THE ROLE OF TEXT ANALYSIS IN TRANSLATION

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Abstract: The aim of this paper is to describe and explain the function of text analysis for understanding a source text, producing an acceptable translation and the assessment of that translation. Basic concepts (e.g. extratextual and intratextual factors, stages of the translation process, understanding of the source text, readability of the target text, and translator competences) are discussed in terms of translation theory in the theoretical part of the paper. Translator analysis of internal and external textual factors contributes to the knowledge of external and internal text factors of the source text and enables the translator to better understand the text itself, its function and aim, which the client (one who orders the translation) wishes to achieve, so that the translation fully meets the translation order. In the course of a text analysis, the translator forms an overview of the source text and acquires a clear idea of how the text should and will look.

Students of the University of Economics in Bratislava, Faculty of Applied Languages are expected to acquire knowledge and skills that would enable them to translate relevant documents from the source language to the target language, and vice versa, as well as to search, analyse, and process foreign language materials for their future employers' needs. The final part of the paper contains an example illustrating how the training of the initial stage of text analysis should be conducted. It contains the description of the authors' experience in translating professional German and English texts and teaching translation classes at the University of Economics in Bratislava.

UDC Classification: 81`25, **DOI**: 10.12955/cbup.v7.1428

Keywords: factor, text, analysis, translation, understanding, readability

Introduction

A large number of jobs have been opened up in the EU language industry, i.e. in all areas that use language as a communication tool. There is also a wide range of different media and other institutions that offer various language and translation related job opportunities. For this reason, it is vitally important to prepare professionals who will be able to perform these activities and meet the demands of the EU labour market. An important basis for creating a translation (of the target text) is the knowledge of the text communication function and its place in a particular situation, before the translator enters the productive phase of translation. For this reason, it is necessary to analyse the situation and function of the text with a focus on the translation. Sometimes, this analysis occurs in the form of a precise translation order. Popelková for example emphasises the importance of a "thorough understanding of the text to be translated" and points out that "it would be a mistake to believe that in professional translation a simple substitution of terminology and a very basic knowledge of grammar would suffice" to create a quality target text (Popelková, 2017, p. 415). Often, however, the translator has to discuss the translation details with the client. Therefore, it is important for the translator to know what (questions) to ask the client in order to be able to produce the target text that will match the client's requirements in all respects.

Analysis of external and internal text factors

At the first stage of the translation process, the translator has to read the text thoroughly. During the process of understanding the source text, the translator first identifies the meanings of words and their relationships at first in sentences, then in paragraphs and individual parts of the text and finally throughout the entire text. The translator then links this knowledge with the real-life situation that the text reflects, and which includes the author of the source and the target text recipient. The translator's intuition also plays an important role in the translation, as the understanding of the text is partly conscious and to some extent a subconscious process (supported by one's intuition).

The second stage of the translation process involves the analysis of extratextual factors. Christine Nord (1995; 2005), a well-known German translatologist, has developed a summary of the most important external textual factors that characterize the communication situation of text and internal textual factors affecting the nature of the source text. These factors can be formulated as question words: *Who*? refers to the author of the text or the translator; *why?* asks about the intention of the author, or the client (one who orders the translation), and about the purpose of the text (e.g. the hotel's advertising brochures are intended to support the clients' interest in staying at the hotel). The question starting in *For* w*hom*? refers to the recipient of the target text. The fact for whom the text is intended significantly influences how the translator will work with the defect text. Indeed, the text intended for adults will differ

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significantly from the one intended for children; the text for the professional public is different from the one for laymen or the non-expert public. The translator must also take into account the cultural specifics of the recipient as well as their knowledge of the given field or subject matter when designing the target text (Rakšanyiová, 2005; Gromová, 2000). The question about the medium concerns the channel through which the translated text reaches the recipient; this factor greatly affects the form and methods of translation. The choice of media largely determines the way of communication (oral/written communication, acoustic/visual communication). Therefore, the translator needs to know if the translation will be published as a book, a journal (or magazine) article, a feature article in newspapers, or as a leaflet or a letter. The text for an oral presentation will vary considerably from a written one. Questions about the place and time (*where*? and *when*?) influence the content and the form of the text. This applies in particular to demonstrative pronouns and adverbs, for instance this, *here, there, yesterday, today*, etc., which anchor the text into a certain communication situation. However, in many cases, the communication situation will change in the course of the translation process because the target text is created at some other place and at a different time than the original source text.

