Ausgewählte Vorträge zur Translation und anderen Themen

Selected Papers on Translation
and other Subjects

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TransÜD. Arbeiten zur Theorie und Praxis des Übersetzens
und Dolmetschens, Band 13

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Vorbemerkung

Die hier zusammengestellten Aufsätze entstanden im Laufe von 17 Jahren, zumeist als Vorträge, wurden jedoch bisher nicht veröffentlicht. Einige blieben von vornherein in der Schublade. Manches in ihnen wiederholt sich. Meine Ansicht und Ausdrucksweise zu translatorischen und translatologischen Fragen hat sich im genannten Zeitraum im einzelnen gewandelt und dabei, wie ich hoffe, auch entwickelt. Ich habe trotzdem nur dort wenige Korrekturen vorgenommen, wo Mißverständnisse auftreten konnten. So bleiben zwischen den zu verschiedenen Zeiten verfaßten Aufsätzen Widersprüche, vor allem aber terminologische Unsicherheiten. Ich möchte das jetzt nicht glätten; damit würden sich die Werdegänge verwischen. Ich bitte um Nachsicht. Vielleicht ist das eine oder andere in der einen oder anderen Hinsicht brauchbar geblieben. Aus dem gleichen Grunde habe ich auch die zitierte Literatur nur ausnahmsweise aktualisiert.

Die Vorträge wurden nach Erscheinungsjahren geordnet. So läßt sich eine eventuelle Entwicklung ablesen. Thematisch ergibt sich dadurch allerdings eine gewisse Mischung. Vielleicht bringt das etwas Abwechslung für die Lektüre.

Die Beiträge führen mehr oder weniger direkt zu zwei 2006 erschienenen Arbeiten hin: zu einem „Versuch einer Intertheorie der Translation" und zu „Luhmann's ‚Social Systems' Theory: Preliminary Fragments for a Theory of Translation".

Eine Neuerung, die ich von Dilek Dizdar (2006) übernommen habe, ist die Angabe des Translators nach dem Autornamen, wenn ein Translat zitiert wird, z. B. Damasio/Kober.

Für die akribische sprachliche Durchsicht der englisch und spanisch geschriebenen Beiträge danke ich meinen Kollegen Ron Walker und Ruth Llerena Walker.

Für die Erstellung des Sachindex danke ich Herrn Kollegen Hartwig Kalverkämper (Berlin).

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Historische Gründe für geltende Übersetzungspraktiken

(Lüttich 1990)

Das Dolmetschen dürfte wohl eine uralte Praxis sein, muß doch überall da ein Dolmetscher auftreten, wo sich Kommunikationspartner, die keine gemeinsame Sprache reden, sprachlich verständigen wollen. (Wir werden hier nicht davon handeln, wie ein solches Dolmetschen vor sich gehen mag; vgl. dazu u. a. Knapp + Knapp-Potthoff 1985.)

Übersetzen als irgendwie geartete Übertragung eines irgendwie fixierten Textes in eine fixierte Form kann es erst geben, seitdem es möglich wurde, Rede auf irgendeine Weise festzuhalten. Das mag ursprünglich in Bildern und Bildgeschichten geschehen sein. Doch handelt es sich hier kaum um eine Fixierung von Rede, als vielmehr um Fixierung von Vorstellungen, was etwas anderes ist. Das Übersetzen können wir demnach erst kurz nach der Erfindung der Schrift erwarten, also vor nunmehr rund 5000 Jahren im vorderasiatischen Zweistromland.

Tatsächlich tauchen wenig später die ersten uns erhaltenen Übersetzungen auf: zweisprachige Wortlisten und Wort-, seltener Phrasenglossen. (Auf Einzelheiten kann ich aus Zeitgründen nicht eingehen. Ich beschränke mich auf das von meinem Thema her Geforderte.)

Schauen wir uns nun in einem gewaltigen Zeitsprung die heutige Übersetzungspraxis an, so wird sie weithin – Ausnahmen hat es immer gegeben – noch von der Bemühung geprägt, Wörter als Elemente eines Textes von einer Sprache in eine andere zu übertragen. (Eine Wende kam in der Theorie mit Justa Holz-Mänttäri, z. B. 1984; aber auch davon kann jetzt nicht gesprochen werden.)

Am Anfang des Übersetzens steht also – anders als beim Dolmetschen – das Wort, und das Wort ist fast überall die Einheit des Übersetzens schlechthin geblieben.

Ich versuche diesen Befund mit folgender Hypothese zu begründen: Der erste „Impetus" bestimmt die Folgerungen. « [...] chaque moment d'une série doit se comprendre à partir du moment initial » (Sartre [1960] 1985, 135).

