

Contextualizing Translation Theories

Contextualizing Translation Theories:

*Aspects of Arabic–English
Interlingual Communication*

By

Mohammed Farghal and Ali Almanna

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BCE	Before Common Era
CE	Common Era
SL	Source Language
SLC	Source Language Culture
ST	Source Text
TL	Target Language
TLC	Target Language Culture
TT	Target Text

NOTES ON HOW TO USE THE BOOK

Although the book is an integrated whole, it is possible for the user to pick out individual chapters for reading or for discussion as each chapter highlights a particular aspect of translation activity. Therefore, the user's needs may determine whether to examine the entire book in search of a holistic picture of the process of translation or, alternatively, to select individual chapters that respond to concerns relating to a specific area such as, for example, the pragmatic aspects of translation. There are two key notations that are employed when discussing translational data in this work: **bold type**, which is used to highlight study items in excerpts and **square brackets**, which are used to enclose literal translation. Literal translation is intended for users who do not know Arabic; it gives them a rough picture of lexicalization and textuality in Arabic discourse, though not extending to all such micro grammatical features as categories of number, gender, case, and so on.

PREFACE

SAID FAIQ

The market does not need yet another book on translation theory and didactics, but it desperately needs this book. The market is replete with books that claim to “translation-teach-it-all” and with titles that range from the humble (introduction to, thinking, doing, translation) to the almost self-help-style books (how to become a translator in X number of easy steps, or the A to Z of translation), etc. These books do cover aspects of translation and translating, but do not fully provide something that brings theory and practice together in an informed and comprehensive fashion.

Translation, as Lefevere (1992) appropriately argues, is process, product and reception. Translation refers to the product and reception, while translating refers to the process. Furthermore, translation needs to be framed as representation, transmission and transculturation (Tymoczko 2007). If translation covers all these variables, it should then be seen through the prism of a friendly and comprehensive theory married to good practice. This book provides theory in a balanced manner with toolkits (derived from presented theories) to tackle translation problems. It is based on the axiom that the two fundamental components of translation are culture and language, and that the trick in examining translation and translating lies in bringing together theory and practice in an interactive fashion.

Because it brings the two together, translation is by necessity a multi-faceted, multi-problematic process with different manifestations, realizations and ramifications. Further, translation is often seen as transcreation and is carried out within the constraints of the discourse of its culture (the translating culture). Ignoring this tenet is tantamount to ignoring culture in translation and vice versa. So, translation plays an important role in the identification and negotiation of cultural identity, similarity and difference as well as the dynamics of intercultural encounters through the interlingual interface (Faiq 2010).

In order to examine the ins-and-outs of translation and translating, this book provides a framework of two parts or strata, namely the macro and the micro. The macro covers aspects that relate to textual practices within the context of sociocultural practices (discourse, genre, register, text types, pragmatics and semiotics). In other words, the ideology and politics of translation and the architecture of information transmitted through language. The micro covers all aspects of language (morphology, syntax, semantics, alliteration, neologisms, etc). In other words, all the possible ways a language can be put to use to reflect and represent the macro, naturally by users.

In doing so, the authors provide critical readings of available strategies of translating (from the dear old concept of equivalence, to strategies of modulation, domestication, foreignization and mores of translation), with the aim of demonstrating to the reader the pros and cons of each of these strategies within a theoretical context that is checked by translational tasks and examples, most derived from actual textual data.

Now, all this might seem easy, but it is not when the chosen language pair is Arabic and English —two languages with utterly different textual and cultural practices (manner and matter). This adds to the theory-practice gymnastics this book goes through. Through its chapters, readers will notice a gentle and informative blend of theory and practice that satisfies the needs of all its users (students, teachers and researchers of/in languages and cultures, translation, linguistics, discourse analysis, intercultural communication, media studies).

Translation is a cultural act and its examination and representation as such is made manifest through the examination of language (linguistic, textual, pragmatic, cultural, semiotic and stylistic realizations). This book does a superb job in tackling these issues. It caters for the seven old-age questions of communication, namely who, to whom, what, how, why, when, and where. Translation is communication *par excellence*.

Said Faiq, Ph.D., FRSA
Professor of Intercultural Studies & Translation
American university of Sharjah (UAE) &
Visiting Professor, Exeter University (UK).

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL SURVEY

1.1 Overview

To drive a car, for instance, does not require you to understand how the engine of the car works, but when you have some basic knowledge of such a mechanism, you will definitely drive your car with greater self-confidence, free from worry and fear. The same holds true for translation theories. You do not need to know translation theories in order to translate; however, acquiring a solid foundation in translation theory will enable you to produce a text reflecting the author's intention, maintaining the text-type focus and living up to the target-reader's expectations. In this chapter we will introduce in brief those important translation theories that have had the greatest influence on the development of translation studies afterwards.

