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## THE PRAGMATIC INFRASTRUCTURE OF TRANSLATION

### RESUMO

Neste trabalho considero os diversos níveis de análise de linguagem a partir de uma perspectiva pragmática, e mostro como esses níveis contribuem de formas distintas, que devem ser levadas em conta no trabalho de tradução para outro idioma. Tais níveis pragmáticos são vistos como constituintes da infraestrutura do processo de tradução, e, postula-se, uma consciência acentuada de sua multifuncionalidade nesse processo deve ser visível no produto tradutório. Dirigiremos nosso foco para o nível lexical, o nível frasal e, então, o do enunciado, mas, principalmente, teremos de dar especial atenção ao nível de performatividade, uma vez que falantes e escritores agem na linguagem e não apenas falam, escrevem/narram ou traduzem. No entanto, a preocupação última será a equivalência desejada, não como tem sido vista na maioria dos casos, no nível lingüístico, mas no nível da cognição. Em outras palavras, a nossa preocupação será com a equivalência desejada entre o mundo cognitivo que é construído pelo texto-mundo na LA (Língua Alvo) e o que é construído no texto da LF (Língua Fonte). Essa perspectiva tem em conta que os mundos-textos criados por todas as características lingüísticas nos contextos específicos de sua produção e de consumo também constroem mundo cognitivos específicos, e a equivalência deveria ser operativa nesse nível metalingüístico. De fato, atenção particular deve ser dada ao nível sub-textual, na medida em que constituintes inarticulados e outros conceitos não codificados mas intencionados 'penetram' e dão forma às percepções e interpretações de textos. Essas infiltrações 'inarticuladas' precisam ser 'transferidas' ao texto na LA.

**Palavras-Chave:** mundo textual; mundo cognitivo; performatividade; atos de fala; implicatura; constituintes inarticulados.

### ABSTRACT

In this paper, I consider the various levels of analysis of language from a pragmatic viewpoint, and show how they contribute in distinct ways that need to be taken into account in translating into another language. These pragmatic levels are regarded as constituting the infrastructure of the translation process, and, it is claimed, raised awareness of their multifunctionality in this process must be visible in the translation product. We will focus on the lexical level, the phrasal, and then the sentential, but most importantly, we will need to pay particular attention to the level of performativity, as speakers and writers alike perform in language rather than just speak, write/narrate or translate. However, the ultimate concern will be the desired equivalence, not as has been viewed in most cases at the linguistic level, but at the level of cognition. In other words, our concern will be with the desired equivalence between the cognitive world that is constructed by the text-world in the TL (Target Language) and that of the text of the SL (Source Language). This view takes on board that the text worlds created by all the linguistic features in the specific contexts of their production and consumption also construct specific cognitive worlds, and equivalence should be operative at this metalinguistic level. Indeed, particular attention must be paid to the sub-textual level, as unarticulated constituents and other non-encoded, but meant, concepts 'penetrate' and shape perceptions and interpretations of texts. These 'unarticulated' infiltrations need to be 'transferred' into the text in the TL.

**Keywords:** textual world, cognitive world, performativity, speech acts, implicature, unarticulated constituents.

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Artigo Original  
Recebido em: 31/7/2009  
Avaliado em: 11/8/2009

Publicação: 30 de setembro de 2009

## 1. INTRODUCTION\*

Translation problematics and the inquiry into meaning have been inextricably interwoven for a very long time and, indeed, since scholars and philosophers have posed questions about the meaning in language. Translation has been of focal concern in philosophy of language and in the semantics of language, both dedicated to the quest of meaning, for a very simple reason: translating into another language (inter-linguistically) or, even within the same language (intra-linguistically) (see Jakobson, 1959), entails a grasp of the meaning and forms in language. Supplying successful translations can work as a litmus paper for testing theories of meaning in semantics. Translating involves interpretation, and interpretation entails a good command of a number of parameters determining communication, in other words conveyance of meaning. Inter-linguistic transference of text is called translating or translating proper, while intra-linguistic transference is called paraphrasing.

Using the term *translating* broadly, we can identify a number of types of translation: Translation into another natural language, into a notational language, such as logic, or any symbolic form that will effectively preserve the same core meaning, into the same language but using different forms, yet conveying the same meaning, into a theoretically equivalent form of the same significance, etc. For a start, we need to pay particular attention to the use of the words *form* and *meaning*. We see that whatever type of translation we discuss, form has to change but meaning has to stay. This concern has inevitably led scholars to routes of researching meaning and its nature, as the review below will show. In what follows, we will see how various aspects of inquiry into meaning can inform, and have informed, translation methodologies.

I have often read (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990, p. 4; Baker, 1998, p. 279) or heard (David Connolly, personal communication, May 2009) that in recent theories of translation linguistics is left behind. This may be right if by the term 'linguistics' one understands the more formal or syntactic oriented theories of language that have been presented by Chomskian oriented linguists or formal semanticists. However, it cannot be more untrue if one considers pragmatics (either a component of linguistics or a perspective of language analysis, Verschueren, 1999) as that component of linguistics that can greatly inform, and has indeed informed, various approaches in translation studies. Pragmatics, which has its origins in philosophy of language and more recently become a

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\* This article is a short and revised version of a plenary talk given at IV CIATI, Brazil, 14-17 May, 2007. I wish to thank the organizing committee for inviting me and the audience for useful comments.

component of linguistics, has been a major source of inspiration for translatology, as a great deal of research can witness (see Hatim and Mason, 1990). But first we will take note of a number of research questions that have at times both troubled and inspired research in translation.

## 2. CENTRAL CONCEPTS IN TRANSLATION

### 2.1. Form and meaning

One of the perennial questions that has dogged translatology relates to the unit of translation. What is it that we are supposed to translate when we are confronted with a text? Do we translate forms or meanings or both, and how do we cut through this big jungle if we don't sort out our concepts and priorities. A cursory look at the verb *translate* in a dictionary, will yield a number of definitions such as the following:

1. Change languages: interpret: translate something (from something) into something.
  - a. 'Translate the text from Italian into English.'
2. Happen as a result
  - a. 'A small increase in local spending will translate into a big rise in property tax.'
3. Have same meaning
  - a. 'These rates translate into a return of 8% for \$ investors.'
4. Change forms
  - a. 'Jokes don't translate well into print.'
5. Use in new situations
  - a. A play to film

(Longman)

1. Change languages
2. Express in a different way, convert
  - a. 'The temperature is 60o if we translate into Fahrenheit.'
3. Transform, turn
  - a. An idea, etc. 'He translated his dreams into action.'
4. Interpret
  - a. Gestures etc.

(CoBuild)

In all these definitions and examples, we notice that the play is –and has always been– between *form* and *meaning*, just as it is in the vast literature in translation studies. First of all, we notice that the verb *translate* is also used metaphorically, as well as literally, but whatever the case may be, we can discern two broad strands of interpretation of the predicate *translate*:

- a) one that relates to *form* (Longman [L], 4, 5; CoBuild [C], 2, 3), and
- b) another one that relates to *meaning* (Longman, 2, 3; CoBuild, 4),

as the two entries from the two dictionaries can witness. Definitions and examples 1 of each entry are difficult to categorize in the one or the other class –as language can involve both form and meaning– but *form* is more congenial in these examples to the word

*translate* as it can be replaced by *change* (1.a. ‘Translate [=change/turn] the text form Italian into English’) but not by *mean*. All examples of *translate* that focus on form can be replaced by the verbs *change/turn/take the form*, while examples of *translate* prioritizing meaning can be replaced by words such as *mean* (L: 2a, 3a; C: 4a). The word *change* or *turn* hits on the outer appearance, hence on form, while the verb *mean* rather evokes inner mental states of meaning, or concepts, etc. So we would tend to classify entries 1 as alluding to form rather than meaning. It may be a bit premature to note at this point, however, that both form and meaning are inextricably tied together as two aspects of the same coin (Figure 1), and ultimately it is meaning that takes the lead in the process of translation.

