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TRANSLATION STRATEGIES: AN OVERVIEW

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Abstract The diversity of terms referring to the translation manipulations varies among “strategy”, “method”, “technique”, “procedure”, “transformation”, and “shift”. Despite being referred to differently, their interdependence cannot be denied since each of these concepts has the same role in the translation process, in overcoming the translation difficulties, in ensuring product quality and literary value. The aim of this paper is to discuss the features which connect the translation strategies and to categorize them into meaningful groups in order to illustrate the (socio)linguistic and extra linguistic aspects they have effects upon during the translation process.

Keywords: “strategy”, transformation, method, procedure, etc.

The concept of translation *strategy* is the broadest in its sense since besides the linguistic/extra linguistic transformations it implies, according to qt. by Ordudari [1, n.p.], Loescher [2, p. 8], and Cohen [3, p. 4] “a plan or some mental activities aimed at achieving a goal or dealing with translation difficulties”. Despite Tian’s [4, p. 108] claims that success is not guaranteed and “there are viable alternative actions”, it must be stated that translation strategies imply a set of mindful actions aimed at overcoming translation difficulties. This can also be traced in Loescher’s [2, p. 8], Chesterman’s [5, p. 92], Venuti’s [6, p. 240], and Tirkkonen-Condit and Jaaskelainen’s [7, p. 125] approaches to define the concept of translation *strategy* as a set of steps, processes, and competences of choosing foreign texts, goal-setting and developing methods to translate them. Besides their being divided into global and local (Bell, 1998: 188), Tian categorizes the translation strategies as coming in dichotomies such as *literal* vs. *free* translation and *domesticating* vs. *foreignizing* translation whereas other sources citing Newmark [8, p. 81-91] place domestication and the above-mentioned dichotomies among the translation universals and *methods*. Moreover, according to Baker [9, p. 167] and Pym [10, p. 2] the *standardization* vs. *interference* dichotomy is added to the list of the above-mentioned strategies. Such overlapping of concepts resulting from scholars’ attempts to define and categorize them is exposed to the danger of “terminological confusions”. A broader classification of translation strategies has developed for the purpose of illustrating which translation strategies are applied to local segments or to the whole text and which ones stand for text manipulations. Additionally, the scheme (fig. 1) demonstrates which translation strategies are product, process, form and content-related:

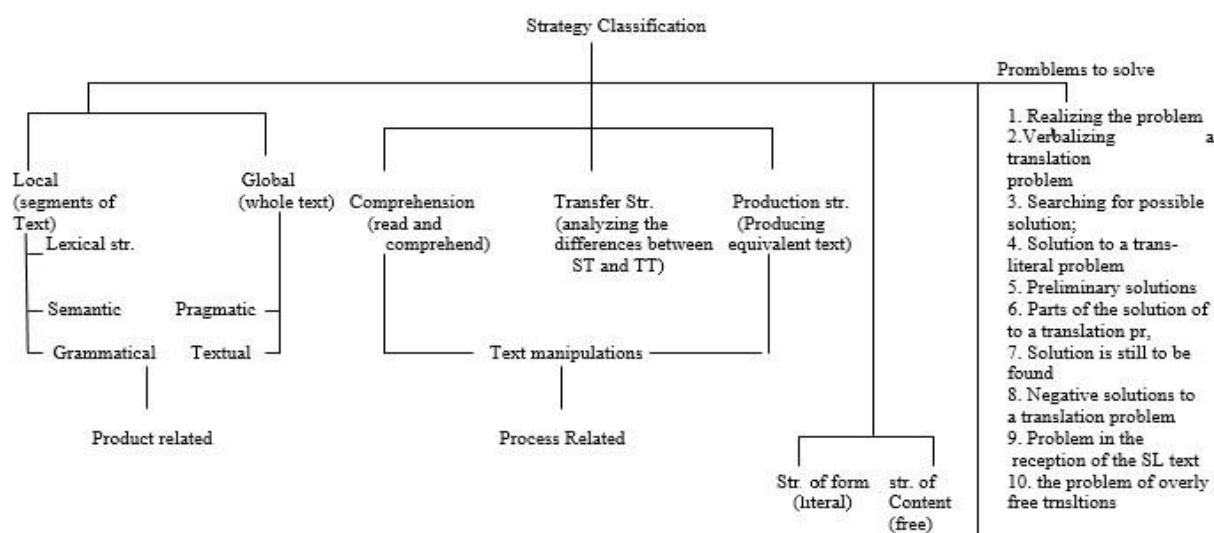


Fig.1. Strategy Classification in dichotomies

The scheme also illustrates a list of possible translation problems and steps towards efficient solutions.

Newmark [8, p. 45] defines these translation manipulations as translation *methods*, which refer to tactics meant to render the source text core. He defined and explained the following: word for word translation, literal translation, faithful translation, semantic translation, adaptation, free translation, idiomatic translation and communicative translation. Method development, in its turn, works for both product and process-related strategies intended for the entire text whereas procedures work for segments of it [11, p. 188]. The concept of translation *procedure* was introduced by Newmark [8, p. 81-91] as well, meaning “an established or official way of doing something”. This obviously overlaps with the concept of strategy. A further definition of X is given by Delisle [12, p. 1] who describes procedures as being practical “when formulating equivalence for elements of meaning transference from ST to TT”. This clearly stands for the fact that translation strategies and methods follow the

