

Introduction

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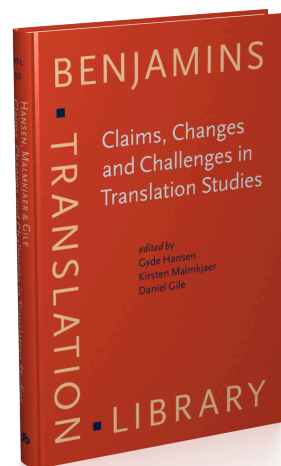
**Claims, Changes and Challenges in Translation Studies:
Selected contributions from the EST Congress,
Copenhagen 2001**

Edited by Gyde Hansen, Kirsten Malmkjær and Daniel Gile
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Introduction

Since its foundation in Vienna in 1992, the European Society for Translation Studies (EST) has held three Congresses: in 1995 (Prague, Czech Republic), 1998 (Granada, Spain) and 2001 (Copenhagen, Denmark). The respective proceedings of the first two (Snell-Hornby et al. 1995, Chesterman et al. 1998) show a lively and diversified interest in many aspects of translation and interpreting, with papers on topics ranging from the links between translation and modern democracy to translation workplace procedures through terminology policies, markers of ideology in translation, aspects of universal grammar, creativity in legal translation, twentieth-century Chinese ideas of translation, the ethics of translation, a case study of simultaneous interpreting on television, Schleiermacher and modern translation theories, working memory and simultaneous interpreting, or gender stereotypes in Bible translation, to mention just a few examples.

As the Translation Studies community grows and evolves, the range of its interests widens. EST Congresses, as opposed to focused, thematic seminars, offer translation and interpretation scholars the opportunity to meet and present their work, and their proceedings offer a sample of the diverse research interests of the EST community. This is also reflected in the articles published in this collection. At the third International Congress of the European Society for Translation Studies, held at the Copenhagen Business School, Denmark, in August 2001, participants continued to work on known themes, but also broached less familiar topics, including a new look at a personality from the world of music as a translator, the translation of screen humour, and the behaviour of children as language mediators.

The first three papers, by Chesterman, Toury, and Paloposki and Koskinen, address the theoretical concept of Translation Universals, which has attracted a great deal of attention in Translation Studies recently, especially in conjunction with increased awareness of the possibilities offered by automatic corpus processing. Chesterman's point of departure is a set of categories of hypotheses, which he proposes to use as tools for the description of historical thinking about translation universals. He claims that predictive hypotheses can be found underlying prescriptive statements made in the past. He also evokes "universal" criticism, a direct consequence of the prescriptive approach, before moving on to contemporary descriptive research and its descriptive universals, which he characterizes as either S-universals, which concern the processing of the source text in the translation, or

T-universals, which concern the way translators process the target language. He offers a list of examples of potential S- and T-universals for further consideration.

Toury focuses on methodological questions. He addresses the issue of the level at which a search for universals could be carried out (not too local, not too global), stresses the non-deterministic nature of candidates for universality, in particular in view of the existence of multiple causation in translational phenomena, and discusses in some detail the potential formats of propositions which could be tested. A particularly welcome question in this paper is how the relevance and power of variables involved in causation could be determined. The issue is central in engineering, physics and mathematics, but is rarely mentioned in Translation Studies, in spite of its importance in applied research.

Paloposki and Koskinen discuss one candidate for Universal status, namely the hypothesis that retranslations are less domesticating than first translations. This seems intuitively reasonable, insofar as a “foreign” element initially introduced into a target culture is best assimilated if adapted, whereas in a retranslation, the need is less conspicuous. However, Paloposki and Koskinen look at actual cases of translation and retranslation of foreign literature into Finnish and find some counter-evidence. Beyond the challenge to the hypothesis *per se*, and the conclusion that different factors may be involved, this paper is a demonstration of the need to do extensive empirical testing of candidate-Universals.