1.2. Early attempts

In the Western world, translation, in particular literary translation, can be traced back to “the age of Romans” (Friedrich 1965/1992, 12). Although translation, at that time, played a significant role in reflecting Greek literature and philosophy in Latin, the attempts at translation were “an act of submission that caused awkward lexical Graecisms to enter into the translations” (ibid.). It was not long before the Romans viewed translation from a different perspective; it meant for them “transformation in order to mould the foreign into the linguistic structures of one's own culture” without tying themselves up with the lexical or syntactic features of the source language (SL) (ibid.). Such a fundamental change towards showing respect to the linguistic system of the target language (TL) and not violating it with foreign lexis and hybrid stylistic idiosyncrasies can be elicited from Cicero's attitude regarding translation:

I translate the ideas, their forms, or as one might say, their shapes; however, I translate them into a language that is in tune with our

conventions of usage. . . . Therefore, I did not have to make a word-for-word translation but rather a translation that reflects the general stylistic features . . . and the meaning . . . of foreign words. (Cicero printed in Schulte and Biguenet 1992: 12)

Cicero and Horace (first century BCE) were the first theorists who made a distinction between *word-for-word* translation and *sense-for-sense* translation. Their comments on translation practice influenced the following generations of translation down to the twentieth century. Five centuries later, St Jerome adopted Cicero and Horace's position on the occasion of his Latin translation of the Greek Septuagint, in his letter to Pammachius on the best method of translating:

Now I not only admit but freely announce that in translating from Greek – except of course in the case of the Holy Scripture, where even the syntax contains a mystery – I render not word-for-word, but sense-for-sense. (St Jerome cited in Robinson 1997, 25)

Although his was not an excellent translation, it is still the official Latin translation of the Bible (cf. Bassnett and Lefevere 1990, 15). His “approach to translating the Greek Septuagint Bible into Latin would affect later translations of the scriptures” (Munday 2001/2008, 7). It was not long before the Romans tilted the scale of balance towards the TL; they considered the original translation “as a source of inspiration for the creation of new expressions in one's own language” (Friedrich 1965/1992, 13).

1.3 Medieval Arabic Translation (Abbasid Period c. 750–1250 CE)

Medieval Arabic translation of Greek classic works in philosophy, medicine, astrology, and so on, flourished in the Abbasid Caliphate era (750–1250), particularly for over two centuries early in the period. It peaked in 832 with the establishment of the translation centre Bayt al-Hikma (The House of Wisdom) in Baghdad during the rule of the caliph al-Ma'mūn, who was said to remunerate translators with the weight of the translated book in gold (for more details, see Wiet 1973; Gutas 1998; Ashford 2004; Menocal 2005; Jabak (undated)). In this regard, Menocal (2005, 3) writes:

While the Umayyads of both Damascus and Cordoba were culturally voracious and syncretistic, it was not they but the Abbasids of Baghdad . . . who sponsored the astonishing multigenerational project to translate major

portions of the Greek philosophical and scientific canon without which, arguably, much of that canon might have been permanently lost.

Major scientist translators of that period, such as Ibn Ishāq, Ibn al-Batrīq, Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), and Farābī, among others, dominated the scene of scholarship and translation. In particular, Hunayn Ibn Ishāq and Yahyā Ibn al-Batrīq, who translated a large number of Greek works, were best known for the profession of translation. Here came up again the issue of the two translation methods of *word-for-word* or *sense-for-sense* translation. While the translations of Ibn Ishāq tended to be fluent in Arabic (translating sense-for-sense), those of Ibn al-Batrīq followed the original text more literally and borrowed extensively from Greek (for more details, see Baker and Malmkjær 1998; Almanna 2014).

However, with the Arabs establishing firm grounds in various domains of scholarship, thanks to the translation movement, and with the Arabic language becoming an international *lingua franca* (the way English is nowadays), the need for translation started to wane and the translation movement finally came to an end. In this regard, Gutas (1998, 152) comments:

The translation movement stopped or came to an end because the Arabic philosophical and scientific enterprise which had created the need for it from the very beginning became autonomous.

1.4 Pre-renaissance: Dante (1265–1321) and Martin Luther (1483–1546)

In his first book, *Convivio*, the Italian poet Dante argued that when he wrote in Latin he would translate from his mother tongue, thus his writing was not elegant or controllable. In defence of the vernacular language he added that it would be “an intelligent servant” as it would show obedience to his or her user. Obedience of language, as he described it, “must be sweet, and not bitter; entirely under command, and not spontaneous; and it must be limited and not unbounded” (cited in Robinson 1997, 48).

In the late fifteenth and early to mid sixteenth centuries, Martin Luther (c. 1483–1546 CE), one of the most notable theologians in Christian history and responsible for initiating the Protestant Reformation, shifted the focus of attention towards the TT and its intended reader (Robinson 1997, 84). Like Dante, he proclaimed that in order to produce a good translation, one needs to find out how ordinary people in the TL communicate such that

their voice and style of speech can emerge through translation. He translated the New Testament into German, giving ordinary lay people the opportunity to read God's word for themselves and, for the first time ever, Bibles were distributed among the German people. Although this was one of the brightest moments in Bible history, it was a dark time of depression in Luther's life. Luther "advised the would-be translator to use a vernacular proverb or expression if it fitted in with the New Testament" (Bassnett 1980, 56).

