

Didactics of Translation

Didactics of Translation:

Text in Context

By

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To my family

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The main purpose of this work is to derive empirical evidence for the didactic value of translating text in context by conducting an experiment involving final-year undergraduate students who study translation (English-Arabic-English) as a basic component of the curriculum. A number of theoretical frameworks are invoked, most notably those of the discourse model elaborated by Hatim and Mason (1990) (1997) and of House's text analysis model (1997). The experiment design draws on Hatim's multi-stage curriculum translation design (2000: 182) which consists of various stages representing an increasing degree of evaluativeness and difficulty. Following each major phase of the experiment (covering register, text types, genre and discourse), the students are evaluated using the pre-test / post-test technique and interviews. It was hoped that the experiment would shed light first on the students' mode of assimilating each of these areas of context and second on the effect of the training in the development of an overall discourse awareness. As documented in the chapters on analysis and conclusions, very convincing evidence emerged which indicates the inestimable value of incorporating text, discourse and genre insights into the training of translators.

I would like to express my gratitude to Professor Basil Hatim, for his guidance and encouragement. I am also indebted to my colleagues from the different universities in Morocco for answering the questionnaire and to my students for their collaboration during the translation experiments. A special word of thanks goes to my colleagues in the English Department of Ben Msik Faculty for their support, and more particularly to Dr. Abdelmajid Bouziane and to Dr. Taoufik Jaafari for their cooperation during the final production stage of this work.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BCE:	Before Common Era
CC:	Contextual configuration
CD:	Communicative Dynamism
CE:	Common era
CS:	Context of situation
DTS:	Descriptive Translation Studies
E:	Evaluative
Th TS:	Theoretical Translation Studies
FSP:	Functional Sentence Perspective
GSP:	Generic Structure Potential
M:	Marked
SAR:	Students attending regularly
SAI:	Students attending irregularly
SE:	Scale of evaluativeness
SL:	Source language
SM:	Scale of markedness
T:	Text
TAPs:	Talk aloud protocols
TL:	Target language
TT:	Target text

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

It was specifically in the second half of the 20th century that legitimately scientific approaches to the study of translation began to appear. This led to the emergence of Translation Studies as a new academic discipline and to the proliferation of a literature devoted to the study of translating and translations. Translation Teaching, as a branch of Applied Translation Studies, has, for its part, benefited a great deal from the theoretical findings and insights yielded by the various branches of Translation Studies. The didactic aspect has, thus, gradually witnessed an expansion of its own literature, which has addressed a variety of subjects, including the relation between pedagogical theory and practice, the legitimacy of formal and academic training, the contents of translation teaching courses, subject specialization, the relation between translation teaching and language teaching, translation assessment, and also the qualifications and qualities required of translation teachers. (Chau 1984: 20)

There are several translation training institutions which have sought to implement the findings of translation teaching research. However, many academic institutions, at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, are still at a stage where translation courses continue to suffer from serious deficiencies. According to (Király 1995: 01),

Translation students attend classes and earn degrees in translation studies, but courses in translation skills instruction are usually not based on a coherent set of pedagogical principles derived from knowledge about the aims of translation instruction, the nature of translation competence, and an understanding of the effects of classroom instruction on students' translating proficiency. The pedagogical gap represents the dearth of systematic approaches to the teaching of translation skills ... This gap persists despite a limited but growing literature in the field of translator training. (1995: 5)

Having taught translation (English/Arabic/English) to Moroccan university students at the undergraduate level for many years, I have

reached the conclusion, just like Kiraly did above, that teaching at this level suffers from many deficiencies concerning the goals of teaching the course. This involves (1), a general lack of understanding of the nature of translating competence (2), a generally poor course content, and a non-systematic approach to the teaching of translation (3), a generally low linguistic level on the part of students with misconceived ideas about the nature of translation, and finally, (4) the non-availability of competent translation trainers.