Stolze’s ideas lie in the realm of hermeneutic language philosophy. She suggests that the translator’s knowledge base is activated by the source text. Comprehension of a source text and the ability to “create presence in translation” depend on the translator’s knowledge base and its adequacy. The translator’s task is to “create presence” for target-text readers, just as in acting on a theatre stage, an idea is “made present” for an audience. Translation is an assignment yet to be fulfilled, an open process towards an optimal solution. It is a cognitive event: as soon as the message is understood, target-language words and phrases appear on the cognitive scene on which the message is “present”.

Several authors in this collection focus their attention on linguistic issues. Heltai makes the interesting point that language production involves many ready-made multi-word units. He suggests that technical translation is associated with more use of such units than literary translation, especially under high time-pressure conditions, that translation under time pressure is actually impossible without the use of ready-made phrases, and that inappropriate use of multi-word units may be one of the characteristics of translationese. One of his conclusions is that the translator’s phraseological competence should include appropriate mastery of ready-made phrases in different registers and in both source language and target language.

Translation is not an autonomous text production process, however, and can be viewed as constrained by relationships between the source language and the target language. Korzen establishes rules for the translation of free adjuncts between

French and Danish. The problem arises against the background of important language-typological differences between Romance and Scandinavian languages. Free adjuncts are statistically much more frequent in French than in Danish. Korzen divides the construction into more or less descriptive and more or less relational free adjuncts and shows that only the more descriptive adjuncts can be translated directly into Danish. In the case of the more relational adjuncts, translation difficulties can be explained by morpho-syntactic differences and the compression of content in the French relational adjuncts. Korzen suggests that these constructions can be translated into Danish with adverbials or relative clauses.

Linguistics comparisons per se do not tell the whole story. Schreiber stresses the value of language-pair-specific translation analysis within what he calls “*sprachenpaarbezogene Translationswissenschaft*”, literally “language-pair-specific translation science”, which is positioned at the interface between contrastive linguistics and general Translation Studies. He stresses that in spite of the increasing importance of extra-linguistic analyses of translation, which have marginalized the role of linguistics as such in TS, in actual translation, language-specific issues still represent the bulk of practical problems that translators must solve. He suggests that translation-solution-oriented language-specific analysis can help.

Zabalbeascoa constructs a tree-diagram with successive binary branching at each level to represent all possibilities not only for translating metaphors (the focus of his paper), but for all other translation problems/solutions as well (jokes, insults, rhymes, etc.). This abstract structure (illustrated with concrete examples in the paper) can be adapted to descriptive and to prescriptive analyses, and allows identification of regularities, including translation strategies, which may help identify underlying norms. It is a binary structure, which could perhaps be used in a computerized model designed to automate the quantitative analysis on larger corpora. Zabalbeascoa deliberately adopts a speculative approach to his topic.

Also linked to the issue of languages is Pokorn’s study on directionality (see also, below, a reference to Bartłomiejczyk’s contribution on directionality in interpreting). Seven fragments from English translations of Slovene texts, translated by Slovene native speakers, English native speakers, and mixed pairs of translators working together, were presented to native speakers of English, who were asked by questionnaire to judge whether the translators were native speakers of English, and how many translators were involved in the translation. A substantial number of respondents did not identify correctly native vs. non-native English translators, and many respondents did not judge correctly how many translators were in the team. These findings challenge some received wisdom on the desirability of translation into one’s native language only.

The reception of translations is also addressed by Nobs, who refers to general expectations of a certain type of translated text. She reports on a questionnaire-based pilot study dealing with expectations and assessment of German translations

of a Spanish tourist leaflet. In the expectations questionnaire, priority was clearly given by respondents to content-related quality parameters. Translations in which deviations from the relevant target-language norms had been corrected were given only marginally higher assessments than translations which had not been similarly corrected. According to Nobs, some evidence suggests that form and content have a comparable weight in actual assessments. The issue of expectations vs. actual assessment has practical relevance to the professional world, and has recently been the focus of some attention in interpreting research as well.

