

# Translation Trends

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# Translation theory before the 20th century (Munday 2001)

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Word-for-word or sense-for-sense (Cicero – first century BCE, St Jerome – late fourth century CE, Martin Luther – 1530)

Early attempts at systematic translation theory:

- Dolet (1540): five principles to translate well to reproduce the sense and to avoid word-for-word translation
- Dryden (1680): metaphor/literal translation/word by word, paraphrase/faithful or sense-for-sense translation, imitation/free translation
- Tytler (1797): three general 'laws' or 'rules: having 'perfect knowledge', identifying 'the true character' and 'correct taste', having 'all the ease of composition'

# Translation theory before the 20th century (Munday 2001)

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Schleiermacher and the valorization of the foreign (*On the different methods of translating* 1813): (1) moving the reader towards the writer, (2) moving the writer towards the reader.

Translation theory of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Britain: focusing on the status of the ST and the form of the TL, Francis Newman (emphasizing the foreignness of the work by a deliberately archaic translation vs. Matthew Arnold (advocating a transparent translation method)

# Equivalence and equivalent effect: (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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Roman Jakobson: the nature of linguistic meaning and equivalence (*On Linguistic Aspects of Translation* 1959): possibility to understand what is signified by a word even if we have never seen or experienced the concept of thing in real life, and no full equivalence between code-units, 'languages differ essentially in what they must convey and not in what they may convey', and only poetry is considered 'untranslatable' by Jakobson and requires 'creative transposition'.

Quine in *Word and Object* (1960): using translation to demonstrate the complexity and indeterminacy of language.

# Equivalence and equivalent effect: (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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Nida and 'the science of translating' (*Toward a Science of Translating* 1964): attempting to move translation into a more scientific era by incorporating work in linguistics and borrowing theoretical concepts and terminology both from semantics and pragmatics and from Noam Chomsky's work on syntactic structure forming the theory of generative-transformational grammar.

Nida's terms: formal equivalence (keenly oriented towards the ST structure which exerts strong influence in determining accuracy and correctness) and dynamic equivalence (this receptor-oriented approach considers adaptations of grammar, of lexicon and of cultural references to be essential in order to achieve naturalness)

The criticism that Nida's work is subjective raises the question of whether Nida's theory of translation is really 'scientific'.

# Equivalence and equivalent effect: (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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Koller: Korrespondenz and Äquivalenz (*Equivalence in translation theory* W. Koller 1979): he points out that while knowledge of correspondences is indicative of competence in the foreign language, it is knowledge and ability in equivalence that are indicative of competence in translation.

He describes 5 types of equivalence (denotative equivalence, connotative equivalence, text-normative equivalence, pragmatic equivalence, and formal equivalence).

# Equivalence and equivalent effect: (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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Wolfram Wilss (1982): The science of translation in Germany

Wilss's science of translation is divided into three related but separate branches of research:

- (1) a description of a “general science” of translation which involves translation theory;
- (2) “descriptive studies” of translation relating empirical phenomena of translation equivalence;
- (3) “applied research” in translation pointing out particular translation difficulties and ways of solving specific problems.

# Equivalence and equivalent effect: (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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Newmark: semantic and communicative translation (*Approaches to Translation* 1981 and *A Textbook of Translation* 1988)

- Semantic translation: similar to formal equivalence, respecting context, interpreting and explaining, different from literal translation
- Communicative translation: similar to dynamic equivalence, trying to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original.
- Newmark has been criticized for his strong prescriptivism.

# Equivalence and equivalent effect: (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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Bassnett believes translation involves more than replacement of lexical and grammatical items between languages (1980/91).

Tertium comparationis: an invariant against which two text segments can be measured to gauge variation (very subjective).

Mona Baker (*In Other Words* 1992): different kinds of equivalence – at the level of the word, phrase, grammar, text, pragmatics, and equivalence influenced by a variety of linguistic and cultural factors and therefore always relative’.

Equivalence continues to be central and criticized concept.

Criticism towards equivalence:

the ‘circularity of the definitions of equivalence: ‘equivalence is supposed to define translation, and translation, in turn, defines equivalence’ (Kenny 1997).