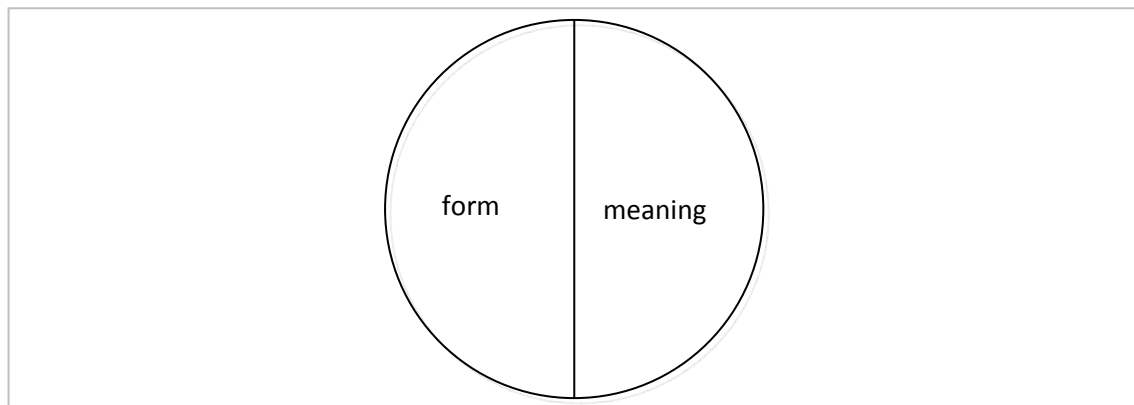


Figure 1 – Form and meaning as two sides of the same coin.

## 2.2. Translation as process and product

A central concept in Translation Studies is that of the two dimensions of process and product, also revealed in our dictionary entries. Locutions such as ‘translating something’, or ‘something that has been translated’ allude to translation as process and translation as product, respectively (Neubert, 1967). On the other hand, dictionary definitions of *translating* as above, such as ‘the process of changing something into a different form’ (Longman), or ‘way’ (CoBuild) clearly point to the process of changing form. This view of the distinction between translation as process and translation as product is taking its cue from pragmatics, where we distinguish between utterances as process and utterances as product. However, in either case, the question that is raised is that of the lead in the process of changing form, and this lead is no other than likeness in meaning or identity of meaning. Indeed, form and meaning constitute a double-edged concept, as shown diagrammatically in figure 1 above. So, meaning again raises its ugly head. Things would be easy if we had a hard and fast definition of the concept of meaning in semantics, but alas, this is not so.

### 2.3. Equivalence

Another long-standing question in Translation Studies relates to issues of equivalence (Pym 2007). Should there be a problematic of equivalence or is the notion outmoded? (Hatim and Munday, 2004, p. 200). But if the notion of equivalence is outmoded then so is translation. Our response needs to be that simply the problem of equivalence has to be re-stated in other terms. But equivalence is a central notion and must remain so.

The two persistent questions in Translation Studies, of form and meaning, on the one hand, and that of equivalence, on the other, are not independent, but intertwined. Equivalence cannot be dismissed, because it will also sweep along in its sway the very act of translation. So, equivalence has a very strong hold on the scene, but the question that raises its ugly head is the plane of equivalence. Equivalence of what? Of form (understood only in terms of structure and grammar) or meaning, the two main notions targeted by the act of translating, as we saw above? Or might perhaps equivalence be transposed a bit to include aesthetic experience, effect, impact, and so on? But then, how can one identify, isolate and define all these various planes, supposing that this is feasible? Or are we to speak of all these planes in a rather impressionistic way? In what follows, we hope to give more precise, even if partial, answers to these deserving questions. To this end, we will have recourse to pragmatic notions that can significantly benefit the field of Translation Studies.

## 3. THE UNIT OF TRANSLATION

Hatim and Munday (2004) repeatedly pose the question: What is the unit of translation? As already noted, the notion of the 'unit of translation' appears to refer to the linguistic or textual level, but the problem persists in its specific identification. Indeed, which specific textual level has to be primed as the main unit of translation? Is it the individual word? And if so, shall we look at the word as a sign comprising form and sense, adopting a structuralist Saussurean perspective? Another option would be to look at the phrasal level or the constructional level, and yet another level would be that of the sentence, the sentential level, which contributes to the textual one, this being the final option as the favoured unit of translation.

I would argue that translating at word level or construction level, we take on board the product dimension of translation, forsaking the process axis of translation. The same can be claimed with regard to the sentential level of translation, since sentences are reified and viewed as parts of the language system (product) rather than as process.

Adopting a process view of translation at the sentential level would take on board looking at sentences as utterances, that is, as specific speech acts or performances by agents (speakers, authors, etc.). This option would draw the enterprise of translation closer to a functional perspective. All these levels or units of translation can be diagrammatically shown in Figure 2.

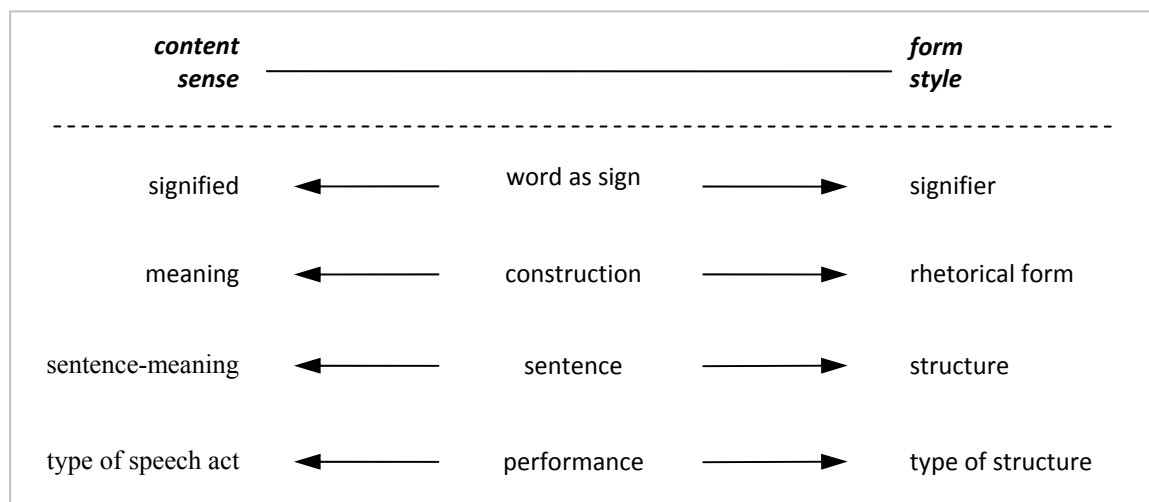


Figure 2 – Options for the unit of translation.