The third stage of the translation process is the analysis of internal textual factors. After the translator has acquired an overview of external textual factors, he should then continue to analyse internal textual factors to obtain a complete picture of the underlying text. Nord (1995; 2005) describes them as textual factors that significantly influence the nature of the source text. These include: the question about *what*? is used to obtain information about the subject-matter of the text. The question word *what?* refers to the content of the text, i.e. what the author has indicated as the core text content. The question starting in *What is not/ does not?* signals a presupposition implied by the text author. The question about the sequence is oriented to organising information in the text, i.e. text macrostructure and microstructure of text segments. The question about nonverbal means of communication refers to for instance the formal layout, font (letter type), visual text segmentation, use of colours and/or illustrations, etc. The question about the choice of words (*in what words?)* concerns lexical properties of the text, including morphological ones, and the function of individual parts of words as carriers of information. The question *what sentences/clauses?* is used to refer to characteristic syntactic means used in the text concerning, i.e. the types of sentence or clause, the relationship between the main clause and subordinate clause, etc.; as well as the inclusion of persons in the text (author or the recipient), that is, whether the author has included himself in the text, or if the text recipient is included in the text. The final question starting in *what tone*?, which refers to suprasegmental text features, indicates accent, intonation and rhythm.

The translator's analysis of internal and external textual factors contributes to the knowledge of external and internal text factors of the source text and enables the translator to better understand the text itself, its function and the aim that the client (one who orders the translation) wishes to achieve, so that the translation fully meets the translation order placed by the client. In the course of text analysis, the translator forms an overview of the source text and acquires a clear idea about how the text should and will look like.

Translator competences required for creating the target text

A significant element of text analysis is the translator's ability to recognize what is defective in the source text. The most serious defects in the source text or the target text are those related to the factual content of the text. Not even language errors play such a significant role, because in principle, they do not prevent the translator from creating a functionally optimal target text, although these errors can complicate the process. However, what happens more frequently is that the source text contains problematic statements; in this case the primary role of the translator is to address the client (one who has ordered the translation) and discuss the points of dispute with him. It is even more important to identify defective elements in one's own text, i.e. in the target text. The translator should be extremely critical of his own text and notice that a certain part of the text, the phrase, or a certain expression has not been translated adequately. For example, the Slovak expression "obloha", which means a vegetable side dish on a plate in gastronomic terminology, and it is also a Slovak equivalent of the English word "sky" cannot be translated as "Himmel" into German if the text is about meals. Such cases indicate possible misunderstandings in the source text, ignorance of terminology, but above all, the translator's failure in creating a coherent target text.

Another significant aspect to be considered in the translation is the cultural background of the source text and the target text. Therefore, translators need to be experts in the culture-specific production and perception of text across languages and cultures (Charfaoiu, 2008). Each text is part of a social interaction and is therefore always culturally conditioned, while each language community has its own conventions regarding texts.

A vital translator competence is the knowledge and active mastering of these text conventions in their form and function. Let us refer to this phenomenon as contrastive competence, which can be acquired by comparing parallel texts, i.e. the original texts (as a rule not translated), whose communication function and topic correspond to the translated text (Floros, 2004). By analyzing and comparing parallel texts from different cultures and written in different languages, the translator can identify relevant differences and characteristic features at various text levels. It would be ideal for the translator to have at their disposal an extensive text corpus with parallel texts in the form of a database, which would enable him to analyse parallel texts and their parts quickly and purposefully. It goes without saying, however, that such parallel texts can only be used as an aid, since the translator does not know the author who wrote the text, and thus cannot be sure whether some parallel text is truly flawless, and the parallel text can never contain the scope or kind of vocabulary used by the translator of the target text. Therefore, the translator's competence also involves the ability of selecting from the range of meanings of the same word the one that is a true equivalent of the translated word. Moreover, this competence also includes the ability to assess the level of translation in terms of its factual (content) correctness.

All aspects of the translation textual competence mentioned in this paper form a strategic basis for developing the target text. Without this base, translation would take place as an isolated and non-communicative process that is conditioned only by systemic aspects of language. There are many parallels between writing the source text and translating it, which have not been adequately explored and described in terms of translation. In this context, we have to discuss intertextuality as a text property, which refers to a specific relationship between the source text and the target text. This relationship depends on the communicative function of the source text (Seresová & Breveníková, 2018). An important feature of translation intertextuality is that the differences between languages and cultures related to these texts (the source language and its culture, and the target language and culture associated with it) need to be taken into account. In the translation process, this is reflected in two ways. Firstly, in addition to the subject-matter knowledge, the translator has to possess a sound knowledge of both languages and their cultures. The competences and abilities mentioned above also have to be mentioned at this point: the contrastive textual competence and the basic knowledge of intercultural communication. Translation is thus also intercultural writing. Secondly, interference problems arise in translation, in particular through the linguistic effects of the source language on the target language. This is a problem that can only be solved with a good knowledge of both languages (i.e. L1 and L2), as well as by the mastering of language and communication resources and possibilities).