1.5 Sixteenth Century: Étienne Dolet (c. 1509–1546 CE) and William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536 CE)

One of the earliest attempts to establish a set of fundamental translation principles was made by Étienne Dolet, who was found a heretic for his mistranslation of one of Plato's dialogues. The phrase "rien du tout" (nothing at all) illustrated to the Church his disbelief in immortality, ultimately leading to his execution (for more details, see Nida 1964, 15; Bassnett 1980, 58; Munday 2001/2008, 23; Hermans 1997, 14–40; Firdaus 2008, 283; Almanna 2014, 13–14). In his essay "La maniere de bien traduire d'une langue en autre The Way to Translate Well from one Language into Another", Dolet (c. 1540 CE) concluded that:

1. the translator must understand perfectly the content and intention of the author;
2. the translator should have an excellent command in both languages: SL and TL;
3. the translator should avoid word-for-word renderings;
4. the translator should avoid the uncommon use of archaic words and expressions, but rather should focus on the common usage of the language; and
5. the translator should devote his/her attention to rhetorical devices (for more details, see Nida 1964, 15–16; Bassnett 1980, 61; Robinson 1997, 95–96; Munday 2001/2008, 27; Firdaus 2008, 283; Almanna 2014, 14).

Dolet tried to strike a balance between the SL and TL, while not seeking "to distinguish between the relative degree of control the translator must have in the source and the receptor language" (Nida 1964, 16). The translator, according to Dolet's principles, "is far more than a competent linguist, and translation involves both a scholarly and sensitive appraisal of the SL text and an awareness of the place the translation is intended to occupy in the TL system" (Bassnett 1980, 61). It is worth noting here that Dolet's principles are routinely followed today by most translators,

particularly in the translation of materials that belong to literary genres, as well as of any expressive discourse in which emphasis is placed on impressing the receptor of the text such as creative adverts and commentaries full of flowery language. This falls in line with Nida (1964, 16) who holds that “Dolet’s emphasis upon avoidance of literalism and upon the use of vernaculars is strikingly relevant for all types of translation aimed at a general audience”.

The translation of the Bible remained subject to many conflicts between western theories and ideologies of translation for more than a thousand years – these conflicts on Bible translations were intensified with the emergence of the Reformation in the 16th century when translation “came to be used as a weapon in both dogmatic and political conflicts as nation states began to emerge and the centralization of the Church started to weaken, evidenced in linguistic terms by the decline of Latin as a universal language” (Bassnett 1980, 53).

1.6 Seventeenth Century: Sir John Denham (c. 1615–1669 CE), Abraham Cowley (c. 1618–1667 CE), John Dryden (c. 1631–1700 CE)

The seventeenth century witnessed the birth of many influential theorists, such as Sir John Denham, Abraham Cowley and John Dryden (Bassnett 1980, 66; Firdaus 2008, 284). To begin with, John Dryden was and still remains well known for the essays that he wrote on translation. Dryden, like many commentators from the time of the Roman Empire onwards, argued that all translation may be reduced to these three types:

- 1- *metaphrase*, i.e., rendering word by word, sentence by sentence, etc. from one language into another;
- 2- *paraphrase*, i.e., “translation with latitude” in which the translator keeps an eye on the author of the source text, rendering his sense without firmly sticking to his exact words; and
- 3- *imitation*, i.e., translation in which the translator experiences a degree of freedom, “not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion”.

(Dryden 1680/1992, 17; emphasis added)

Having reduced translation into three main types, Dryden explained his position towards them criticizing the first type: “’tis a faith like that which proceeds from superstition, blind and zealous” (ibid., 18). Similarly, he stood against the third type of translation claiming “imitation of an author is the most advantageous way for a translator to show himself, but the

greatest wrong which can be done to the memory and reputation of the dead” (ibid., 20). He was in favour of the middle path, that of paraphrase.

Dryden’s attitude in favour of paraphrase was not static, but rather it underwent “a movement from the slight preference for the conservation of ideas which he displayed in ‘The Preface to Ovid’s Epistles’ (1680), through his revaluation of this opinion in the ‘Prefaces’ to his poems from *Sylvae* (1685), to his reversal of it in his ‘Discourse concerning Satire’ (1693)” (O’Sullivan Jr 1980, 144). Later on, in “The Dedication of the *Aeneis*” (1697), he tilted the scale towards literalness situating himself between metaphrase and paraphrase. Dryden’s justification for such a change was that “he had come to believe that a translator must try to recreate the original’s style as closely as possible” (ibid., 26):

On the whole matter, I thought fit to steer betwixt the two extremes of paraphrase and literal translation; to keep as near my author as I could, without losing all his graces, the most eminent of which are the beauty of his words. (Dryden 1697 printed in O’Sullivan Jr 1980, 26)

Dryden’s writings on translation were “very perspective, setting out what has to be done in order for successful translation to take place” (Munday 2001/2008, 26).