With respect to students' general linguistic level and their misconceptions about what a translation course is designed to achieve, it is not uncommon to find that many students have an inadequate knowledge of the source language (Arabic), a rather poor level of English (often making serious mistakes in grammar, vocabulary, spelling and punctuation), a lack of general knowledge, a general tendency to regard translating as a simple transcoding operation or as a mere test of the comprehension of a foreign language text. With regard to the non-availability of competent translation trainers, Mehrach describes the situation in Moroccan universities by first noting that Moroccan translation teachers are not trained in the didactics of translation and secondly that they concentrate on "minor grammatical errors", which "obscures the student's ability to correct major, i.e. textual, errors". (Mehrach 2003: 5)

Similarly, Farghal describes the situation with reference to universities throughout the Arab world. According to Farghal, the ever-increasing demand for translators on the job market "has caught these universities off-guard in terms of the availability of competent translator trainers". These institutions, therefore, had to make do with what was available, i. e. assigning "the task of translation training to bilingual academics specializing in literature or linguistics who neither have sufficient theoretical background in translation studies nor do they have the interest and/or motivation to familiarize themselves with translation studies as adequately established subdisciplines of applied linguistics." (2000: 85)

This book will tackle one aspect of the issue of translation teaching content, namely, the interpretive aspect -as opposed to the grammatical and cultural aspects- with the emphasis to be laid on text, genre and discourse.

The main goals are:

- a) to test the claim that discourse analysis could give learners some insight and help them adopt an efficient translating strategy. According to Heliel (1994), while discourse is a field which is increasingly gaining in importance in English, teaching materials

adopting a discourse analysis approach for translation purposes are yet to be written.

- b) to try to contribute to the process of the “professionalization” of translation teaching initiated in the last few decades. Many translation scholars have argued, with good reason, that the training of translators “should be institutionalized and given a sound methodological basis” (Kussmaul 1995: 2), (Chua 1984: 17), (Baker 1992: 1- 4), (Mauriello 1992: 64). With regard to translation assessment, Mason (1987: 79-80) calls for “standardisation and consistency of grading in translation testing”.

The present work on the didactics of translation adopts the assumptions, principles, and methods of the contrastive discourse model developed by Hatim and Mason (1990) (1997). It also makes use of insights yielded by House’s text analysis and translation quality model. With regard to translation teaching, the value of these models lies firstly in their putting forward suggestions for the systematization of translation problems. Second, these approaches make a serious attempt to objectify translation evaluation. Third, they make an important contribution to laying down a number of principles for the selection of translation teaching material.

Discourse analysis is used in these models as a means for dissecting texts in order to unravel the way language communicates meaning and social power relations. Thus, in considering meaning, which is central in translation, the translator using these models has to be extra vigilant with regard to the speaker’s / writer’s linguistic choices in their relation to a wide-ranging socio-cultural context. Texts are consequently decoded in terms of three dimensions of context: a communicative dimension (register), a pragmatic dimension (intentionality) and a semiotic dimension (language embracing culture). It is believed that both language users, in general, and translators in particular, resort to these dimensions of context during the communication process. Haddad (1995: 264) persuasively argues in favour of Hatim and Mason’s discourse model to translation, stating that “the pragma-semiotic model is the best to address translation in general... since it studies text in context, taking into consideration the three dimensions (register, pragmatics and semiotics) and since it seeks to preserve the pragmatic as well as the semiotic aspects of signs.”

This book consists of six chapters. Chapter I is the introduction and deals with the aims for writing the book. It also gives a presentation of the research model followed. Chapter II deals with Translation Studies as a new academic discipline that is asserting itself slowly but surely in

academic circles. First, the use of the name Translation Studies is adopted instead of the term 'translation' which is thought to be ambiguous, referring to both translation as a subject matter and to translating as an activity (Holmes 1972). Second, the various branches and sub-branches of translation studies are outlined.

The importance of translation theory for the translator is also tackled in chapter II. The distinction is made between a theory of translating vs. a theory of translation, and between a general translation theory vs. partial translation theories. Finally, an overview of the main approaches to translation is carried out by comparing and evaluating three surveys that have been conducted for this purpose by Chau (1984), Venuti (2000) and Munday (2001).

