

Analyse, and then translate: a focus on a pre-translational analysis model.

التحليل سبيلا للترجمة: دراسة عن نموذج تحليل قبلي.

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Abstract:

We intended in the present contribution to shed light on one side of theoretical efforts aiming to apply the discourse analysis's approach in the field of translation teaching. Our conceptual frame was based on Trosborg's pre-translational source text analysis model, presented within a collective book issued by Christina Schäffner in 2002. This book discusses the role of discourse analysis for translation and translator and examines the said model in a very critical way. Our practical study was carried out on a journalistic discourse and revealed interesting qualitative results and answered the question of how the intra-textual and extra-textual analytic reading can help to resolve some of the translational problems.

Keywords: translation; discourse analysis; pre-translational analysis; extra-textual features; intra-textual features; mode.

ملخص:

نسلط الضوء في هذا المقال على جانب من الجهود النظرية الرامية إلى تطبيق مقارنة تحليل الخطاب في مجال تعليم الترجمة. و سنتناول دراستنا بالتعريف و التمثيل نموذج تروسبورغ للتحليل القبلي لنص الانطلاق، و الذي قدمته في إطار كتاب جماعي نشر عام 2002 ، و الذي يدرس دور تحليل الخطاب في الترجمة و تدريسها، و يتناول النموذج المذكور بطريقة نقدية. أما دراستنا التطبيقية فقد أجريناها على خطاب صحفي، حيث توصلت إلى نتائج نوعية مهمة و أجابت عن السؤال المتعلق بمدى مساهمة القراءة التحليلية للعناصر الداخلية و الخارجية للخطاب في حل بعض المشكلات الترجمة.

كلمات مفتاحية: ترجمة، تحليل الخطاب، التحليل القبلي، العناصر الخارجية، العناصر الداخلية، النمط.

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1. INTRODUCTION:

In the field of translation, there is a general and a constant agreement among researchers and scholars that a discursive analysis is always proven to be indispensable during the source text (ST) reading and also during the transfer process, *“since this appears to be the only way of ensuring that the source text has been wholly and correctly understood”* (Nord, 2005:02). This implies that translation learners need to be initiated to the discourse analysis activity, by different resources and exercises which could enhance their ability to read and understand the meaning found in the source text’s context, and then to reconstruct it in the target language and context.

Being in translation teaching field for more than ten years, we have always been defending the idea telling that the translator has practically nothing to analyse and consider but the given ST. The latter is at the same time a means and an objective of translation, seen that it’s the only object which could be explored in order to extract as much of meaning elements as possible to use in the comprehension process and then to reuse during the transfer.

It is worth mentioning that a ST analysis as a phase of translation process is to distinguish from other types of analyses, done for linguistic purposes or from comparative perspectives. This one has its own specific purpose: *“to identify and highlight specific textual features which might be expected to present translation problems in order to steer translation decisions”* (Erdman et al., 1994: 4).

Going from this point of view and focusing on the importance of a deep comprehension in translation process, the present paper comes to enrich the already existing case studies with a corpus-based analysis, aiming a practical experience to help students with and provide them some real parameters to use in their own practice, within the process of learning translation.

2. Theoretical background and literature review:

When the discourse analysis made its debut in the second half of the previous century, one common vision gathered the different linguists with their diverse approaches: language should be regarded as a dynamic social interactive phenomenon. Thus, it should be studied and analysed conforming to the context in which it is used. According to this new definition of language, several models had

been set by scholars to define the dimensions and describe the elements to be considered during a discursive analysis. And one of the most relevant was Halliday's systemic functional model, which is based on the relationships between language function (determined by situational or social factors) and language form. This relation is presented by the notion of "register" already defined and used in the field of social linguistics, as a variety of a language used for a particular purpose or in a particular setting.

Hatim and Mason consider that a register is always «*defined in terms of differences in grammar, vocabulary, etc., between two samples of language activity such as a sports commentary and a church service*» (1990, p. 46).

Since translation studies left the narrow linguistic frame and moved towards the interpretative approach, some key notions inside the transfer process had their basic definitions changed. "Meaning" for example, is no longer that static mass found in the text and which can be extracted by a simple reading, but the result of a constant interpretative conversation between the text and the reader. As to "Comprehension", it is an ongoing cognitive process in which every new attempt transforms the first cognitive representation of the source text's message.