1.7 Eighteenth Century:

Alexander Fraser Tytler (c. 1747–1813 CE)

In the eighteenth century, the translator was likened to an artist with a moral duty both to the work of the original author and to the receiver (cf. Bassnett 1980, 68; Munday 2001/2008, 27). With the development of new theories and volumes on the translation process, the study of translation started to be codified and systematized – Alexander Fraser Tytler’s 1791 volume *Principles of Translation* (see below) is a case in point. Tytler drew attention to three principles that should be taken into account by translators:

- 1- the contents and/or ideas of the ST should be transferred completely into the TT;
- 2- the style and manner of the ST should be retained in the TL; and
- 3- the translation should have all the ease of the original composition (cf. Bassnett 1980, 69; Venuti 1995, 69; Munday 2001/2008, 27; Almanna 2014, 17).

Examining Tytler's principles, in particular the first two, one can readily observe that they represent, albeit indirectly, the age-old debate of the nature of translation: whether the translator had to opt for *word-for-word* translation or *sense-for-sense* translation. While the first principle requires translators to be faithful to the content of the original text, the second principle encourages translators to be free "from linguistic constraints involving form and denotation in favour of a more functional perspective" (Farghal 2010, 91). In his third principle, Tytler is developing the concepts of 'fluency' (see Venuti 1995, 68–69), 'naturalness' (discussed later by Nida 1964) and 'domestication' (discussed first by Schleiermacher (see below) and later by Venuti 1995; 1998; 2004).

In describing a good translation, Tytler (1978, 15) stated that it is the translation "in which the merit of the original work is so completely transfused into another language, as to be as distinctly apprehended, and as strongly felt, by a native of the country to which that language belongs" (Tytler cited in Venuti 1995, 68). Although Tytler held that translators had to clarify obscurities in the original by way of omission or addition, he stood against 'paraphrase', which was supported by Dryden (see above) – holding that "the concept of 'paraphrase' had led to exaggeratedly loose translations" (Bassnett 1980, 69).

1.8 Nineteenth Century: Friedrich Schleiermacher and Muhammad Ali Pasha (Romanticism and Reformism)

The nineteenth century was characterized by two conflicting tendencies: (1) considering translation as a "category of thought, with the translator seen as a creative genius" who "enriches the literature and language into which he is translating"; and (2) viewing the translator in terms of performing the mechanical function of making a text or an author known (see Bassnett 1980, 71). The nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of Romanticism, which led to the birth of many theories and translations in the domain of literature. Particularly gaining in popularity were poetic translations such as Edward Fitzgerald's (c. 1809–1863 CE) Rubaiyat Omar Al-Khayyam (1858) (for more details, see Bassnett 1980, 76).

As stated previously, debates about translation had been raging since Cicero and Horace up to the nineteenth century concerning whether translations should be carried out word-for-word or sense-for-sense. Translation in the seventeenth century was considered as "essentially copying", prohibiting translators from passing on their comments or their

interpretations, and that can be traced back to the Septuagint (Kelly 1979, 35). In the eighteenth century, the concept of ‘copying’ was slightly modified to mean “a recreation in terms of the other language” (ibid.) – the translator’s duty was “to create the spirit of the ST for the reader of the time” (Munday 2001/2008, 28).

With the rise of hermeneutic theories, translation in the nineteenth century came to be conceived as an “interpretive recreation of the text” (Kelly 1979, 34). However, this does not rule out the existence of the other school of translation theory that considered translation as being a “transmission of data” (ibid.). The theologian and translator Friedrich Schleiermacher, considered the founder of modern hermeneutics, took the discussion a step further in his essay of 1813 entitled “*On the Different Methods of Translating*” in which he focused on the “methodologies of translations”, rather than “illuminating the nature of the translation process” (Schulte and Biguenet 1992, 6). Schleiermacher argued that a translator “either . . . leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader towards the writer, or he leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer towards the reader”. He further added: “Both paths are so completely different from one another that one of them must definitely be adhered to as strictly as possible, since a highly unreliable result would emerge from mixing them, and it is likely that author and reader would not come together at all” (Schleiermacher 1813/1992, 41–42).

In the Arab world, and in Egypt in particular, a succession of schools was established in the 1820s for both the army and navy branches of the armed services. In addition to the purely military schools, a number of civilian arts and sciences schools were started up, most of which had some military aspect in their administration. The largest was the medical school, founded on the suggestion of the French physician Clot, and just a year after his arrival in 1825 the building was completed. Schools of veterinary science, agriculture, pharmaceuticals, mineralogy, engineering, and other subjects followed in the 1820s and 1830s. Clot also played a part in reforming the primary and secondary school systems (for more details, see Baker and Malmkjær 1998, 323–324).

