Discourse Analysis and Translation

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It is odd that we enter the new millennium with no firm definition of the concept 'translation'. Mundy states that 'the word is notoriously slippery'(1) . From applied linguistics to discourse analysis (DA), translation does not seem to be an established 'science', and we have not reached the point to verify its validity through such concepts as 'equivalence' and 'faithfulness' that modern translation refutes as in the case of the Skopos theory.
As recent as 2002, Recardi considers translation as 'an emerging discipline" (2). It is a field where different fields from philosophy, linguistics, literary studies, cultural studies, and language engineering show direct interest. The translation issue and procedure is confined to the form-content and the literal-free dichotomies. The approach is sustained by the literal word equivalence or the free sense equivalence. Consequently, the unit of translation will be confined to the linguistic equivalent recodified target text (TT). It can be either a word, a sentence, a clause or a paragraph depending on the linguistic sign as developed by De Saussure.

Two main issues have always been following the translation performance: The absence of a legitimate method, and that of gain and loss through the concept of equivalence. Translation, based on equivalence, has been the subject matter of all translators, writers, poets and linguists from the earliest times. From social and cultural

universals to literary and linguistic universals, the path to translation tends to go through complex landscapes. In fact, translation in a postmodern era moves from the funerals of the ST to the mere translator's literary creation, as is the case with Derrida or Borges in his Pierre Menard, author of the Quixote.(3). Thus, translation shifts between the ST, the TT, through a "translator-centred translation" as suggested by Venuti while Godard infuses a feminist ideology when translating, and she "argues that a feminist translator should 'flaunt' the signs of her manipulation of the tex".(4)

The above-cited translators' initiatives seem rather a consequence of the translation cultural transfer. This transfer or communication operates only in a social context. It is through this activity that society continues and revitalizes while transmitting knowledge, regulating social behavior and socializing individuals. In our context, to insert translation into a model of social sciences is based on two points: Communication preserves the symbolic representation of the society. This reproduction of the imaginary is generated by language. This implies that communication would be valid only within this imaginary. However, this means that communication is monolingual because for Habermas, experience (le monde vécu) 'offre un réservoir de convictions, et les participants à la communication y puisent afin de satisfaire leur besoin d'intercompréhension, né dans une situation déterminée par des interprétations susceptibles de consensus.'(5). The implication of such an idea throws

forth the presence of linguistic and sociocultural rules in general. It would be naive to think that communication is only the transmission of information. For Habermas, communication is a complex activity because it is based on varying and unstable factors, with different psychological structures and different understandings of human experiences and apprehensions of worldviews. Habermas does not break with history and historical tradition. They are anchored in the collective and individual unconscious 'On ne suspend pas de cette manière une continuité historique vivante ; tout au plus la refoule-t-on' (6) .It is at this time that the urge to use DA is felt.

While mapping the disciplines interfacing translation, Holmes cites DA in the linguistic field and CDA in the literary field (7). Both are indeed complementary because of the linguistic word-for-word poor translations. DA can be a way to decipher the text through what it stores and what it intends to communicate. However, DA is a loose term that comprises some approaches that analyze any written text, spoken language or media production. It is an analysis that goes beyond the boundaries of the sentence. It is mostly interested in the type of text, genre, and purpose. DA also remains a loose approach that deals with the linguistic construction of a text and the socio-cultural and political sphere construction that is entailed to it and provides the text with meaning. Both discourses complement each other.

Hence, it might be difficult, at least theoretically, to rely on DA as a scientific approach for translation. DA remains a pre-translational model to collect data and

analyze the text. DA starts from wording to sentence structure to register and genre, but these remain only data that help recognize the Source Text (ST) and the context of situation. Therefore, DA merely helps to describe the text although it draws from a variety of fields stretching from linguistics to ethnological studies, from psychology to sociology. Van Dijk (1997) provides the insight of discourse studies that want to 'include some other essential components in the concept, namely who uses language, how, why and when' (8)

Translation as "an emerging science" watches the final production of meaning as an interactive link between the ST and TT. In doing so, the production is observable, quantifiable, analytical and empirical because it is produced in a social objective context and more importantly on a text. However, to what extent can DA handle translation especially in these postmodern days when a discourse brings to surface multiple readings?