# The translation shift approach (Munday, 2001)

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Vinay and Darbelnet's model

- *Comparative Stylistics* 1958/1995: a comparative stylistic analysis of French and English

- 2 general translation strategies (2000): direct translation (borrowing, calque, literal translation) and oblique translation (transposition, modulation, equivalence, adaptation)

Criticism: as far as the key question the 'unit of translation' is concerned, the authors reject the individual word.

# The translation shift approach (Munday, 2001)

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Catford and translation 'shift' (*A Linguistic Theory of Translation* 1965): making an important distinction between formal correspondence (a more general system-based concept between a pair of languages) and textual equivalence (tied to a particular ST-TT pair), and considering 2 kinds of shifts (A level shift and category shifts: structural shifts, class shifts, unit shifts/rank shifts, intra-system shifts)

Criticism towards Catford: his examples are almost all idealized and decontextualized (never looking at whole texts, nor even above the level of the sentence).

# The translation shift approach (Munday, 2001)

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Czech writing on translation shifts: introducing a literary aspect, that of the 'expressive function' or style of a text in the 1960s and 1970s

Levý's minimax strategy (1967/2000): the translator resolves for that one of the possible solutions which promises a maximum of effect with a minimum of effort.

Van Leuven-Zwart's comparative-descriptive model of translation shifts (1989, 1990):

1. the comparative model: involving a detailed comparison of ST and TT and a classification of all the microstructural shifts (within sentences, clauses, and phrases)
2. the descriptive model: a macrostructural model, designed for the analysis of translated literature.

# The *Skopos* (Purpose) theory and Functional theories of translation (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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The *Skopos* theory developed by Hans Vermeer (1978) breaks with the equivalence paradigm by giving priority to the target-side purpose to be fulfilled by the translation.

For *Skopos* theory, equivalence characterizes a “constant function” translation and is considered a special case.

This theory allows that the one source text can be translated in different ways to achieve different purposes.

Vermeer’s *skopos* theory (1970s/2004) of translation strategy depending on purpose of TT is expanded in Reiss and Vermeer (1984 – aiming at a general translation theory for all texts).

# The *Skopos* (Purpose) theory and Functional theories of translation (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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*Type, Kind, and Individuality of Text: Decision Making in Translation* by Katharina Reiss (1977/2004): stressing equivalence at text level, linking language functions to text types (informative, expressive, operative, audiomedial) and translation strategy

Hönig and Kussmaul's "principle of the necessary degree of precision" (the "good enough" theory – 1982/1996) states that the translator should give the details that the reader needs, which may be more than those in the source text, or less.

Holz-Mänttari's theory of translation action (1984): a communicative process involving a series of players (the initiator, the commissioner, the ST producer, the TT producer, the TT user, the TT receiver).

Holz-Mänttari's concept of "translatorial action" sees the translator as an expert in cross-cultural communication who may be called upon to do much more than translate.

# The *Skopos* (Purpose) theory and Functional theories of translation (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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Nord's translation-oriented text analysis (*Text Analysis in Translation* – 1988/91): a functional approach with more attention to ST.

Christiane Nord summarizes the *Skopos* rule as “the ends justify the means” (1997).

Gouadec's approach (2007) to project analysis is similarly based on purpose as defined by the client, but it assumes that complete information in the pre-translation phase will resolve most translation problems.

Although the purpose paradigm is compatible with the equivalence paradigm at many points, the opposition between the two was largely institutional within the context of the 1980s and 1990s in Germany and Austria.

# Discourse and register analysis approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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The 1970s-1990s saw the growth of discourse analysis in applied linguistics.

House's model (*Translation Quality Assessment* by Juliane House 1977/1997) for the assessment of translation quality is based on Hallidayan-influenced register analysis (systemic functional grammar). In House's model: register covers a variety of elements, field refers to the subject matter and social action and covers the specificity of lexical items, and tenor includes the addresser's temporal, geographical and social provenance as well as his/her intellectual, emotional, or affective stance personal viewpoint.

An overt translation: a TT does not purport to be an original.