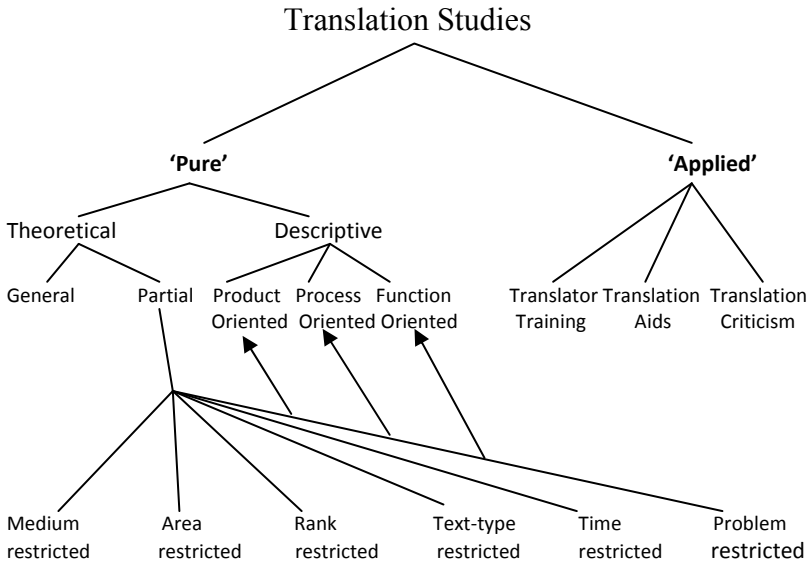
During this time, Muhammad Ali Pasha began sending students abroad, particularly to France where some of them learned specific skills individually, while others were sent to Paris in a series of education missions. It was not long before those students became experts in French and through their stay abroad acquired Western techniques and adopted

the Western style of learning. Upon their return, they began translating significant texts into Turkish and Arabic, teaching in the new schools, and translating what the foreign experts were teaching. During that time, Rifā'ah al-Taḥṭāwī rose to prominence as a translator as well as for the authorship of *Takhliṣ Al-Ibriz fi Talkhiṣ Bariz*, a famous account of his journey. A figure of importance in the revival of the Arabic language and literature, known as Nahda, al-Taḥṭāwī became the second director of what began as the School of Translation and was in 1837 subsequently renamed the School of Languages. Despite its title, this was more of a translation bureau than a language school.

The establishment of these new schools required textbooks, which became the chief product of the new government printing press set up in Bulāq, the port of Cairo, in 1822. This was the first permanent press in Egypt, second only to the short-lived press brought by the French expedition (1798–1801) that was removed upon French withdrawal. With his expedition Napoleon brought scientists and savants in all fields, along with a printer that could type in Arabic, Greek and French. The first translation made by the French mission from French into Arabic was Napoleon's proclamation addressing the Egyptians.

1.9 Contemporary Translation Theories

In his paper entitled “The Name and Nature of Translation Studies”, Holmes (1972/2004) developed a paradigm conceptualizing translation as “an overall framework, describing what translation studies covers” (Munday 2001/2008, 9). In Holmes's map of Translation Studies (1972/2004, 172–185; also discussed in Toury 1995; Baker and Malmkjær 1998; Munday 2001/2008; Hatim 2001; Hatim and Munday 2004; Chakhachiro 2005; and Almanna 2014, among others), translation, as a discipline, is divided into two main branches, viz. **‘pure translation studies’** and **‘applied translation studies’**. While the former concerns itself with theoretical and descriptive studies, the latter exclusively deals with issues related to translator training, translator aids and translation criticism. Below is an illustration of the framework for translation studies, which is considered the founding statement for the discipline (cf. Toury 1995; Munday 2001/2008; Gentzler 1993/2001).

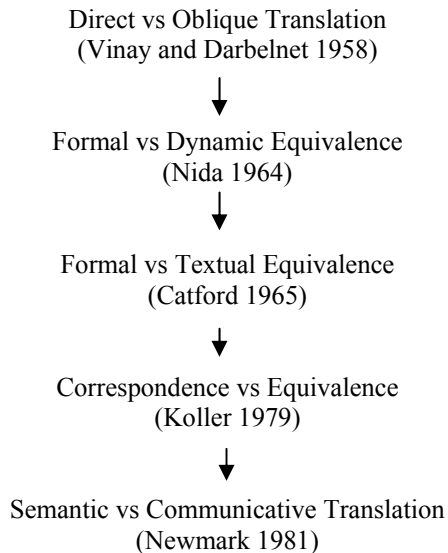


Holmes’s basic map of Translation Studies (Toury 1995, 10)

In the 1990s, translation began to find its footing as an independent scholarly discipline, and was described as “the bloom of translation studies” (Gentzler 1993, 187). Therefore, prior to closing this chapter, we will try to shed some light on the most influential theories of translation that emerged in the 1990s.