Understanding and readability of the text

In the translation process, the translator has to make decisions on various levels, either textual, language, or ethical ones. However, translators can arrive at proper decisions only if they have the relevant information at their disposal. The concept of understanding can be explained as the comprehension of text content, which does not include only knowledge in itself, but also intellectual understanding, and the capacity of capturing links. According to Dilthey, a German psychologist, educator, and philosopher, understanding is recognition of "the inner", "psyche" by means of external features, which can be perceived via senses (Makkreel, 2016). We can say that understanding is the result of the process of arriving at mental perception. The following paragraph explains the meaning of this concept in the context of translation.

Each text created by the author carries some communication intent and is designed for a particular target group. It is not as an end in itself, it aims to bring content-specific information to a certain group of readers. The process of understanding the text cannot be reduced to the external characteristics of the text, i.e. what we can see or hear. Part of the understanding is also the specific situation in which the text originates. Moreover, the understanding process involves the source text culture in which the author lives, and which is explicitly or implicitly included in the text itself, and of course, the recipient's culture for whom the translation product is intended. In order for the translation as a product to fulfil the role for which it is intended, the text has to be understood by the recipient.

Understanding of the text is a complex process, which involves two languages, two situations, and two different cultures. This process is participated by several persons; consequently, the translator has to consider several factors when translating and has to be able to understand the intent and requirements of several communication participants. Translators have to take into account facts, function, and intention of the source text author, as well properly comprehend what the client (who has placed an order for the translation) wants to achieve with the target text, and finally also interests of the target reader, i.e. recipient.

To fulfil all the requirements leading to the understanding of the source text, translators have to have at their disposal the precise data on the standpoint and situation of all those concerned. What is the difference between the concepts of understanding and readability of the target text? Readability can be assessed by means of several criteria developed by translation scholars. These parameters include simplicity (in contrast to text complexity), text segmentation (in contrast to lack of clarity and absence of contextual links), brevity (optimum length) and conciseness of the text (an example of the very reverse is a useless, unjustified verbiage), and finally, it is an additional stimulation as opposed to zero stimulation. Langer et al., (1981) use the term simplicity to refer in the first place to the choice of lexical means, sentence structure, and an understandable interpretation of necessary information. Of course, simplicity needs to be adjusted to a given situation, function of the target text, and to the target recipient. The right text segmentation is a pre-requisite of the proper understanding of the text concerned, since the text is clear only when it enables us to freely pursue the flow of thoughts, and if the latter is adjusted to the topic and situation (Langer et al., 1981). The concept of additional stimulation can be described in various ways, namely as various examples from real-life, using stylistic elements as for example rhetorical questions, unusual formulations, and images. The target text author has to be able to use these means very sensitively and consider their use carefully in order to capture the purpose, function, and original intentions of the source text author.

Readability is one of the most significant features of every text, either oral or written. It is, therefore, necessary for the source text author to formulate their ideas so that in the end, the recipient of the text concerned may unanimously identify the author's intention (intent). As translators we often encounter texts of varying degrees of readability. For this reason, it is important for readers/ recipients not only to understand the foreign language (in which the source text is written) but also a particular situational context in which the text has arisen. Likewise, the source culture has to be included in the process of understanding, the culture in which the author of the source text lives and which is present, either explicitly or implicitly, in the text itself. Of course, the target culture for which the text is designed cannot be neglected either.

Application: an example of developing text analysis competence

Students of the Faculty of Applied Languages, University of Economics in Bratislava (FAL, UEBA) pursuing the study programme of Foreign Languages and Intercultural Communication are preparing for a professional career in multicultural and multilingual environments in various international or domestic institutions and enterprises. Graduates in this study programme may embark on various careers in the future, for instance international facilitators, marketing experts, public relations officers, or as translators and interpreters specializing in professional communication, social sciences, and the like. Unlike students studying translation as a course of study, students of our Faculty of Applied Languages represent a specific group of learners in terms of knowledge of translation theory and translation skills. The bachelor curriculum contains only a limited number of class hours in translation (3 terms/semesters per 2 hours weekly). For this reason, it is necessary to talk about a specific graduate profile. Since our study programme is interdisciplinary and contains also courses in economics, our students already will have received basic knowledge in economics and law before they start translating specialised texts (Štefančík, 2018). As part of their studies, students of the FAL UEBA are expected to learn to translate relevant documents from the source language to the target language, and vice versa, and to search, analyse, and process foreign language materials for their future employers' needs. One of the most important roles of this curriculum is developing competences as closely as possible corresponding to the EMT (The European Master's in Translation) competence profile. For this reason, teachers are trying to acquire translation skills and competences needed by a quality translator. One of the most important translator competences is text sensitivity, i.e. the ability to recognize semantic errors in the text and modify the source text by small adjustments to make it understandable and evoke such ideas in the

recipient that correspond to the purpose of text, i.e. text skopus, to produce an interesting target text, identical with the source text (Seresová, 2010). Our aim here is to present a concrete text, which can be used for developing learners' text analysis competence.