A covert translation: a translation which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture.

# Discourse and register analysis approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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Baker's influential coursebook (*In Other Words* 1992) presents discourse and pragmatic analysis for practising translators.

Hatim and Mason (*Discourse and the Translator* 1990 and *The Translator as Communicator* 1997) add pragmatic and semiotic levels to register analysis.

Criticism of discourse and register analysis approaches to translation:

- the Hallidayan model has been attacked by Fish (1981) for being over-complicated in its categorization of grammar and for its apparently inflexible one-to-one matching of structure and meaning.

## Discourse and register analysis approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010)

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- As for the House's model, Gutt (1991) raises the question as to whether it is possible to recover authorial intention and ST function from register analysis.
- Hatim and Mason's findings are illuminating, but although they analyze a range of text types (written and spoken), their focus often remains linguistics-centered, both in its terminology and in the phenomena investigated.

Early translation studies (corresponding to literary function) (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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James Holmes (1972): first introducing a new way of discussing translation to Western Europe, the founding father of translation studies

André Lefevere (1977): developing the idea of translation as a form of rewriting, which means that any text produced on the basis of another has the intention of adapting that other text to a certain ideology or to a certain poetics, and usually to both.

Raymond van den Broeck (1981): addressing the problem of equivalence in translation from the perspective of translation studies

# Holmes (1972)

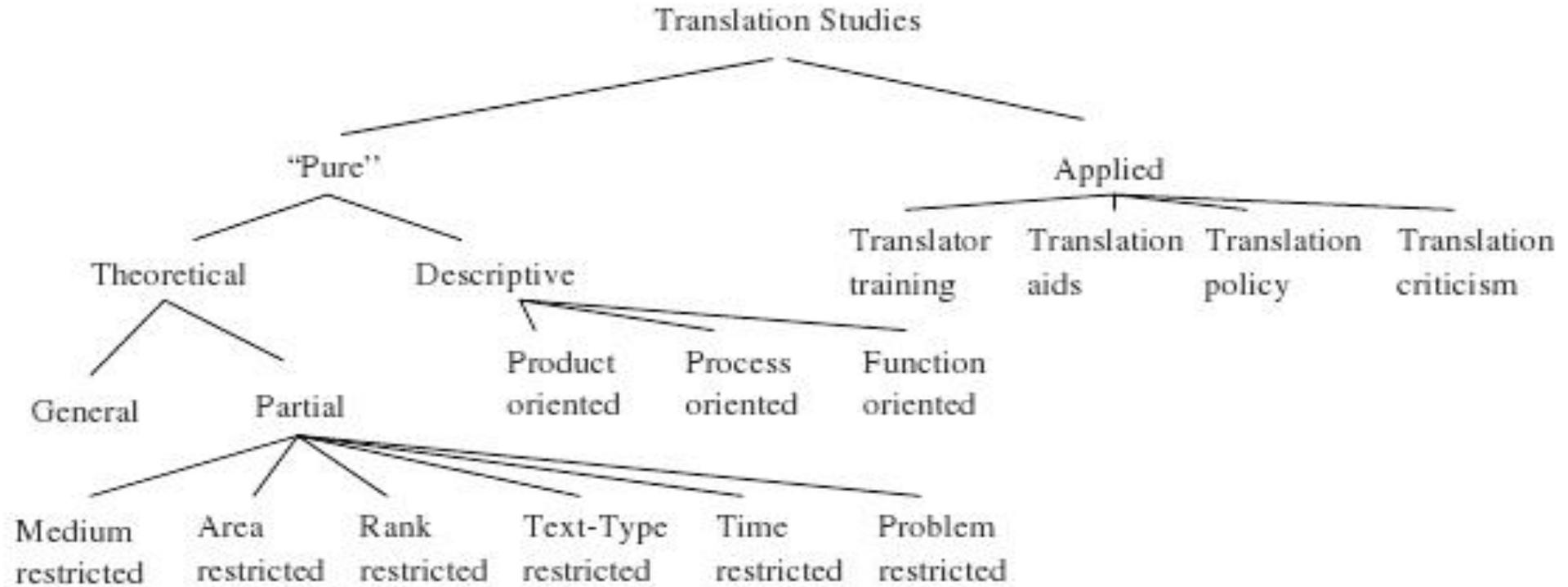


Figure 1. Holmes' map (based on Holmes 1988)

# System Theories: Polysystem Theory (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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Even-Zohar's polysystem theory (1970s) sees translated literature as part of the cultural, literary, and historical system of the TL.