The question of shifts in translation is taken up by Malmkjær, who argues that through pattern analysis, it may be possible to make a distinction between choice-based shifts and actual errors. Shifts would be documented by semantic patterning, and errors by formal patterning. In an analysis of Mary Howitt's translation of Hans Christian Andersen, she shows consistent censorship-like patterns in some translation solutions, which suggest choices, and the lack thereof in other surprising deviations, which can in almost every case be related to graphical or phonological error-inducing similarities.

Beyond local shifts, the issue of translation strategies is of interest to the community. In an analysis of one British and six American film comedies and of their dubbing and subtitling into five target languages, Schröter identifies strategies for producing humour in both the source and target texts. The number of strategies expressing humour in the target text turns out to be roughly one third lower than in the source text. The study does not yet tell the reader whether dubbing or subtitling is superior in dealing with language-based screen humour or whether it is easier to translate English wordplays, which are an important ingredient in many comedies, more into some languages than into others.

How relevant are scholarly analyses of translation issues by translation scholars to actual translation work? Not very relevant, according to the two surveys on the question reported in Milton's contribution. The first was carried out in Brazil in 1999 and showed the existence of two distinct worlds of translation: the academic one, concerned with academic issues, and the professional one, concerned with professional issues, often related to technical texts. A follow-up survey carried out in 2001 confirmed the findings. Milton asks whether the university should attempt to adapt to the needs of professional translators, in particular by providing training in newly developing translation fields, or play other roles (arbitration, standard-setting, etc.).

Translators do not always remain translators. They sometimes migrate into different activities. Professional migration from translation to technical communication is the topic taken up by Risku, who reports on an investigation of six cases of such migration, using semi-structured, individual interviews. Her paper presents information on the reason for the career shift, on the perception of the advantages of the new career, and on similarities and differences between the two careers. In

particular, technical communication was seen as more autonomous and active, and as involving more project management and self management. The findings suggest that training and professional experience as translators may provide a good foundation for further training and migration into technical communication, but that they do not equip a person adequately for working in technical communication.

From terminology, another neighbouring field, Dragsted and Kjeldsen refer to the practical issue of bringing together and optimizing cooperation between human translators, translation software developers and the police in an effort to collect terminology relevant to a project aimed at the exchange of law-enforcement intelligence. The needs of the three groups are analysed and shown to be different and sometimes conflicting. A particular event-based knowledge model was developed, and workshops in terminology for police officers and seminars with individual users were organized. Besides the large terminology data base produced, the project resulted in a methodology for terminology exchange across countries and institutions and in a specific knowledge model.

The connection between translation and literature is obvious, but Azenha shows how translation can also be related to music. Robert Schumann is famous as a musician, but his interest in foreign languages, literature and translation is not well known. Azenha describes this interest, which started when Schumann was a young pupil at school and lasted all his life. He lists some of Schumann's translations from Greek and Latin, and highlights his interest in poetry. Music could be considered a type of translation of his literary experience. Schumann's translations are difficult to assess, because only a few fragments of his original manuscripts are available, but Azenha emphasises the important part played by translating in the artist's development, as it enabled him to increase his expressive resources and enrich his work with input from other cultures.

Moving from the individual to the group, in terms of linguistic and national communities, Van Doorslaer highlights the role of translation in the context of tensions between linguistic communities, both international and intra-national. Bilingual and multilingual countries such as Finland, Canada and the Netherlands are cases in point. In European Union working groups, where all European languages cannot be used, certain working languages have to be selected for translation and interpreting, and this choice can also be analysed in political, as well as in pragmatic terms. Thus, translation is central in identity-forming mechanisms, often reflects political and social power relationships, and may be a promising field of investigation for translation scholars who adopt this vantage point.