Linguistics-informed theories draw upon Chomskyan linguistics (Nida 1964) and Firthian and Hallidayan linguistics (Catford 1965). Nida’s approach to work from deep structure (semantic structure) in order to arrive at surface structure, and subsequently achieve equivalent effect in translation, was an offshoot of Chomsky’s revolutionary Generative-Transformational Grammar in the late fifties. Parallel to this was Catford’s linguistic approach to translation where surface structure class shifts constitute the core of translation activity, which aims at achieving textual equivalence. A similar approach was adopted earlier by Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/trans. 1995) where they deal with two methods of translation: (1) ‘*direct translation*’, which involves *literal translation*, *calque* and *borrowing*, and (2) ‘*oblique translation*’, which involves several processes including *transposition*, *modulation*, *equivalence* and *adaptation*. In addition to these authors, we have Koller (1979) and

Newmark (1981; 1988) who give more credit to formal equivalence than Nida by distinguishing between correspondence and equivalence and between semantic and communicative translation, respectively. These linguistically-informed translation dichotomies can be summarized in the diagram below:



Pragmatics-informed theories – which drew upon the Speech Act theory introduced first by Austin (1962) and later developed by Searle (1975), and Implicature theory introduced by Grice (1975) – bring particular attention to indirectness in human communication. Speech Act theory focuses on the importance of linking the illocutionary force (i.e., the communicative force of the utterance) to its perlocutionary effect (i.e., the effect of the utterance on the receptor). Thus, not only the “referential meaning of individual elements” should be taken into account by the translator, but “the illocutionary force of each speech act” and its effect on the reader/hearer as well (Hatim and Mason 1990, 61). In its turn, Implicature theory highlights the importance of human reasoning which enables interactants to handle conversational implicatures orbiting utterances in communication (for more details, see chapter seven in Baker 1992). Informed by these theories, translators are expected to capture illocutions as well as conversational implicatures interlingually (for more details, see chapter six in this book).

Register-oriented theories in translation, which were based on the early formulation of Register theory presented by Halliday et al (1964) and later by Gregory and Carroll (1978), focus on the analysis of the text according to its user, taking into account three variables: (1) field of discourse; (2) mode of discourse (i.e., the channel of communication); and (3) tenor (i.e., the relationship between the participants) (for more details on register, see chapter nine in this book). Hatim and Mason (1990, 51) argue that

there is overlap between all three variables, field, mode and tenor. . . . The three variables are interdependent: a given level of formality (tenor) influences and is influenced by a particular level of technicality (field) in an appropriate channel of communication (mode). Translators who are required to produce abstracts in a target language from a SL conference paper, for example, will be attentive to the subtle changes in field, mode and tenor that are involved.

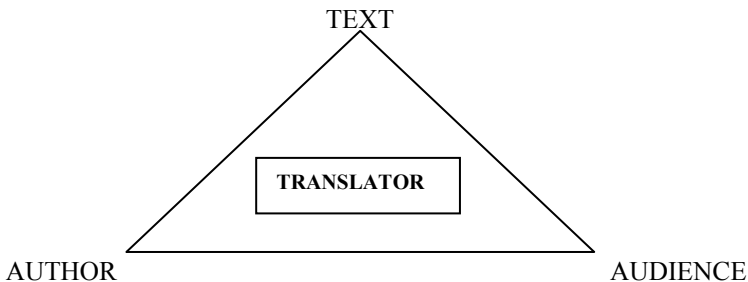
Simultaneously, the psycholinguist scholar, Ernst-August Gutt (1991) introduces his **Relevance theory** in which he argues that language users tend to use the least amount of effort to convey the maximum amount of information. He draws attention to the importance of “the inferential approach of relevance theory” in obtaining “a deeper and precise level of understanding texts” (Gutt 1992, 20). He further argues that “the intended interpretation of the translation”, in order to ‘resemble’ the ST, should be made “adequately relevant to the audience” (ibid.). Similarly, the translation needs to be presented in a way that easily communicates “the intended interpretation without putting the audience to unnecessary processing effort” (Gutt 1991, 101–102; for more details, see chapter two of this book).

The notion of the translator’s *‘invisibility’*, as opposed to *‘visibility’*, is introduced by Venuti. By invisibility, he means that translators tend to hide their voices, thus producing a ‘fluent’ piece of translation by avoiding “any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities” that make “it seem transparent” (Venuti 1995, 1–2). To put this differently, the TT sounds as if it were not a ‘translation’, but rather an ‘original’. By contrast, visibility, according to Venuti, refers to that type of translation in which translators, whether deliberately or not, leave their fingerprint in the TT, thus producing a piece of work full of linguistic and stylistic features that strike the TL reader as marked and unusual. Having traced back a distinction made by the German theologian and translator Friedrich Schleiermacher (aforementioned), and more recently House (1977) in her distinction between *‘covert’* and *‘overt’* translation, Venuti (ibid.) argues that the translation strategy can be either *‘domesticating’* or *‘foreignizing’*.

Domestication entails filtering out all foreign features, producing a text more acceptable and readable by the TL reader. Foreignization involves translators leaving the linguistic and cultural features of the SL, thus producing a text full of foreignness, i.e., “moving the reader to the writer” (Schleiermacher 1813/1992, 41–42).