Dabei haben wir vier ‚Ursprünge' oder Bedingungen für den genannten Impetus:

1. Ein schwerfälliges Schreibsystem, das nur langsame und mühsame Aufzeichnung gestattet, daher zu möglichster Kürze neigt und sich deshalb im Anfang auf eine Art „Notizentechnik" beschränkt, wobei der Text aus den lückenhaften Aufzeichnungen rekonstruiert werden muß – ein halbwegs zwischen Dolmetschen und Übersetzen stehender Rezeptionsprozeß ähnlich wie beim „Spontan-" oder „Vom-Blatt-Übersetzen".
2. Stehen piktographische Zeichen für Wörter, so lassen sie sich in beliebiger Sprache lesen. Daher bedarf es kaum einer Übersetzung.
3. Wortlisten für rituelle und andere Ausdrücke (W. v. Soden 1936, 423, bezeichnet die sumerische „Wissenschaft" als „reine Listenwissenschaft"); aus diesen Wortlisten entstanden später zwei- und mehrsprachige „Wörterbücher" (ib. 429f).
4. Listen für die Aussprache von Silbenzeichen(kombinationen).
5. Die letzten Endes priesterliche Herkunft der Übersetzer in Mesopotamien (und Ägypten). Priester sind an der Erhaltung ihres Rituals und damit ihrer Macht und ihres Establishment interessiert. Daher gilt, was Nida (1963, 4) schreibt, daß nämlich von hier aus keine prospektive, funktionale Translationstheorie ausgehen kann.

Es sei nun, wie gesagt, angenommen, daß der Anfang als „Impetus" (vgl. Vermeer 1969)[1] den weiteren Verlauf, die „Geschichte" eines Phänomens entscheidend (mit)bestimmt: Jedes Phänomen und seine Interpretation haben eine historische Tiefe, stehen in einem „Kontinuum möglicher Welten", wodurch Tradition gebildet wird, die immer vom Voraufgehenden (mit)geprägt ist. Der Anfang setzt also die Maßstäbe. Was einmal da ist, ist nur schwer ganz wieder wegzuschaffen. (Zum Biologischen vgl. hierzu K. Lorenz und seine Schule.)

Tatsächlich registrieren wir von allem Anfang an ein deutliches Überwiegen des Wort-Übersetzens vor anderen Translationsstrategien.

Im 5. Jh. v. Chr. trennt sich unter Platons Einfluß die Übersetzungsanschauung (und -praxis) endgültig von der Rhetorik. (Das Dolmetschen bleibt letzterer eher verbunden.) Platon hatte mit seiner Ideentheorie das abendländische Denken auf den Primat des Wortes (als Ideenausdruck) festgelegt.

In frühchristlicher Zeit wurde das Wort (besonders als *verbum* in starker Verkürzung des griechischen *logos*) zum Behältnis der göttlichen Wahr-

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[1] Dort wurde angenommen, daß der Einfluß des Indo-Portugiesischen in ganz Asien auf eben solch einer „Initialzündung" der Pidginierung des Portugiesischen beruht.

heit: Je weniger man an den einzelnen Wörtern eines „heiligen" Textes änderte, desto näher glaubte man der im Text inkarnierten Wahrheit Gottes zu bleiben. Übersetzen blieb und wurde immer fester zur Wortarbeit. (Man hat von „Biblizismus" gesprochen und allgemeiner vom „Literalismus".) Wir exemplifizieren Theorie und Praxis am „Schutzpatron" der Übersetzer, Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus (ca. 347-419):

In seinem translatorischen Vorgehen ist Hieronymus ganz logisch, wenn er vom Wort ausgeht (zudem war die antike Rhetorik zur Zeit Augustins und Hieronymus' zu einer Schule von Minimaleinheiten herabgesunken):

Gott ist der Schöpfer der Welt und des Menschen in ihr. So ist etwas Göttliches an und in der Welt und am und im Menschen. Dieses Göttliche im Menschen setzt ihn instand, intuitiv zu erkennen, daß die Welt als Schöpfung Gottes recht, „wahr" ist. Es gibt (nach Genesis 1) nur eine von Gott geschaffene Welt, diese unsere, und somit gibt es nur eine Wahrheit und eine wahre Erkenntnis von (der) Welt.

Gott erschafft die Dinge, indem er die Ideen der Dinge (laut) denkt bzw. ausspricht. So gibt es eine ununterbrochene Verbindung von Gott → Sprache → Idee → Gegenstand.

Nur weil der Mensch in allem Erkennen zuerst die Allgemeinheit als Einheit (*unitas*) erfaßt, ist (nach Eckehart) überhaupt Sprechen möglich. Die Mannigfaltigkeit ist „Abfall vom Sein" (vgl. Seppänen 1985, 33). Je mehr der Mensch vom Akzidentellen abstrahiert, je allgemeiner er einen Gegenstand erfaßt, desto reiner hat er ihn, desto wahrer (ib. 42f). Also ist das Absehen von Konnotationen die höhere Form der Übersetzung.

Je näher eine Sprache bei Gott ist, desto mehr Wahrheit enthält sie, desto größer ist die in ihr liegende Erkenntnismöglichkeit, desto wahrer die in ihr liegende Erkenntnis. Also gibt es einen Abstieg vom Hebräischen als der Sprache Gottes im Paradies über das Griechische und das Lateinische als den Sprachen der Kirche zu den Volkssprachen. Dann aber ist möglichst wörtlich aus den antiken Sprachen zu übersetzen, um möglichst wahr zu bleiben.

Es gibt im hier geschilderten Gedankengang keine „Relativitätstheorie" der Sprache. (Das sollte erst viel später mit Humboldt, Weisgerber und Whorf Thema werden.) Das Einzelsprachliche ist äußere Form (*vox*) und Verbindung zur „Welt" (als Gegensatz zu Gott), also akzidentell.