The questions of why and how to do a discourse analysis within a translational act had been dealt with by researchers of different schools (Schäffner, 2002:05). If the objective was the same: to identify specific textual features which are relevant for the process of translation, the models and tools were different, according to the parameter of relevance deciding of which textual ingredients to analyse. Nord, for example, proposed a Translation-Oriented ST analysis based on the very imperceptible characteristics distinguishing the reader of the translation:

"In any translation which is intended to allow people to communicate across a linguistic and cultural barrier, at least one element is different every time and that is the receiver, even if the TT receiver is the very image of the ST in sex, age, education, social background, there would be one difference namely that they are bound into diverse linguistic and cultural communities" (1992).

Going back in time to the 1980s, when translation was freed from applied linguistics and joined the interpretive circle, the first writings on the contribution of discourse analysis to translation were, almost, all based on contrastive principles and included, in their practical part, a comparative study of a given pair of languages.

Starting with Jeans Delisle (1980) and his famous book entitled: "*Analyse du Discours comme Méthode de Traduction*", in which he proposes the foundations

of a good teaching of translation, basing on a comparison of some lexical, grammatical and stylistic elements between French and English. Exercises on analysis models were presented to deal with the problems encountered by students.

Since then, a number of analytical models had been proposed to be inserted in translation teaching programs, such as the functional model by Nord (1991), the didactic model by Grelet (1991) and the interpretative model by Lederer (1994). Each model met the principles and objectives of the approach in which it is included.

Written in various languages, many articles have dealt with the interrelation between translation and discourse analysis.

In an article entitled "*l'Analyse du Discours à la Traduction: L'intermédiation Culturelle*) published in 2019, and as part of a comparative study between institutional discourse and media discourse, Durieux addressed yet another reminder of the place of a discursive analysis in a translating process. "*Translating is not converting a linguistic code into another linguistic code; it is not bringing languages into contact. It's putting people in contact*", she says, basing on one of the fundamental principles of the interpretative approach to which she adheres: "*to translate is to understand in order to make people understand*". This operating principle summarizes the contribution of analysis during the stage of comprehension.

Entitled "*the Role of Discourse Analysis in Translation*", the paper of M. Vasheghani Farahani (2013), discusses the influence of discourse analysis (as a discipline dealing with the relationship between language and context in which it is used) on translation studies, citing the works of some translation scholars such as Halliday's functional grammar, House's translation quality assessment model and Katherine Reiss' typology of texts in translation.

In his article "*Traduction et Analyse du Discours: Typologies Croisées*" (2005), Gambier tracks the relationships that existed between the sciences of language and translation studies. His objective was to highlight the contribution of reflection on discourse analysis to translation and consequently to the training of translators.

3. Trosborg's analysis model:

Anna Trosborg had proposed a pre-translational source text analysis model, presented within a collective book issued by Christina Schäffner in (2002) and

inspired from *Halliday's* register analysis and *Swales' genre analysis*. It's described as a complex one, seen that it covers in details both intra and extra textual parameters. Trosborg describes her approach as *"part of a translator training for the teaching of university students at advanced level, aiming to create a deep understanding of the source text (ST) by means of a detailed analysis of it"*.

Regardless all the reservations voiced of Trosborg's approach (student awareness, time pressure, absence of pedagogical element, etc), we think that it has the merit of being a process oriented approach, since it emphasises not only the quality of the product (the translation) but also the way the process is administered. Moreover, it could join a number of textual analysis approaches, mainly *Halliday's register analysis*, (but also the speech acts and semantics) to the *Skopos theory* which is considered as the most revolutionary approach in the field of translation studies.