As is clear, the unit of translation appears at the centre while it is flanked by its form on the right and by its functional value on the left. Prioritizing the construction as the translation unit means that we look at more complete units of meaning, rather than the individual word. For example, in encounters in Greece, a usual answer to a casual ‘How are you?’ is not necessarily ‘Very well’, but rather the elliptical ‘Praise God’ which is interpreted as ‘Very well’. It goes without saying that such constructions, which are not idioms but can be idiomatic, need to be translated as constructions rather than in their analytical form. Focusing on the word level, translation will produce incomprehensible results. Translation as process is prioritized only at the bottom level (figure 2) of the speech act, *alias* illocution (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1971; Bach and Harnish, 1984; see Robinson, 2003 on speech acts in translation), at which language or text is viewed as performance.

#### 4. DICHOTOMIES IN TRANSLATION

In this section, we will briefly mention certain received dichotomies concerning assumed equivalence between the two languages, the SL and the TL -but also in terms of a relativized notion of equivalence- that have been proposed in Translation Studies over the years. These broadly understood dichotomies are presented below in Figure 3.

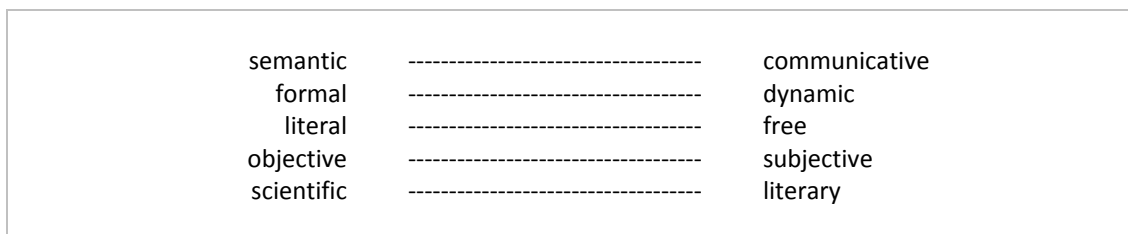


Figure 3 – Dichotomies in translation.

The more static or formalistic views of translation feature on the left side of figure 3. Semantic translation adheres more closely to the lexical, phrasal and sentential structure of the SL text and pays particular attention to the lexical level and its semantics, while communicative translation is more geared to the function of the ST and seeks to render this function in the TT (Newmark, 1981). Formal translation is focused on the surface structure of the ST, while dynamic translation is tuned to evoking a similar response by audiences in the TT. (Nida and Taber, 1969). For example, the typical English expression *bread and butter* will be adapted in the Modern Greek translation as *bread and cheese* (as a compound) to evoke similar responses, and the expression *wicked holiday*, often featuring in adverts, must equally be translated as a construction to evoke the same sense of desired naughtiness, which may call for a translation of the word *wicked* not found in bilingual dictionaries.

In some theories, the assumption of equivalence is dismissed rather than retained, as when the target of translation is focused on the *skopos* (the Greek word for 'aim', 'purpose', or 'goal'), i.e., what is the purpose or function of the translation in the TL as determined by the client? Issues of equivalence become subsidiary to this *skopos* that dominates the translational process and the product (see Snell-Hornby, 2006, p. 34; 2007), just as they are sidestepped in cases of communicative or instrumental types of translation (see Snell-Hornby, 2006, p. 156).

## 5. TEXT AS DISCOURSE

In all these aforementioned dichotomies, we can discern a rather fragmented view of translation theory, practice and methodology. Instead, we will henceforth argue for the more holistic (and wholesome) view of looking at the ST as a textual world that reflects a cognitive world. So, if there is a dichotomy, this is between a textual world and a cognitive world, as shown in Figure 4:

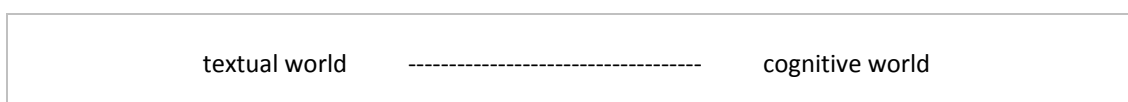


Figure 4 – Textual world vs. cognitive world.

The cognitive world, reflected by the textual world, has to be securely grasped through the interpretation of the text by the translator, who must first and foremost be an accomplished interpreter and competent 'human understander' of the text and its culture, and only then can the text be re-assembled and re-constituted in the TL in a way that the reconfigured TT will reflect the same cognitive world as the original. To this end, we must be fully aware of the many layers that envelop each linguistic event, that is, language use, which feed into its interpretation simultaneously. Language is 'entextualized' or contextualized, and so must be the process of translation, so that the final product is similarly and competently re-entextualized or re-contextualized in the TL. (Verschueren 2007). Diagram 5 is a graphic representation of this multiple entextualization process of the text.

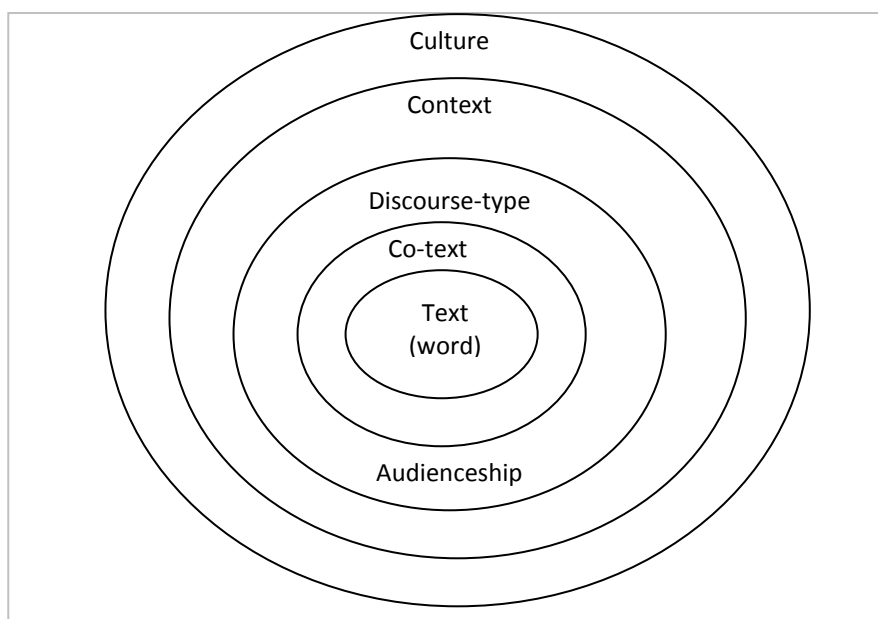


Figure 5 – Enveloping layers of text.