The romantic theory of a translator as 'a genius' or as a 'creator' that Lefevre and Steiner or even Meschonic with his hermeneutic translation are heirs seems to leave room to a more analytical discourse and empirical procedures. Language has a grammar that rightly transcends the linguistic particularities, and makes translation more or less feasible. This particularity can be analyzed only on a text that is the sole means of communication. The latter depends on components of communicative distinctive features, and the translator does not have to do mind reading or creative writing to perform a translation.

On another side, Marianne Lederer seems favorable to follow the method of simultaneous translation and oral discourse. For her, translation is simply confined to communication, and accordingly translation must focus on the message, just like oral translation. It should particularly support the meaning and the 'parole stylistics' (stylistique de la parole), that she defines as a kind of language stylistic as expressed by Vinay and Darbelnet with the condition of the use of the contextual and situational language. 'La stylistique de la parole se distingue de la stylistique de la langue en ce que la clarté de l'expression se mesure par rapport à l'ensemble des facteurs qui interviennent dans la communication : qualité de celui qui parle et de celui à qui s'adresse le discours, situation sur laquelle s'appuie l'énoncé bagage cognitif commun, etc.' (9)

Lederer 's approach focuses particularly on the meaning, and understanding is intimately linked to the languages in question, to the translation subject and the cognitive aspect, to the 'mémoire immédiate' 'and ' la mémoire à long terme'. The Unit of translation relies on the cognitive and behavioral attitudes of the speaker. However, Lederer does not provide a scientific method for her translating moment. She speaks about the interpreter's 'tâtonnements' that we can translate by 'groping towards the meaning' and 'hesitations', because for her 'Chez l'interprète qui ne peut avoir les certitudes du spécialiste, tout est, au départ, hypothèse de sens...' (10)

It is the scientific method that is the source of Peter Newmark's criticism against interpretative school in general and Lederer in particular. He sees in her

approach a distancing from the scientific method because it does not respect language. The rigor of the linguistic analysis that the supporters of the scientific method want to establish is certainly necessary. Newmark was among the first to think about the usefulness of a whole translation 'theory'. (11)

The scientific method based translation seems unlikely on a literary text. Of course, the main issue with literary translation is not only the imaginary realm but also the associated and sophisticated literary style. It is understood that the whole issue with translation is the gain and loss problem. Until recently, Susan Bassnett has acknowledged that 'Yet there is a lot to be learned from determining the criteria for undertaking a translation' (12) when dealing with novels translation. The scandals of translation as reported by Lawrence Venuti are real when entering the new millennium without a clear method and procedures other than those borrowed from linguistic sciences, social sciences, philosophy and other fields that show interest because of their need to question translation.

DA has its own particular procedures, but so should translation. Reiss, Vermeer and Nord represent the functionalist approach. Reiss tries to assess the translation theoretical problems at the text level, but she does not suggest effective functional tools to be adopted empirically. According to Theo Hermans "Different translations may be needed to suit different kinds of readers" (13). There will be as many translations as many intentions and many needs. "The end justifies the means" launched by Reiss and Vermeer (Baorong)

sounds "immoral" towards the fidelity principle of the ST.

DA represented by Reiss and the functionalist approach remains text related rather than word related. If DA tries to negotiate the socio-cultural extra-linguistic features, the frustrations of the unlimited numbers of equivalences stir us to; at least, find a set of rules for a rigorous translation. Thus for both Reiss and Vermeer "poetry need to be translated at the level of the text (or even culture) and not the word if their message is to function in the target culture"(14). This means that communication will rest on the form and may lose the intertexuality weaving the sociocultural discourse of the given ST. However, are we not moving towards adaptation ?

In fact, the functionalist approach considers the register (field, tenor and mode) as an important step in DA and communication, but cares less about the 'truthfulness' of a translation. "In the framework of Skopos theory, there are not such things as right or wrong, faithfulness or unfaithfulness" (15). Register is a linguistic variety and its description 'covers three major components: the situational context, the linguistic features, and the functional relationships between the first two components' (16). The contextual situation generates the 'pervasive linguistic features'(17).

