the planetary not to see ecology as translation, but to reflect on what failed translation means for the status of humans.

8.5 Generalized translation

Within and beyond the above frames, there is certainly no shortage of metaphorical uses of the word 'translation'. Language is a translation of thought;

writing translates speech; literature translates life; a reading translates a text; all metaphors are also translations (*metapherein* is one of the Greek terms for 'translation'), and as the Lauryn Hill song puts it, 'everything is everything'. Such usages have long been present in literary and cultural theory. Here I pick at a few additional threads:

- Translation is the displacement of theory from one topographic location to another (for example, Miller 1995); it is the figure of intellectual nomadism, moving from discipline to discipline (for example, West 2002), but that was already in Serres.
- Translation is 'a metaphor for understanding how the foreign and the familiar are inter-related in every form of cultural production' (Papastergiadis 2000: 124).
- Translation is part of all meaning production; there is no non-translation (Sallis 2002), but the proposition was already in Jakobson and Latour.
- Translation plays a key role in the transmission of values from one generation to the next and is thus part of all 'literary invigoration' (Brodski 2007).
- Translation is the process underlying all semiosis and producing all meaning, so translation theory has to liberate itself from its fixation on language and linguistics: 'As far as translation is concerned, I am interested in the emergence of forms of meaning from processes of meaning' (Marais 2019: 5).
- Translation is 'a means of repositioning the subject in the world and in history; a means of rendering self-knowledge foreign to itself; a way of denaturalizing citizens, taking them out of the comfort zone of national space, daily ritual, and pre-given domestic arrangements' (Apter 2006: 6).
- And a long etcetera.

Such generalization may be liberating and exciting to many; it could seem dissipating and meaningless to a few; it might even be *déjà vu* for anyone aware of European philosophy since the 1960s. Any of the above positions might be considered engaging if and when they can tell us something we do not already know. Let me simply note that many (although certainly not all) of the above references are from the United States or are in tune with the development of literary theory and comparative literature in the United States. At the same time, the United States is a country with remarkably few translator-training institutions and therefore with relatively little demand for the kind of translation theory developed within the equivalence or *Skopos* approaches, and scant development of descriptive approaches (despite the fact that Lefevere went to Texas). In terms of academic markets, if nothing else, the United States has provided a situation where what I have called indeterminist theories have been able to flourish magnificently into several modes of generalized translation.

Most of the above references do not refer to 'cultural translation', since that term has tended to come later. They have nevertheless opened huge conceptual spaces for cultural translation. Once its moorings to texts are severed, 'translation' can become a drunken boat.

8.6 Some virtues of cultural translation

There are several laudable aspects of the ways people talk about 'cultural translation':

- Most uses of the term place translation in a very human context, often seeing it from the perspective of a translator, no matter how metaphorical that translator may be.
- Translation is placed in relation to the demographic movements that are changing the shapes of our cultures.
- The concepts often underscore hybridity and thus undo many of the binary oppositions plaguing previous translation theories.
- Translation is mostly seen as a cultural *process* rather than a fixed stand-off between two sides of a border.
- Cultural translation concerns issues of complex social and historical contexts, beyond the epistemological concerns of construing texts.
- These theories are generally compatible with the critiques ensuing from awareness of indeterminism.
- We are implicitly called on to address other sciences, or even all sciences, as if we had a stock of original concepts and knowledge that enabled us to do so. This might motivate translation scholars to see if we actually have a stock of concepts and knowledge.

Those are not minor virtues. There are nevertheless many who do not see the point or do not accept the redefinitions of basic terms.

8.7 Frequently had arguments

Arguments like the following can ensue.

8.7.1 *These theories only use translation as a metaphor*

Many of the theorists I have cited here freely recognize that they are talking about 'translation' in a metaphorical way. They are drawing ideas from one area of experience (the things that translators do) and applying them to other areas (such as the ways cultures interrelate). This can be productive and stimulating on all sides. On the other hand, the generalized production of metaphors risks inflating the term 'translation' until it becomes meaningless (Duarte 2005). Or as Michaela Wolf puts it, there is a risk of developing 'a sociology of translation without translation' (2007: 27).

It would be dangerous to defend any original or true sense of the word 'translation'. After all, metaphors always map one area of experience onto another, and when you think about it, the words we use for the activities of translators ('translation', 'Übersetzen', etc.) are no less metaphorical, since they propose images of movement across space (more than time) (see D'hulst 1992). Perhaps the problem is that they have become dead metaphors, images that we somehow accept as self-evident truths. The more conscious metaphors of 'cultural translation' might help us think more critically about all kinds of translation.

8.7.2 Cultural translation is an excuse for intellectual wandering

'Intellectual wandering' is a way of translating **Antoine Berman**'s term 'vagabondage conceptuel' (1985: 42–43), which he used as a complaint against the proliferation of metaphors and 'generalized translation'. Berman recognized that since translations produce cultural change, there will always be the temptation to associate any change with translation. However, he warns against the view where everything can translate everything else, where there is 'universal translatability'. To oppose this, to curtail excessive theorizing, he argues for a concept of 'restrained translation' that respects the letter of the foreign text.

Berman's view does not seem to account for the many theorists of cultural translation who emphasize untranslatability, resistance, and maintenance of foreignness in all processes of translation. That is, most of them would agree with his politics, but not with his strategy. In fact, some would accept 'intellectual wandering' as a compliment.

8.7.3 Cultural translation is a space for weak interdisciplinarity

Associated with criticism of 'generalized translation' is the suspicion that the theorists of cultural translation are not interested in translation between languages. The German translation scholar Michaela Wolf (2009: 77–78) responds:

> the question arises 'who is the owner of the translation term?' I argue that banning a metaphorical variant of the translation notion – i.e., what has been called 'cultural translation' – from the field of research of Translation Studies would ultimately mean rejecting any sort of interdisciplinary work in this respect.

Can any discipline own a word? Obviously not. Can it attempt to stop others from using the word? It is difficult to see how. Yet surely any discipline has the right and duty to define the words it uses, turning them into terms? And then, should one kind of scholar work with others simply because they use the same word?

Wolf's second argument here is that if we do not accept this **interdisciplinarity**, then we must refuse all interdisciplinarity. That is the kind of argument reminiscent of binary political activists: 'If you are not with us, you are against us.'

8.7.4 Cultural translation can be studied entirely in English

Once the term 'translation' loses the interlingual element of its definition, it can be studied without reference to different languages. In fact, everything can be studied within the major languages, often just within English (or French, or German, or Chinese). Homi Bhabha was writing as a Professor of English about a novel in English. The result is a paradoxical eclipse of alterity, as seen by **Harish Trivedi**: 'Rather than help us encounter and experience other cultures, translation would have been assimilated in just one monolingual global culture' (2007: 286). This critique fits in with Berman's fear of 'global translatability', and indeed with a mode of theorization where the model 'postmodern society' somehow now fits all societies, and the one kind of 'translation correctly understood' (after reading Walter Benjamin, in English) accounts for all translation. The theories of cultural translation could be sweeping away precisely the otherness they proclaim to espouse.

8.7.5 Cultural translation is not in touch with the translation profession

This is part of a general reproach made of almost all translation theories: the people who theorize do not know how to translate, so they do not know about translation. The criticism might be more acute in the case of 'cultural translation' since the theorists are talking about much more than translations as texts.

On the other hand, some of the theorists are indeed translators, and very innovative ones at that (Spivak, certainly, and Venuti), and most of the others live and work across multiple cultures. They are not unaware of the kinds of situations in which translators work. More promisingly, the connection with migration helps us consider many new translation situations, with a focus on social needs rather than market demands. There is no theoretical reason why the discourse of cultural translation should exclude a critical focus on translators.

8.7.6 We need liberation from the 'reductionist paradigm'

This argument is something like a retort from the other side. Marais and Meylaerts (2019, 2022) are critical of what they see as the 'reductionist paradigm' (also called the 'simplicity paradigm' in Marais 2014: 29), which they see as ignoring wider senses of translation and leading to simplistic binarisms. This is attributed to 'the linear, reductionist thinking that is omnipresent in western scholarship in general, and translation studies in particular.

Reductionism induces binarism and limits causes to two […]. It prevents translation studies [from] understanding translation' (Meylaerts and Marais 2022: 4). Not to fear: 'a revolutionary break from reductionism' (2022: 3) can come by incorporating complexity theory with a focus on 'non-linearity, emergence, multiple causation, paradox and non-equilibrium' (3). As such, the critique accepts indeterminism and seeks to build up an alternative kind of discipline, not called 'cultural studies' but sharing the aspiration to address all forms of meaning-making.

A possible response might go like this. The critique fails to see that there are numerous ways of dealing with indeterminism, numerous non-binary theories of translation, and numerous projects for wider senses of 'translation'. To reduce them all to reductionism vs. complexity is itself a banal binarism (cf. Robinson 2022). To approach the mechanisms of social life in terms of five concepts ('non-linearity, emergence…') is to impose just another kind of restrictive modelling. Further, silent on the subjective motivations behind its own restrictiveness, the critique seems to fall into the descriptive fallacy that everything that can be described must be described, thereby conscripting the essentialist assumption that some kind of complete 'understanding' can result. It fails to appreciate how something like the variables in a mixed-methods experiment can be wilfully and artificially controlled and limited (often to ten or so, not just two), that this has been done since at least the 11th century, that it is how academic disciplines are created, and that it has been done in order to formulate problems and seek solutions to them, creating knowledge. And for that matter, the principle of indeterminacy was formulated within hard-core Western science, the very thing being opposed here. In short, the critique has many elements that are on the right track but it seems to be tilting at windmills.

The above are real arguments, of significance for the future of translation theory. Some of them are profound enough to threaten any attempt to see cultural translation as a coherent approach; others are debates that ensure the dynamism and contemporary relevance of the many issues that surround the term.

Summary

This chapter started with a reading of the way Homi Bhabha uses the term 'cultural translation'. It has then questioned how new the concept is. A review has been offered of earlier concepts of processes that are wider than text-based translation, particularly in Jakobson and Even-Zohar, and of how the term 'cultural translation' was developed from social anthropology. The wider view can also draw on actor-network theory (translation sociology) and German work on communication between different cultural groups in complex societies, particularly in contexts involving immigration. If something new has entered the world of translation, it is probably first from migrations and changes in communication patterns, to the extent that we can

no longer assume separate languages and cultures, and then from awareness of the planetary as non-translation. The spaces that once set up equivalence theory are no longer there. Cultural translation might thus offer ways of thinking about the many situations in which translation now operates in the world.

Sources and further reading

The Translation Studies Reader (Venuti 2021) includes texts by Berman, Spivak, Appiah, and Derrida, although the last-mentioned is not highly representative of Derrida's uses of translation. Munday et al. (2022) touch on the issues of cultural translation in three separate chapters, courageously attempting to distinguish between cultural turns, the role of the translator, and philosophical approaches. Homi Bhabha should be basic reading for anyone interested in cultural translation. Where you go from there depends very much on what questions are of interest. The volume *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation*, edited by Bermann and Wood (2005), gives samples of the work done in the United States.