Culture is the ultimate layer enveloping text. But it is more precise to say that text and talk are cultural products and processes. The culture encrypted in text and talk, however, is manifest at various levels of choice made in their processual construction or generation. The translator needs to unwrap, so to speak, this multiple entextualization process of the ST into its various layers and at its various levels; entextualization of text in effect means multiple transformations into the cultural object that it has become, the discourse, which is in need of interpretation, assessment and evaluation by the prospective translator. So, even if the culture layer appears on the outside, it is in essence diffuse at all the levels of text generation, consisting in the multiple choices made in the process of generating discourse and its multiple framing (Baker, 2006, ch 6). We can now claim that while you may start with text, the initial semiotic core of language, the end product that is characterized by features such as intentionality, functionality, interactivity,



communicativity and ideological complexes is what we call discourse. Discourse is a socio-cultural product, the dynamic text in interaction with its audiences and readers. It is this end product (which is never static or finalized, though), the multiply entextualized text, that needs to be looked at as discourse and unpacked as such. This process of laying open the various layers of its entextualization presupposes an attitude on the translator's part of desired awareness of the multiple pragmatic enveloping of texts and language in use. The 'final' product –whose very interactivity negates finality– is what we call discourse, rather than text, a term that transpires negotiability of its meaning.

In what follows, we will proceed from more inner layers of meaning constitution to more outer and broader layers in an effort to show the necessity of this multilevel or multimodal perspective and pragmatically oriented methodology in the translation process. Concentrating on, or limiting our attention to, inner layers of language only is exceeded by the need to reconstitute and retrieve the cognitive world of the ST in the TL.

## 6. WORD AGAINST OBJECT (OR THE RATIONALIST APPROACH)

The title of this section, partly borrowed from chapter 3 of Steiner (1975), is meant to reflect a closer linguistic and semantic observance of the ST in the process of translation, as inspired by theories of reference. After all, language is supposed to reproduce the object world, that is, to describe or refer to the extra-linguistic world. As Newmark (1981) first claimed, and Hatim (2007, p. 94) reiterates, "a literal rendering is a prerequisite procedure for all translations: our point of departure should always be a literal rendering." (cf. Benjamin, 1996/1923). In this section, we will briefly review the inadequacy of such a close rendering impinging on lexical translation that is dependent on word meaning (and form). The translator may orient towards the criterion of the symmetry of names; it must be recalled that names (or nominals or definite descriptions) name things and entities supposedly pre-existing in the world that enter into functions, thus describing a pre-existing world, or referring to entities, individuals and things, and their interrelationships. So, this orientation in translation will either be word for word, on the basis of identity of reference (cf. radical translation), or sense for sense on the basis of identity of sense (core meaning, cf. actual translation, Katz 1978), as shown below:

1. Word-for-word: (the Anglo-Saxon tradition)
  - a. Symmetry of names
  - b. Identical referential potential
2. Sense-for-sense:
  - a. Symmetry of senses (synonymy)
  - b. Identical senses may correspond to different names?

However, since different senses have to be assigned to different names, the choice between options 1 or 2 is a bogus one that has to be reduced to option 2 only. Indeed, we may have to place the translator in a parallel perspective with that of the semanticist, but mainly of the lexicographer and the grammarian; they both deal with translating one thing into another, either intra-linguistically or inter-linguistically, as shown diagrammatically below:

3. Lexicography
  - Intra-lingually
  - Inter-lingually
4. Semasiology or semantics
5. Translation
  - Intra-lingually
  - Inter-lingually

The lexicographer's terrain is just one language and how s/he can translate meanings (sense) (and forms) within it (intra-linguistically), both tapping and feeding into semasiology and semantics, while the translator probes this enterprise inter-linguistically. Their jobs are paralleled and reciprocally informed and enriched. But equivalence may be jettisoned in favour of other notions. After all, Venuti (1998, p. 115) proposes the notion of 'accuracy' for lexicographical equivalence and both lexicographer and grammarian draw on the old notion of meaning. This method of observing the word and its reference closely rather than other units of equivalence is more prevalent in descriptive texts (e.g., historical texts), in which the referential function of language is dominant, while in more expressive or emotive texts, identity of sense can take the lead in the translation process. In any case, preponderance on the notion of reference will give priority to an equivalence of the objective worlds –this is why this approach may be called the rationalist approach- while putting more weight on aspects of sense will tip the balance towards a more subjective equivalence (see section 4).

In just what sorts of contextual position, if not in all, are two forms to be interchangeable or intertranslatable? To test the validity of translation or interchangeability of forms and senses, we may resort to the notion of truth, that is, the emergent text must be invariant, or cognitively 'synonymous' (equivalent). But the notion of equivalence of truth (interchangeability *salva veritate*) is too weak a condition for synonymy for Quine (1953, p. 56-58). Even if language as a whole was 'extensional' (referential), interchangeability *salva veritate* is an unilluminating condition, involving a vicious circle (57). For Quine orders of synonymy are best viewed in segments longer than the word for the reasons stated below. Only then, can we resolve inherent ambiguities:

- Forms are synonymous when their interchange leaves their contexts synonymous.

- *Inter-linguistic synonymy* must be a relation, primarily, between segments of discourse which are long enough to bear consideration from a containing context, peculiar to one or the other particular languages.

Therefore, this view leads to seeking synonymy for long segments of discourse rather than words. Referring back to figure 5, Quine suggests that we transgress the boundary of text (which can consist of a word) to move to the wider co-text and beyond, embracing the text.

While meaning appears untamable according to Quine, that is, meaning equivalence cannot be identified, Davidson (1967) transposes the issue to the concept of truth, a traditional concept in the philosophy of language with a long venerable history. So, if someone says 'Es regnet' and someone else 'It is raining' under the same circumstances, one knows that they both can be true even if one does not speak or understand German. It's like ostension. In Davidsonian terms "we get statements about the circumstances in which a sentence of a given language holds true a given utterance." (in Malmkjaer, 2005, p. 55). This approach requires the assumption of sufficient cognitive similarity amongst speakers of various languages.

But taking on board Quine's view of discursive equivalence, truth is relativized to circumstance and can no longer pose an uncontextualized validity test for equivalence in translation; likewise, equivalence is also relativized to circumstance, thus invalidating an uncontextualized notion of Truth. This view is juxtaposed to a view of translation methodology as objectively translating texts representing an outer reality or an object world. Equivalences are no longer between object worlds, as if language were just a mere vehicle for re-presenting those extralinguistic worlds, but rather meanings intervene to tamper, as it were, with the supposedly object world, in effect constructing it, as diagrammatically shown in Figure 6:

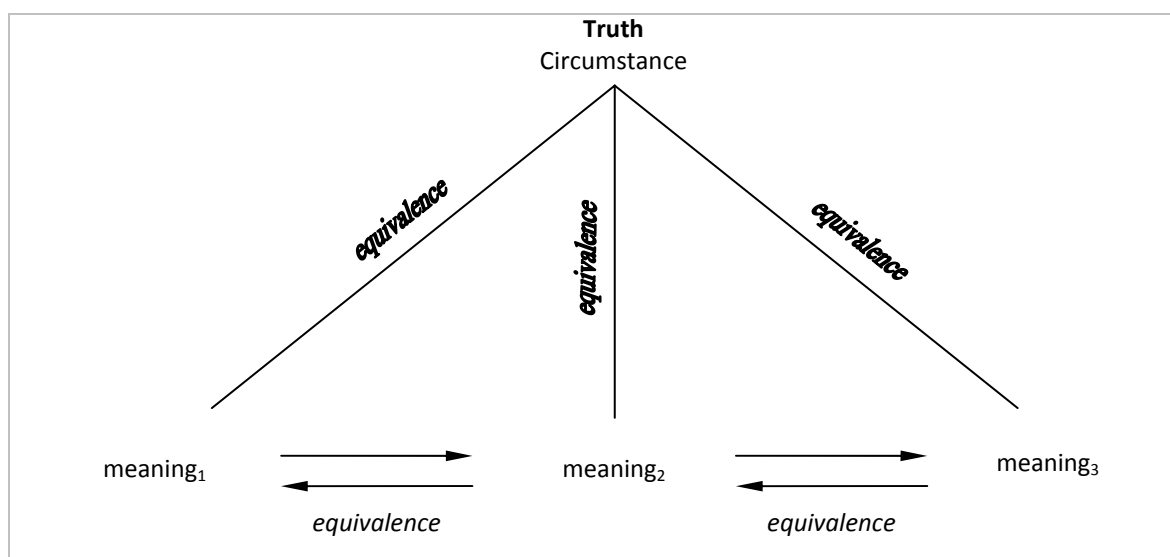


Figure 6 – Truth as holding to circumstance.