Polysystem theory: similar formal correlation governed by social acceptability)

Even-Zohar: translated literature as a literary system, looking beyond individual translations

Position of translation influences practice of translation and socio-literary status.

Definition of translation cannot be considered out of context.

Translation is dependent on relations within cultural system.

# System Theories: Descriptive Translation Studies (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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Rather than prescribe what a good translation should be like, descriptive approaches try to say what translations are like or could be like.

Toury (1995) puts forward a methodology for descriptive translation studies (DTS) as a non-prescriptive means of understanding the 'norms' at work in the translation process and of discovering the general 'laws' of translation. Toury's concept of norms is focused mainly on their function as a descriptive category to identify translation patterns.

In DTS, equivalence is functional-historical and related to the continuum of 'acceptability' and 'adequacy'. If it is towards the ST, then the TT will be adequate; if the target culture norms prevail, then the TT will be acceptable.

# Descriptive Translation Studies (Toury 1995)

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DTS is the branch of the discipline which constantly maintains the closest contact with the empirical phenomena under study. There are three major kinds of research in DTS: product-oriented, function-oriented, and process-oriented.

1. **Product-oriented DTS:** the area of research describing existing translations (linguistics, discourse/text analysis);
2. **Function-oriented DTS** is not interested in the description of translations in themselves, but in the description of their function in the recipient socio-cultural situation: it is a study of contexts rather than texts (sociology and sociocultural);
3. **Process-oriented DTS** concerns itself with the process or act of translation itself; the problem that exactly takes place in the “little black box” of the translator’s “mind” (psychology/ psycho-translation studies and cognitive studies)

# System Theories (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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Chesterman's translation norms (1997): all norms exert a prescriptive pressure.

His norms: (1) product or expectancy norms, (2) professional norms (the accountability norms, the communication norm, the relation norm)

Other systems approaches (Lambert and van Gorp) include the Manipulation School.

- the Manipulation of School or Group was the collection of papers entitled *The Manipulation of Literature: Studies in Literary Translation* (1985), edited by Theo Hermans. The link with polysystem theory and DTS can be seen to be strong and the Manipulation School proceeded on the basis of 'a continual interplay between theoretical models and practical case studies'.

# System Theories (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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The paper by José Lambert and Hendrik van Gorp (1985), 'On describing translations', draws on Even-Zohar's and Toury's early work and proposes on such scheme for the comparison of the ST and TT literary systems and for the description of relations within them.

Deconstruction, post colonial, cultural studies, cultural translation approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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Deconstruction is an indeterminist approach which resolves the problem of uncertainty by accepting that all translation involves transformation.

The notion that the translator creates the original is one that is introduced by deconstructionists and serves to undermine the notion of authorship and with it the authority on which to base a comparison of subsequent translated versions of a text.

Deconstructionists argue that original texts are constantly being rewritten in the present and each reading/translation reconstructs the source text.

Deconstruction, post colonial, cultural studies, cultural translation approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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In his essay “Différance” from *Margins of Philosophy* (1982), Derrida calls into question any definition of translation as transporting, reproducing, representing, or communicating the “meaning” of the original. Instead, he suggests translation might better be viewed as one instance in which language can be seen as always in the process of modifying the original text, of deferring and displacing for ever any possibility of grasping that which the original text desired to name.

In Euro-American circles, the post-Derridean discussion about translation centers around an ongoing debate about Walter Benjamin’s “The Task of the Translator” (1923). Benjamin’s concept of language is based upon difference, and he has abandoned any belief that language refers to any objective reality.