Suggested projects and activities

1. Do a web search for the term 'cultural translation'. How many different meanings can you find? Would they all fit into the one kind of approach?
2. If a novel by Salman Rushdie can be considered an act of cultural translation because of its active use of hybridity, could the same be said of all novels? Are there any non-translational uses of language?
3. Consider the statement that 'the language of the Americas is translation'. Could the same be true of all countries and continents? (Is there any language that has not been displaced?) How many different languages are spoken in the Americas, including Amerindian languages? What could be the ideological effect of saying that they are all the one language?
4. Even-Zohar wants 'transfer studies' to look at the cross-cultural movements of basic technologies like the horse or different writing systems. Should such things be considered translation?
5. Locate one of Spivak's translations of Mahasweta Devi (or any literary translation that has a substantial preface by the translator). How does the translator describe the languages that enter into the translation processes? How many start languages are there in the content of the text (i.e., what languages are the ideas coming from)? Are those languages assumed to be more authentic than the translations? Can they be seen as translations?
6. Callon and Latour see translation as an act where someone speaks on behalf of someone else, becoming indispensable and thus accruing power. Is this the case for all translations? Could it be the case of the relationship between Bhabha and Rushdie, or Spivak and Devi?

7. Emily Apter is an American Professor of Comparative Literature and French who associates translation theory with a 'new Comparative Literature' (2006, 2013). In doing so, she acknowledges the following 'pioneers in the field of translation studies': 'George Steiner, André Lefevere, Antoine Berman, Gregory Rabassa, Lawrence Venuti, Jill Levine, Michel Heim, Henri Meschonnic, Susan Sontag, Richard Howell, and Richard Sieburth' (2006: 6). What do all these people have in common? Why are so few of them mentioned in the book you are reading right now?

8. Can translation be studied by looking at one language only? *Should* it be studied by people who know only one language?

9. Look for information on the translation services (not) provided for immigrants in your country. Are immigrants obliged to become translators themselves? What role do children play? What is the position of women with respect to the various languages? Are these problems and forms of translation addressed by theories of translation?

10. In 1928, in full Surrealist swing, the Brazilian poet Oswald de Andrade proclaimed his *Manifesto antropófago* for Brazilian culture. Here is a taste:

> Only Cannibalism unites us. Socially. Economically. Philosophically.
> The only law of the world. Masked expression of all individualisms, of all collectivisms. Of all religions. Of all peace treaties.
> Tupi, or not tupi that is the question.
> Against all catechisms. And against the mother of the Gracchus brothers.
> I am only interested in that which is not mine. Law of the human. Law of the cannibal.
>
> (Andrade 1928/1980: 81; my translation)

In 1978 the Brazilian poet Augusto de Campos applied this to translation, listing his favourite foreign poets and declaring, '[m]y way of loving them is to translate them. Or to swallow them down, in accordance with Oswald de Andrade's Cannibal Law: I am only interested in that which is not mine' (1978: 7; my translation). Compare these statements with the inner/outer dynamic described by Spivak. Are they talking about the same kind of translation? Now compare it with the guilt described by Spivak, or with the power of 'speaking on behalf of' mentioned by Callon and Latour. Do the degrees of guilt or power depend on the directionality of the translation? Could they have anything to do with your own experience when translating?

11. Compare the statements by Andrade and Campos with the accounts of postcolonial cannibalism theory in Vieira (1999) or Gentzler (2008). Do the above statements present a theory of translation? Do the commentaries by Vieira or Gentzler present much more evidence than the above? Have the commentaries somehow constructed a whole school of thought without reference to any actual translation practices in Brazil?

Postscript
Where's the evidence?

When I teach *Skopos* theory, I tell my students that before translating any text, they should always ask what the translation is for. One hour later I give them a text to translate, they all begin translating, and of course *no one* asks what it is for. The theory was for the theory lecture; practice is something else. Same thing with machine translation: students work in groups doing an hour of post-editing then I ask them why the machine translation systems get things wrong: all their replies concern abstract ideas about machine translation ('it can't think', 'it can't see context" 'it is sexist') rather than the actual examples they have just been working on. Somehow, my students fail to see that the abstract ideas, be they good or bad, can and should be tested in practice.

That separation of theory from practice is problematic. In the teaching situation, theoretical reflection should be embedded in the practice class, as far as possible, which means the practice class can include activities that test the viability of theoretical approaches. I have suggested a few such activities in this book.

The problem is not so much in our teaching institutions as it is in the way theorization is increasingly carried out. Any of the books from the bad old days of the 1950s and 1960s was full of examples, wallowing in practice, motivated by a love of language. You used to be able to see the theorist getting their hands dirty with the nitty-gritty of translations. That style of reflection has increasingly been replaced by theories about theories. How many theorists write books merely from their readings of other theorists? You can picture them there, reading about ideas, thinking about the ideas, then writing about the ideas as they read – producing book after book, with barely a glance at anything remotely like practice. And I am caught up in the same game! Of course, it is very legitimate to engage in debate, and exchanges on the level of ideas can produce new ways of seeing things: they can challenge a thousand preconceptions. But there must be a point where the pure play of gratuitous theorizing turns into – let's face it – bullshit, a term I use not as a gratuitous insult but as a technical description of a discourse that cares not about truth but about building and affirming social

relationships (Frankfurt 2005). Many of these theories do precisely that: they bring together like-minded scholars who can convince each other that they are on the right path to somewhere. And that path only rarely passes through the practice of translation.

That is why many of the more recent theoretical claims have an incredibly weak empirical basis – our feet of clay. How can you presume to imitate the complexity models of data-rich science if you are in a data-poor science? How can you bravely go out to inform all other disciplines of how things can be done if your stock of knowledge and procedures barely suffices to explain the most restricted forms of translation? Yes, I know that the one set of data can be explained by multiple theories; yes, I know that political struggles also happen on the level of theory just as they do on any other level; yes, I admire the beauty of a concept that works and I revel in the pyrotechnics of dialectic debate, which also has its pleasures as a practice. Those are all reasons for defending theories about theories and for theorists. Those are all things that can build social relationships, heroes, groups, and fans. There must nevertheless come a point where someone, somewhere, has to ask where the evidence is.

My doubts partly spring from the dilemmas of what we now know as a post-truth age, where simulacra effectively bring about change and there is no time and less public will to check the evidence. It is as if there were no new evidence to look at. My claim is not that any special truth springs from evidence. It is that work on evidence can and should engage research in the problems of a wider world, and that such engagement is very necessary. Why? Because a simple post-truth age has turned into something else, I suspect, when machine translation is changing actual practice, giving new evidence to look at, when superdiverse cities make translation a problem of municipal governance, and when, more powerfully, a pandemic speaks truth through numbers of deaths and the planet gives other sets of numbers that point to cataclysmic climate change. Technology brings new practices, societies enter new phases, and nature, as in the darkest Romantic age, retains its truths, which we must take heed of. In the case of translation, that means taking automation seriously, looking at complex cities rather than discrete language spaces, and getting urgent behaviour-change messages to be effective across languages, where the effects can also be measured in numbers, new numbers. Translation theorists who only read other translation theorists might have missed news from those several fronts.

Here, then, is a suggestion about how to do theory. When theorizing translation, when developing your own translation theory, first identify a problem – a situation of doubt requiring action, or a question in need of an answer – and *make sure you can get evidence on it*. Then go in search of ideas that can help you work on that problem. Search anywhere: East, West, North, South, it does not matter at all – nationalism is a luxury we cannot afford. And then be prepared to change all prior theories when the evidence does not fit.

References

Akrich, M., M. Callon, and B. Latour (2006) *Sociologie de la traduction. Textes fondateurs*, Paris: Presses de l'École des Mines.

Alighieri, D. (1307/1887). *Convivio*, trans. E. Price Sayer as *The Banquet*, Glasgow and New York: George Routledge and Sons.

Alves, F. and J. Gonçalves (2004) 'Modelling Translator's [sic] competence: Relevance and Expertise under Scrutiny', in Y. Gambier, M. Shlesinger, and R. Stolze (eds) *Doubts and Directions in Translation Studies*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 41–55.

Amirian, Z., and M. Baghiat (2013) 'Uncertainty and Uncertainty Management: The Metacognitive State of Problem-solving of Professional (Experienced) Translators and Students of Translation Studies', *International Journal of English Language and Translation Studies* 1: 223–242.

Ammann, M. (1994) 'Von Schleiermacher bis Sartre. Translatologische Interpretationen', in M. Snell-Hornby and K. Kaindl (eds) *Translation Studies. An Interdiscipline*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 37–44.

Andrade, O. de (1928/1980) 'Manifesto antropófago', in J. Schwartz (ed.) *Literatura comentada*, São Paulo: Abril, pp. 81–83.

Angelone, E. (2010) 'Uncertainty, Uncertainty Management and Metacognitive Problem Solving in the Translation Task', in G. M. Shreve and E. Angelone (eds) *Translation and Cognition*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 17–40.

Angelone, E., M. Ehrensberger-Dow, and G. Massey (eds) (2019) *The Bloomsbury Companion to Language Industry Studies*, London: Bloomsbury Academic.

Appiah, K. A. (2000/2021) 'Thick Translation', in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, fourth edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 339–351.

Apter, E. (2006) *The Translation Zone. A New Comparative Literature*, Princeton, NJ and Oxford: Princeton University Press.

—— (2013) *Against World Literature. On the Politics of Untranslatability*, London and New York: Verso.

Arrojo, R. (1992) *Oficina de tradução. A teoria na prática*, second edition, São Paulo: Ática.

—— (1993) *Tradução, Deconstrução e Psicanálise*, Rio de Janeiro: Imago.

—— (1994) 'Fidelity and the Gendered Translation', *Traduction, terminologie, rédaction* 7: 147–63.

—— (1997) 'Asymmetrical Relations of Power and the Ethics of Translation', *TEXTconTEXT* 11: 5–25.

—— (1998) 'The Revision of the Traditional Gap between Theory and Practice and the Empowerment of Translation in Postmodern Times', *The Translator* 4: 25–48.

Asad, T. (1986) 'The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Anthropology', in J. Clifford and G. E. Marcus (eds) *Writing Culture. The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, pp. 141–164.

Asscher, O. (2022) 'The Explanatory Power of Descriptive Translation Studies in the Machine Translation Era', *Perspectives. Studies in Translation Theory and Practice*, doi: 10.1080/0907676X.2022.2136005

Augustine of Hippo (Aurelius Augustinus) (c.400/1969) 'De catechizandis rudibus', in A. B. Bauer et al. (eds) *Aurelii Augustini Opera*, vol. 13.2, Turnout: Brepols.

Austin, J. L. (1962) *How to Do Things with Words*, London: Oxford University Press.