Übersetzen heißt unter den vorgenannten Gesichtspunkten: die Wahrheit, die wesensgemäß ist und durch alle Sprachen hindurch bleibt und eine teilweise wahre Erkenntnis Gottes und der Welt ist, von einer Sprache in eine andere übertragen – „transkodieren" würden wir heute sagen. Bewahrt

bleibt dabei nach Gottes Willen – und muß mit menschlichem Willen bewahrt bleiben wollen – das Wahre als das Essentielle in seiner göttlichen Schöpfung, denn sonst würden ja Wahrheit und wahre Erkenntnismöglichkeit schwinden und die Welt fiele aus Gottes Hand dem Teufel zu. Was Gott nicht zulassen kann. Folglich ist Transkodierung das beste Mittel, das essentiell Wahre zu erhalten und die Welt recht zu übersetzen. Die Unterschiede von Sprache zu Sprache sind akzidentell. Wollte der Mensch Sprache nach eigenem Gutdünken gestalten, so liefe er Gefahr, Akzidentelles und Essentielles zu verwechseln, das Wahre zu verlieren, das ewig ist. So wörtlich wie möglich übersetzen heißt also, das Akzidentelle aufgeben, aber das Wesentliche, Wesensgemäße bewahren. Nur diese Strategie erreicht das Ziel.

Bis weit in das moderne Denken hinein gilt die Ruhelage als das natürliche Verhalten der Dinge. Damit ist die Unveränderbarkeit auch im qualitativen Bereich gegeben. Die Unveränderlichkeit der Dinge, auch im qualitativen Bereich, war auch für die Übersetzung gegeben: Je unveränderter, also je wörtlicher, man übersetzt, desto besser trifft man den unveränderlichen Gegenstand aus dem Ausgangstext wieder, desto wahrer ist die Übersetzung.

Und noch eins kommt hinzu: Die Bibel, so lehrt(e) die Kirche, war Gottes Wort. Gott selbst hatte zu den Menschen gesprochen. Inspiration bezog sich nicht nur auf den Inhalt der Hl. Schrift, auch nicht auf ihren „Sinn" (den „Skopos" würde ich heute sagen), denn der lag ja gottgegeben fest, sondern durchaus auch auf die Form. Und da alles, was Gott tut, wohlgetan ist, mußte er seine Gründe dafür gehabt haben, Hebräisch als Anredeform für die ersten Menschen zu verwenden. Also galt es, diese Form so weit nur irgend möglich gleicherweise zu bewahren. Das geschah durch Transkodierung.

Ein Letztes noch: Wörtlich übersetzen können zeigt den Reichtum der Zielsprache (Rener 1989, 51f). Also versucht man es.

Ich habe in einem roten Faden seit sumerisch-akkadischer Zeit über Platon und die frühchristlichen Bibelübersetzungen den Vorrang des Wortes vor dem Text und erst recht vor der Situation als Vorkommensform von Texten aufzuzeigen versucht. Ich betone noch einmal: Die vorgefundene Strategie ist eine unter anderen, aber quantitativ die häufigste. Der rote Faden ist eine These (über die man diskutieren kann).

In der Renaissance scheint das „imitatio"-Konzept der Nachahmung (griechisch *mimesis*) zeitweilig eine Chance zu bekommen, Skopos und

Kulturspezifik als Parameter der Übersetzung einzuführen. Humboldt untermauert das Konzept, indem er Wahrheit nicht mehr als die einzige christliche, sondern als in jeder Kultur je spezifisch vorhandene versteht (vgl. Seppänen 1985). – Die Versuche brachen spätestens da ab, wo das angeblich exakte Denken der aufkommenden Naturwissenschaften die junge Sprachwissenschaft zu beherrschen begann. Überschaubar waren nur die kleinen Einheiten, höchstens also das Wort (neben den Lauten und Morphemen). – Das Übersetzen kehrte auf abermals rund 150 Jahre zum möglichst „wörtlichen" Übersetzen zurück.

Und ein allerletztes: In allem wörtlichen Übersetzen steckt implizit (oder später auch explizit) die Theorie vom Primat des objektiv-statisch „da- und so-seienden" Ausgangstexts vor dem relativ-dynamischen Funktionieren-Sollen eines (Ziel-)Texts in dessen jeweiliger Situation. Darwins Entwicklungstheorie steht noch vor der Tür.

The CERA Lectures*

(Louvain 1990)

Quality in Translation – a Social Task

(1st Lecture)

In recent years we have moved significantly away from the traditional approach to translation as a linguistic transcoding of a text "from one language to another" (de Waard + Nida 1986; cf. Rez. Vermeer 1988). It is now taken for granted that translation must be seen in the context of a wider whole of social interactions (cf. Holz-Mänttäri 1984; Arrojo 1986). Verbal interaction may be described in a rather complex, but nonetheless realistic model in the following way: A "sender" (for example a radio or television news speaker, an actor, a businessman) needs a text from a text producer (e.g. a technical writer, or some other "producer") to be used under given circumstances for a certain purpose and communication partner or partners. (Several roles may be filled by the same person; thus, sender and producer may be one and the same person, e.g. in face-to-face communication, private letters, etc.)

The role of a text in such a model is twofold. On the object level it serves as a vehicle for the transmission of a message carrying a meaning intended by one partner (in fact, the verbal part is estimated to be no more than about 25% of the message) and an evocation of more or less the same message, depending on situational circumstances, in the other partner(s). (Each recipient will interpret the message in a different way, his own individual way; cf. modern reception theory.) On a meta-level the text serves as only one of several factors which contribute to the achievement of an intended aim (I have called it "skopos") under given circumstances 'in' the recipient(s).