Skopos theory focuses more on commission, purpose of translation, intention and aim of translation. Skopos admits that the translator is unable to fetch the cultural conditions and conventions and thus 'What the translator does is to offer another kind of information in another form' (18). Equivalence is not linguistic but

functional and it serves the communicative purposes for the TT audience within the frameworks of their own culture. The principle of coherence is related to adequacy, a concept that Reiss subsitutes for equivalence. Coherence stands within the cultural and narrative conventions of the TT receiver. "The main point of the functional approach is the following. It is not the source text as such, or its effect on the ST receiver, or the function assigned to it by the author, that operates the translation process, as is postulated by equivalence – based translation theory, but the intended function or skopos of the target text as determined by the initiator's needs" (19). But is this really translation ?

In a recent study, Scott S. Elliot shows that Jesus as a historical figure becomes a fluid character in different cultures "Transfigured into a narrative character, Jesus is forever changed. Further translations of him and of the stories surrounding him, therefore, will always be simultaneously both similar and different. The referent is not Jesus the person, an historical man, but rather Jesus the figure, a fluid, literary, "creature of discourse." Although Jesus is irreversibly created in and by narrative, the figure cannot be allowed or forced to remain fixed within any single narrative thereafter." (20) Yet, meaning is only one unless we distort, twist or create connotations. Translation is not interpretation but a "dialogical understanding, involves the validity claims of comprehensibility, truth, truthfulness, and rightness"(21).

DA may obstruct the receiver from a legitimate intercultural competence in a globalized era: the translator neglects the ST cultural transfer and so does

Skopos. This leads to a cultural disconnection in a time of globalization despite Nord's concept of the 'loyalty principle' (22). However, she does not suggest any procedure or technique to remain loyal to the ST linguistically, stylistically and more important to the original idea of the ST culture and situation of context.

Let us examine the Skopos theory, and we will see how the TT culture may waste the original cultural and philosophical content of the ST. Both translators of Gibran's 'The Prophet', Anouar Okacha and Antoine Bachir lose the original text meaning in the following translation:

'People of Orphalese, you can muffle the drum, and you can loosen the strings of the lyre…' (23)

عكاشة: 'يا أبناء أورفليس، إنكم لتستطيعون أن تكتموا صوت الطبول و ترخوا أوتار القيثار،'...(24)

بشير: 'أجل يا أبناء أورفليس، إنكم تستطيعون أن تخمدوا صوت الطبل و تحلوا أوتار القيثارة،'...(25)

The lyre has not direct equivalent in Arabic, and both translators have recourse to a loan word. Nevertheless, we know well the relation between Orpheus and the lyre in the Greek myth, and how relevant it is in creating meaning in 'the Prophet'. This meaning is lost in the TT.

Nord states clear that 'functionality is the most important criterion for a translation' (26) and not a method, although she also states elsewhere that 'we have to postulate a compatibility between ST intention and the TT functions' (27), but she does not provide such postulates and does not show how to check the ST intentions. However, how can a translator be loyal to the

ST if Nord believes that the conept 'equivalence is 'fuzy' ? how can a translator be 'expected not to falsify the author's intention ?' (28) how can he be loyal to the ST sender and the initiator at the same time ? In terms of morality, how can she serve two Gods ? 'Loyalty is a moral principal indispensable in the relationships between human beings, who are partners in a communication process' (29) . Nord suggests a model that she calls the 'looping model' (30), but it remains a description or let us use the word 'steps' that she prefers to 'stages' (31) of the translational movement between ST and TT. However, her model remains like that of Wilss's 'code switching' (32) as a two phases translation process (analysis, synthesis) or Nida's three sequential stages (decoding, transfer, synthesis). The analysis bears extra-textual and intra- textualfeatures that remain mostly functional:

Who transmits	*on what subject matter*
To whom	*does s/he say*
What for	*what*
By which medium	*(what not)*
Where	*in what order*
When	*using which non-verbal elements*
Why	*in which words*
A text	*in what kind of sentences*
With what function?	*in which tone ?*
	to what effect (33)

We think that this functionalist approach that depends on the text typology remains far from translation terminology, tools and procedures, yet of salient importance too to consider in any translation approach.

In fact, understanding the text typology is a prerequisite to translation, but it remains a mere phase in the process which main purpose is to identify linguistic and extra linguistic features involved in the decision-making.