As Steiner (1975, p. 135) noted, “The truth-functions cannot, as it were, be nailed down.” So, is the rationalist approach, encapsulated in the following theses, a myth?

- Ideas, thoughts or meanings are universal and stable, thus translatable into language form and inter-linguistically.
- Forms vary while meanings do not.

If these theses are taken on board, then it’s a matter of shooting down the right equivalent form. But this appears to be a myth.

## 7. MODULATION OF MEANING (OR THE RELATIVIST APPROACH)

The rationalist approach cannot grab hold of the translation process. Meaning is not stable but modulated according to circumstance, context and time. The relativist approach, subsumed in the following arguments, seems to hark back to the rationalist approach:

- Forms and meanings are not co-extensive and symmetric.
- Fluidity of form may result in fluidity of meaning and vice versa.
- No rigid segmentation of form can implicate rigid segmentation of the conceptual domain.

So, our neat Saussurean sign consisting of a certain form and content seems to be extremely fluid and unstable (Figure 7).

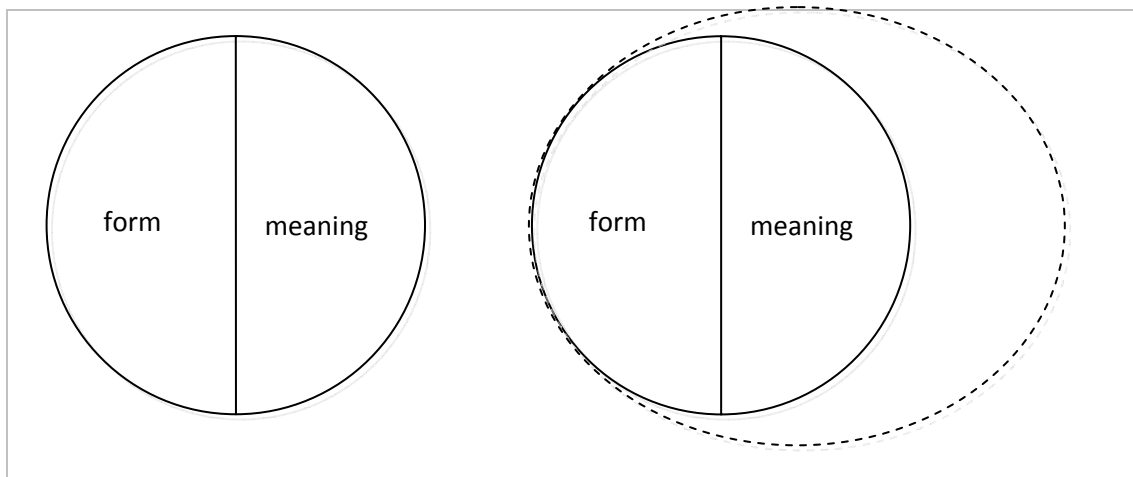


Figure 7 – Meaning modulated.

The diagram shows how meaning can change, expand or even shrink as against its form, which may remain constant.

Modulation of meaning crosses the boundaries of semantics and sets the scene for the pragmatics of language. Eco has called this process unlimited semiosis and finds it difficult to see its limits (Eco, 1990). Unlimited semiosis has to do with variability of interpretation. Peirce, who talked about various levels of semiosis, posed the notion of an

interpretant. As Eco and S. Nergaard (1998, p. 219) write, “An interpretant is any sign which explains or ‘translates’ the first one: through a definition, a synonym, an example, a sign from another semiotic system and so on, *ad infinitum*. Every interpretation is an inference.” Interpretative semiotics, just like pragmatics, has challenged the notion of code.

Modulation of meaning is also dependent on genre or text type (see figure 5). As noted above, language can be primarily descriptive or referential, but it can also be expressive, emotive, etc. Text types presuppose certain audiences and these two factors conjoin forces to produce discourse types, that is, text types socially operational. Intralinguistic criteria of genre relate to semantic aspects of lexis, grammar and style, while extralinguistic criteria relate to situation, subject field, time, place, receiver, sender, etc.

However, while it’s useful to identify genres, it is not a panacea, not only because of the intermingling of text types, but also because of the hybridity of texts. Text types are not insulated. Further, the speaker/author is always encrypted in the discourse, colouring it in various ways. Propositional attitudes (*I think, I hope, I fear*, etc.), hedges (*quite, slightly, somewhat*, etc.) and modality (*might, possibly*, etc.) are some of the clues of encrypted authorial voice persisting in various text types.

So, it becomes rather difficult for the translator to focus on referential issues in translation when confronted with descriptive (representational, referential) text types - relating to truth, cognitive synonymy, as discussed in the previous section- while in translating emotive language (poetry, literature, etc.), one can pay particular attention to issues of equivalence of effect, disregarding for the moment the highly impressionistic character of this notion. Moreover, the divide between literature and advertising discourse, for instance, is very tenuous at least in formal terms (Kitis, 1997). For example, DeLillo’s language is very dry, while metaphor and other figures of speech abound in adverts (cf. Kitis and Kontoulis). Besides, metaphor and its perceptions have changed (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980), and nowadays we believe it is pervasive in all types of discourse, mostly in journalese, the presumably informative text type *par excellence* (Kitis and Milapides, 1997). Moreover, EU texts and their translations have been found to construct particular identities (Sidiropoulou, 2004), while issues of distinct framing (ideological issues) traditionally germane to literary discourse (Karagiannidou and Kitis, 1997) are now dominant in journalese where least expected (Kitis and Milapides, 1997). Reporter Andrew Gilligan of BBC Radio 4 and Dr. David Kelly’s case demonstrates very resoundingly how information can be ‘sexed-up’, the very term finding its way in this

novel sense in English Language Dictionaries only after 2003, when the event of ‘sexing-up’ intelligence took place (The September Dossier) ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew\\_Gilligan](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Andrew_Gilligan)).

## 8. WHAT IS SAID VS. WHAT IS MEANT

In this section, we need to distinguish between two levels of textuality, or more precisely, two levels of meaning, the textual meaning of what is said and the sub-textual one of what is meant or more broadly conveyed. This level of meaning includes implicated meanings that are not textual, i.e., encoded in the text, the type of function of the text or the clause (speech act level of text), but also of underdetermined (underspecified/overspecified) meanings of the sub-text of the ST. Unarticulated constituents are included in this underspecification or indeterminacy of meaning, which need to be somehow inferred to contribute to interpretation.