Let us take a simple example: When A and B, two travellers, strangers to each other, travel together in the same train in the same compartment, a long period of silence between them will probably become awkward after some time. The silence may be broken by a casual remark: that it is very hot in the compartment, for example. On the object level the content of the

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message is the rather redundant information about the temperature in the train, generally called phatic communion. The meta-meaning is the establishment of some kind of contact between strangers who find themselves together in a compartment on a rather tedious journey. Such contact may be brought about by other remarks or by nonverbal behaviour, such as a smile – or, depending upon the cultural conventions involved, may not be established at all. It depends on the culture.

Let us return to the translator. It is well known that the task of the translator is not fulfilled by the mere linguistic transcoding of a message on what we have called the object level. His more important task is twofold:

First, to convey an intended meta-meaning in such a way that the ultimate aim ("skopos") of the communicative act is achieved. But this meta-meaning is not, I repeat, "in" the source text. It is created, thanks to the translator's intervention, by the recipient, on the basis of culture-specific conventions, and, hopefully, fulfils the commissioner's intention in having communication established with someone else in a given situation. It is "verbalized" in the form of a target text in the recipient's own situational context.

The translator's task is to transform the form and function ("skopos") of the message on its object level into a target text in such a way as to make it correspond as nearly as possible to the intended skopos. This may involve, as we shall soon see, a thorough change of form and content beyond the normal change "from one language to another".

Collaborating in the communicative act in such a way as to enable the achievement of the skopos is the main and foremost task of the translator. We may call it his social task, for he is the expert who knows how to socially bring about transcultural communication and lead it to its intended aim.

Years ago, a friend of mine told me about one of his adventures in Pakistan. Travelling in a train in the company of two Pathans, the fierce mountain tribe from the western border regions between Pakistan and Afghanistan, whose men seem to be born with a rifle in their hands, he was asked by them, after some time of silence, a question, which he mentally translated as "Where is your money?" He got scared and began to nervously look around for an escape route. Later he learned that he should have translated the question as "Where do you come from?" The "skopos" was a polite one; out of politeness it presupposed that the addressee was a rich man.

A more serious example is the following. You may already know it in one version or another. The one told me by my son, who is an interpreter for Chinese, is as follows: During some tough negotiations between a German businessman and his Chinese partners, the former lost his patience and exclaimed *sotto voce*: "I'll be damned if I'm going to let the thing go on in this way. Either they sign the contract right now or I'm leaving." The Chinese heard the words and wanted to know what the gentleman had said. What was the interpreter to do? A translation on the object level would have meant a serious insult to the Chinese, "losing countenance", as they call it. The intention of the negotiations was not to insult but to come to terms with the Chinese. So the interpreter translated on the meta-level (because he had to "translate" something; the Chinese partners had heard the German talking): "We still need some time to ponder the matter. We should like to meet again a little later." The situation was saved, the German cooled down and the Chinese partners understood what was meant.

I said the task of a translator is to 'convey' the skopos of a communicative act and I believe that only few people will disagree as far as economic, political, technical etc. texts and situations are concerned. But what about literary translation? Is it not common sense to believe – or even take for granted that in the field of literature the translator's duty is to be faithful to the wording of the source text, or, to put it another way, to be faithful to the surface structure of a text, which, it is often still believed, objectively shows 'the' meaning contained in the text itself?

Let us again look at an example: Through centuries of tradition we have become accustomed to often clumsy and boring translations of classical literature. And yet we are supposed to consider the classics as interesting and of high esteem. But who reads them (besides our pitiable school children who cannot escape such martyrdom)? The way we translate the classics is due to what Derrida calls our "logocentrism", our belief in the word, ultimately in the Christian belief of the inspired word as the vehicle of truth. Have you ever tried to read, say, Sallustus as a surprisingly modern "alternative" writer? How could one show today such a meta-meaning in his books?[2] Why not attempt a translation by writing about the subjects he dealt with, but in the way *we* are used to verbalizing them today? We would not be unfaithful to the source text; we would only be faithful to a possible meta-meaning of the text. We cannot be faithful to everything at

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[2] Fuhrmann (1990, 325): "Besondere Schwierigkeiten haben zahlreiche Altphilologen dann, wenn es sich darum handelt, die Bedingtheit der Inhalte zu erfassen, die Fragen zu ermitteln, auf welche die Texte ursprünglich eine Antwort zu geben suchten."

the same time. (The problem of serving two masters ...) We have to make our choice.[3]

The social task of the translator lies in making choices (either accepting a commissioner's choice or rejecting a commission before signing a contract for a translation) and where he must know and defend the conditions for his choice. He translates for a public who have a right to know the reason for the choice the translator made in order to know what they are reading, and by whom it was written, the author or rather his co-author, the translator. (You can never get the author alone in a translation.)

So far we have briefly mentioned two social tasks of the translator: his duty to bring about communication between two partners (or groups of partners) in such a way that the ultimate aim of the act, the "skopos", may be achieved; and his cultural responsibility for the introduction into a society and its literary tradition of new aspects either of form or content or meaning and thereby of new aspects of the "world". Form and content and meaning are intertwined in each culture in their own several ways, and in the target culture in a necessarily different way from that of the source culture. In translating, priority should be given to one factor and the others will be subjected to it – because one cannot serve two masters at the same time ...