Students were presented an original German text, extracted from the information platform of the Haribo firm. The text provides information about the firm's products, its history, press releases, and various information about the firm's events, etc. We modified the text, while the most important information was preserved; however, the modifications resulted in the decrease of the text readability. Students were assigned to edit the text and correct it to make it comprehensible by the recipient after the first reading, and ensure that the resulting text mediated the information corresponding to the source text skopus, i.e. to inform the reader about the Haribo firm's achievements. This kind of assignment belongs to exercises that are used to develop learners' sensitivity to the source text. Students need to be able to recognise possible defects in the source text and correct them so that the text intent is preserved. The reception and understanding of a complicated and defect text is a demanding task for the learners, which is reflected in the fact that only 47% of students were able to recognise defects and incomprehensible parts in the text. In some cases, students exchanged only one or more expressions, or revised the wording of entire sentences, or even filled in other words that they considered necessary for the text to be readable/comprehensible. To develop sensitivity to the source text, we used the following extract (which we modified) from the promotional materials of the Haribo firm:

Bärenstarker Werbeauftritt – HARIBO verzeichnet Rekordwerte

Erfolgreiche Werbebotschaften sind einfach. Für die Kunden muss die Verbindung ohne langes Nachdenken erkennbar sein. Es gibt wohl kaum ein Unternehmen, das darin erfolgreicher wäre als HARIBO. 98% kennen den späterer weiterten Slogan „HARIBO macht Kinder froh und Erwachs' ebenso" aus den 30-er Jahren des letzten Jahrhunderts. Bei Jung und Alt bekannt und sehr beliebt – seit 1991 gibt es eine Werbepartnerschaft mit dem TV-Entertainer Thomas Gottschalk, die dazu beiträgt, den Bekanntheitswert zu erhöhen. Die Partnerschaft ist außer gewöhnlich erfolgreich, stabil und langwährend. Mit 14 Jahren wurde sie als längste Werbepartnerschaft ins Guinness Buch der Rekorde eingetragen. Aufgrund dieses bären starken Arguments gibt es natürlich eine Fortführung. (Hauptrolle: HARIBO, n.d.)

Students identified the second statement as the least comprehensible, and proposed to complement it with suitable expressions (syntactic objects). The following are some examples: *die Verbindung* ***mit der Marke;*** *den Kunden muss* ***der Zusammenhang solcher Botschaft*** *...****klar sein; Zusammenhang mit der Marke.*** The next shortage detected by the students was lower comprehensibility. Students suggested that the percentage data should be followed by nouns, namely: *98% Kunden* (customers), *98% Menschen* (people), and *98% Leute (people).* However, some students found these figures unimportant and left them out completely. It was surprising that most students found the final statement (which was defective and incomprehensible at first sight) to be correct and did not suggest any adjustment to it. Other students perceived the statement as incorrect and incomplete, which was reflected in their target text – some of them translated it incorrectly and some omitted it completely. This could be interpreted as the signal that the sentence was not understood. The sentence should have read as follows: *Aufgrund dieses bären starken Arguments sollte die erfolgreiche Partnerschaft (Zusammenarbeit) fortgeführt werden.* This example illustrates how the training of the initial stage of text analysis should be conducted (Can I understand the text? Is it necessary to make some content or form adjustments?) and how to develop learners' sensitivity to the source text.

Conclusion

In the present paper we approach translation as a process that involves both routine and deliberate management of our activities. Translation is also a creative activity, as it results in developing a new text, while the content, cultural background and text function remain preserved.

Translator analysis of internal and external textual factors contributes to the knowledge of external and internal text factors of the source text and enables the translator to better understand the text itself, its function and aim, which the client (one who orders the translation) wishes to achieve, so that the translation fully meets the translation order. In the course of text analysis, the translator develops an overview of the source text and acquires a clear idea about how the text should and will look like.

Translator competences described in the paper (contrastive competence, intercultural competence, source text sensitivity, etc.) are necessary for developing a high quality target text. Translation can be thus viewed as intercultural writing. Translators have to approach their translation task with adequate interdisciplinary knowledge and skills, which enable them to perform text analysis, recognise defect elements in the source text, supplement their factual knowledge in the field described in the source text, use suitable parallel texts purposefully, as well as consider the cultural background both of the source and the target text.

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