Over the past five decades, there has existed a series of shifts from word to sentence, from sentence to text, from text to context, from language to culture and/or society, hence the growing interdisciplinary interest between translation studies and sociology. In the past two decades, there has been increased attention “toward more sociologically– and anthropologically–informed approaches to the study of translation processes and products” (Inghilleri 2005, 125), in particular those of Pierre Bourdieu, Niklas Luhmann and Bruno Latour (see chapter two for more details).

The continuing shift from equivalence-based theories to more functionally-oriented theories has major impacts on translation studies. In addition to contextual factors including text type, author, and audience, which usually figure heavily in linguistic and text-linguistic approaches to translation, the central role of the translator (whether acting singly or in collaboration with a commissioner) has been highlighted in more functionally-informed theories. Farghal (2012, 35) places the translator in the centre of a social game portraying the interaction between various agents in translation activity, as can be shown in the diagram below.



Consequently, whether the translation product will formally reflect the ST’s features, the author’s marked features, or the audience preferences as consumers of the TT depends, to a large extent, on the global as well as local translation strategies taken by the translator and/or the commissioner.

1.10 Conclusion

This chapter has surveyed the different theories of translation from Cicero and Horace (first century BCE) up to contemporary translation theories. By drawing on different theoretical orientations in translation studies, the following chapters in this book aim to show that the end translation product will never assume a pure form, embracing wholly one theoretical orientation. For example, the strategy of '*foreignization*' might be adopted as a global strategy in translating a ST; however, the actual production of the TT will have to involve cases where the strategy of '*domestication*' presents itself as a must, in order to avoid some communication breakdowns. One can compare translation dichotomies or orientations to the relationship between the phatic and referential elements of language, where one or the other will show some dominance without excluding the other function. The same is true in translation activity, where one orientation will show dominance while leaving some room for others. The main objective of this volume is to spell out the tenets relating to different translation theories in an attempt to form a multi-faceted holistic picture, which will help in the perfecting of translators' work. The competent translator is not expected to restrict himself/herself to one translation orientation and/or paradigm, but rather travel among them in search of informed solutions to problems. In this spirit, Pym (2010, 166) concludes:

When theorizing, when developing your own translation theory, first identify a problem – a situation of doubt requiring action, or a question in need of an answer. Then go in search of ideas that can help you work on that problem. There is no need to start in any one paradigm, and certainly no need to belong to one.

CHAPTER TWO

TRANSLATION PARAMETERS AND CONSTRAINTS

2.1 Overview

This chapter addresses itself to the macro-parameters and constraints that need to be considered at the pre-translation stage in a translation project. It aims to show that there usually exists a tug of war between several theoretically polar options at the macro level although they become more congruent and dynamic during the actual process of translation. The main emphasis in this chapter, therefore, is to bring out the relevance of macro issues such as culture, (master) discourse, genre, ideology, norms, and so on, prior to actual translation activity. Each section in this chapter will show how a macro parameter or constraint can have significant bearings on the work of translators. Many illustrative examples are employed to drive home the importance of such pre-translation issues.

When deciding their global strategy, translators usually ask themselves a number of questions to identify the text type, genre, the intended readership of the TT, the translation purpose, and the function of the TT, among other things, with a view to forming a global strategy before embarking on the actual act of translating. In this regard, Hatim and Mason (1997, 11) remark: “Translators’ choices are constrained by the brief for the job which they have to perform, including the purpose and status of the translation and the likely readership and so on”. Parallel to these, the publisher’s attitude, or the agency’s policy, the presence of the ST in a bilingual edition, and the relationship between the source and target cultures (self and other) are often of equal influence in deciding the appropriateness of a particular global strategy. Venuti (2000, 468) comments:

Translation never communicates in an untroubled fashion because the translator negotiates the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text by reducing them and supplying another set of differences, basically

domestic, drawn from the receiving language and culture to enable the foreign to be received there.

In sum, translators do not work randomly, but are rather influenced by particular constraints that are of a macro nature. The translator sometimes receives some information (the translation brief) from the translation commissioner (client, agent, translation project manager, or publisher), which implicitly or explicitly gives indications as to what global strategy to adopt. For example, many commissioners of translation into Arabic require that blasphemous segments and other taboo segments be eliminated or, at least, be toned down or euphemized. Such editorial constraints do not usually present themselves when translating into English where such sensitivities are culturally tolerated. Likewise, if working alone, the translator consciously chooses a global strategy where a preference occurs vis-à-vis one strategy rather than another, for example communicative rather than semantic translation (Newmark 1981) or domestication rather than foreignization (Venuti 1995).