But the translator's task goes beyond translating. The ethics of his profession are at stake – and more worldly items, too. The conditions of his work – and his pecuniary compensation, for example, as well as his reputation and position in society. – Or as Plato/Lamb (1983) makes the rhetorician put it in his "Gorgias" (452e):

> And I tell you that by virtue of this power [to persuade by speeches ...] your money-getter will turn out to be making money not for himself, but for another, – in fact for you, who are able to speak and persuade the multitude.

Where a translator is supposed to know only his words and to transcode a text line by line into a target language, he will need at most a good dictionary. But when a translator is made co-responsible for the success of a communicative act, because he is the crucial factor in it as a transcultural act, then a translator does more, is obliged to do more. In order to carry out

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[3] Toury (1980), taking up Schleiermacher's well known dichotomy – which in reality is even older than Cicero – of assimilating and alienating translation strategies, distinguishes between adequacy with respect to the source text and acceptability in the target culture stressing at the same time the role of tradition in translation methods.

his task of transmitting a "skopos" he is bound to do research work in order to make himself acquainted with the details of his commission and its texts – the source and target text – so that he understands fully what the purpose of communication is. He may have to dig deep into source-culture conditions in order to be able to fully appreciate the impact of a source text in its own cultural surroundings, etc.; he may have to argue with his commissioner about the specifications of his commission and the best way to achieve the intended goal (the "skopos"). After all, it is he, the translator, and he alone, who is the expert responsible for transcultural communication, otherwise he would not be needed and his profession would not exist.

I am talking about another kind of social task involved in translating: namely one which relates to the public, the commissioner and the recipients of a translation. The commissioner must be aware, or be made aware, (1) that the translator is the expert in transcultural communication on whom the success of the communicative act depends, (2) that the translator is a human being and not a machine and therefore to be treated as such and respected as an expert in his field and (3) that the translator is the commissioner's partner who works for him and collaborates with him in order to achieve an optimal outcome for their joint efforts and therefore needs the commissioner's confidence, goodwill and collaboration. How often do people deny the translator the necessary insight into documents, for example, because these are considered top secret. Can a lawyer or a doctor work efficiently if you hide important information from them? Would they work for you under such conditions?

And what has been said of the commissioner holds good for all other partners in the communicative act of which translation is a part.

The social task I am talking about – and no longer the social task of the translator alone – is the elucidation of the translator's task, as well as of his responsibility to the public, customers, commissioners, and the readers of his target text, so that they can fully understand and appreciate his role in the communicative act; what he does, what his duty is and what the limits of his responsibility are. In a word: what his social position is (just as we know the social position and the prestige of a lawyer or a doctor etc.).

The translator's task, as I said, is to bring about communication between partners for a given purpose ("skopos"). His work starts before he even begins to formulate a target text. His work includes research of various kinds. And again, his responsibility does not end with feeding the last word of the target text into his computer.

The social task of all of us – translators, theoreticians and public – is to become conscious of the complexity and the responsibility of the translator's work so that it can be fully understood and appreciated. This point is just as valid in the case of everyday texts as it is for highly specialized and literary texts. In each case there are choices to be made between form and content, function and meta-function and their interdependences which need to take differences between source and target text into account. In this respect the everyday text is as complex as any other. – The details that distinguish literary translation will not be gone into here;[4] suffice it to say that the social task of translating is a complex task to be done by the translator as well as by the society for which and in which he translates.

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[4] Not pertinent is Glassgold (1987).

Is Translation a Linguistic or a Cultural Process?

(2nd Lecture)

I

The English term "linguistic" has both a general and a specialised meaning. In ordinary or standard language (*Gemeinsprache*) linguistic means "of language", "belonging to language" (*sprachlich*), language taken in its everyday meaning, such as in terms like "English language", "German language" etc. An utterance may be called a linguistic sign or, more technically, a verbal sign (*ein sprachliches/verbales Zeichen, ein Sprachzeichen*), something one says or writes. But language has also another almost metaphorical meaning, when one speaks of the language of the animals or the language of nature etc. Language in such and other cases means a system, a more or less structured whole of signs. – In specialised language or "linguistic" terminology (*Fachsprache*) linguistic means "of linguistics", "belonging to linguistics" (*linguistisch*).[5] Here again, linguistic may refer to a theory of language, such as the structuralists' "linguistic theory" (*die sprachwissenschaftliche/linguistische Theorie*)[6] or to the science of language as, e.g. in neurophysical or biological approaches to language or to the "organism" theory of the beginning of the 19th century[7] or even to a not-yet-developed fractal theory.

   "Culture" has been defined in literally hundreds of ways (cf. Kroeber + Kluckhohn 1963; Baller + Kosolapow 1964). Here again a distinction can be made between every day language and terminology, but in neither use do "culture" and "civilization" have a one-to-one relation to the German *Kultur* and *Zivilisation*. For what follows we shall adopt Göhring's definition of "culture", which modifies an older definition by Goodenough (Goodenough 1964; Göhring 1978; cf. Vivelo 1978, 36-39):

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[5] A common mistake in German translations from English is to translate linguistic in both the general as well as terminological case, as "linguistisch". But German makes a clear distinction between "sprachlich" and "sprachwissenschaftlich/linguistisch".