For a start, we can present a graphic representation of the total signification of an utterance (*pace* Grice, 1989) and its subdivisions (cf. Koutoupis-Kitis, 1982):

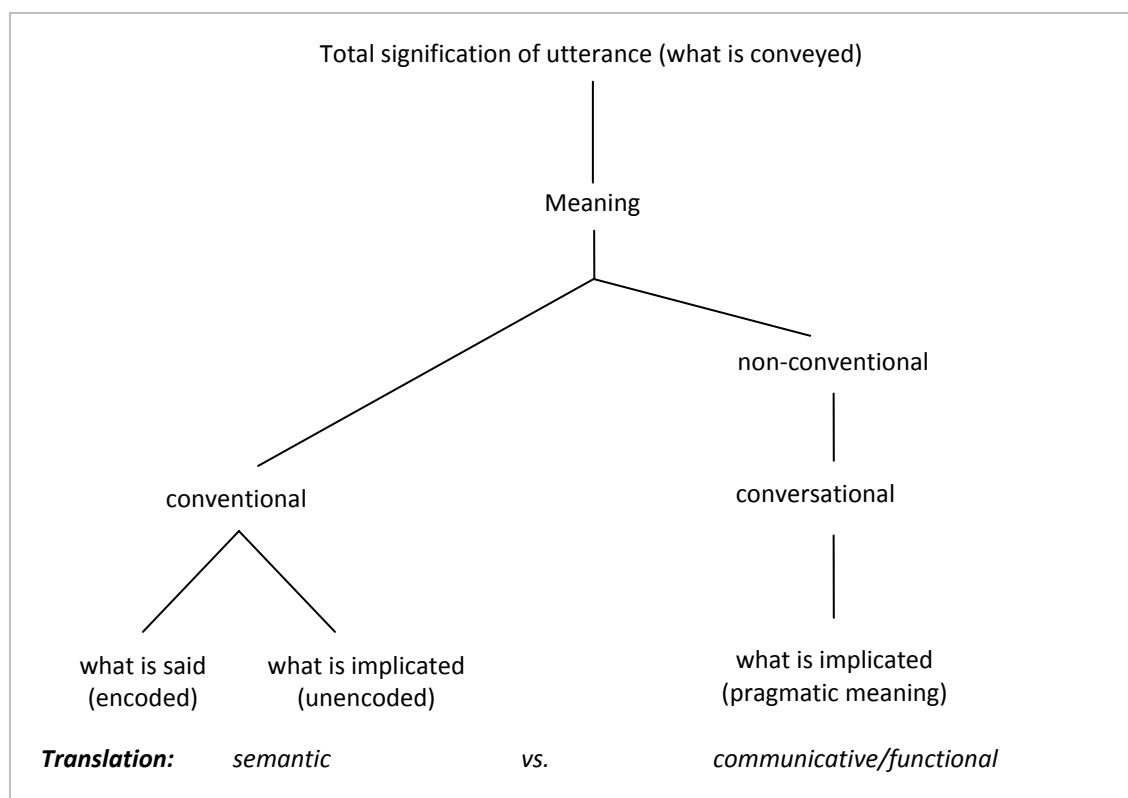


Figure 8 – What is conveyed.

Just as all these aspects of meaning hold true for any utterance, so, too, they obtain for any text. The translator must very competently identify what meanings are articulated or textually encoded in the text that need to be transferred to the TT, but also

pay particular attention to subtextual meanings, i.e., to the pragmatic meaning conveyed by the text. All these levels join forces into generating a textual world that may indeed exceed its textual correlates. This textual world, in collaboration with the interpreter (reader, translator), will in its turn project a cognitive world for the audience or readers. So, ultimately, the TT must also have the capacity of projecting a cognitively equivalent world for analogous audiences and readers in the TL. Thus, we propose that equivalence is set at this cognitive (meta-linguistic) level.

We may note that the distinction between semantic equivalence and communicative or functional equivalence can roughly coincide with the two aspects of meaning; more precisely, non-conventional pragmatic aspects of meaning (wherever they are prevalent) are pivotal in determining the function of the text. The competent translator needs to identify implicated meanings, that is, what is the intention of the author in writing this rather than that, in selecting this form or structure rather than another, and allow for exactly the same latitude of implicated subtextual meanings in the TT. The intention of the author or speaker -evinced in linguistic choices made in the text- is what is of paramount significance in inferring what is conveyed beyond the strictly textual conventional meaning (what is said). What is said may often be used as merely the vehicle for what is the desirably communicable meaning. Quite often the intention to imply something may govern linguistic choice even to the extent of distorting grammar, structure and semantic rules, as some examples may witness:

Toyota Yari's well-known advert: '*Bigsmall*'; car adverts: '*More car for your money*'; a woman's response: '*I'm very married*' to a flirting man's compliment: '*You're very beautiful*', etc.

All these examples need to be translated in a way that the implicature is not just preserved, but also as carrying the main message of the utterance. Indeed, implicatures are not borne out only in whole sentences in specific contexts (*A: How do you like my dress? B: Well, the colour's OK*), but also in specific constructions (see above). So, dwelling on just the semantics of words and constructions in any depth, we will still witness authorial intention that effects enrichment or bleaching (desemanticization) of meaning (loss of meaning).<sup>1</sup> This is what we called meaning modulation, but such modulation, especially while in the process of acquiring novel shades of meaning, is far from innocent. The following diagram may schematically represent a cycle of lexical and constructional modulation put in operation by authorial intention (will to implicate, etc.):

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<sup>1</sup> Hence the joke in the detective's utterance: We don't like fucking corpses, or we don't like FUCKING corpses! (upper case for stress). Hitting both the desemanticized (bleached) sense and the full conventional sense of the word fucking simultaneously or in the same breath is the source of many jokes and poses a serious problem for translation. (Concurrent distinct syntactic representation is necessitated by selected meaning).

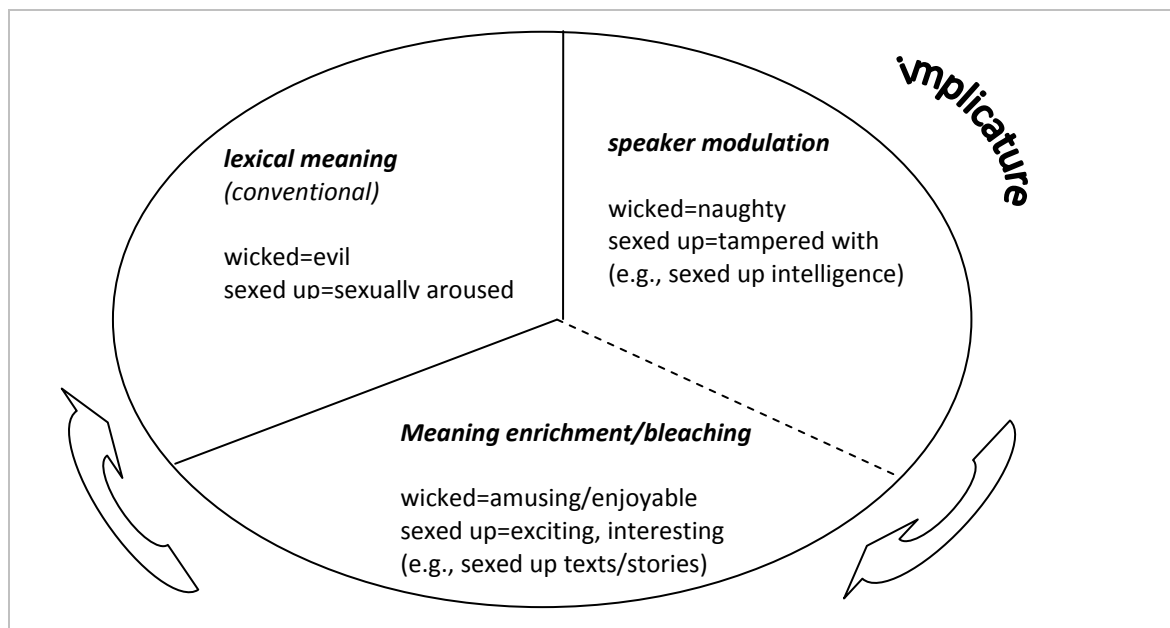


Figure 9 – Pragmatically effected (implicature) cycles of semantic meaning.