Deconstruction, post colonial, cultural studies, cultural translation approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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The 'cultural turn': this is the term used in translation studies for the move towards the analysis of translation from a cultural studies angle.

“Cultural translation” may be understood as a process in which there is no source text and usually no fixed target text. The focus is cultural processes rather than products. The prime cause of cultural translation is the movement of people (subjects) rather than the movement of texts (objects).

Lefevere (*Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* 1992), working originally from within systems theory, examines translation as 'rewriting' and the ideological tensions around the text.

Deconstruction, post colonial, cultural studies, cultural translation approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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Sherry Simon (*Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* 1996 – criticizing translation studies for often using the term culture as if it referred to an obvious and unproblematic reality) and the Canadian feminist' translation project: making the feminine visible.

Deconstruction and postcolonial translation: Two of the most influential scholars advocating such a use of deconstruction are Tejaswini Niranjana and Gayatri Spivak.

Call by Tejaswini Niranjana (*Siting Translation: History, Post-structuralism, and the Colonial Context* 1992) for an 'interventionist' approach by translators.

Deconstruction, post colonial, cultural studies, cultural translation approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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In her book, Niranjana draws on Derrida and Benjamin to render a complex critique of translators, ethnographers, and historians in their treatment of colonial cultures. Niranjana argues that translations cannot just be understood in terms of faithful/free or source-text/target-text models, but that they should instead be viewed as a two-way flow, reciprocally reinforcing and/or transforming established notions of culture and identity.

Deconstruction, post colonial, cultural studies, cultural translation approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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Postcolonial translation theories (Gayatri C Spivak *The Politics of Translation* 1993/2000): Translation has played an active role in the colonization process and the image of the colonized.

Spivak's concerns about the ideological consequences of the translation of 'Third World' literature into English and the distortion this entails. Such translation, in Spivak's view, is often expressed in 'translationese', which eliminates the identity of politically less powerful individuals and cultures.

Deconstruction, post colonial, cultural studies, cultural translation approaches (Munday, 2001; Genzler 2001; Pym 2010):

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Brazilian cannibalism (*Manifesto Antropófago* by Oswald de Andrade 1920s): drawing on the famous story of the ritual cannibalism of a Portuguese bishop by native Brazilians: the colonizers and their language are devoured, their life force invigorating the devourers, but in a new purified and energized form that is appropriate to the needs of the native peoples.

The Irish context (Michael Cronin's *Translating Ireland* 1996 and Maria Tymoczko's *Translation in a Postcolonial Context* 1999):

- Cronin himself concentrates on the role of translation in the linguistic and political battle between the Irish and English languages, examining how Irish translators throughout history have discussed and presented their work in prefaces, commentaries and other writings.

Cultural theorists writing on translation have various agendas of their own.

# Translating the foreign: the (in)visibility of translation (Munday 2001):

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Venuti (*The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* 1995): the 'invisibility' (to describe the translator's situation and activity in contemporary Anglo-American culture) of the translator in the modern publishing world.

Venuti: 'foreignizing' vs. 'domesticating' translation, and the 'call for action'.

Antoine Berman (*The Experience of the Foreign: Cultural and Translation in Romantic Germany* 1992): more positive evaluation, not the 'negative analytic', and deformation of translation.

# Translating the foreign: the (in)visibility of translation (Munday 2001):

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Literary translators' accounts of their work: 'ear' (their work is intuitive and that they must listen to their 'ear') and 'voice' (listening to the 'voice' of the ST).

The power network of the publishing industry.

The reception of translation – reception theory and translation reviewing.

# Philosophical theories of translation (Munday 2001; Genzler 2001):

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Hermeneutics (the theory of interpretation of meaning), linked to the German Romantics.

Steiner's hermeneutic motion (*After Babel* 1975/98), the four moves of translation (initiative trust, aggression or penetration, incorporation or embodiment, compensation or restitution). Hermeneutic approach as the investigation of what it means to understand a piece of oral or written speech, and the attempt to diagnose this process in terms of a general model of meaning.

Ezra Pound (1929/2000): the energy of language, using archaism to overturn the literary poetics of the time, an early foreignization.