The aim of her approach being to provide a model which allows an in-depth comprehension of the source text, Trosborg considers that *"understanding the text in full gives the translator a thorough overview and a possibility of maintaining or adapting the ST in a conscious way in order to meet the demands of the TT skopos"*. (2002: 09)

Trosborg's model includes two levels of analysis. The first one covers extra-textual features which give answers about when and where the text events take place, in addition to the context of situation. The second deals with three different functions: ideational, interpersonal and textual. The model can be represented as follows:

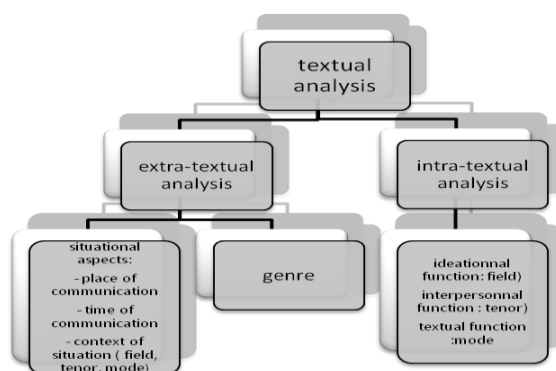


Figure1: Extra - textual and intra-textual features in a pre-translational analysis, according to Trosborg (2002: 10-18).

Even if they are categorized into different features in order to facilitate their analysis, extra-textual and intra-textual features are actually interdependent. As it is shown in the figure above, the context of situation which is considered as an important extra-textual analysis parameter, comprises elements that are directly included in functions analysed inside the text. The ideational function (an intra-textual feature) for example, referring to language as form and meaning is analysed according to the field (an extra-textual feature) which refers to “*what is going on in the text*”.

In the following, we will try to define and explain some elements presented in the figure above.

3-1 extra-textual features:

-3-1-1 place of communication: given that this parameter may be of significance for the understanding of a text in terms of words and expressions meanings (Trosborg, 2002:10)

-3-1-2 time of communication: this parameter is closely related to the previous one and presents a double interest: to understand and translate for a new recipient: “*If a non- contemporary text is to be translated, it may be of importance to be able to identify expressions or slang from a certain era*”. (Trosborg, 2002:10)

-3-1-3 context of situation: it refers to what is going on the specific situation in which the text occurs. Since it was elaborated for the first time in 1923, this concept had reviewed, across the studies extensions and changed in terms of the features to take into account when considering the interaction between language and social conditions. According to Trosborg (2002), the conception proposed by Hymes (1971), seems to be the most representative. He conceives eight component form and content of text: participants end (intend and effect), key, medium, genre, interactional norms (Halliday and Hassan, 1990: 22).

For her model, Trosborg adopted the description offered by Halliday (1964), who proposed three main features for the content of situation: field, tenor and mode. The field is the total event in which the text is functioning. The tenor is the set of relevant social relations among the participants involved. The mode is the function of the text in the event and includes the channel taken by the language.

3-2: intra-textual features:

Regarding the intra-textual features, we will focus on those related to the Ideational function, also called experiential meta-function. This one refers to the field of the text and uses language to encode the reader's experience of the world and to convey a picture of reality (Trosborg, 2002: 16). It includes the following issues: - nominalization, - transitivity (type of the verb), - frames and chains, - collocation, - poetic function, - presuppositions (culture-specific elements) and, - intertextuality. (2000:16-19)

Basing on the needs of our practical frame, we will pay a special attention to the following ideational features: collocation, poetic function and preposition.

- Collocation: as a group of two or more words that are almost always put together to create a specific meaning. *“Knowledge of collocational constraints in the ST is an important aspect of translator competence, just as “unusual collocations” present a great challenge”* (Trosborg, 2002: 19).
- Poetic function: Trosborg considers that the following features can constitute the poetic function of the discourse: metaphors, alliteration, unusual collocations, parallel structures, balanced sentences, interrupted movement, sound bites, repetition and contrast. (2002: 19).
- Presuppositions (culture- specific elements): it is about the presupposition pool that every participant has. It is contained of the general knowledge and the situational context. As to their translational problematic aspect, Trosborg notes that *“in the presupposition pool, we find cultural as well as professional references that often have to be explained somehow because they cannot be expected to be part of TT reader’s presupposition pool. The point is to identify such elements and to decide on a translation strategy suited to the TT skopos”*. (2002, 19).

4. Practical frame: analysing some extra and extra textual features:

In this practical part, we will try to show the translational interest of a pre-translational analysis carried out on some intra and extra textual elements found in Trosborg's model, according to their occurrence and availability in the chosen text. The latter is an extract of an article entitled *“What Brexit and Donald Trump have in common”*, from *“The Economist”* newspaper (Jan 30th, 2017).