[6] Formerly a distinction was made in German between "linguistisch" referring to modern, particularly structural linguistics, and "sprachwissenschaftlich" denoting prestructural linguistic theories developed since the beginning of the 19th century.

[7] For an interesting blending of socio-biological views with an organismic theory v. Bonfim (s.a. – cf. Klinger 1990, 22-25).

> Kultur ist all das, was man wissen, beherrschen und empfinden können muß, um beurteilen zu können, wo sich Einheimische in ihren verschiedenen Rollen erwartungskonform oder abweichend verhalten, und um sich selbst in der betreffenden Gesellschaft erwartungskonform verhalten zu können, sofern man dies will und nicht etwa bereit ist, die jeweils aus erwartungswidrigem Verhalten entstehenden Konsequenzen zu tragen. (Göhring 1978)

The definition may be summarised by the following paraphrase:

> Culture may be understood as the whole of norms and conventions governing social behaviour and its results.

Three remarks should be added:

1. The 'whole' should really be understood in a holistic way, i.e. meaning more than the mere sum of norms and conventions (cf. Nagel 1965, 225-235).
2. In analogy to linguistic usage, we distinguish para-,[8] dia- and idio-cultural phenomena.
3. As language may be regarded as a norm governed phenomenon (cf. Heger 1969a) and from a socio-linguistic point of view as a system of conventions, the above definition of "culture" includes language as one of its elements.[9]

Thus, a first answer to the question formulated in the title of this lecture may be derived from the preceding definitions.

Although translation in its ordinary sense is generally thought of as a (primarily) linguistic transfer process it is, as such, at the same time a cultural process, because language is part of culture.[10]

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[8] I take the term from Gerstenkorn (1971, 155-169).

[9] Translation is defined by Terracini (1957, 56) as a transposition of language from one culture to another ("trasporlo da una forma culturale ad un'altra"). Cf. ib. (96): "la traduzione non è una riproduzione, ma una trasposizione da un ambiente culturale ad un altro". – Pergnier (1978) is too traditional to be able to contribute to the subject in question.

[10] We shall not go into details here as to the exact relation of language and culture. They certainly do not stand in a simple one-to-one relationship to each other, and this is by no means implied in the above assertion about language as an element of "culture".

II

Another means of finding an answer to the question posed in this paper may be looked for in modern philosophy. Evolutionary Epistemology (*Evolutionäre Erkenntnistheorie*) as developed by Eccles (1970), Lorenz (1941f; 1987) and his followers (cf. Vollmer 1983) defends an evolution of the human brain "parallel" to world evolution and asserts that the human brain functions in analogy to the "functioning" of the world. Therefore, perception and interpretation of the world are in principle a faithful representation (*Abbildung*) of the world outside the human brain. The brain is in accordance with the "world" as far as it is necessary for man's survival to "know" the world.

Thus, human behaviour, biological, socio-cultural and linguistic, is parallel to the world (of which man is an element). Again, culture and language merge in a particular way: language as an element of culture.

III

A third possible answer to our question may be derived from anthropological and sociological theories of enculturation or socialization of the child.[11]

For the infant, "in the beginning" the world surrounding it is a constant passing of sensory impressions out of which, gradually, "holistic parts" are momentarily sorted out only to be forgotten and substituted by other impressions moments afterwards. As the infant begins to fix perceptions and, by and by, under the guidance of its elders (parents etc.) and a little later play-mates learns to distinguish and name things and happenings (first passively as a combination of "holistic parts" and sound impressions, later on actively as attempts to pronounce their names) the world passes from momentary impressions and chaos to a more or less ordered jumble of "things" and movements, a kind of often repeated and often interrupted TV novel. Constant corrections in the active combination of impressions and sounds lead the child to a gradual world view as deemed "correct" by the "educators" who, themselves, are biologically and socially conditioned to enforce and reinforce their world view and with it such corrections on the infant as are deemed appropriate to assure its culture-specific "correct" enculturation (socialization) and thus make possible communication within

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[11] It is not necessary here to make a distinction between "enculturation" and "socialization".

the framework of an understandable and energy saving economic be-
haviour. "Correct" behaviour essentially means the behaviour of the fore-
generation (that of the parents and older relatives). Cultural behaviour as
taught to a child therefore is always a sort of "frozen" culture, retarding
innovation in order to guarantee the continuation of communication be-
tween the generations. And language as a system of "frozen" signs desig-
nates this frozen culture and therefore "lags behind" cultural development
to a certain extent. This is one of the reasons why culture and language are
not in a one-to-one relation to each other. Cf., for example, that everyone
still speaks of the rising sun though we all know that 'in reality' it is the
earth which moves. The relationship between language and culture can best
be understood as a dynamic or, better, dialectic one (cf. Sartre 1985 for the
implications of such an approach).

Enculturation or socialization ensure a tight relationship between culture
and language, although there is no (or not necessarily) a one-to-one rela-
tionship between language and culture.[12]

IV

Taking together evolutionary philosophy (II) and enculturation (III), i.e.
adaptation of brain functions to the "world" and initiation of the infant into
a specific "world view" (*Weltanschauung*/*Weltsicht* – cf. Weisgerber
1962ff; Whorf 1956), i.e. "culture", we get a fourth, combined answer to
our question:

Translation involves cultural phenomena and processes as well as lin-
guistic ones, and is therefore a cultural as well as a linguistic procedure.
Because language (a specific language), is part of a (specific) culture,
translation has to be understood as a "cultural" phenomenon dealing with
specific cultures: Translation is a culture transcending process.