Walter Benjamin (*The Task of the Translator* 1923/2000): the 'pure' language of interlinear translation.

Derrida (2001): deconstruction and the undermining of basic premisses of linguistic translation theory.

## Localization (Pym 2010):

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The localization industry responds to the problem of uncertainty by creating artificial languages and cultures.

Localization is the preparation of a product for a new locale.

A locale is a set of linguistic, economic, and cultural parameters for the end-use of the product.

# Future translation trends

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## Cognitive studies:

- Hans-Peter Krings was the first one to look at the translator's mind using the method of think-aloud protocol (TAPs). He was able to find out that professionals activate their knowledge and experience and focus on the text, whereas learners concentrate more on words and formal elements.
- Baddeley and Hitch made up a model in 1974 which has their names and is the model used to examine cognitive processes applied to translation. It is made up of three different parts: the phonological loop, the visuo-spatial sketchpad, and the central executive.

# Future translation trends

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Gregory Shreve is one of the pioneers in discussing translation expertise by reviewing it from the expertise studies. He argues in “Knowing Translation: Cognitive and Experiential aspects of Translation Expertise from the Perspective of Expertise Studies” (2002), that there is not a single definition to this term, but expert scholars agree that they are the product of long years of practice and exhibit consistently high levels of performance. He also argues that the existing literature support the estimation that it takes ten years or 10,000 hours of practice to reach the level of expertise.

The need to triangulate the experiments using more than one tool on the same participants and in the same experiment, in order to see whether some patterns could be found and more specific and reliable conclusions could be drawn.

As for the possible future directions of this field, Juliane House claims in “Consciousness and the Strategic Use of Aids in Translation” (2001) that the “experiments should be less artificial, richer in translation strategies and much more interesting since subjects might engage in more natural, less strained and less pressured introspective exercises that resemble real life activities more than the laboratory ones.”

# Future translation trends

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## Corpus-based studies:

- A corpus is defined by Lynne Bowker as “a collection of texts or utterances that are used in order to conduct some type of linguistic investigation” (2002). Bowker explains that in the past texts contained in corpora tended to be in hard-copy while recently, thanks to the advances in technology, they are most of the times in electronic format. Benefits: large amount, less time, and easier to detect patterns (e.g of the tools: WordSmith tools and Paraconc).
- John Sinclair in *Corpus, Concordance, Collocation* (1991) talks about the main terminology and the main features of corpora (such as frequency list, concordance or KWIC – key words in context, collocation).

# Future translation trends

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- Michael Stubbs (1996) shows how ideological positions are conveyed through lexical and grammatical patterns, how these choices can be reflected in discourse and how they can influence hearers and readers.
- Mona Baker and Sara Laviosa (2000) applied corpus studies to the style of two different translators: Peter Bush and Peter Clark. Baker and Laviosa's goal was to exhibit patterns or habits that are different between the two translators (Olohan 2004).

# Future translation trends

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- As for the possible directions for the future of corpus-based studies, Maeve Olohan dedicates the last chapter of his book *Introducing Corpora in Translation Studies* (2004) to them and affirms that one of the possible future directions is to expand the range of languages and cultures.
- The second possible future direction is the application of corpus-based studies in literature. Maria Tymoczko (1999) argues that corpus could be applied to study cultural interface and cultural relations between two or more groups or languages.
- The third and last possible future direction is the combination of comparable and parallel corpus analysis. This dual approach, in fact, could be used to measure the extent to which any source text influences specific patterns of usage observed in translated language.

# Future translation trends

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In the final essay of the collection “The Translation Turn in Cultural Studies”, Susan Bassnett announces a new era of interdisciplinary research. Bassnett argues that translations are the performative aspect of intercultural communication.

The future of translation studies will no doubt involve an increase in scholarship on postcolonial cultures, a trend that has already started.

Perhaps the most exciting turn for the field of translation studies has been its postcolonial interest and its openness to new theories from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, a movement pioneered by mostly women.

Gentzler (2001) argues in favor of the implementation of multiple theories of translation from a variety of disciplines and discourses to better analyze the variety meanings and functions produced.