Ayvazyan, N., and A. Pym (2016) 'West enters East. A Strange case of Unequal Equivalences in Soviet Translation Theory', in L. Schippel and C. Zwischenberger (eds) *Going East: Discovering New and Alternative Traditions in Translation Studies*, Berlin: Frank & Timme, pp. 221–245.

Axelrod, R. (1984). *The Evolution of Cooperation*, New York: Basic Books.

—— (1986) 'An Evolutionary Approach to Norms', *The American Political Science Review* 80(4): 1095–1111.

Bachmann-Medick, D. (2006) *Cultural Turns. Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften*, Reinbek: Rowohlt.

—— (2009) 'Introduction: The Translational Turn', *Translation Studies* 2(1): 2–16.

Badiou, A. (1988) *L'Être et l'évènement*, Paris: Seuil.

—— (1997) *Saint Paul. La fondation de l'universalisme*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.

Barkhudarov, L. S. (1975) *Язык и перевод (Вопросы общей и частной теории перевода)* [Language and Translation. Questions on the General and Specialized Theory of Translation], Moscow: Mezhdunarodnye otnosheniya.

Batyushkov, F. D. (1920) 'Задачи художественных переводов' [Problems of Literary Translation], in F. D. Batyushkov, N. Gumilyov, and K. Chukovsky (eds) *Принципы художественного перевода* [Principles of Literary Translation], Saint Petersburg: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, pp. 7–15. (Originally published in 1919 in the form of a brochure with texts by Gumilyov and Chukovsky; the 1920 edition includes Batyushkov.)

Baumgarten, S. (2009) *Translating Hitler's "Mein Kampf"–A Corpus-Aided Discourse-Analytical Study*, Saarbrücken: VDM Verlag.

Benjamin, W. (1923/1977) 'Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers', in *Illuminationen: Ausgewählte Schriften*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, pp. 50–62.

—— (1923/2004) 'The Task of the Translator', trans. H. Zohn, in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, second edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 75–85.

—— (1923/2021) 'The Task of the Translator', trans. S. Rendall, in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, fourth edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 89–97.

Berger, K, and C. Nord (trans.) (1999) *Das Neue Testament und frühchristliche Schriften*, Frankfurt: Insel.

Berman, A. (1984/1992) *The Experience of the Foreign. Culture and Translation in Romantic Germany*, trans. S. Heyvaert, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

—— (1985) 'La traduction et la lettre, ou l'auberge du lointain', in *Les Tours de Babel : Essais sur la traduction,* Mauvezin: Trans-Europ-Repress, pp. 35–150.

—— (1990) 'La retraduction comme espace de la traduction', *Palimpsestes* 4: 1–7.

—— (1995) *Pour une critique des traductions: John Donne*, Paris: Gallimard.

—— (1999) *La traduction et la lettre ou l'Auberge du lointain*, Paris: Seuil.

Bermann, S., and M. Wood (eds) (2005) *Nation, Language, and the Ethics of Translation*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Besler, I. (2019) 'Übersetzungstheorie in Russland', in H. Siever (ed.) *Neuere Entwicklungen in der europäischen Translationstheorie*, Munich: Akademische Verlagsgemeinschaft München, pp. 173–259.

Bessen, J. E. (2016) *How Computer Automation Affects Occupations: Technology, Jobs, and Skills*, Boston: University School of Law. Law and Economics Research Papers. Paper no. 15–49.

Bhabha, H. (1994/2004) *The Location of Culture*, Routledge Classics Edition, London and New York: Routledge.

Bigelow, J. (1978) 'Semantics of Thinking, Speaking and Translation', in F. Guenthner and M. Guenthner-Reutter (eds), *Meaning and Translation. Philosophical and Linguistic Approaches*, London: Duckworth, pp. 109–135.

Blum-Kulka, S. (1986/2004) 'Shifts of Cohesion and Coherence in Translation', in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, second edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 290–305.

Blum-Kulka, S., and E. A. Levenston (1983) 'Universals of Lexical Simplification', in C. Faerch and G. Casper (eds.) *Strategies in Inter-language Communication*, London and New York: Longman, pp. 119–39.

Bond, E. (2018) 'The Stunning Variety of Job Titles in the Language Industry', *Slator* https://slator.com/features/the-stunning-variety-of-job-titles-in-the-language-industry/.

Brislin, R. W. (1981) *Cross-Cultural Encounters. Face-to-Face Interaction*, New York: Pergamon.

Brodski, B. (2007) *Can these Bones Live? Translation, Survival, and Cultural Memory*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Brooks, D. (2000) 'What Price Globalization? Managing Costs at Microsoft', in R. C. Sprung (ed.) *Translating into Success. Cutting-edge Strategies for Going Multilingual in a Global Age*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 43–57.

Bühler, K. (1934/1982) *Sprachtheorie. Die Darstellungsfunktion der Sprache*, Stuttgart and New York: Gustav Fischer.

Burge, T. (1978) 'Self-Reference and Translation', in F. Guenther and M. Guenther-Reutter (eds) Meaning and *Translation. Philosophical and Linguistic Approaches*, London: Duckworth, pp. 137–153.

Buzelin, H. (2007) 'Translations "in the Making"', in M. Wolf and A. Fukari (eds) *Constructing a Sociology of Translation*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 135–160.

Cadera, S. M., and A. S. Walsh (eds) (2022) *Retranslation and Reception. Studies in a European Context*, Leiden: Brill.

Callon, M. (1975) 'L'opération de traduction', in P. Roquepio (ed.) *Incidence des rapports sociaux sur le développement des sciences et des techniques*, Paris: Cordes, pp. 105–141.

—— (1986) 'Some Elements for a Sociology of Translation: Domestication of the Scallops and the Fishermen of St-Brieuc Bay', in J. Law (ed.) *Power, Action and Belief: A New Sociology of Knowledge?* London: Routledge, pp. 196–223.

Callon, M., and B. Latour (2006) 'Unscrewing the Big Leviathan; or How Actors Macrostructure Reality, and How Sociologists Help Them to Do So', in K. D. Knorr and A. Cicourel (eds) *Advances in Social Theory and Methodology. Toward an Integration of Micro and Macro Sociologies*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 277–303.

Campbell, S. (2001) 'Choice Network Analysis in Translation Research', in M. Olohan (ed.) *Intercultural Faultlines. Research Models in Translation Studies I: Textual and Cognitive Aspects*, Manchester: St. Jerome, pp. 29–42.

Campos, A. de (1978) 'Verso, reverso, controverso', *Verso, reverso e controverso*, São Paulo: Perspectiva, pp. 7–8.

Campos, H. de (1962/1976) 'Da tradução como criação e como crítica', reprinted in Metalinguagem, São Paulo: Cultrix, pp. 35–36.

Cary, E. (1957) 'Théories soviétiques de la traduction', *Babel* 3: 179–90.

—— (1959) 'Andréi Fédorov: Introduction à la théorie de la traduction', *Babel* 5: 19–20.

Catford, J. C. (1965) *A Linguistic Theory of Translation: An Essay in Applied Linguistics*, London: Oxford University Press.

Cercel, L. (2013) *Übersetzungshermeneutik. Historische und systematische Grundlegung*, St. Ingbert: Röhrig.

Cercel, L., R. Stolze, and J. Stanley (eds) (2015) *Translational Hermeneutics: The First Symposium*, Bucharest: Zeta Books.

Chan, L. T. H. (2001) 'What's Modern in Chinese Translation Theory? Lu Xun and the Debates on Literalism and Foreignization in the May Fourth Period', *Traduction, terminologie, rédaction* 14(2): 196–223.

—— (2004) *Twentieth-century Chinese translation theory: Modes, issues and debates*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

—— (2020) *Western Theory in East Asian Contexts. Translation and Transtextual Rewriting*, London: Bloomsbury.

Chang, N. F. (2015) 'Does 'Translation' Reflect a Narrower Concept than 'Fanyi'? On the Impact of Western Theories on China and the Concern about Eurocentrism', *Translation and Interpreting Studies* 10(2): 223–242.

Chang, V. (2011) 'Translation Directionality and the Revised Hierarchical Model: An Eye-tracking Study', in S. O'Brien (ed.) *Cognitive Explorations of Translation*, London and New York: Continuum, pp. 154–174.

Chernyakhovskaya, L.A. (2009) 'Информационный подход к переводу' [Information Approach to Translation], *Мир Перевода* [World of Translation] 2(22): 39–46.

Chesterman, A. (1996) 'On Similarity', *Target* 8(1): 159–163.

—— (1997/2016) *Memes of Translation. The Spread of Ideas in Translation Theory*, revised edition, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

—— (1999) 'The Empirical Status of Prescriptivism', *Folia Translatologica* 6: 9–19.

—— (2001) 'Proposal for a Hieronymic Oath', in A. Pym (ed.) *The Return to Ethics*, Special issue of *The Translator* 7(2): 139–154.

—— (2004) 'What is a Unique Item?' In Y. Gambier, M. Shlesinger, and R. Stolze (eds) *Doubts and Directions in Translation Studies*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 3–14.

—— (2005) 'Where is Similarity?' in S. Arduini and R. Hodgson (eds) *Similarity and Difference in Translation*, Rimini: Guaraldi, pp. 63–75.

—— (2006) 'Interpreting the Meaning of Translation', in M. Suominen et al. (eds) *A Man of Measure. Festschrift in Honour of Fred Karlsson on his 60th Birthday*, Turku: Linguistic Association of Finland, pp. 3–11.

—— (2009) 'The Name and Nature of Translator Studies', *Hermes* 42: 13–22.

Chesterman, A., and R. Arrojo (2000) 'Forum: Shared Ground in Translation Studies', *Target* 12(1): 151–160.

Chomsky, N. (1980) *Rules and Representations*, New York: Columbia University Press.

—— (1986) *Knowledge of Language: Its Nature, Origin and Use*, New York: Praeger.

Cicero, M. T. (45 CE/2004) *De finibus*, trans. R. Woolf as *On Moral Ends*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—— (46 CE/1949) 'De optimo genere oratorum', trans. H. M. Hubbell in *Cicero: De Inventione, De Optimo Genere Oratorum, Topica*. London: Heinemann, pp. 349–372.

Clagett, M. (1953) 'The Medieval Latin Translations from the Arabic of the Elements of Euclid with Special Emphasis on the Versions of Adelard of Bath', *Isis* 44: 27–28, 38–42.

Clifford, J. (1997) *Routes: Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Cohen, I. (2018) 'On Randomness', *Target* 30(1): 3–23.

Coșeriu, E. (1978) 'Falsche und richtige Fragenstellungen in der Übersetzungstheorie', in L. Grähs, G. Korlén, and B. Malmberg (eds) *Theory and Practice of Translation*, Peter Lang: Bern, Frankfurt a.M., Las Vegas, pp. 17–32.