Chapter III looks at two main approaches to translation: non-text-based approaches (the grammatical and cultural models) compared with text-based approaches (the hermeneutic and textlinguistic approaches). The textlinguistic approach which constitutes the focal point in this book is then dealt with in more detail, starting with defining the notion of text in textlinguistics and then reviewing the main studies concerning the development of a linguistics of text (context in relation to text, register, register variation, register in relation to culture, text structure and texture, thematic structure and information structure). This section finally ends with a discussion of the validity and legitimacy of the textlinguistic approach. Following this theoretical overview of the various aspects of textlinguistics, there is a section on the application of textlinguistics in the field of translation. This section deals more particularly with the notion of parallel texts (Neubert 1981), House's text analysis model (1997), and the contrastive discourse model advocated by Hatim and Mason (1990) (1997) (the communicative, pragmatic and semiotic dimensions of context). Within the semiotic dimensions, particular attention is given to the notions of text, genre and discourse.

Chapter IV deals with the following points: translator competence and translator training, translation teaching in relation to foreign language studies, formal academic training in translation, the scope of translation teaching, an overview of translation pedagogy in the second half of the twentieth century in Germany, France, Italy and in the Arab World, a review of some current methodologies for the training of translators (first, the process-oriented translation methods represented by Kussmaul (1995) and Kiraly (1995) are reviewed, followed by some textlinguistic translation methods); the last point in this chapter is concerned with translation assessment.

Chapter V is devoted to a translation teaching experiment. Prior to reporting on the experiment, the aims are stated and the design of the experiment is explained along with the teaching method to be pursued and the content of the translation lessons to be delivered. The informants' performance in the experiment is measured using pre-tests and post-tests with respect to the following points of investigation: register, genre, text types and discourse. Between the pre-tests and post-tests, the points of investigation are addressed formally in class through lectures, discussions and some exercises. After each pre-test or post-test, the informants are interviewed and some concluding statements about the results of their performances are made. The last section in this chapter analyzes the informants' feedback to the various aspects of the experiment: the degree of difficulty of the course, the degree of assimilation, the progress / non-progress made in the course... Chapter VI is the site of conclusion and implications.

CHAPTER II

TRANSLATION STUDIES

2.1 The concept of translation

Before addressing the main issue of this book, namely, the didactics of translation, a word about the concept and the nature of translation is in order. Clarifying this concept and understanding the nature of translation is of paramount importance in defining the boundaries of this activity, dispelling confusion and avoiding misunderstanding.

For Munday (2001: 4), the term translation subsumes different meanings. It can be used to refer either to the subject field, to the product or to the process. Process means the act of rendering a source text (ST) into a target text (TT). Roman Jakobson uses the terms “interlingual translation” or “translation proper” to refer to this act (Jakobson 1959). The characterisation of the concept of translation as a product and as a process is useful both in theory and in practice. Such a dichotomy clearly defines the boundaries for different areas of research.

Nida (1969) also gives a detailed description of the concept of translation as a process. However, the term “process” is here used interchangeably with an equivalent term, namely, “translating”:

Translating is basically not a process of matching surface rules of correspondence, but rather a more complex procedure involving analysis, transfer and restructuring. (Nida 1969: 80)

According to Nida (1969), the analysis process subsumes at least three sets of procedures:

- A. analyzing the grammatical relationship between constituent parts
- B. analyzing meanings of semantic units
- C. analyzing the connotative values of the grammatical structures and semantic units

The transfer process which, according to Nida, occurs at a kernel or near kernel-level, consists of three different types of redistribution of the componential structure:

- A. complete redistribution as is the case with idioms
- B. analytical redistribution, where one SL word is decomposed into several words in the TL
- C. synthesis of components, where several SL words are rendered by one word in the TL

Concerning the restructuring process, this is, according to Nida, contingent upon the target language system. Such restructuring has to take into account two aspects of the target language: the formal aspect (style, genre determination) and the functional or dynamic aspect (achieving similar response in the TL).

For Kussmaul (1995: 9), translation is a particular kind of process; it is a problem-solving process:

Translation is not only a skill but a problem-solving process. If translation were a skill like, say, driving a car, professionalism could be achieved once and for all. The correct actions for driving can be internalized, and the normal driving situations are mastered without any mental conscious effort. With problem-solving activities like translating, internalization of strategies and techniques is only part of the process. There will always be situations when we have to make a conscious effort, and it is in these situations that we often get the feeling that we are, alas, semi professionals only.