same goal: equivalence effect achievement and overcoming translation difficulties. This definition has been broadened to include the fact that translation procedures can be applied to culture-specific terms translation [1, p. 2]. This peculiarity goes beyond Nida's [13] categorization into technical and organizational procedures but it proves that translation procedures follow the same goals as the translation strategies. Consequently, Newmark's [8, p. 81] translation procedures are not limited to technical linguistic transformations but cover extra linguistic areas as well: transference, naturalization, cultural and other types of equivalents, synonymy, through translation, transposition, modulation, recognized translation, translation label, compensation, componential analysis, reduction, expansion and paraphrase. The transformations cited in *Translation Procedures and Strategies* (2013: p.20), include transcription, transliteration, borrowing, literal translation, modulation, eliminating and adapting) which have been earlier assigned to Newmark's procedures and methods. Mailhac [14, p.21] on the other hand, advances several procedures available to the translation of cultural reference (cultural borrowing, calque, cultural substitution, and definition). According to Mailhac's [14, p.22] earlier publications, qtd. in *Translation Procedures and Strategies* (2003: 21), and to Delisle [15, p.2], some procedures are narrow; others are wider units (exoticism in cultural references). Such narrow procedures as lexical (lexical repetition, lexical superlative/diminutive, addition of noun, addition of adverb or adverbial phrase, addition of interjection, addition of particle, addition of adjective or adjectival phrase, addition of verb, addition of conjunction, addition of lexical sequence, focus, surprise and lexical harmonization), syntactic procedures (syntactic repetition [ante- and post-position], adding a clause, cleft sentences – change of sentence type: exclamatory, negative, interrogative, etc.), morphological procedures (stressed personal pronoun forms use of reinforcement, demonstrative pronouns, and demonstrative adjectives), phonetic procedures (vowel/consonant lengthening), punctuation procedures (commas, suspension points, dashes, exclamation marks, inverted commas), typographical marker (e.g. bold, italics, underlining), descriptive label, compensation, combination of procedures (e.g. morphological + typographic) and deletion which may also be partially found in Catford's [15, p. 56-71] study of phonological and graphological, grammatical, and lexical translation.

Given the many linguistic transformations during the translation process, an attempt has been made to group them into sections which would add clarity to the criteria of their division. Thus, fig 2. exemplifies linguistic strategies including lexical, semantic, and grammatical transformations. Grammatical strategies further evolve into morphological, syntactic, and textual transformations which range from simple and compound parts to sentences and clauses and then to a more complex textual level:

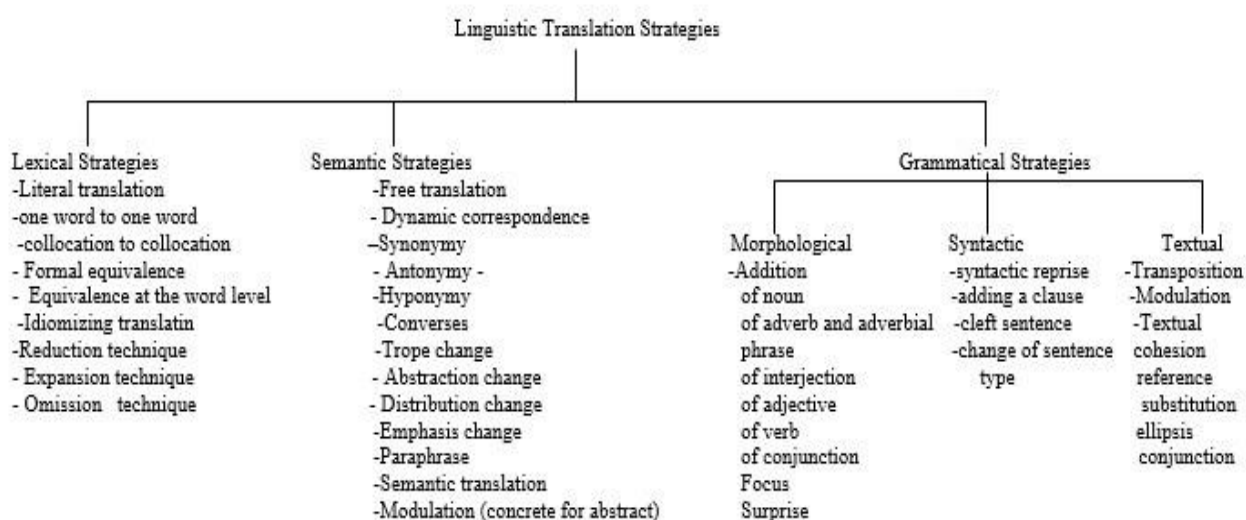


Fig. 2. Linguistic Translation Strategies

Attempting to trace the difference between the concepts of *method* and *technique*, Mathieu (2016) equates the concepts of *procedure* and *technique*. The common feature which joins both concepts is the textual micro-unit (Lucía Molina et Amparo Hurtado, 2002: 498; Mathieu, 2016). Defined like “ways to carry out a particular task especially the performance of an artistic work”, translation techniques have been described by Harvey (2003: 6) as applicable to culture-based text translation. This proves the fact that translation procedures and techniques, and strategies are rather similar in concept and function.

After a close look at the rather blurring concepts mentioned above, it can be stated that they are related in terms of function, and development. Thus, strategies are applicable by means of methods in case of whole text units and by means of procedures, and techniques in case of smaller text units. They all can be applied to culture-specific elements. In order to illustrate how methods, procedures and techniques contribute to effective strategy development when dealing with linguistic, cultural and pragmatic aspects of various types of text, a more detailed categorization is recommended since it will contribute to determining the levels of equivalence relevant to different translation units.

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