2.2 Macro Cultural Considerations

When translating from language/culture A to language/culture B, translators are influenced by the way in which they look at the other and vice versa. This way of viewing the other and/or the way in which the other sees ‘us’ influences the translation process at every stage of translation. In this regard, Bassnett and Trivedi (1999, 2) write: “Translation is not an innocent, transparent activity but is highly charged with signification at every stage; it rarely, if ever, involves a relationship of equality between texts, authors or systems”. As such, they argue that translation is a cultural act, associated with “a highly manipulative activity that involves all kinds of stages in the process of transfer across linguistic and cultural boundaries”.

Approached from such a perspective, another type of pressure, derived from the struggle between the culture we are translating from and the culture we are translating to, can be identified. Faiq (2008, 27–30) emphasizes that translation presents prime sites for examining a great number of issues, such as power relations, race, gender, (post-) colonialism, publishing strategies, censorship, and otherness, whereby all parties involved in the translation process at its macro-level (be they publishers, editors, translation project managers, or translators) are highly influenced by their own culture and the way it views the cultures they are translating from or to. The way in which they see ‘self’ and ‘other’ (source

and target) influences, among other factors (see below), every single aspect of the translation process, starting from selecting the ST for translation up to presenting it to the target reader. As far as the relationship between the source culture and target culture is concerned, it is worth noting that the relationship is not always equal, but rather a target culture, as Robyns (1994, 409–420) concludes, may take one of the following positions with regard to the source culture:

1. *'Imperialist'*, i.e. the target culture encourages transporting foreign materials from the source culture, provided that the transported materials are naturalized in accordance with the established systems of the target culture and its norms and conventions;
2. *'Defensive'*, i.e. the target culture regards the source culture as a threat to its identity, thereby avoiding any influence the target culture might exercise;
3. *'Trans-discursive'*, i.e. the two cultures see each other equally; or
4. *'Defective'*, i.e. the target culture looks at the source culture as a capable culture that can compensate for target cultural deficiencies.

Consequently, whatever the relationship between the interfacing cultures is, be it imperialist, defensive, trans-discursive, or defective, there will be some sort of influence on the translator prior to embarking on the actual act of translating. However, the influence may well reach its peak when the relationship is imperialist whereby the target culture adopts a colonial approach in transporting the foreign materials (Almanna 2014, 98). Such an imperialist relationship between the source and the target cultures has encouraged the translation of literary works that are in line with the existing stereotypical representations conjured up in the target readers' minds towards the original cultures regardless of the literary quality of the works (ibid.). That is why, for example, the West is so attracted to Arabic literary works that are of a controversial nature in their source culture – usually works which deal with blasphemy, feminist concepts, human rights, and so on – which readily feed into the target culture's stereotypical images of the source culture. Historically, one can mention the classic Arabic work *'The Thousand and One Nights'*, which has received a remarkable international status through translation into tens of languages but has remained a marginal work in its source culture. You can hardly find this work as part of the syllabus in any Arabic department at an Arab university, whereas it enjoys an outstanding presence in Western academic activity relating to Arabic literature.

2.3 Master Discourse of Translation

In addition to being influenced by their own culture and the way they see the other, translators, before starting the actual act of translating, may find themselves working for and affiliated to specific bodies with certain criteria and descriptions that have been formulated regarding the translated materials. Such criteria and descriptions form established systems with specific norms and conventions for selecting, representing, producing, and consuming the foreign materials, thereby producing a master discourse of translation through which identity and difference (self and other) are discussed and negotiated, and within which translating is done (cf. Faiq 2007, 2008). Adhering to the constraints imposed by virtue of a master discourse on all parties involved in a macro-level of translation, self and other (source and target) become situated in ways of representation inherited in the shared experience and institutional norms of the self. Otherness is therefore measured according to a number of possibilities within the master discourse. Faiq (2008, 30, emphasis his) rightly comments that:

When the other is feared, the lexical strategies (language choices) one expects are those that realize hierarchy, subordination and dominance. Otherness can and often does lead to the establishment of stereotypes, which usually come accompanied by existing representations that reinforce the ideas behind them. The presentation of others through translation is a powerful strategy of exclusion used by a self as normal and moral (Said, 1995). Not surprising, this exclusion is also accompanied by an inclusion process of some accepted members from the other as long as the *acceptees* adopt and adapt to the underlying master discourse and its associated representational system and ideology of the accepting self, *acceptors*.

The traditional Western discourse in general and the more recent Anglo-American discourse in particular have been hostile to Arab-Islamic culture. For example, Barber (1995, 53–63) envisions two parallel futures for our globe: a McWorld informed by modernity, science and technology representing the West and a McTripe dominated by backwardness and tribal/sectarian violence representing the East (especially Arab-Muslim cultures). Also, a quick look at English media discourse clearly points to the adoption of a master discourse whose lexicon is based on stereotypical images. Expressions such as ‘terrorism’, ‘fundamentalism’, ‘Islamists’, ‘Muslim militants’, ‘jihad’, and so on, have become Western media buzz words employed when referring to Arabs and Muslims, especially after the 9/11 attacks. This negative image reached a stage that required politicians of the highest level to interfere in an attempt to soften the negative