Similarly, Hatim and Mason (1990: 3) have drawn attention to the importance of the concept “process”. For them translating is regarded as a communicative process which takes place within a social context. This is crucial and the authors warn against any neglect of the distinction which characterizes any text, namely, the distinction between process and product:

If we treat a text merely as a self-contained and self-generating entity, instead of as a decision-making procedure and an instance of communication between language users, our understanding of the nature of translating will be impaired. (Ibid)

2.2 Translation studies as a new discipline

According to Munday (2001: 1),

Translation studies is the new academic discipline related to the study of the theory and phenomena of translation. By its nature it is multilingual and also interdisciplinary, encompassing languages, linguistics, communication studies, philosophy and a range of types of cultural studies.

In a very important paper, James Holmes (1972) draws up a disciplinary map for Translation Studies in which he distinguishes between “pure” research-oriented areas of translation theory and description, on the one hand, and “applied” areas like translator training, on the other. (Holmes 1972: 176 in Venuti 2000).

In this paper, Holmes starts by giving account of the translation situation; a situation marked by “great confusion” due to the lack of a general agreement as to:

- A. the types of models to be tested
- B. the types of methods to be used
- C. the terminology to be employed
- D. the boundaries of the field
- E. the name to be given to this new discipline
- F. the scope and structure of the discipline

In this context, Holmes also raises the problem of the lack of “appropriate channels of communication” due to the fact that the writings about the field are scattered in the various journals of adjacent disciplines. Concerning the attribution of a name to this new discipline, Holmes states:

It would not be wise to continue referring to the discipline by its subject matter...and failure to distinguish the two can only further confusion. The designation of “translation studies” would seem to be the most appropriate of all those available in English, and its adoption as the standard term for the discipline as a whole would remove a fair amount of confusion and misunderstanding. (Holmes 1972: 174-5)

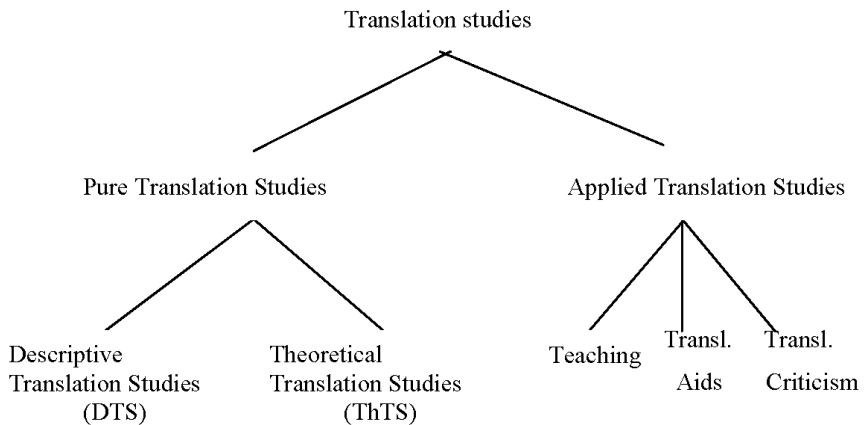
Holmes devotes the bulk of his paper to what constitutes this new discipline (i.e. its scope and structure). He thus asserts that translation is an empirical discipline which, as any other empirical discipline, has two goals:

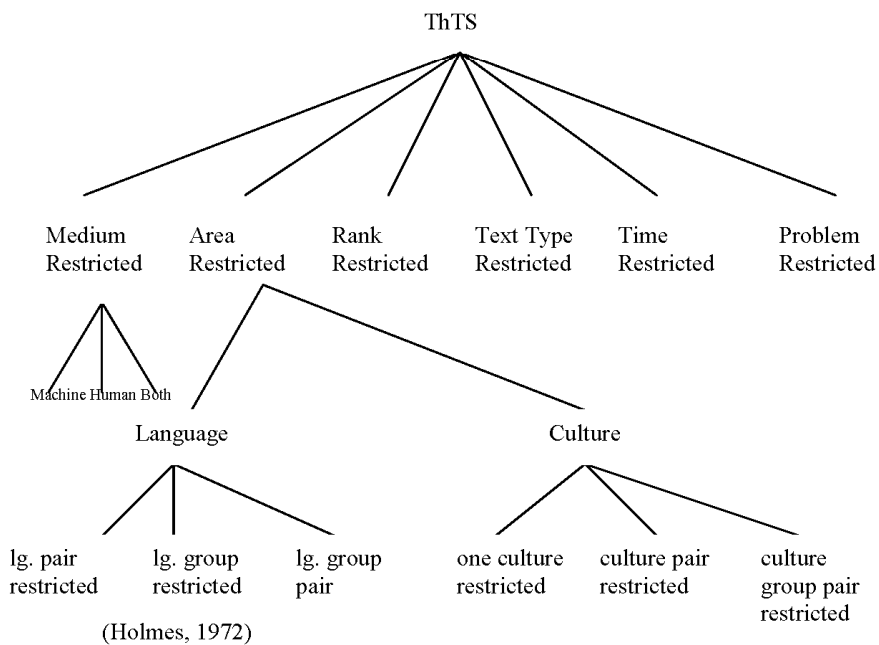
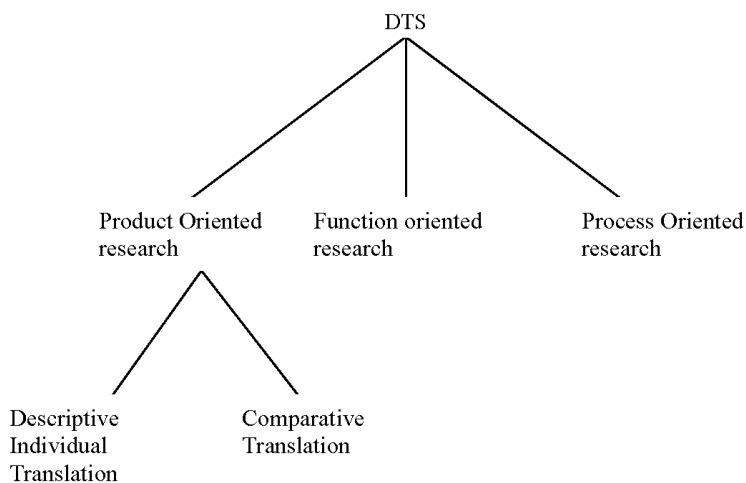
- A. the description of particular world phenomena
- B. establishing general principles which can explain and then predict the occurrence of these phenomena

These two goals, according to Holmes, can be dealt with through two sub-branches under “Pure Translation Studies”; namely, Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) and Theoretical Translation Studies (ThTS).

Following is a simplified representation of Holmes’ “meta-reflection” on the structure and content of “Pure Translation Studies” and “Applied Translation Studies”:

Figure 1: A representation of Holmes’s “meta-reflection” on the structure and content of Pure and Applied Translation Studies (adapted from Munday J. 2001) (continued below)





2.3 Translation Theory

A “theory” is defined by *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary* as “a set of properly argued ideas intended to explain facts or events.”

For many translation scholars, translation theory is a necessary component of a translation teaching course. According to Mona Baker (1992: 1-2), the value of a theoretical component in an academic course is that it

encourages students to reflect on what they do, how they do it, and why they do it in one way rather than another. In addition, it enables the translator to handle the unpredictable, gives him or her a certain degree of confidence and provides them with the basis on which further developments in the field may be achieved.

Farghal (2000: 86) makes a very important distinction between two kinds of theories: a theory of translating and a theory of translation. The first is said to be subconscious “consisting of a set of practical principles and guidelines which are intuitively implemented in translation practice by competent translators”. It is also said to be “naturally acquired through extensive translation activity” leading to “a high degree of automatization in finished translators”. The second, on the other hand, is said to be conscious, i.e. “consisting of a set of theoretical or abstract principles and guidelines which are consciously applied by translators”. It is also said to be formally learned “through exposure to or instruction in translation studies where the theoretical validity of some translation theorems are tested against concocted or naturally-occurring translation data”. Farghal further notes that before introducing translation theory into the class, students must first develop a certain translating technique, (i.e. a certain practical experience):

The role of translation theory is intended to refine and sharpen the already existing level of translating theory by bringing to consciousness a set of translation strategies and principles in prospective translators... The prospective translator will be expected to work with many theoretical options whose practical application manifests itself in a translational decision which is ... both practically and theoretically motivated.