There is never a guarantee that the enculturation of a child will succeed
to the complete satisfaction of the older generation. Elders will correct a
child's verbal and nonverbal behaviour in so far as it deviates significantly
from their own expectations. Smaller deviations may, therefore, go un-
noticed and become a lifelong habit in the child. (We call it the "generation
problem" and speak of "language" and "cultural change".)

In any case, translation analysis has to take into account phenomena of
deviation. They are one reason amongst others why translations of the same

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[12] "[L]a lingua ora è in piena armonia ora si trova in conflitto" with culture (Terracini
1957, 11).

text done by different people are bound to differ from each other. Enculturation is an overall process, not a mathematically measurable phenomenon – as, by the way, biological phenomena never are (cf.Witte 1987, 109-136; Witte 1989).

V

Up to now we have looked at "culture" as a rather static phenomenon. After defining it as the whole of the conventions and norms of a society we may say that "behaviour" means practicing culture. In its broadest sense as an all embracing physical as well as 'mental' process, including thinking and, of course, speaking and writing, listening and reading, behaviour is culture-as-action. All behaviour is goal-oriented, teleological,[13] "skopos" oriented, as I have called it elsewhere (cf. now Vermeer 1990a).

To translate means to do something, to act. Here we have translation as a culture-specific process, i.e. as acting.[14]

By the way, I am not so sure that thinking is always a goal-oriented action. Maybe it is partly just "happening", 'one can't help thinking'. Thinking is only partly linguistic and within this only partly grammatical. But we may leave this problem aside for the time being.

VI

We are 'people of the world', which means (amongst other things) that we always "act" in a given situation, taking this situation, or parts of it (in so far as they seem to be relevant to us), into account whilst acting. Linguistic, or as one says more commonly, verbal behaviour or "communication" is situation sensitive, as is all interaction. Interaction and therefore communication are always directed towards an interaction or communication partner. Taking her/him into consideration whilst "acting" means that we try to foresee her/his behaviour, moods, reactions to our behaviour, her/his knowledge (*Weltwissen*), etc. And it also means that we know that she/he knows that we know and that she/he does the same with reference to us.

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[13] It is unnecessary to detail here the vast literature on the subject. Cf. for some samples, Vermeer (1986a).

[14] That is why Justa Holz-Mänttäri (1984) speaks of translation as "translatorisches Handeln". We shall see more of it soon. Cf. Nyholm (1980, 230): "Jede Kommunikation ist eine soziale Handlung zwischen agierenden Personen".

"Reflexive co-orientation" is the term for such knowledge and behaviour (Siegrist 1970).[15]

Reflexive co-orientation warns us not to transgress on Grice's (1975; 1978) maxims for adequate behaviour, though, of course such maxims again are culture specific (cf. Vermeer 1986a, 247-268).

The conclusion is that translation as a sort of communication is subject to culture-sensitive reflexive co-orientation and behavioural maxims. But translation deals with two cultures. Therefore, the target text will deviate in some way (or more exactly: in a specific way) from the form and content (and more often than not) scope and skopos (and therefore meaning) of the source text.

(Here I cannot go into details to prove my affirmation further. I refer the reader to my publications, especially Vermeer 1990a.)

VII

Let us return to language. The use of language is predominantly social (one talks to another person or group of persons, less often to oneself; thinking, as already mentioned, is only partly linguistic). Today the primary social function of language seems to be what Katharina Reiss (1976; [2]1983) has called the "informative" type. (Perhaps 'in the beginning' the function was more phatic or socializing than nowadays; it may continue to be so in very small communities where everyone knows what usually happens and is very likely to happen again, making repetition of information unnecessary.)

I should like now to take language in the broad sense mentioned above, comprising all that can be considered "informative" or "communicative". Thus, a broken twig may tell (inform) the scout that his group passed here and took such and such a direction. Traffic and other pictorial signs have long since been referred to as tertiary signs of language, because they are derived short forms of information which may at any time be reconverted into ordinary linguistic utterances. (Writing has been called the secondary level of language.) We also talk of the language of fashions, movements, personal distances etc. (Cf. publications on kinesics, proxemics etc., above

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[15] An old formula for reflexive co-orientation can be found in João de Barros' *Décadas* of the 16th century. – Co-orientation is also valid for literary texts: "Der Schriftsteller konzipiert zwar sein Werk im Hinblick auf eine bestimmte Lesergruppe, von der er sich bestimmte subjektive Vorstellungen gemacht hat. Er weiß aber nicht, ob er über-haupt einen adäquaten Leserkreis erreicht. Die tatsächlichen Leser kennen dagegen im allgemeinen die Entstehungssituation des Textes nicht genau, sondern verstehen den Text aufgrund ihrer Erfahrungen." (Nyholm 1980, 229)

all Poyatos 1983; cf. Hall 1966; Birdwhistell 1952.) In short, we distinguish between verbal and nonverbal, vocal and nonvocal signs; paralingual signs are those which normally accompany language and help to identify a person, her/his moods and intentions, e.g. gestures (for a distinction between *Geste* und *Gebärde* see Leonhard 1976), voice quality, utterance speed etc. (Coughing is vocal, but not verbal; coughing may be intentional and meaningful, as a sign of warning, for example.)

