

**MINISTRY OF HIGHER AND SECONDARY SPECIAL EDUCATION
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SELF STUDY

**THEME: TRANSLATION THEORY: OBJECT AND
OBJECTIVES. THE MAIN AIMS AND TASKS OF TRANSLATION.**

Student: Xamrayeva Z.

Teacher: Jabborzoda D.

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**TRANSLATION THEORY: OBJECT AND OBJECTIVES. THE
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1. Introduction.

2. Main part:

2.1. The aim of the translation theory

2.2. The general theory of translation

3. Conclusion

Introduction.

Translation is a means of interlingual communication. The translator makes possible an exchange of information between the users of different languages by producing in the target language (TL or the translating language) a text which has an identical communicative value with the source (or original) text (ST). This target text (TT, that is the translation) is not fully identical with ST as to its form or content due to the limitations imposed by the formal and semantic differences between the source language (SL) and TL. Nevertheless the users of TT identify it, to all intents and purposes, with ST - functionally, structurally and semantically.

The functional status of a translation is supported by its structural and semantic similarity with the original. The translator is expected to refrain from any remarks or intrusions in his text which may betray his authorship thereof. He is expected to efface himself as fully as he can to avoid interference with the process of communication between S and TR.

The structure of the translation should follow that of the original text: there should be no change in the sequence of narration or in the arrangement of the segments of the text.

Main part:

2.1 . The aim of the translation theory

The aim is maximum parallelism of structure which would make it possible to relate each segment of the translation to the respective part of the original. It is presumed that any breach of parallelism is not arbitrary but dictated by the need for precision in conveying the meaning of the original. The translator is allowed to resort to a description or interpretation, only in case "direct translation" is impossible. Similarity in structure is preserved in respect to the smallest segments of the text.

Of major importance is the semantic identification of the translation with ST. It is presumed that the translation has the same meaning as the original text. No exchange of information is possible. The presumption of semantic identity between ST and TT is based on the various degrees of equivalence of their meanings. The translator usually tries to produce in TL the closest possible equivalent to ST.

As a kind of practical activities translation (or the practice of translation) is a set of actions performed by the translator while rendering ST into another language. At its best translation is an art, a creation of a talented, high-skilled professional.

Translation can be the object of scientific study aimed at understanding its nature, its components and their interaction as well as various factors influencing it or linked with it in a meaningful way. The science of translation or translatology is concerned both with theoretical and applied aspects of translation studies. A theoretical description of the translation phenomenon is the task of the theory of translation.

The linguistic theory of translation is concerned with translation as a form of speech communication establishing contact between communicants who speak different languages. The basis of this theory is linguistics in the broadest sense of the word, that is, macrolinguistics with all its new branches, such as psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics, text linguistics, communicative linguistics, etc.

The core of the translation theory is the general theory of translation which is concerned with the fundamental aspects of translation inherent in the nature of bilingual communication and therefore common to all translation events, irrespective of what languages are involved or what kind of text and under what circumstances was translated.

2.2. The general theory of translation

An important part of the general theory of translation is the theory of equivalence aimed at studying semantic relationships between ST and TT. It has been noted that there is a presumption of semantic identity between the translation and its source text. Let us take an elementary example. Suppose we have an English sentence 'The student is reading a book'. Its Russian translation will be «Студент читает книгу». This translation is a good equivalent of the English sentence, but it is not identical in meaning. It can be pointed out, for example, that the Russian sentence leaves out the meaning of the articles as well as the specific meaning of the Continuous Tense. In Russian we do not get explicit information that it is some definite student but not some particular book or that the reading is in progress at the moment of speech. On the other hand, the Russian sentence conveys some additional information which is absent in the source text. We learn from it that the

student is a male, while in ST it may just as well be a female. Then the translation implies that the student in the case is a college undergraduate, while in ST he may be a high school student or even a scholar, to say nothing of the additional grammatical meaning conveyed by the grammatical aspect of «читает», the gender of «книга» and so on. Part of this information, lost or added in the translating process, may be irrelevant for communication, another part is supplemented or neutralized by the contextual situation, but it is obvious that translation equivalence does not imply an absolute semantic identity of the two texts. The theory of equivalence is concerned with factors which prevent such an identity, it strives to discover how close ST and TT can be and how close they are in each particular case.

The general theory of translation describes the basic principles which hold good for each and every translation event. In each particular case, however, the translating process is influenced both by the common basic factors and by a number of specific variables which stem from the actual conditions and modes of the translator's work: the type of original texts, in which ST is presented to him and the form in which he is supposed to submit his translation, the specific requirements he may be called upon to meet in his work, etc.

The translator has to deal with works of the great authors of the past and of the leading authors of today, with intricacies of science fiction and the accepted stereotypes of detective stories, must be able to cope with the elegance of expression of the best masters of literary style and with the tricks and formalistic experiments of modern avant-gardists.

His duty is to translate diplomatic representations and policy statements, scientific dissertations and brilliant satires, maintenance instructions and after-dinner speeches, etc.

Translating a play the translator must bear in mind the requirements of theatrical presentation, and dubbing a film he must see to it that his translation fits the movement of the speakers' lips.

In simultaneous interpretation the translator is expected to keep pace with the fastest speakers, to understand all kinds of foreign accents and defective pronunciation, to guess what the speaker meant to say but failed to express due to his inadequate proficiency in the language he speaks.

In consecutive interpretation he is expected to listen to long speeches, taking the necessary notes, and then to produce his translation in full or compressed form, giving all the details or only the main ideas.

In some cases the users will be satisfied even with the most general idea of the meaning of the original, in other cases the translator may be taken to task for the slightest omission or minor error.

Each type of translation has its own combination of factors influencing the translating process. The general theory of translation should be supplemented by a number of special translation theories identifying major types of translation activities and describing the predominant features of each type.

Another important branch of the theory of translation is concerned with the study of ST and TT units which can replace each other in the translating process. A bilingual theory of translation should study two separate sets of equivalents, with either language considered, in turn, as SL and the other as TL.

Of particular interest is that branch of the theory of translation which is concerned with the translating process itself, that is, with the operations required for passing over from ST to TT. It is a great challenge to the translation theory to discover how the translator does the trick, what are his

mental processes which ensure production in TL of a text of identical communicative value with the given ST.

The study of the translating process reveals both the translator's general strategy and specific techniques used to solve typical translation problems

Conclusion

In conclusion, mention should be made of one more branch of the theory of translation which deals with the pragmatic aspects of the translating process. The communicants involved in interlingual communication speak different languages but they also belong to different cultures, have different general knowledge, different social and historical background.

The translator has to assess the possible communicative effect of TT and take pains to ensure an adequate understanding of its message by TR. This may necessitate expanding or modifying the original message to make it more meaningful to the members of a different language community.

In some cases the pragmatic value of translation is the major factor in assessing the quality of the translator's performance. All branches of the theory of translation are concerned with important aspects of the translator's work and constitute a body of theoretical thought of indisputable practical value.

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