2.3.1 The interdisciplinary character of translation

Despite the privileged status which translation theory is said to enjoy amongst translation scholars, it is unfortunately a fact that the concept of ‘theory’ as far as translation is concerned remains somewhat vague and

unclear in the minds of many. The main reason for this most probably lies in the complex nature of translation itself and, more specifically, in its interdisciplinary character. According to Chesterman (1989: 5),

The field [of translation theory] is a motley one, full of unstated assumptions and terminological confusion; this even extends to the term “translation theory” itself... To some extent this is understandable: translation is an extremely complex activity. And translation studies must cover a very wide area touching on semiotics, linguistics, text and discourse analysis, literary criticism, contrastive analysis, communication theory, action theory and a good deal more.

An adequate translation theory, according to Chesterman, should be descriptive (“stating precisely what it is that translators do” when they translate), prescriptive (“stating what a translator should do, what a translation should be like, in given circumstances; i.e. defining an optimum product or an optimum process leading to such a product”) and, finally, it should be capable of “establishing principles, strategies or rules that will enable predictions to be made with the highest probability possible” (Ibid).

From a slightly different perspective, Venuti (2000: 4) stresses the interdisciplinarity issue in the following terms:

The increasingly interdisciplinary nature of translation studies has multiplied theories of translation. A shared interest in a topic, however, is no guarantee that it is acceptable as a theory in one field or will satisfy the conceptual requirements of a theory in others. In the West, from antiquity to the late nineteenth century, theoretical statements about translation fell into traditionally defined areas of thinking about language and culture; literary theory and criticism, rhetoric, grammar, philosophy. Twentieth-century translation theory reveals a much expanded range of fields and approaches reflecting the differentiation of modern culture; not only varieties of linguistics, literary criticism, philosophical speculation, and cultural theory, but experimental studies and anthropological field work, as well as translator training and translation practice.

In order to grasp a particular translation theory, Venuti suggests, one has to relate it to the specific discipline where it originated:

Any account of theoretical concepts and trends must acknowledge the disciplinary sites in which they emerged in order to understand and evaluate them (Ibid).

This is almost a re-statement of James Holmes’ position which maintains that

Theoretical Translation Studies is interested in using the results of Descriptive Translation Studies in combination with the information available from related fields and disciplines to evolve principles, theories and models which will serve to explain what translating and translations are and will be. (Holmes 1972: 177-17)

2.3.2 A general translation theory vs. partial translation theories

Another source of confusion and lack of clarity regarding the designation “Translation Theory” is the absence of specificity of reference. Does Translation Theory refer to

a full, inclusive theory accommodating so many elements which can serve to explain and predict all phenomena falling within the terrain of translating and translation? (Holmes 1972: 178)

or does it refer to a partial theory having to do with only one or a few aspects of a general translation theory?

According to Holmes, there is still a long way to go before translation theorists can develop a translation theory that is all inclusive and general. Thus, the translation theories that have been put forward to date are simply partial theories. However, Holmes argues that

it is in this area of partial theories that the most significant advances have been made in recent years. In fact a great deal of further research will probably have to be conducted before we can even begin to think about arriving at a true general theory of translation. (Holmes 1972: 178)

In a similar vein, Chau states, quoting Wilss (1982: 51-53), that

it can be misleading to talk about ‘translation theories’ as such, as if there are properly developed theoretical models... This does not imply, though, that there is a lack of serious, albeit unsystematic, contemplation and explanation of the problems of translation. These insights can be grouped under the heading of ‘translation studies’. (Chau 1984: 94)

Holmes classifies partial translation theories into six main groups. These are:

1. medium-restricted translation theories; that is, is the translation conducted by humans, machines or both?