4.1 The text sample:

“Comparisons between Donald Trump’s presidential win and Britain’s vote to leave the European Union have often been overdone. Though during the campaign Mr Trump called himself “Mr Brexit” and promised “Brexit plus, plus, plus” for America, many Britons voted for Leave who would not dream of supporting him. The debates and issues involved were often different. The racial dimension was much less pronounced in Britain. Yet there are affinities, as a successful British petition shows.

Launched on January 29th it urges the British government to cancel Mr Trump’s summer state visit to Britain. Such trips are considered an honour. They are not afforded to all presidents and involve staying with the monarch. The petition says the “embarrassment to Her Majesty the Queen” would be unacceptable. At the time of writing, it had attracted 1.4m signatories and climbing, far above the 100,000 needed for Members of Parliament to consider debating the issue in Parliament. Nonetheless, the government says it will not change its plans”.

4.2 Corpus analysis:

In order to limit the frame of our study and meet the main objective of the present contribution, (to show how a pre-translational analysis can help to well translate and resolve some translation problems), we will pay a special attention to the extra-textual features presented in the figure above: the place of communication, time of communication and the context of situation. This latter will necessarily include some intra-textual features, namely the tenor, since it takes account of the form of the discourse as it was already explained.

4.2.1 Analyzing the Place of communication:

Words indicating places where the events reported in the text took place are: “*Britain*”, “*America*” and “*European Union*”. The words referring to these places are: “*Donald Trump*” and “*Brexit*”.

The establishment of the place of communication will help the student to recognize some of the implicit content of the text, by answering the following comprehension questions:

- 1- *How is Donald Trump?*
- 2- *Which presidential did he win?*
- 3- *Why did Britain want to leave the European Union?*
- 4- *What is Brexit?*
- 5- *Which racial dimension is evoked in the text?*
- 6- *Which trips are considered an honour?*
- 7- *Will the issue discussed be debated in Parliament?*
- 8- *Would Trump's visit cause an embarrassment to Her Majesty the Queen?*
If yes, why?

It's visible that the answers for the questions asked above are not provided directly or explicitly by the author. Instead, they could be reached by three possible ways:

- Some are to be deduced by reference since they are supposed to be already known by the targeted reader as part of his previous knowledge and recognized as a shared cognitive background. (i.e. questions 1 and 3 whose answers don't need to be given by the text).
- Some are to be deduced by inference, i.e. by mobilizing information already provided in the text. (i.e. question 6, whose answer is found just in the sentence before: the trip here is about presidential state visit to Britain).
- Other answers are intentionally implicated by the author. However, they can be unveiled by considering the whole context of situation and the author's attitude. For the question 7, for example, the answer is yes, because the number of signatories exceeds by far that needed by the parliament to debate the issue. The last question has an implicit positive answer, deduced by combining many elements such as the author's position and the participants' reactions).

As it has been already mentioned, recognizing places in a text and identifying their geographic, social, political and historical connections, helps to well understand the meaning. "*Brexit*" is a key word in the text and it is an abbreviation of two English words: '*Britain*' and '*exit*' and. It refers to the withdrawal process of the United Kingdom (UK) from the European Union (EU)).

4.2.2 Analysing the time of communication:

We found some time indicators introduced by different means including adverbs (*during, time of writing*), dates (*January, 29th*) and year specific periods (*summer*). In order to reach a better understanding about the temporal frame of the text, the following questions can be directly or indirectly asked by the student/reader:

- 1- *When did Trump's electoral campaign take place?*
- 2- *When did the vote for Brexit take place?*
- 3- *In which year was the British petition launched?*
- 4- *In which year was Mr Trump's summer visit to Britain planned?*
- 5- *Is the petition still circulating?*

Once again, these questions don't have ready and direct answers in the text. The reader needs extra-textual details about when exactly the text was written, in order to situate every event. He needs a time reference which is the text time of writing. It would help him to reconstitute the text logically and chronologically).

In some cases, the role of the adverbs of time can go beyond a simple events' organization and to intervene in the meaning's construction and manipulation. The use of the time indicator "*at the time of writing*", for example, implied two pieces of inferential information: - the petition is still circulating when he wrote his text, - the number of signatories is increasing. It can also imply an undertone of challenging when it is related to the immediate context and the author's position.