Christina Schaffner has noticed the 'terminological confusion' (34) that borrowing from discourse analysis may provoke on translation studies. From text typology to models of text analysis, the terminological framework is not sealed yet (35). She thinks that DA can make any translator busy analyzing the ST and losing the TT. Criticizing Anne Trosborg's model of analysis, Schaffner thinks her model "did not sufficiently account for the fact that is an analysis for translation' (36). The model available in Schafner' book presents some weaknesses:

1. It is very long and detailed text analysis
2. It is ST oriented and not translation oriented
3. It is eclectical and does not stand as an independent model

Such model and other models involved in narration analysis and the theory of literature belong to the translator's culture and translation competence rather than a 'scientific method' in the translation process. Is it not high time to return to a theory of translation that stands on its procedures? Can Vinay and Darbelnet be a source of inspiration? Translation should have its own methods and own tools, own techniques and own disciples to stand as a thorough theory. There is a discipline in search for its own method. Sergey Tyulenev conceives translation as 'a 'self-organizing system' (37). It cannot respond totally to social sciences, but at the same time, it cannot be a literary hermeneutic study on its own. Simultaneously, it cannot be linguistic proper.

In fact, we know that translation is understanding and communicating; we also know it is carried out through language, but we need to state 'scientific' procedures.

Vinay and Darbelnet's comparative stylistics is inspired from linguistics, and both translators do not lose sight of that important aspect of translation insofar as early as the first few pages of their book, they say that 'La traduction a pour but de faire connaitre à d'autres ce qui a été dit ou écrit dans la langue étrangère. Celui qui traduit ne traduit pas alors pour comprendre mais pour faire comprendre. Il a compris avant de traduire'. (38)

This ' mais pour faire comprendre' is communication par excellence. Communication is normally monolingual, but communication between two different languages is also possible, and translation is a distinct aspect. Criteria are imposed notably knowledge of a common functional role, of a common situational context, and ultimately adequate linguistic norms in the used languages. Communication is the transfer of information elements notably the message that the text communicates. Message and meaning are an interweaving of culture and ideology, the level of social class and level of language. The invariable core interlocution should be the element to be transferred par excellence. Translation stays at this level of definition

However, one question remains unresolved. Should translation be erected on a theory and rules? There would be no doubt as to linguists and translators. However, the more we advance, the more it seems that the problem of translation itself summarizes the problems with its theory. Everyone understands translation from a

certain point of view thus laying the foundations of a certain relativity.

Translation Studies, in fact, owe their existence to two factors that are a willingness to wade through science and the social performance of translation for the purpose of communication. Catford, for instance, suggested the formal correspondence and the textual correspondences (39). The translation shift occurs during the absence of the formal correspondence. This remains a purely linguistic operation that Vinay and Darbelnet have translation terms for. For both theorists, they become oblique translation procedures such as transposition or modulation. However, Nida and Faber have introduced formal equivalence "the purely 'formal' replacement of one word or phrase in the SL by another in the TL" (40), which is 'equal' to Catford's formal correspondence, and dynamic equivalence that relies on the purpose and function of the ST and its effect on the audience. This form of equivalence is to be used only when comprehension poses difficulties with the use of formal equivalence. Yet, for Hatim & Munday, both methods "are not absolute techniques but rather general orientations" (41) as long as translators go through adjustments and restructurations. Nida's method is the logical path a translator follows: Analysis, transfer and restructuration. However, Hatim and Munday were right because "What is needed is a set of procedure" (42).

However, it would still be useful to note that translation from a linguistic inspiration was interested in literary translation. Vinay and Darbelnet have studied the literary question since they have dealt with the translation of the metaphor. What emerges is that

linguistic translation cannot be mechanical when it follows and complements the semiotic translation, because 'La langue d'arrivée ne permet pas de traduire la métaphore littéralement... Notre tâche est d'être fidèle au sens et de le présenter, autant que faire se peut, sous une forme qui rappelle celle de l'original.'(43).

Nevertheless, we have the impression that the translation methods they have made look more like "recipes" (44) and often tend to overlap in the same translational operation in search for a possible equivalent. What is important, however, in our opinion, is that this equivalent may still not be a concept, but an arrangement and stylistic movement worthy of a moment of art as it is necessary to work on both the content and the form. Thus, we avoid what Nord calls the 'fuzziness' of the concept equivalence (45). The result can only be a total disruption of constituent structure in the absence of formal correspondence, a deep disruption but a necessary one for a better support of the concept of equivalence. Vinay and Darbelnet offer tools that any translator can follow after the DA analysis.

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