Croce, B. (1902/1922) *Aesthetic as a Science of Expression and General Linguistic*, trans. D. Ainslie, London: Noonday.

Cronin, M. (2000) *Across the Lines: Travel, Language, Translation*, Cork: Cork University Press.

—— (2003) *Translation and Globalization*, London and New York: Routledge.

—— (2006) *Translation and Identity*, London and New York: Routledge.

—— (2013) *Translation in the Digital Age*, London and New York: Routledge.

—— (2017) *Eco-Translation. Translation and Ecology in the Age of the Anthropocene*, London and New York: Routledge.

Cui, Y., and B. Zheng (2022) 'Extralinguistic Consultation in English–Chinese Translation: A Study Drawing on Eye-Tracking and Screen-Recording Data', *Frontiers in Psychology* 13. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.891997

D'hulst, L. (1992) 'Sur le rôle des métaphores en traductologie contemporaine', *Target* 4(1): 33–51.

Davidson, D. (1986) 'A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs', in E. LePore (ed.) *Truth and Interpretation: Perspectives on the Philosophy of Donald Davidson*, Oxford and New York: Blackwell, pp. 433–446.

—— (2001) *Inquiries into Truth and Interpretation*, second edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Davis, K. (2001) *Deconstruction and Translation*, London and New York: Routledge.

de Man, P. (1986) *The Resistance to Theory*, Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

de Swaan, A. (2002) *Words of the World: The Global Language System*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Deleuze, G. (1968/1994) *Difference and Repetition*, trans. P. Patton, New York: Columbia University Press.

Delisle, J. (1988) *Translation: An Interpretive Approach*, trans. P. Logan and M. Creery, Ottawa: University Press.

Delisle, J., and J. Woodsworth (eds) (1995) *Translators through History*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Derrida, J. (1967) *De la grammatologie*, Paris: Minuit.

—— (1968) 'La pharmacie de Platon', *Tel Quel* 32: 3–48; 33: 18–59.

—— (1972) *Marges de la philosophie*, Paris: Minuit.

—— (1979) 'Living On: Border Lines', in H. Bloom (ed.) *Deconstruction and Criticism*, New York: Seabury, pp. 75–176.

—— (1982/1985) *The Ear of the Other: Otobiography, Transference, Translation: Texts and Discussions with Jacques Derrida*, trans. P. Kamuf, New York: Schocken Books.

—— (1985) 'Des Tours de Babel' (French and English versions), in J. F. Graham (ed.) *Difference in Translation*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, pp. 165–207, 209–248.

—— (1990) *Du droit à la philosophie*, Paris: Galilée.

—— (1993) *Spectres de Marx: l'état de la dette, le travail du deuil et la nouvelle Internationale*, Paris: Galilée.

—— (1999) 'Qu'est-ce qu'une traduction « relevante »?' *Quinzièmes Assises de la Traduction Littéraire*, Arles: Actes Sud, pp. 21–48.

Derzhavyn, V. (1927) 'Проблема віршованого перекладу' [The problem of poetic translation], *Плужанин* [Plužanin] 9–10: 44–51.

Duarte, J. F. (2005) 'Para uma crítica de retórica da tradução em Homi Bhabha', in A. G. Macedo and M. E. Keating (eds) *Colóquio de Outono. Estudos de tradução–Estudos pós-coloniais*, Braga: Universidade do Minho, pp. 89–100.

Eco, U. (1977) *A Theory of Semiotics*, London and Basingstoke: Macmillan.

—— (2001) *Experiences in Translation*, trans. A. McEwan, Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press.

Eco, U., et al. (1992) *Interpretation and Overinterpretation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ehrensberger-Dow, M., and G. Massey (2014) 'Cognitive Ergonomic Issues in Professional Translation', in J. W. Schwieter and A. Ferreira (eds) *The Development of Translation Competence: Theories and Methodologies from Psycholinguistics and Cognitive Science*, Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars, pp. 58–86.

Eliot, T. S. (1933/1975) 'The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism', in F. Kermode (ed.) *Selected Prose of T. S. Eliot*, Orlando, FL: Harcourt, pp. 79–06.

Englund Dimitrova, B. (2005) *Expertise and Explicitation in the Translation Process*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Even-Zohar, I. (1978) 'The Position of Translated Literature within the Literary Polysystem', in J. S. Holmes et al. (eds) *Literature and Translation*, Leuven: Acco, pp. 117–127; cited here from I. Even-Zohar, *Papers in Historical Poetics*, Tel Aviv: Porter Institute, pp. 21–27.

—— (1986) 'The Quest for Laws and its Implications for the Future of the Science of Literature', in G. M. Vajda and J. Riesz (eds) *The Future of Literary Scholarship*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, pp. 75–79.

—— (1990a) 'Translation and Transfer', *Poetics Today* 11(1): 73–78.

—— (1990b) 'Polysystem theory', *Poetics Today* 11(1): 9–26.

—— (2008) *Ideational Labor and the Production of Social Energy: Intellectuals, Idea Makers and Culture Entrepreneurs*, Tel Aviv: Porter Chair of Semiotics.

Enríquez Raído, V. (2014) *Translation and Web Searching*, New York and London: Routledge.

Fedorov, A. V. (1953) *Введение в теорию перевода* [Introduction to the Theory of Translation], Moscow: Literaturi na inostrannix iazikax. Literatury na inostrannykh yazykakh, Chinese translation: 翻译理论概要 [Introduction to the Theory of Translation], Beijing: Zhonghua, 1955. English translation by B. J. Baer, *Fedorov's Introduction to Translation Theory*, London and New York: Routledge, 2021.

Folkart, B. (1991) *Le Conflit des énonciations. Traduction et discours rapporté*, Montreal: Balzac.

Frank, A. P. (1989) 'Translation as System and *Übersetzungskultur*, On Histories and Systems in the Study of Literary Translation', *New Comparison* 8: 85–98.

Freeman D. (1999) *The Fateful Hoaxing of Margaret Mead: A Historical Analysis of her Samoan Research*, Boulder, CO: Westview.

Gadamer, H. G. (1960/2013) *Wahrheit und Methode: Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik*, trans. J. Weinsheimer and D. G. Marshall, *Truth and Method*, second edition. London and New York: Bloomsbury.

—— (1994) *Heidegger's Ways*, trans. J. W. Stanley, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Ganguly, A. (2019) 'Border Ethics: Translation and Planetarity in Spivak', *Intermédialités / Intermediality* 34. https://doi.org/10.7202/1070871ar

Garbovskiy, N., and O. Kostikova (2012) 'Science of Translation Today: Change of Scientific Paradigm', *Meta* 57(1): 48–66.

Gentzler, E. (1993/2001) *Contemporary Translation Theories*, revised version, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

—— (2008) *Translation and Identity in the Americas*, London and New York: Routledge.

Goethe, J. W. von (1819/2010) *Noten und Abhandlungen zu besserem Verständnis des West-östlichen Divans*, translated M. Bidney and P. Anton von Arnim in *West-East Divan*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, pp. 278–279.

Goldfajn, T. (2020) 'Translation and Loss-Aversion', *Traduction, terminologie, rédaction* 33(1): 81–98.

Göpferich, S. (2009) 'Towards a Model of Translational Competence and its Acquisition: The Longitudinal Study TransComp', in S. Göpferich et al. (eds) *Behind the Mind. Methods, Models and Results in Translation Process Research*, Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur, pp. 12–38.

—— (2013) 'Translation Competence. Explaining Development and Stagnation from a Dynamic Systems Perspective', *Target* 25(1): 61–76.

Gouadec, D. (2007) *Translation as a Profession*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Grice, H. P. (1975) 'Logic and Conversation', in P. Cole and J. L. Morgan (eds) *Syntax and Semantics*, vol. 3, New York: Academic Press, pp. 41–58.

Guerberof-Arenas, A., and A. Toral (2020) 'The Impact of Post-editing and Machine Translation on Creativity and Reading Experience', *Translation Spaces* 9(2): 255–282.

Gutt, E. A. (1991/2014) *Translation and Relevance. Cognition and Context*, second edition, London and New York: Routledge.

Habib, M. S. (2020) 'The Need for a "National Translation Theory" in the Pakistani Academic Discourse', *Journal of English Language, Literature and Education* 1(4): 59–64.

Hadley, J. (2017) 'Indirect Translation and Discursive Identity: Proposing the Concatenation Effect Hypothesis', *Translation Studies* 10(2): 183–197.

Halverson, S. (1998) 'Translation Studies and Representative Corpora: Establishing Links between Translation Corpora, Theoretical/Descriptive Categories and a Conception of the Object of Study', *Meta* 43(4): 459–514.

—— (2007) 'Translations as Institutional Facts: An Ontology for "Assumed Translation"', in A. Pym, M. Shlesinger, and D. Simeoni (eds) *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 343–362.

Halverson, S., and H. Kotze (2022) 'Sociocognitive Constructs in Translation and Interpreting Studies (TIS). Do We really Need Concepts like Norms and Risks when we Have a Comprehensive Usage-based Theory of Language?', in S. L. Halverson and A. Marín García (eds) *Contesting Epistemologies in Cognitive Translation and Interpreting Studies*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 51–79.

Hansen, G. (2003) 'Controlling the Process: Theoretical and Methodological Reflections on Research into Translation Processes', in F. Alves (ed.) *Triangulating Translation: Perspectives in Process Oriented Research*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 25–42.

Hasegawa, Y. (2011) *The Routledge Course in Japanese Translation*, London and New York: Routledge.

He, Y., and J. Wang (2021) 'Eye Tracking Uncertainty Management in Sight Translation: Differences Between Professional and Novice Interpreters', in R. Muñoz Martín, S. Sun, and D. Li (eds) *Advances in Cognitive Translation Studies*, Singapore: Springer. doi: 10.1007/978-981-16-2070-69

Heidegger, M. (1957) *Der Satz vom Grund*, Pfullingen: Neske.

Heisenberg, W. (1927) 'Über den anschaulichen Inhalt der quantentheoretischen Kinematik und Mechanik', *Zeitschrift für Physik* 43: 172–198.

Hemmungs Wirtén, E. (1998) *Global Infatuation. Explorations in Transnational Publishing and Texts*, Uppsala: Uppsala University.

Hermans, T. (1997) 'Translation as Institution', in M. Snell-Hornby, Z. Jettmarová, and K. Kaindl (eds.) *Translation as Intercultural Communication*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 3–20.

—— (1999/2019) *Translation in Systems. Descriptive and Systemic Approaches Explained*, second edition. London and New York: Routledge.

—— (2007) *The Conference of the Tongues*, Manchester: St Jerome.

Hermans, T. (ed.) (1985) *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation*, London and Sydney: Croom Helm.

Hersey, S. J. (2006) *Endangered by Desire. T. G. H. Strehlow and the Inexplicable Vagaries of Private Passion*, PhD thesis, University of Western Sydney.

Hitler, A. (1925–26) *Mein Kampf*, Munich: Franz Eher.