On the interpreting side, three papers are devoted to issues in conference interpreting, and three to community interpreting. Conference interpreting is considered from the technical viewpoint, with three problem areas in mind.

It is trivial to say that the most obvious difference between translation and interpreting is the written form of the former, and the oral form of the latter. What

is less trivial is the exploration of the phonological dimension of interpreting, in both descriptive and functional terms, and very few studies are devoted to this topic. Following in the footsteps of Daró, Williams and Shlesinger, Ahrens looks at the interpreter's intonation, confirms the previous finding that the interpreter's pitch movements are not those that would occur naturally in spontaneous speech, and suggests that rather than mimicking the speaker's, they may well be used as structuring aids in target-speech production.

Speech production issues are particularly important in interpreting, where there is no time to examine and correct one's target utterance. Directionality is therefore as central an issue in interpreting as in translation (see also the discussion of Pokorn's contribution above). Bartłomiejczyk reports on a questionnaire survey on the perception of directionality by interpreting students and professionals. The latter were found to prefer to work into their A language, while the preference was not as clear-cut among students. Bias is possible, due to the fact that the professionals were AIIC interpreters, which presupposes a directionality norm. Further bias may have come from the large proportion of students from Poland, where the prevalent norm may well be the opposite, as in the former USSR.

In consecutive interpreting, the production of notes during the listening phase, while the speaker is producing his/her utterance, is of particular importance, because during the second phase, interpreters rely on them heavily for speech reformulation. Dam analyses a corpus of consecutive notes and looks at the interpreters' preferences for symbols vs. language and for source language vs. target language. From this exploratory study, she develops interesting hypotheses, in particular the idea that interpreters prefer noting in the target language when they have no particular difficulty with the source speech, and that they shift to the source language when the going gets tough, presumably in order to save processing capacity.

Moving on to public service interpreting (in the wide sense of the word), we find a concern with sociological issues:

Fenton reports on interpreters working in convention refugee hearings in New Zealand. Her survey questionnaire showed that nearly all respondents had come to New Zealand as migrants themselves, that they were active in their respective communities, that the majority were university graduates but had little training in interpreting, and that most of them felt valued by their employer. They were often placed in an uncomfortable position because of pressure by appellants, or because of incompetence and sometimes unfair practices on the interviewers' part, and because they felt that, at times, they were party to false claims by asylum seekers. Their role perception was clearly that of professional, impartial language mediators.

Rudvin also looks at pressures, arising both from power asymmetries and from differences in language and/or culture. She presents a number of illustrations of the kinds of problem faced by public service interpreters. For instance, metaphors and indirect speech may be used far more often in so-called traditional cultures than in

Western cultures, and may cause comprehension difficulties in a hospital setting, or a misperception of testimony as inaccurate. In one case, reluctance to indicate a rapist's action explicitly for cultural reasons resulted in the testimony sounding unconvincing and in the rapist's acquittal. Like Fenton, Rudvin recalls that interpreters often have ethnic affiliations as well, and these may stand in the way of acceptability.

Hall's paper focuses on children's perception of their role when they act as 'language brokers' in conversations between adults. An interview between a non-English Urdu-speaking mother of a young boy who wanted to enrol her child in a school and an English-speaking representative of the school was simulated, with children acting as interpreters. The main issue explored in the study was the children's role perception in the face of contradictory social pressures: the mother said something about her son's naughtiness, which was negative in the context of seeking his enrolment in school. The evidence shows that children reacted on multiple levels and actually shaped and controlled the event to a considerable extent.

In the process of bringing this volume into being, the detailed comments received from referees on the contributions were remarkably similar, considering the wide range of topics covered and the authors' very different backgrounds. The editors felt that the data and the message conveyed by their convergence were worth analysing and presenting to the EST community, which Gile and Hansen do in the last contribution in this volume. They discuss the fact that most of the referees requested that the authors provide more complete reporting of data and a more precisely formulated rationale. The referees' most frequent comments are presented and analysed.

The Editors

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