2. area-restricted translation theories; that is, these theories are restricted either with regard to the languages used in the translation or with regard to the particular cultures involved.
3. rank-restricted theories; that is, is the translation theory concerned with the rank of the word as in technological and scientific translation where the terminology is very important, or is it concerned with the rank of the sentence? Alternatively, is the translation theory interested in translation at the textual level, i.e. beyond the sentence level?
4. text-type restricted translation theories: the main concern here is with translating particular types of texts such as informative texts, aesthetic texts, operative texts (Reiss 1977: 109).
5. time-restricted translation theories: these are divided into two types, namely, translation theory of contemporary texts and translation theory of ancient texts.
6. problem-restricted translation theories: here the focus is on tackling specific translation problems such as the translation of metaphors, collocations, idiomatic expressions... (Holmes 1972: 178-180)

2.4 An overview of the main trends in translation studies

In this section, an overview of the main approaches and contributions to translation studies, especially in the last fifty years or so, will be carried out. To focus the discussion, three brief surveys by three different translation scholars, Chau (1984), Venuti (2000), and Munday (2001), will be examined and compared.

2.4.1 Models of translation: Chau (1984)

The main concern in Chau (1984) is to “examine the theoretical basis of various methods of training translators and to propose an overall view of translation pedagogy” (Chau 1984: 3). His research first discusses the relationship between Language Studies, Translation Studies and Translation Teaching and then traces the evolution of this relationship by shedding light on four major stages of development since the late 19th century. This is an interesting way of surveying the main trends and contributions in Translation Studies because, to use Holmes’s classification of Translation Studies, it considers the main branches of these studies (i.e. Pure Translation Studies and Applied Translation Studies) in their interaction with language studies (1).

The four major stages of evolution, in terms of which the relationship between Language Studies, Translation Studies and Translation Teaching is examined by Chau, are as follows:

- A. the pre-linguistic stage
- B. the formal stage
- C. the ethno-semantic stage
- D. the text-linguistic stage

A. The pre-linguistic stage:

Language studies at the pre-linguistic stage, according to Chau, are characterized by a concentration on the written word, a lack of distinction between *langue* and *parole*, a heavy emphasis on the diachronic study of language and finally a prescriptive rather than a descriptive attitude. In other words, translation studies are seen to be characterized by a focus on “highly accredited” source texts, a prescriptive approach and a continuous debate over free vs. literal translation. As for translation teaching, this is marked by emphasis on grammatical transfer and on *langue*, language as an abstract system, rather than *parole*, language in use. It also adopts a prescriptive approach, telling the translator how to translate (Chau 1984: 100).

B. The formal linguistic stage:

Chau uses the term “formal” to refer to those schools and theories which exclude the element of meaning from their language study. According to Chau, language studies at this stage exhibit certain features such as:

- the emergence of a new conception of language in which language is regarded as a structure with different levels and interconnected elements, and with meanings depending on the paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations they have within the entire system...
- the strict adherence to the meanings emanating from within the system; that is, no attempt is made to link meanings to actual language use
- the adoption of a descriptive rather than a prescriptive attitude

Concerning translation studies at this stage (2), they are characterized by the following:

- the emphasis is put on comparing the structures of the languages involved in the translation
- connecting meanings within the language system with language use in real life rarely takes place
- the approach is descriptive

As for translation teaching at this formal stage, it is dominated by controversy over whether linguistics should be used in translation classes and by the publication of influential works on the subject of translation such as those of Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), G. Mounin (1963) and Catford (1965). (Ibid: 103-108)

C. The ethno-semantic stage:

According to Chau, language studies at this stage are marked by a rising awareness of the cultural dimension of meaning in language, thanks to the studies carried out by some anthropologists such as Malinowski. Within this phase, meaning is consequently defined in terms of cultural fields and in terms of context. In addition to this, the influence of the 'relativity' view of language and culture associated with Humboldt, Whorf and Sapir is also manifested in the language studies conducted at this stage. Thus, unlike formal linguists, the ethno-semantic linguists do not turn their back on meaning but rather acknowledge the fact that meaning is inseparable from language and culture. Students of language thus paid particular attention to inter-cultural contrasts.