Hjelmslev, L. (1943/1963) *Prolegomena to a Theory of Language*, trans. F. J. Whitfield, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin.

Hoffman, E. (1989) *Lost in Translation. Life in a New Lang*uage, New York: Penguin.

Holmes, J. S. (1970) 'Forms of Verse Translation and the Translation of Verse Form', in J. S. Holmes, F. de Haan, and A. Popovič (eds) *The Nature of Translation. Essays in the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation*, The Hague and Paris: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 91–105.

—— (1972/1988) 'The Name and Nature of Translation Studies', in J. S. Holmes, *Translated! Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 67–80.

—— (1988a) 'On Matching and Making Maps: From a Translator's Notebook', in J. S. Holmes, *Translated! Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 52–64.

—— (1988b) 'Rebuilding the Bridge at Bommel: Notes on the Limits of Translatability', in J. S. Holmes, *Translated! Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 45–52.

Holmes, J. S., F. de Haan, and A. Popovič (eds) (1970) *The Nature of Translation. Essays in the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation*, The Hague and Paris: Mouton de Gruyter.

Holmes, J. S., J. Lambert, and R. van den Broeck (eds) (1978) *Literature and Translation: New Perspectives in Literary Studies with a Basic Bibliography of Books on Translation Studies*, Louvain: Acco.

Holz-Mänttäri, J. (1984) *Translatorisches Handeln. Theorie und Methode*, Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica.

Hönig, H. G. (1997) 'Positions, Power and Practice: Functionalist Approaches and Translation Quality Assessment', *Current Issues in Language and Society* 4(1): 6–34.

Hönig, H. G., and P. Kussmaul (1982/1996) *Strategie der Übersetzung. Ein Lehr- und und Arbeitsbuch*, Tübingen: Narr.

Horace (c.19 BCE/1929) *Satires, Epistles, Ars Poetica*, trans. H. Rushton Fairclough, revised edition, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Hosking, G. (2014) *Trust. A History*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

House, J. (1997) *Translation Quality Assessment. A Model Revisited*, Tübingen: Narr.

—— (2000) 'Consciousness and the strategic use of aids in translation', in S. Tirkkonen-Condit and R. Jääskeläinen (eds) *Tapping and Mapping the Processes of Translation and Interpreting: Outlooks on Empirical Research*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 149–162.

—— (2018) *Translation. The Basics*, London and New York: Routledge.

Hu, B. (2020) 'How are translation norms negotiated? A case study of risk management in Chinese institutional translation', *Target* 32(1): 83–122.

—— (2022) 'Feeling foreign: A trust-based compromise model of translation reception', *Translation Studies* 15(2): 202–220.

Humboldt, W. von (1836) *Über die Verschiedenheit des menschlichen Sprachbaues und ihren Einfluss auf die geistige Entwickelung des Menschengeschlechts*, Berlin: Druckerei der Königlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Hunziker Heeb, A. (2016) 'Professional translators' self-concepts and directionality: indications from translation process research', *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 25: 74–88.

Iser, W. (1994) 'On Translatability', *Surfaces* 4: 5–13.

Jääskeläinen, R. (1999) *Tapping the Process: An Exploratory Study of the Cognitive and Affective Factors Involved in Translating*, Joensuu: University of Joensuu Publications in the Humanities.

Jääskeläinen, R., and S. Tirkkonen-Condit (1991) 'Automatised Processes in Professional vs. Non-Professional Translation: A Think-aloud Protocol Study', in S. Tirkkonen-Condit (ed.) *Empirical Research in Translation and Intercultural Studies*, Tübingen: Narr, pp. 89–110.

Jakobs, C. (1975) 'The Monstrosity of Translation', *Modern Language Notes* 90: 755–766.

Jakobson, R. (1959/2021) 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, fourth edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 156–162.

—— (1960) 'Closing Statement: Linguistics and Poetics', in T. A. Sebeok (ed.) *Style in Language*, Cambridge MA, New York and London: MIT Press, John Wiley and Sons, pp. 350–377.

Jensen, A. (1999) 'Time Pressure in Translation', in G. Hansen (ed.) *Probing the Process in Translation: Methods and Results*, Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur, pp. 103–119.

Jensen, A., and A. Lykke Jakobsen (2000) 'Translating under Time Pressure', in A. Chesterman, N. Gallardo San Salvador, and Y. Gambier (eds) *Translation in Context*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 105–116.

Jerome (Eusebius Hieronymus) (395 CE/1958) 'On the Best Kind of Translator' (Letter 57 to Pammachius), in P. Caroll (ed. and trans.) *The Satirical Letters of St. Jerome*, Chicago, IL: Gateway, pp. 132–51

Jiménez-Crespo, M. A. (2013) *Translation and Web Localization*, London and New York: Routledge.

Kade, O. (1968) *Zufall und Gesetzmäßigkeit in der Übersetzung*, Leipzig: VEB Verlag Enzyklopädie.

Kahneman, D. (2011) *Thinking, Fast and Slow*, New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

Kahneman, D., and D. T. Miller (1986) 'Norm Theory: Comparing Reality to its Alternatives', *Psychological Review* 93(2): 136–153.

Kal'nychenko, O. (2011) 'A Sketch of the Ukrainian History of Translation of the 1920s', in T. Hermans, A. Chalvin, A. Lange, and D. Monticelli (eds), *Between Cultures and Texts: Itineraries in Translation History*, Frankfurt, Berlin, Bern, Brussels, New York, Oxford, Wien: Peter Lang, pp. 255–267.

Kamenická, R. (2007) 'Explicitation Profile and Translator Style', in A. Pym and A. Perekrestenko (eds) *Translation Research Projects 1*, Tarragona: Intercultural Studies Group, pp. 117–130.

Katz, J. (1978) 'Effability and Translation', in F. Guenthner and M. Guenthner-Reutter (eds) *Meaning and Translation. Philosophical and Linguistic Approaches,* London: Duckworth, pp. 191–234.

Kazakova, T. (2014) 'Propositions on Current Trends in Russian Translation Studies', *Europa Orientalis* 33: 1–12.

Kenny, A. (ed.) (2018) *Carl Strehlow's 1909 Comparative Heritage Dictionary*, Acton ACT: Australian National University Press.

Keohane, R. (1984) *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Kiraly, D. C. (2000) *A Social Constructivist Approach to Translator Education. Empowerment from Theory to Practice*, Manchester: St Jerome.

Knight, G. W. (1973) *Jackson Knight: A Biography*, Oxford: Alden Press.

Koller, W. (1979/2020) *Einführung in die Übersetzungswissenschaft*, ninth edition, with K. Berg Henjum, Heidelberg and Wiesbaden: Quelle & Meyer.

Kotze, H. (2021) 'Translation is the canary in the coalmine. What the debate about Amanda Gorman's translators is really about', Medium blog. https://haidee-kotze.medium.com/translation-is-the-canary-in-the-coalmine-c11c75a97660

Krings, H. P. (1988) 'Blick in die "Black Box"–eine Fallstudie zum Übersetzungsprozeß bei Berufsübersetzern', in R. Arntz (ed.) *Textlinguistik und Fachsprache*, Hildesheim: Olms, pp. 393–412.

Kruger [Kotze], H. (2012) *Postcolonial Polysystems. The Production and Reception of Translated Children's Literature in South Africa*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Kuczmarski, K. (2013) 'The Great Plural Experiment', https://xion.org.pl/2013/03/31/the-great-plural-experiment/

Kundu, R. (2019) 'Colonial Politics of Finding Equivalence: Interpreting "Translation" and *anubad* through Nineteenth Century English to Sanskrit/Bengali Dictionaries', *Translation Today* 13(2): 35–60.

Künzli, A. (2001) 'Experts *versus* novices: l'utilisation de sources d'information pendant le processus de traduction', *Meta* 46(3): 507–523.

—— (2004) 'Risk taking: trainee translators vs. professional translators. A case study', *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 2: 34–49.

Kurzweil, R. (2005) *The Singularity Is Near*, New York: Viking Books.

Kussmaul, P. (1995) *Training the Translator*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Latour, B. (1984/1988) *The Pasteurization of France*, Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press.

—— (2005) *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

—— (2018) *Down to Earth: Politics in the New Climatic Regime*, trans. C. Porter, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Laygues, A. (2006) 'Pour une réaffirmation de l'« être-ensemble » par la traduction', *Meta* 51: 838–847.

Lecercle, J. J. (1990) *The Violence of Language*, London and New York: Routledge.

Lefevere, A. (1992) *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, London and New York: Routledge.

Lefevere, A., and S. Bassnett (1990) 'Introduction: Proust's Grandmother and the Thousand and One Nights: The "Cultural Turn" in Translation Studies', in S. Bassnett and A. Lefevere (eds) *Translation, History and Culture*, London and New York: Pinter, pp. 1–13.

Levý, J. (1963/2011) *Umění překladu*, trans. P. Corness, ed. Z. Jettmarová, as *The Art of Translation*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

—— (1967/2000) 'Translation as a Decision Process', in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 148–159.

Lewis, P. E. (1985/2004) 'The Measure of Translation Effects', in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, second edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 256–275.

Liu, M. H. (2009) 'How do experts interpret? Implications from research in Interpreting Studies and cognitive science', in G. Hansen, A. Chesterman, and H. Gerzymisch-Arbogast (eds) *Efforts and Models in Interpreting and Translation Research*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 159–177.

Locke, J. (1690/1841) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, London: Tegg.

Lockwood, R. (2000) 'Machine Translation and Controlled Authoring at Caterpillar', in R. C. Sprung (ed.) *Translating into Success. Cutting-edge Strategies for Going*

Multilingual in a Global Age, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 187–202.

Loh D.Y. (陆殿扬). (1958) 英汉翻译的理论与技巧/ *Translation: Its Principles and Techniques*, two volumes, Beijing: Times Publishing.

Lörscher, W. (1991) *Translation Performance, Translation Process, and Translation Strategies. A Psycholinguistic Investigation*, Tübingen: Narr.

Lotman, Y., and B. Uspenskiy (1971/1978) 'On the semiotic mechanism of culture', *New Literary History* 9(2): 211–232.

Lovell, J., and C. Bull (2018) *Authentic and Inauthentic Places in Tourism*, London and New York: Routledge.

Lu, X. (1931/2021) In 'An Exchange on Translation', trans. C. Estep, in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, fourth edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 106–121.

Luhmann, N. (1968) *Vertrauen. Ein Mechanismus der Reduktion sozialer Komplexität*, Stuttgart: Ferdinand Enke.

—— (1985) *A Sociological Theory of Law*, trans. E. King and M. Albrow, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

—— (1988) 'Familiarity, Confidence, Trust: Problems and Alternatives', in D. Gambetta (ed.) *Trust Making and Breaking. Cooperative Relations*, New York: Blackwell, pp. 94–108.