We see that what starts its life as implicature can end up, not just as conventional implicature, as Grice put it, but also as conventional meaning. At any time in a language there's a vast number of constructional meanings in the unstable process of generating implicatures, before those implicated meanings become conventionalized and find their way into dictionaries. The translator must be on the alert in this respect, too.

In conclusion, even if we restrict our attention to semantic translation, we have seen how deceptive such an approach can be, since even lexical meaning is not stable, but elusive, depending on a conjunction of parameters, such as authorial intention, context, culture and encyclopaedic knowledge (in effect subsumed in culture and context) of the participants (authors/readers). Indeed, in deconstructing meaning we witness its constantly deferred punctuation. As Norris (2002, p. 32) writes, "where Derrida breaks new ground ... is in the extent to which 'differ' shades into 'defer'. This involves the idea that meaning is always *deferred*, perhaps to the point of an endless supplementarity, by the play of signification. *Difference* not only designates this theme but offers in its own unstable meaning a graphic example of the process at work." What underlies a deconstructionist stance is the collapse of the Saussurean divide between form and meaning. In fact, there is no original text, no identity to be identified (no reference to a reality or objects), but rather an eternal referral to a postponed signified that is never completely captured. This view concerns the multiply interpreted texts by individual readers and translators at a variability of times and contexts. Translators, just like readers, carry their own baggage (experiences, frames of background knowledge, etc.) that is brought to bear on the interpretation of texts. Derrida 'bases' his theory of deconstruction on non-identity, non-presence and un-representability. The translator needs to be



susceptible to this fluidity, even though his/her intervention 'cuts through' it in the process of translation. In the next section, we will discuss a further aspect of pragmatic meaning, that of performativity.

## 9. TRANSLATION AS PERFORMANCE

The proposal of semantic vs. communicative equivalence in translation (sections 4, 8) is also closely allied to types of discourse, and follows suit on advances in theoretical linguistics and their incorporation in applied linguistics, such as translation theory.<sup>2</sup> The question of translation as action, raised by the proposed thesis of communicative equivalence in translation, is twofold: it may concern the translation action *per se*, but the actual text to be translated is an act in itself. It is authored by someone who apparently speaks in it -in other words- but also acts in it. So, a text is constituted by minor acts specifically intending to position the author and the addressee and perform certain acts, but it can also be a summative super-act in its totality. All in all, it's difficult to see how some text types or texts have to carry just contextual meaning while some other texts aim at particular effects, as even informing needs to take effect, that is to have an effect on the reader. It's "purpose-driven, outcome-oriented human interaction" (Munday, 2001, p. 77).

Newmark (1981) has a Quinean ring in his distinction between semantic and communicative translation when he writes:

Communicative translation attempts to produce on its reader an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original. Semantic translation attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original (p. 39).

But exactly what are we to understand by the term 'effect'? Isn't the meaning of it rather undetermined or impressionistic? Pragmatics offers a more precise way of determining such notions, thus offering a better specified methodology of translating.

As will be argued in the next section, the same effect or similar responses or the same dynamic text can be produced and reproduced only on account of the cognitive world that is generated by the textual world of the TT. But this can only be effected on the basis of more particularly targeted goals in the act of translation. The translator needs to be versed in an agenda that targets profiling the text. The re-synthesis of the source text's analytical meaning-aspects will yield the most promising results in the TL.

Let's now concentrate on Newmark's notion of 'effect' in the quotation above, pertaining to communicative translation and try to define it in pragmatic terms.

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<sup>2</sup>Understandably, this is only partly true since Translation Studies is a field at the intersection of many other disciplines.

Utterances and language-in-use, in general, are action because even when we inform we perform as speakers the act of informing. Indeed, much social acting is performed in language: we promise, we get married, we nominate candidates, we adjourn, we order, we request, we declare war, we endorse, we approve, we sympathize, we congratulate in language, and it is often impossible to do these acts outside of language (unlike running, digging, etc.). Indeed, most social institutions demand specific formulaic language, to an extent that one can claim that social institutions mainly consist in language as they are performed linguistically. So, these acts may be social institutions and the language we use to perform these acts is in itself the performance of those acts.

Each specific utterance performs a specific speech act that consists of three aspects; the locutionary act, the illocutionary act, and possibly the perlocutionary act. The first two are determinate or determined by the author's/speaker's intention and conventions holding in the language, while the third one, the perlocution, is unconventional and indeterminate, but mostly relates to effects the illocutionary act may have on the audience or readers. Admittedly, the divide between these two aspects of a speech act (illocution-perlocution) is far from clear in the literature in the field. However, we can define equivalence of 'effect' in translation as granting the TT the potential to perform the same speech act(s) (illocution), thus concurrently allowing for similar perlocutionary effects to take place (depending on audiences/readers and/or circumstances, etc.). Figure 10 is a graphic representation of an utterance or speech act with its tripartite constitution.