Another important item has to be briefly mentioned here: Communication is, as we said, always partner oriented (when I talk to myself I am my partner). But the partner need not really exist. (Who knows whether the lost scout will really pass by and see the broken twig? Who knows whether it was really broken by his comrades and not by the wind or a passing animal?) As long as a sign (or token) is taken to be communicative it functions as such. We may represent presence or absence of partner(s) by their function as either P (producer) or R (recipient).

What is important for us to keep in mind is that nonverbal vocal and nonvocal and paralingual signs which may all accompany or in a way be substituted or stand for verbal utterances, whether spoken or written (cf. the lay out of a page, the printing type chosen etc.), are culture specific. (Cf. such stereotype convictions – and sometimes prejudices – as: Italians speak louder than Englishmen, Americans laugh more than British people, Mediterranean people gesticulate and talk more than Scandinavians etc.; instead of saying "no" one may just shake one's head – South Indians "nod" their "no", etc. which for Europeans and others would mean "yes". – Cf. Condon + Yousef 1976; Patai 1973; etc.)

All this leads us to say that because different cultures behave differently in communicative interaction, there is no one-to-one relation in the communicative signs used from one culture to another, which means that in translating different signs may or must be used on different occasions.

To represent this graphically: Let the extension of culture S be represented by a square s and the verbal part of an utterance as part of this culture by a smaller square sv within s (we are not discussing here whether sv is merely a part of s or partly reaches beyond s) and let the extension of culture T be represented by a square t and its verbal part by tv, then tv may occupy a place in t different from the one sv occupies in s:
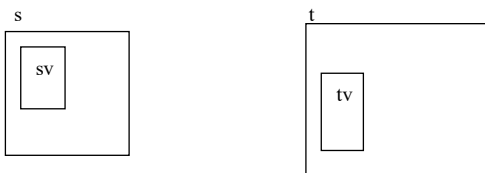
Exemplifying: Instead of asking someone to leave the room one may point to the door. The possibility of such a gesture being used depends on the situation and the partner relationship envolved. On certain occasions one may say, "Please, shut the door", on others rather "Do you mind if I shut the door?" – The English, "Please, go and buy me a stamp," may be expressed in Japanese by *yuubin-gitte o katte kite kure* which literally means something like: "buy a stamp and come back". Whereas in English, the beginning of the action is verbalized (*go*), Japanese verbalizes the end (*come*), and so forth. The meaning (and the effect) of both utterances, however, is (roughly) "the same". (For further illustrations cf. Wienold 1990.)

Conclusion:

   For two reasons translation is not a process confined to a merely linguistic transfer: Verbalized and otherwise signified parts of utterances differ from culture to culture; a translation of the verbalized parts alone is only a partial transfer of utterances (and meaning).

VIII

Above I spoke of speaking/writing as "acting". Acting may be taken in its terminological sense of stage acting, or rather "rhetoric". That is what I meant, when I said communicating is an overall verbal plus nonverbal, vocal plus nonvocal process. Rhetoric may be understood as part of stylistics (or stylistics as part of rhetoric, it does not matter which way we take it). What is important is that translating is also a rhetoric act and therefore a complex communicative process. And we know already, and expect its repetition here, that rhetoric is culture specific.

IX

A general distinction is that between oral and written translation (interpreting vs. translation proper or translation in a strict or narrow sense). The essential differences between these two types of translation are that (1) in oral interpreting the communication partners and the interpreter normally act in each other's presence (face-to-face communication); the interpreter may even change his role quickly from interpreter to commentator, explicator, even communication partner; (2) in written translation (much as in writing elsewhere) the translator does not enter into direct communication with her/his partner(s), but has to anticipate, to a much greater degree than

in the case of the interpreter, what the target recipient knows and what she or he does not know etc. (cf. what was said above about reflexive co-orientation).

When in face-to-face communication something is not heard or understood, it may be repeated or paraphrased, discussed, modified, varied etc. During interpretation one partner sometimes addresses the interpreter directly: "Tell me what he said", and the interpreter then often acts as direct "mediator": He said ... (instead of translating in the speaker's first person singular form). Interpreting clearly is goal-oriented, addressee-sensitive, always subject to its specific situation (cf. the work done by Knapp + Knapp-Potthoff 1985, etc.) and not a "faithful"[16] word-for-word rendering of a 'source text'. (Cf. the immigrant's child helping her/his mother in market bargaining.)

Again we have a clear example of translation (in the broad sense, including interpreting) being situation-specific and situation being a complex phenomenon in which partners behave as real persons and not merely as "moving tongues". Translation is culture specific.

X

In written translation culture specificity is not less obvious. In 1984 Justa Holz-Mänttäri presented her "frame" for "translational acting" showing the main roles in a translation process to be represented by one or more persons or institutions (and sometimes in personal "union" of several roles for one person or institution). Holz-Mänttäri mentioned the initiator, the commissioner, the text producer, the translator, the target text applicator and the recipient. (I'll come back to this "frame" in my next lecture.)

Each person representing a role is an extremely complex phenomenon. (We'll come back to this, too.)

If translation is a process going on between a group of persons each of whom has their own interests, and, as often as not, intentions[17] in and represented by their different roles, one can easily imagine that translation is not a purely linguistic transfer from one language to another. (That is one of the reasons why back translations do not work.)

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[16] We shall come back to "faithfulness" in translation.
[17] For a differentiation of intention and function cf. Nord (1988).