—— (2008) 'Are There Still Indispensable Norms in Our Society?', trans. T. Cesaratto, *Soziale Systeme* 14(1): 18–37.

Lung, R. (2011) *Interpreters in Early Imperial China*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Luo, X. (2002) '"Elegance" in translation: a postcolonial mark', *Perspectives: Studies in Translation Theory and Practice* 10(3): 207– 214.

Luther, M. (1530) *Ein sendbrieff D. M. Lutthers. Von Dolmetzschen vnd Fürbit der heiligenn*, Nuremberg: Johann Petreius für Georg Rottmaier.

Lykke Jakobsen, A. (2002) 'Translation Drafting by Professional Translators and by Translation Students', in G. Hansen (ed.) *Empirical Translation Studies: Process and Product*, Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur, pp. 191–204.

Lykke Jakobsen, A., and K. T. H. Jensen (2008) 'Eye Movement Behaviour Across Four Different Types of Reading Task', *Copenhagen Studies in Language* 36: 103–124.

Maitland, S. (2017) *What is Cultural Translation?* London: Bloomsbury.

Malblanc, A. (1944/1963) *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'allemand: Essai de représentation linguistique comparée et étude de traduction*, Paris: Didier.

Malmkjær, K. (1997) 'Linguistics in Functionland and through the Front Door. A Response to Hans G. Hönig', *Current Issues in Language and Society* 4(1): 70–74.

—— (2020) *Translation and Creativity*, London and New York: Routledge.

Marais, K. (2014) *Translation Theory and Development Studies: A Complexity Theory Approach*, London and New York: Routledge.

—— (2019) *A (Bio)Semiotic Theory of Translation. The Emergence of Social-Cultural Reality*, London and New York: Routledge.

Marais, K., and R. Meylaerts (eds) (2019) *Complexity Thinking in Translation Studies: Methodological Considerations*, London and New York: Routledge.

Marais, K., and R. Meylaerts (2022) *Exploring the Implications of Complexity Thinking for Translation Studies*, London and New York: Routledge.

Massey, G., and M. Ehrensberger-Dow (2014) 'Looking beyond Text: The Usefulness of Translation Process Data', in D. Knorr, C. Heine, and J. Engberg (eds) *Methods in Writing Process Research*, Bern: Peter Lang, pp. 81–98.

Massey, G., E. Huertas Barros, and D. Katan (eds) (2023) *The Human Translator in the 2020s*, London and New York: Routledge.

Mayoral, R. (2003) *Translating Official Documents*, Manchester: St Jerome.

McElduff, S. (2009) 'Living at the Level of the Word. Cicero's Rejection of the Interpreter as Translator', *Translation Studies* 2(2): 133–146.

Melby, A., and C. Kurz (2021) 'Data: Of Course! MT: Useful or Risky. Translators: Here to Stay!', *MultiLingual* Nov/Dec 2021: https://multilingual.com/issues/november-december-2021/data-of-course-mt-useful-or-risky-translators-here-to-stay/

Meschonnic, H. (1973) 'Propositions pour une poétique de la traduction', *Pour la poétique II*, Paris: Gallimard, pp. 305–316.

—— (1999) *Poétique du traduire*, Lagrasse: Verdier.

—— (2003) 'Texts on Translation', trans. A. Pym, *Target* 15(2): 337–353.

—— (2011) *Ethics and Politics of Translating*, ed. and trans. P. P. Boulanger, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Meylaerts, R., and K. Marais (2022) 'Exploring the Implications of Complexity Thinking for Translation Studies', in K. Marais and R. Meylaerts (eds) *Exploring the Implications of Complexity Thinking for Translation Studies*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 1–6.

Miko, F. (1970) 'La théorie de l'expression et la traduction', in J. S. Holmes, F. de Haan, and A. Popovič (eds) *The Nature of Translation. Essays in the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation*, The Hague and Paris: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 61–77.

Miller, J. H. (1995) *Topographies*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Min'jar-Beloruchev, R. K. (1996) *Теория и методы перевода* [Theory and Method of Translation], Moscow: Lyceum.

Miyata, R. (2021) *Controlled Document Authoring in a Machine Translation Age*, London and New York: Routledge.

Moore, D. (2019) 'The Wanderings of Altjira, Christianity and the Translation of Sacred Words in Central Australia', in S. Dedenbach-Salazar Sáenz (ed.) *Translating Wor(l)ds: Christianity Across Cultural Boundaries*, Baden-Baden: Academia Verlag, pp. 127–156.

Mossop, B. (1995) 'Understanding poorly written source texts', *Terminology Update* 28(2): 4–21.

—— (2016) 'Invariance orientation: Identifying an object for translation studies', *Translation Studies* 10(3): 329–388.

Mounin, G. (1963) *Les Problèmes théoriques de la traduction*, Paris: Gallimard.

Mumford, L. (1934/2010) *Technics and Civilization*, Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Munday, J., S. Ramos Pinto, and J. Blakesley (2022) *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and Applications*, fifth edition, London and New York: Routledge.

Muñoz Martín, R., and M. Apfelthaler (2021) 'Spillover Effects in Task-Segment Switching: A Study of Translation Subtasks as Behavioral Categories within the Task Segment Framework', in R. Muñoz Martín, S. Sun, and D. Li (eds) *Advances in Cognitive Translation Studies*, Singapore: Springer, pp. 19–45.

Muñoz Martín, R., and C. Olalla-Soler (2022) 'Translating is not (only) problem solving', *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 38: 3–31.

Nabokov, V. (1955) 'Problems of Translation: *Onegin* into English', *Partisan Review* 22(4): 498–512.

Nattier, J. (2008) *A Guide to the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Translations*, Tokyo: Meiwa.

Nedelkoska, L., and G. Quintini (2018) *Automation, Skills Use and Training*, OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, No. 202, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/2e2f4eea-en.

Neves, M. (2019) 'Antifragile Tactics for Translators – A Primer', *transLogos* 2(2): 27–47.

Newmark, P. (1988) *A Textbook of Translation*, New York: Prentice Hall.

—— (1997) 'The Customer as King', *Current Issues in Language and Society* 4(1): 75–77.

Nida, E. (1964) *Toward a Science of Translating with Special Reference to Principles and Procedures involved in Bible Translating*, Leiden: Brill.

—— (1970) 'Formal correspondence in translation', *The Bible Translator* 21(3): 105–113.

Nida, E., and C. Taber (1969) *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, Leiden: Brill.

Nord, C. (1988/1991) *Text Analysis in Translation. Theory, Method, and Didactic Application of a Model for Translation-Oriented Text Analysis*, Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi.

—— (1997/2018) *Translating as a Purposeful Activity. Functionalist Approaches Explained*, second edition, London and New York: Routledge.

—— (2001) 'Loyalty Revisited. Bible Translation as a Case in Point', in A. Pym (ed.) *The Return to Ethics*, special issue of *The Translator* 7(2): 185–202.

—— (2014) *Hürden-Sprünge. Ein Plädoyer für mehr Mut beim Übersetzen*, Berlin: BDÜ Weiterbildungs-und Fachverlagsgesellschaft.

O'Hagan, M. (ed.) (2020) *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Technology*, London and New York: Routledge.

Olalla-Soler, C. (2018) 'Using electronic information resources to solve cultural translation problems: differences between students and professional translators', *Journal of Documentation* 74: 1293–1317.

O'Sullivan, C. (2018) '"New and Improved Subtitle Translation": Representing Translation in Film Paratexts', in I. Ranzato and S. Zanotti (eds) *Linguistic and Cultural Representation in Audiovisual Translation*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 265–279.

Olohan, M., and M. Baker (2000) 'Reporting *that* in translated English: Evidence for subconscious processes of explicitation?' *Across Languages and Cultures* 1(2): 141–158.

Paker, S. (2006) 'Ottoman Conceptions of Translation and its Practice: The 1897 "Classics Debate" as a Focus of Examining Change', in T. Hermans (ed.) *Translating Others*, vol. 2, Manchester, St. Jerome, pp. 325–348.

Paloposki, O., and K. Koskinen (2004) 'A Thousand and One Translations: Revisiting Retranslation', in G. Hansen, K. Malmkjær, and D. Gile (eds) *Claims, Change and Challenges in Translation Studies*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 27–38

Papastergiadis, N. (2000) *The Turbulence of Migration: Globalization, Deterritorialization and Hybridity*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Parsons, T. (1951) *The Social System*, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Peirce, C. S. (1931/1958) *Collected Papers,* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Peng, G. (2009) 'Using rhetorical structure theory (RST) to describe the development of coherence in interpreting trainees', *Interpreting* 11(2): 216–243.

Pöchhacker, F. (2001) 'Translationskultur im Krankenhaus', in G. Hebenstreit (ed.) *In Grenzen erfahren–sichtbar machen–überschreiten*, Frankfurt: Peter Lang, pp. 339–354.

—— (2022) *Introducing Interpreting Studies*, third edition, London and New York: Routledge.

Pöchhacker, F., and M. Shlesinger (eds) (2001) *The Interpreting Studies Reader*, London and New York: Routledge.

Poe, E. A. (1848/2011) *Eureka. An Essay on the Material and Spiritual Universe*, Auckland: The Floating Press.

Pokorn, N. K., and J. Čibej (2018) 'Interpreting and Linguistic Inclusion – Friends or Foes? Results from a Field Study', *The Translator* 24(2): 111–127.

Popovič, A. (1968/1970) 'The Concept "Shift of Expression" in Translation Analysis', in J. S Holmes, F. de Haan, and A. Popovič (eds) *The Nature of Translation. Essays in the Theory and Practice of Literary Translation*, The Hague and Paris: Mouton de Gruyter, pp. 78–87.

Prunč, E. (1997) 'Translationskultur (Versuch einer konstruktiven Kritik des translatorischen Handelns)', *TEXTconTEXT* 11: 99–127.

—— (2000) 'Vom Translationsbiedermeier zur Cyber-translation', *TEXTconTEXT* 14: 3–74.

Pym, A. (1992) 'Translation Error Analysis and the Interface with Language Teaching', in C. Dollerup and A. Loddegaard (eds) *The Teaching of Translation*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, pp. 279–288.

—— (1992/2018) *Translation and Text Transfer. An Essay on the Principles of Intercultural Communication*, second edition, Tarragona: Intercultural Studies Group.

—— (1998a) *Method in Translation History*, Manchester: St Jerome.

—— (1998b) 'Okay, so How are Translation Norms Negotiated?', *Current Issues in Language and Society* 5(1–2): 107–113.

—— (2004a) 'Propositions on Cross-Cultural Communication and Translation', *Target* 16(1): 1–28

—— (2004b) *The Moving Text. Translation, Localization, and Distribution*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

—— (2007a) 'On History in Formal Conceptualizations of Translation', *Across Languages and Cultures* 8(2): 153–166.