Translation studies at this stage, Chau points out, are characterized by the emergence of two translation methods, namely, the Ethnographical-Semantic Method and the Dynamic Equivalence Method. The first method is a direct response to a set of obstacles faced by Bible translators. It encourages translators to be sensitive to the culture-bound elements inherent in and unique to each lexical item of a language (Chau: 132). While this method focuses on comparing world views and concentrates on language, like other grammatical methods, the Dynamic Equivalence method is more pragmatic because it focuses on reader-response. In other-words, the theory now puts the emphasis on *parole*. By reader-response is meant that the TL text should produce the same effect on the TL text readers as the SL text did on the original readers. According to Chua, "the most popular version of this method is the one presented by Nida (1964): dynamic equivalence translation" (Chau: 139).

Concerning translation teaching at this stage, this is characterized by the incorporation of the SL culture or even the TL culture in the curricula of many translation institutions. These curricula also consist of ethno-

semantic approaches, such as componential analysis and folk taxonomies. In this respect, Chau points out that:

In particular terms, ethno-semantic translation teachers spend most of their time introducing to the students the civilization of the SL, pointing out the crucial contrasts between that culture and their own, and how the two peoples conceptualize and subsequently dissect the world differently (Chau: 134)... Translation training, according to this method, is basically a cultivation of the awareness of cultural gaps (colour, kinship terms...) (Chau: 136).

D. The text linguistic stage:

At this stage in the evolution of language and translation study, language studies have begun to acknowledge the importance of 'text' as the relevant unit of investigation and started to abandon their concern with minimal units and decontextualized sentences. Thus, text-based language studies have started to proliferate (3).

Not indifferent to these major developments in language studies, translation studies at this stage have been marked by a breakaway from formal translation methods since these try to represent the idealized knowledge of the language user with no consideration whatsoever for pragmatic factors. According to Chau, the main characteristics of translation studies in this phase are:

- regarding the text as the relevant unit of translating
- viewing the translating process as an interactive process between the author, the translator and the TL text reader and not simply as a sterile comparison of two "dead" texts
- taking into consideration the transfer of pragmatic features
- replacing the widely used concept of "equivalence" by that of "adequacy"
- forsaking the idea of an ideal or original translation. (Chau 1984: 105)

Translation teaching methods adopting text linguistic-oriented methods at this stage are represented by the works of Reiss (1976a), Wilss (1982), Hatim (1984 a, b), Kussmaul (1983), Neubert (1983), leading Chau to predict a bright future for textlinguistics in the translation class.

2.4.2 The Cultural Turn: Venuti (2000)

In this reader, Venuti assembles a number of articles and essays by different contributors and which represent the most important contributions to translation studies in the 20th century. Among the reasons advanced for the publication of this reader, one can mention:

- the rapid growth of the translation discipline as can be seen in the multitude of translation training centres and publications .
- the diversity of translation research, with some scholars dealing with the didactics of translation, but most focusing on translation within and across traditional disciplines such as linguistics, literary criticism, philosophy and anthropology.

The reader is divided into five chronological sections:

- 1900s-1930s
- 1940s-1950s
- 1960s-1970s
- 1980s
- 1990s

Each section provides a brief account of the main approaches and includes seminal articles by prominent translation scholars. However, Venuti warns that the multitude of translation theories makes it difficult to give a comprehensive evaluation of the translation situation today:

In translation studies, the broad spectrum of theories and research methodologies may doom any assessment of its “current state” to partial representation, superficial synthesis, optimistic canonization. (Venuti 2000: 1)

A. 1900s-1930s

According to Venuti, translation theory in this period is influenced by German literary and philosophical traditions, hermeneutics and essential phenomenology. Language is considered “not so much communicative as constitutive in its representation of thought and reality” (Venuti 2000: 11). Consequently, translation is viewed simply as an “interpretation which necessarily reconstitutes and transforms the foreign text” (Ibid).

The autonomous status of translation is also recognized: a translated text is considered in its own right as an independent “work of signification” despite its being derived from an original text. The main