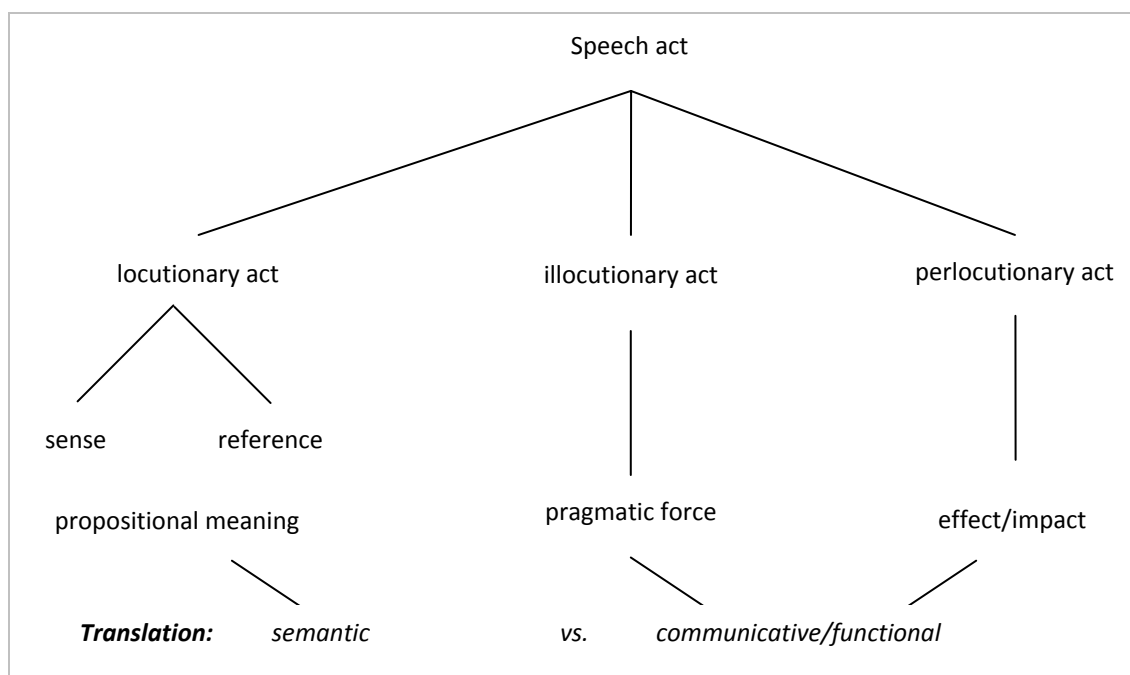


Figure 10 – The tripartite constitution of a speech act.

As we can clearly see above, the pragmatic force of an utterance or text needs to be focused upon in communicative translation (what is its function?), while semantic translation focuses on the semantic meaning of sentences and texts, i.e., their propositional meaning or what is said. This aspect of meaning concentrates on structure, standard lexical and sentence meanings and their reference, ignoring how this reference is achieved, or the specifics of the function of the utterance or text. This approach in semantic translation clearly disregards much that is not linguistically encoded in texts, but detectable or inferable sub-linguistically, or even textually provided that the translator pays specific attention to particularities of punctuation, structure, modality and discourse markers that do not carry propositional or referential meaning. Pragmatic knowledge and raised awareness of its importance sharpens the translator's acumen (see Robinson 2003).

The claim or proposal that we start from propositional meaning in translation and then we gradually move to more functional aspects of meaning is ill-founded. Instead, the translator needs to concentrate on the function and the speech act performed each time, that is on the pragmatic force and meaning, since this is the most important aspect of communication and often structure and semantic meaning may be subsidiary to function and speech act. For example, you drop something in the street and a stranger who noticed this, may want to draw your attention to it by addressing you with the following utterance:

*Did you drop something?*

However, the hedging of the interrogative form (motivated by politeness and the will not to intrude) is not similarly transferable into the Greek language, in which politeness in this case can only be semiotized in the plural form. But the structure has to remain affirmative and indeed in Greek we would pre-pose the word 'something' ('Something you-PL dropped'). Even the speech act of marrying within the Christian faith is variously tempered by specific denominations and cultures. Formulations such as *I hereby pronounce you man and wife* or *God's servant John is wedded to God's servant Maria* have to be variously translated depending on the degree of congeniality targeted (cf. degrees of domestication or foreignization). For example, in the Greek Orthodox tradition bride and bridegroom are not required to utter anything during the ceremony as in the Anglican denomination, but are considered married at the moment the priest utters the locution *God's servant John is wedded to God's servant Maria*.

Inferential approaches to translation and communicative approaches impinging on authorial intention are juxtaposed to semantic/propositional approaches. This preponderance favours the well acclaimed distinction between system vs. agency. The

main incentive for intentional theories of meaning was the despair felt for fixing meaning at the linguistic level, on the one hand, and the emergence of pragmatics, on the other. Translation has benefitted from this pragmatic turn, but the translator needs to be well versed in this approach to enhance his/her methodology and the end result.

## 10. RE-PRODUCING THE COGNITIVE WORLD OR FROM ENTOPIC TEXTS, THROUGH UTOPIA, TO EUTOPIC TEXTS

In the previous two sections, we investigated the 'remainder' of meaning that is not necessarily encoded or articulated in the text, but may be encrypted in some form in it. This remainder or surplus meaning is often much more significant than the propositional meaning, i.e., the meaning conveyed by the locution or the proposition, by what is said or written (encoded meaning), and extends beyond the referential domain of a text (the world it refers to) and sense or lexical meaning (standard, core lexical or sentence-meaning). So, it is of paramount importance to consider, not just what the text refers to or what the object world of the text is, but rather, what sort of object world the text constructs. Since object worlds can be claimed to be objective (independent of the speaker's or author's perceptions), it is best to claim that texts and their textual worlds effected by authors' choices generate or reflect cognitive worlds rather than object ones (Kitis, 1999). But as we have seen, even this referential objective world has proved to be a myth, since language can lose its referentiality and become self-referential (Derrida).

Translations of STs need to re-produce the same cognitive world in their twin TTs; this is the real call on the competent translator, who must first and foremost be a competent interpreter. This is why in times when there were no certified translators, poets and erudite men (rather than women!) were the first translators of literature (e.g., in Greece and Brazil).

Well-trained translators nowadays need to have a raised awareness of the many layers enveloping texts (figure 5); this will be achieved if they can actively identify and transfer pragmatic determinants of texts, so that the ST's profile is competently reconstituted to yield the TT's textual world that will effectively allow for its readers to reflect on an as close to the original as possible cognitive world. Identical textual worlds do not warrant equally identical cognitive worlds and uniform interpretations. After all, this is not the case for the original text, either. It's widely accepted nowadays that texts offer various levels of interpretation in collaboration with the reader. Meaning is a negotiated commodity and an interactional process. But the issue is not to restrict the

terrain of this variability of interpretation dependent on the recipient of the text. This onus lies heavily on the translator's shoulders.

The original, the source text, is a configuration of positions, how the author/speaker is positioned in his/her speech in relation to addressees, how the subjects are positioned in there with relation to each other, etc. But if this text is transposed into another language (translated), then it loses its *topos* (position, locale), it becomes *a-topos* or *utopic* as it becomes an object of analysis rather than use. Indeed, translation is *utopia*. Since all the topical or positional configurations are ruptured and annihilated -the text in the process of translation being violated (Gentzler, 2001, p. 149-150)- it needs to be reconstituted; the question raised is where, for whom, by whom, for what purpose? Language and texts never occur *in vacuo*; they occur in specific socio-political circumstances. They are *entopic*, that is they occur *in* a certain *topos*, in space and time. Furthermore, linguistic events are steeped in the ideology of their entopic occurrence. Translation can never reconstitute a text's initial correlates of space, time and circumstances of production and consumption. But language is translatable, and by that we should mean that texts can re-acquire a simulacrum of a *topos*, reconfigured by the competent translator as its *eutopos* (good positioning). Meaning is inextricably entrenched in topical (positional) configurations, and translation needs to primarily acknowledge and pay its dues to this factor, and only then try to reconstitute the text's profile. So, clearly, interpretation is dependent on a determination of all the topical configurations of the participants involved, their positional specificities that chart a space, a *topos*. While in the hands of the translator texts become *utopic*, however the translator can render them *eutopic* by imaginatively re-assembling a cognitively equivalent world.<sup>3</sup> In this enterprise the translator needs to *re-frame* the text in a textual world that will reflect the same ideological complexes, as well (cf. Baker, 2006, 2007).

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<sup>3</sup> The terms *entopia*, *utopia*, *eutopia* are Greek words. They are all compound, the second morpheme means 'locale', while the prefixes have the following meanings: *en* 'in', *u* 'out of', and *eu* 'good'.

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