—— (2007b) 'On Shlesinger's Proposed Equalizing Universal for Interpreting', in F. Pöchhacker, A. Lykke Jakobsen, and I. M. Mees (eds) *Interpreting Studies and Beyond: A Tribute to Miriam Shlesinger*, Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur Press, pp. 175–190.

—— (2008) 'On Toury's Laws of How Translators Translate', in A. Pym, M. Shlesinger, and D. Simeoni (eds) *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies. Investigations in Homage to Gideon Toury*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 311–328.

—— (2009a) 'Using Process Studies in Translator Training. Self-discovery through Lousy Experiments', in S. Göpferich, F. Alves, and I. M. Mees (eds) *Methodology, Technology and Innovation in Translation Process Research*, Copenhagen: Samfundslitteratur, pp. 135–156.

—— (2009b) 'Humanizing Translation History', *Hermes* 42: 23–48.

—— (2014) 'Charles Bally and the Missing Equivalents', *Forum* 12(2): 45–63.

—— (2016a) *Translation Solutions for Many Languages – Histories of a Flawed Dream*, London: Bloomsbury.

—— (2016b). 'Risk analysis as a Heuristic tool in the Historiography of Interpreters. For an Understanding of Worst Practices', in J. Baigorri-Jalón and K. Takeda (eds) *New Insights in the History of Interpreting*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, pp. 247–268.

—— (2021a) 'Cooperation, Risk, Trust. A Restatement of Translator Ethics', *Stridon. Journal of Studies in Translation and Interpreting* 2(1): 5–24.

—— (2021b) 'On Recent Nationalisms in Translation Studies', *INContext* 1(1): 59–81.

—— (2021c) 'Translation and Language Learning as Policy Options', *Translation and Interpreting* 13(1): 24–37.

—— (2022) 'Conceptual Tools in Translation History', in C. Rundle (ed.) *The Routledge Handbook of Translation History*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 86–101.

Pym, A., and H. Turk (1998) 'Translatability', in M. Baker (ed.) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 273–277.

Pym, A., and E. Torres-Simón (2021) 'Is Automation Changing the Translation Profession?' *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 270: 39–57.

Pym, A., and Hu, B. (2022) 'Trust and Cooperation through Social Media. COVID-19 translations for Chinese communities in Melbourne', in T. K. Lee and D. Wang (eds) *Translation and Social Media Communication in the Age of the Pandemic*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 44–61.

Pym, A., B. Hu, Y. Hao, and K. Hu (2020) *A Typology of Translation Solutions for Chinese-English*, ResearchGate. doi: 10.13140/RG.2.2.10890.95680

Pym, A., J. Raigal-Aran, and C. Bestué Salinas (2023) 'Non-standard Court Interpreting as Risk Management', in C. Zwischenberger, K. Reithofer, and S. Rennert (eds) *Introducing New Hypertexts on Interpreting (Studies)*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 108–125.

Quine, W. V. O. (1960) *Word and Object*, Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

—— (1969) 'Linguistics and Philosophy', in S. Hook (ed.) *Language and Philosophy. A Symposium*, New York University Press, pp. 95–98.

—— (1990) *Pursuit of Truth*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Raunak, V., A. Menezes, and M. Junczys-Dowmunt (2021) 'The Curious Case of Hallucinations in Neural Machine Translation', in K. Toutanova et al. (eds) *Proceedings of the 2021 Conference of the North American Chapter of the Association for Computational Linguistics: Human Language Technologies*, pp. 1172–1183. https://arxiv.org/abs/2104.06683. Accessed July 14, 2022.

Reiss, K. (1971/2000) *Translation Criticism: Potential and Limitations. Categories and Criteria for Translation Quality Assessment*, trans. E. F. Rhodes, Manchester: St Jerome.

Reiss, K., and H. J. Vermeer (1984) *Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie*, Tübingen: Niemeyer; trans. S. García Reina and C. Martín de León as *Fundamentos para una teoría funcional de la traducción*, Madrid: Akal, 1996; trans. C. Nord and M. Dudenhöfer as *Towards a General Theory of Translational Action*, London and New York: Routledge, 2013.

Rendall, S. (1997) 'Notes on Zohn's Translation of Benjamin's "Die Aufgabe des Übersetzers"', *Traduction, terminologie, rédaction* 10(2): 191–206.

Renn, J. (2006) *Übersetzungsverhältnisse. Perspektiven einer pragmatistischen Gesellschaftstheorie*, Weilerswist: Velbrück.

—— (2014) *Performative Kultur und multiple Differenzierung: Soziologische Übersetzungen I*, Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

—— (2016) *Selbstentfaltung–Die Formen und das Formen der Person: Soziologische Übersetzungen II*, Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

—— (2021) *Indirekte Referenz–Pragmatischer Realismus und Medientheorie: Soziologische Übersetzungen III*, Bielefeld: Transcript Verlag.

Retsker, Y. I. (1950) 'О Закономерных соответствиях при переводе на родной язык' [On Regularities in Correspondence in Translation into the Native Language], in K. A. Ganshina and I. Karpov (eds) *Вопросы теории и методики учебного перевода* [Questions on the Theory and Methodology of Translator Training], Moscow: Akademiya pedagogicheskikh nauk RSFSR, pp. 156–183.

—— (1974/2007) *Теория перевода и переводческая практика* [Theory of translation and translation practice], Moscow: Mezhdunarodnii otnoshenia.

Revzin, I. I., and Rozentsveyg, V. I. (1964) *Основы Общего И Машинного Перевода* [Fundamentals of General and Machine Translation], Moscow: Vysshaia Shkola.

Ricœur, P. (2004) *Sur la traduction*, Paris: Bayard.

Rizzi, A., B. Lang, and A. Pym (2019) *What is Translation History? A Trust-Based Approach*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan.

Robinson, D. (1991). *The Translator's Turn*, Baltimore, MD and London: Johns Hopkins University Press.

—— (2001) *Who Translates? Translator Subjectivities beyond Reason*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

—— (2003) *Becoming a Translator. An Accelerated Course*, London and New York: Routledge.

—— (2013) *Feeling Extended. Sociality as Extended Body-Becoming-Mind*, Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press.

—— (2020) 'Reframing translational norm theory through 4EA cognition', *Translation, Cognition and Behavior* 3(1): 122–142.

—— (2022) 'Translation as icosis as negentropy at the edge of chaos', *Stridon: Studies in Translation and Interpreting* 2(1): 97–128.

—— (2023) *Priming Translation. Cognitive, Affective, and Social Factors*, New York and London: Routledge.

Rosa, A. A. (2003) 'What about a Section on Translation in that Literary History Volume? Readership, Literary Competence and Translation', *Current Writing* 14(2): 175–191.

Rose, M. G. (1997) *Translation and Literary Criticism. Translation as Analysis*, Manchester: St Jerome.

Rubel, P. G., and A. Rosman (2003) 'Introduction. Translation and Anthropology', in P. G. Rubel and A. Rosman (eds) *Translating Cultures. Perspectives on Translation and Anthropology*, Oxford and New York: Berg, pp. 1–22.

Ryabtseva, N. K. (2013) *Прикладные проблемы переводоведени* [Applied Aspects of Translation Studies], Moscow: Flinta-Nauka.

Saha, S. (2019) 'Indian *Anuvad* or English Translation? Combining Tradition and Modernity in the Nationalistic Translations of Nineteenth Century Bengal', *Translation Today* 13(2): 17–34.

Sallis J. (2002) *On Translation*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Santoyo, J. C. (1987) *Teoría y crítica de la traducción: Antología*, Bellaterra: Publicacions de la Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona.

Saura, C. (1976) *Cria cuervos*, film.

Saussure, F. de (1916/1974) *Course in General Linguistics,* trans. W. Baskin, Glasgow: Fontana Collins.

Schäler, R. (2006) 'Reverse Localization', *Multilingual* 17(3): 82.

Schjoldager, A. (2020) 'The Usefulness of Equivalence within Translation Studies: Memes, Paradigms and a Functional Translation Analysis', in M. Birkelund, S. Doubinsky, and C. Khona (eds) *Equivalence(s). Necessity and Challenges in Translation Today*, Department of German and Romance Languages, School of Communication and Culture, Aarhus University: eco, pp. 91–109.

Schleiermacher, F. (1813/1963) 'Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersezens', in H. J. Störig (ed.) *Das Problem des Übersetzens*, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, pp. 38–70.

Schreiber, M. (1998) 'Übersetzungstypen und Übersetzungsverfahren', in M. Snell-Hornby, H. G. Hönig, P. Kussmaul, and P. A. Schmitt (eds) *Handbuch Translation*, Tübingen: Stauffenburg, pp. 151–154.

Scott, C. (2012) *Literary Translation and the Rediscovery of Reading*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Searle, J. (1969) *Speech Acts: An Essay in the Philosophy of Language,* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Séguinot, C. (1989) 'The Translation Process: An Experimental Study', in C. Séguinot (ed.) *The Translation Process*, Toronto: HG Publications, pp. 21–53.

—— (2017) 'Perspectives on Cognition, Translation, and Translators', *Traduction, terminologie, rédaction* 30(1–2): 195–214.

Seleskovich, D., and M. Lederer (1984) *Interpréter pour traduire*, Paris: Didier.

Semizu, Y. (2006) 'Invisible Translation: Reading Chinese Texts in Ancient Japan', in T. Hermans (ed.) *Translating Others,* vol. 2, Manchester, St. Jerome, pp. 283–295.

Şerban, A. (2020) 'Linguistic Approaches in Translation Studies', in C. Millan-Varela and F. Bartrina (eds) *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies*, London and New York, Routledge, pp. 213–227.

Serres, M. (1974) *Hermès III. La Traduction*, Paris: Minuit.

Shlesinger, M. (1989) *Simultaneous Interpretation as a Factor in Effecting Shifts in the Position of Texts on the Oral-Literate Continuum*, MA thesis, Tel Aviv University.

Shveytser [Švejcer], A. D. (1987) *Übersetzung und Linguistik*, Berlin: Akademie.

Simeoni, D. (1998) 'The Pivotal Status of the Translator's Habitus', *Target* 10(1): 1–39.

Smirnov, A. A., and M. Alekseev (1934) 'Перевод' [Translation], in P. I. Lebedev-Polyansky et al. (eds) *Литературная энциклопедия* [Encyclopedia of Literature and Folklore], vol 8, Moscow: OGIZ RSFSR, http://feb-web.ru/feb/litenc/encyclop/le8/le8-5121.htm. Visited September 2022.

Smith, A. (1776/2000) *The Wealth of Nations*, New York: Random House.

Snell-Hornby, M. (1988) *Translation Studies. An Integrated Approach*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

—— (1990) 'Linguistic Transcoding or Cultural Transfer? A Critique of Translation Theory in Germany', in S. Bassnett and A. Lefevere (eds) *Translation, History and Culture*, London and New York: Pinter, pp. 79–86.