4-2-3 analysing ideational features:

Along with examining the place and the time of communication, some of the features belonging to the ideational function had been systematically enlightened and analysed. Here are two examples:

- Presuppositions (culture-specific elements): Being presupposed to be part of the ST reader's general knowledge, the notions "*Brexit*" and "*European Union*" are not expected to be found in the TT reader's presupposition pool, and don't necessarily represent an already acquired knowledge for him. Thus, the translator should identify them as such and decide on their translation strategy.
- Poetic function: we could detect some poetic function's indicators:

- Interrupted movement:

“Launched on January 29th it urges the British government to cancel Mr Trump’s summer state visit to Britain. Such trips are considered an honour. They are not afforded to all presidents and involve staying with the monarch. The petition says the “embarrassment to Her Majesty the Queen” would be unacceptable”

The underlined sentence is considered as an interrupting sentence since it cuts the movement of the basic information about the petition. The author had inserted an extra detail about the state visit. His intention was seemingly to draw the reader’s attention to the formal importance of such visits and to give a strong argument to his position towards the President’s visit.

This way organizing information inside the discourse presents an essential meaning element in a translational act. The translator has to reorganize his TT according to the author’s logic and in respect of every tool used.

4.2.4 Analysing the context of situation: the tenor.

As it was defined above, the tenor of the text refers to the participants’ relationship including power, contact and effective involvement. Accordingly, analysing its features helps to find out how the personality of the author is projected in the text. This point seems to be of capital importance in a translation act since it enlightens the student/ translator about the position of the author in his text and the different tools used to express it. These tools are to be maintained and reused carefully when translating.

Given that the analysed text is written and non interactive, and in order to meet the objectives of the present study, we will focus, while considering the tenor, on the following aspects:

- Standing: answering the question about whether the author is in a position of criticizing/giving praise or is just telling events objectively and without involving his personal opinion.
- Attitude: telling us whether the position of the author towards the discussed issue is positive, negative or neutral.

Both standing and attitude reveal the author’s implicit opinion and are made known by detecting practically the same features in a text: evaluative expressions and lexical choices.

a- Evaluative expressions:

The author has referred to some respectable external sources in telling the events and describing them. He used different tools like:

- Reported speech, in:
 - *“During the campaign Mr Trump called himself “Mr Brexit” and promised “Brexit plus, plus, plus” for America”*
 - *“The petition says the “embarrassment to Her Majesty the Queen” would be unacceptable”.*
 - *“The government says it will not change its plans””*
- Official sources:
 - *“Such trips are considered an honour. They are not afforded to all presidents and involve staying with the monarch””.*

However, the author has chosen to introduce his text with the following subjectively formulated statement:

- *“Comparisons between Donald Trump’s presidential win and Britain’s vote to leave the European Union have often been overdone””*

What makes the reader think that it’s about an unproven and probably unfounded statement is the presence of the word “overdone” which expresses an individual judgment and then constitutes an indicator of the author’s involvement in his text.

- b- **Lexical choices:** the use of some appreciative words and structures reveals the attitude of the writer and his position towards the discussed issue: he is against the American President State visit to Britain. The following table shows the different lexical choices made in order to imply his point of view:

Appreciative words	Appreciative expressions
Overdone	Many Britons voted for Leave <u>who</u> would <u>not dream of</u> supporting him.

Successful Embarrassment unacceptable	The racial dimension was <u>much less</u> pronounced in Britain. <u>Such trips</u> are considered an <u>honour</u> . <u>They are not</u> afforded to all presidents
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The translator should take every term's function and connotation into account in order to decide which strategy to be used while translating, which word can be deleted, explicited or just literally translated.

CONCLUSION:

In our contribution, we shed light on one of the most practical discursive analysis models and unveiled the capital role of considering the source text before translating it. It has been shown that reading in order to translate is nothing else but a process of questioning the author of the original by asking a series of questions on its internal and external conditions of production and then, trying to find accurate and credible answers by examining every word and expression and exploring all discursive parameters.

To conclude, it should be stressed that to be able to manage with the different analysis models and apply them in a efficient way, translation teachers need to undergo a constant and objective training within a whole teaching strategy, aiming to meet the translational act's nature and requirements.

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