—— (1994) Contribution to D. Motas et al., 'New Translation Departments – Challenges of the Future', in M. Snell-Hornby, F. Pöchhacker, and K. Kaindl (eds) *Translation Studies, An Interdiscipline*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 431–434.

Sobolev, L. N. (1950) 'О мере точности в Переводе в Теория и Методика Учебного Перевода' [On the measure of exactitude in translation], in K. A. Ganshina and I. Karpov (eds) *Вопросы теории и методики учебного перевода* [Questions on the Theory and Methodology of Translation Teaching], Moscow: Akademiya pedagogicheskikh nauk RSFSR, pp.141–55.

Sorokin, Y. A. (2003) *Переводоведение: Статус переводчика и психогерменевтические процедуры* [Translation Studies: The Status of the Translator and Psycho-hermeneutic Procedures]. Moscow: Gnosis.

—— (2012) 'Лингвокультурология, лакунология, соматология и их априорная взаимосвязь (попытка расширения понятийного аппарата)' [Linguaculturology, Lacunology, Somatology and their A Priori Relationship (An Attempt to Expand the Concept)], *Стил* [Style] 8: 99–105.

Spivak, G. C. (1992/2021) 'The Politics of Translation', in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, fourth edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 320–338.

—— (2003) *Death of a Discipline*, New York: Colombia University Press.

—— (2007) 'Translation as Culture', in P. St-Pierre and P. C. Kar (eds) In *Translation – Reflections, Refractions, Transformations*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 263–276.

—— (2013) *An Aesthetic Education in the Era of Globalization*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Sprung, R. C. (ed.) (2000) *Translating into Success. Cutting-edge Strategies for Going Multilingual in a Global Age*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

Stolze, R. (2003) *Hermeneutik und Translation*, Tübingen: Gunter Narr.

Sun, S., R. Muñoz Martín, and D. Li (2021) 'Introduction: One More Step Forward – Cognitive Translation Studies at the Start of a New Decade', in R. Muñoz Martín, S. Sun, and D. Li (eds) *Advances in Cognitive Translation Studies*, Singapore: Springer, pp. 1–18.

Tang, F., and D. Li (2017) 'A Corpus-based Investigation of Explicitation Patterns between Professional and Student Interpreters in Chinese-English Consecutive Interpreting', *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer* 11(4): 373–395.

Tirkkonen-Condit, S. (1989) 'Professional versus Non-professional Translation: A Think-aloud Protocol Study', in C. Séguinot (ed.) *The Translation Process*, Toronto: HG Publications, pp. 73–85.

—— (1992) 'The Interaction of World Knowledge and Linguistic Knowledge in the Processes of Translation: A Think-aloud Protocol Study', in B. Lewandowska-Tomaszczyk and M. Thelen (eds) *Translation and Meaning, Part 2*. Maastricht: Rijkshogeschool Maastricht, pp. 433–440.

—— (2000) 'Uncertainty in translation processes', in S. Tirkkonen-Condit and Riitta Jääskeläinen (eds) *Tapping and Mapping the Processes of Translation and Interpreting: Outlooks on Empirical Research*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 123–142.

—— (2004) 'Unique Items – Over- or Under-represented in Translated Language?' in A. Mauranen and P. Kujamäki (eds) *Translation Universals. Do they Exist?* Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 177–186.

Tiselius, E. (2013) *Experience and Expertise in Conference Interpreting: An Investigation of Swedish Conference Interpreters*, PhD thesis, Bergen: University of Bergen.

Torop, P. (1995/2000) *Тотальный перевод*, Tartu: Tartu University Press, trans. B. Osimo as *La traduzione totale*, Modena: Guaraldi Logos.

Toury, G. (1980) *In Search of a Theory of Translation*, Tel Aviv: Porter Institute for Poetics and Semiotics.

—— (1991) 'What are Descriptive Studies into Translation Likely to Yield apart from Isolated Descriptions?' in K. M. van Leuven-Zwart and T. Naaijkens (eds) *Translation Studies: The State of the Art*, Amsterdam and Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, pp. 179–192.

—— (1992) ' "Everything has its Price": An Alternative to Normative Conditioning in Translator Training', *Interface* 6(2): 60–72.

—— (1995) 'The Notion of "Assumed Translation" – An Invitation to a New Discussion', in H. Bloemen, E. Hertog, and W. Segers (eds) *Letterlijkheid, Woordelijheid / Literality, Verbality*, Antwerp and Harmelen: Fantom, pp. 135–147.

—— (1995/2012) *Descriptive Translation Studies and beyond*, second edition, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins.

—— (2004) 'Probabilistic explanations in translation studies. Welcome as they are, would they count as universals?' in A. Mauranen and P. Kujamäki (eds) *Translation Universals. Do they exist?*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 15–32.

Trivedi, H. (2006) 'In Our Own Time, on Our Own Terms: "Translation" in India', in T. Hermans (ed.) *Translating Others* vol. 2, Manchester: St. Jerome, pp. 102–119.

—— (2007) 'Translating Culture vs. Cultural Translation', in P. St-Pierre and P. C. Kar (eds) *In Translation – Reflections, Refractions, Transformations*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 277–287.

Tschacher, T. (2011) 'Commenting Translation: Concepts and Practices of Translation in Islamic Tamil Literature', in R. Ricci and J. van der Putten (eds) *Translation in Asia*: *Theories, Practices, Histories*, Manchester, St. Jerome, pp. 27–44.

Tymoczko, M. (1999) *Translation in a Postcolonial Context*, Manchester: St Jerome.

van den Broeck, R. (1990) 'Translation Theory After Deconstruction', in P. N. Chaffey et al. (eds) *Translation Theory in Scandinavia*, Oslo: University of Oslo, pp. 24–57.

van der Meer, J. (2021) 'Translation Economics of the 2020s', *MultiLingual* July/August 2021 https://multilingual.com/issues/july-august-2021/translation-economics-of-the-2020s/

van Luxemburg-Albers, A. (1991) 'The Indeterminacy of Translation or Whether, and If So in What Way, Willard van Orman Quine Undermines the Rebuilding of the Bridge of Bommel or Not', in K. M. Leuven-Zwart and T. Naaijkens (eds) *Translation Studies: The State of the Art*, Leiden: Brill, pp. 171–178.

Vasserman, E. (2021) *Andrei Fedorov's Theory of Translation and its Place in the History of Translation Studies*, PhD thesis, University of Leeds.

Vázquez-Ayora, G. (1977) *Introducción a la traductología*, Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.

Venuti, L. (1995) *The Translator's Invisibility. A History of Translation*, London and New York: Routledge.

—— (1998) *The Scandals of Translation. Towards an Ethics of Difference*, London and New York: Routledge.

—— (2013) *Translation Changes Everything*, London and New York: Routledge.

Venuti, L. (ed.) (2021) *The Translation Studies Reader*, fourth edition, London and New York: Routledge.

Vermeer, H. J. (1989) *Skopos und Translationsauftrag*, Heidelberg: Institut für Übersetzen und Dolmetschen.

—— (1989/2021) 'Skopos and Commission in Translational Action', in L. Venuti (ed.) *The Translation Studies Reader*, fourth edition, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 219–230.

—— (1996) *Übersetzen als Utopie: Die Übersetzungstheorie des Walter Bendix Schoenflies Benjamin*, Heidelberg: TEXTconTEXT.

—— (1998) 'Didactics of translation', in M. Baker (ed.) *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 60–63.

Vieira, E. (1999) 'Liberating Calibans: Readings of Antropofagia and Haroldo de Campos' poetics of transcreation', in S. Bassnett and H. Trivedi (eds) *Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice*, London and New York: Routledge, pp. 95–113.

Vinay, J. P., and J. Darbelnet (1958/1972) *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais: méthode de traduction*, Paris: Didier. Translated by J. C. Sager and M. J. Hamel as *Comparative Stylistics of French and English*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, 1995.

Viveiros de Castro, E. (2004) 'Perspectival Anthropology and the Method of Controlled Equivocation', *Tipití: Journal of the Society for the Anthropology of Lowland South America* 2(1), Article 1. https://digitalcommons.trinity.edu/tipiti/vol2/iss1/1

Vives, J. L. (1533/2017) *De ratione dicendi*, ed. D. Walker, Leiden: Brill.

Vorderobermeier, G., and M. Wolf (eds) (2008) "*Meine Sprache grenzt mich ab…*" *Transkulturalität und kulturelle Übersetzung im Kontext von Migration*, Münster: LIT.

West, R. (2002) 'Teaching Nomadism: Inter/Cultural Studies in the Context of Translation Studies', in S. Herbrechter (ed.) *Cultural Studies, Interdisciplinarity and Translation*, Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, pp. 161–176.

Wilss, W. (1982) *The Science of Translation: Problems and Methods*, Tübingen: Gunter Narr.

Wittgenstein, L. (1958) *Philosophical Investigations*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Wolf, M. (1997) 'Translation as a Process of Power: Aspects of Cultural Anthropology in Translation', in M. Snell-Hornby, Z. Jettmarová, and K. Kaindl (eds) *Translation as Intercultural Communication,* Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 123–133.

Wolf, M. (2007) 'Introduction: The Emergence of a Sociology of Translation', in M. Wolf and A. Fukari (eds) *Constructing a Sociology of Translation* , Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 1–36.

Wolf, M. (2009) 'The Implications of a Sociological Turn – Methodological and Disciplinary Questions', in A. Pym and A. Perekrestenko (eds) *Translation Research Projects 2*, Tarragona: Intercultural Studies Group, pp. 73–79.

Xiao, K., and R. Muñoz Martín (2020) 'Cognitive Translation Studies: Models and Methods at the Cutting Edge', *Linguistica Antverpiensia, New Series: Themes in Translation Studies*, 19: 1–24.

Yamada, M. (2019) 'The impact of Google Neural Machine Translation on Post-editing by student translators', *The Journal of Specialised Translation* 31: 87–106.

Yan, F. (1901/2004) 'Preface to *Tianyanlun*', trans. C. Y. Hsu in L. T. H. Chan (ed.) *Twentieth-century Chinese Translation Theory: Modes, Issues and Debates*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, PA: John Benjamins, pp. 69–71.

Zhang M. (2001) *English-Chinese Translation Textbooks in China (1949–1998)*, Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Languages Education Publishing House.

Zhang P., Y. Yu, Z. Li, and P. Moyu (1980) 英汉翻译教程 [Textbook of Translation from English into Chinese], Shanghai: Shanghai Foreign Language Education Press.

Zheng, B. (2014) 'The Role of Consultation Sources Revisited: An Empirical Study of English-Chinese Translation', *Perspectives. Studies in Translation Theory and Practice* 22: 113–135.

Zhong, Y. (2014) 'Questioning Translation Readers. Investigating the Impact of Foreignization and Domestication in Three Chinese-speaking Locales', *Translation and Interpreting Studies* 9(2): 257–273.

Zürcher, E. (1959/2007) *The Buddhist Conquest of China. The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*, second edition, Leiden: Brill.

Index