| RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Making of a Discipline: Trajectories in Translation Studies

Hanane Belgaid
Associate Professor, Translation Studies, Laboratory of Language and Society, Ibn Tofail University, Kenitra, Morocco
Corresponding Author: Hanane Belgaid, **E-mail**: hanane.belgaid@uit.ac.ma

| ABSTRACT

Long regarded as merely the art of transferring words, translation now reveals its deeper complexity: situated between fidelity, cultural dynamics and cognitive processes, it has become an interdisciplinary field where history meets science and practice informs theory. This study examines how translation evolved from an empirical craft into a structured discipline, raising the underlying question of how theoretical models can account for the cultural and cognitive forces that shape communicative acts. The objective is to trace this evolution by foregrounding the linguistic mechanisms, mental operations and cultural mediations that underpin translational activity. Methodologically, the analysis combines a historical review of translation practices, a critical reading of key theoretical contributions, and an observation of translational processes. The findings point toward a discipline increasingly grounded in cognitive modelling, historical awareness and professional competence. These developments suggest new perspectives for translation pedagogy and research, particularly in integrating cultural literacy with scientific approaches to meaning-making. From a simple transfer of words to an interdisciplinary science, translation shows that every word matters, every culture speaks, and understanding a text means understanding a world—between fidelity, culture and cognition.

1. INTRODUCTION

Translation is far more than a bridge between languages—it is a centuries-old battleground of ideas, where theory and practice have continually reshaped one another. Revisiting this history reveals how an instinctive craft evolved into a disciplined field of inquiry. While some theorists, such as Ballard (1992) critique the lack *of* historical awareness in certain contemporary approaches, others—including Nida (1964), Bassnett (1980), Kelly (1979), and Steiner (1975), actively incorporate historical perspectives into their frameworks. Despite this, the attention given to the history of translation remains uneven, with many scholars—from Seleskovitch (1968), to Catford (1967), and including Vinay & Darbelnet (1958), and Ladmiral (1979) —largely overlooking it.

This article aims to clarify how translation evolved from a practice grounded in empirical know-how into a structured discipline by examining its linguistic, cognitive, cultural, and social dimensions. Methodologically, the study combines a critical analysis of major theoretical texts with a close reading of key historical practices. These insights open new perspectives on how translation theory can better account for the interplay between fidelity, cultural negotiation, and contemporary translational processes.

2. HERITAGE IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

Translation dates back to Mesopotamian scribes, yet systematic reflection on it emerged much later. Ballard (1992) notes that the first genuine critical essay appeared in 1711 with Alexander Pope, while seventeenth-century preface writers such as d'Ablancourt articulated early translation principles through their prefatory texts.

A. *Balancing Faithfulness and Elegance*

Translation studies examine the transfer of meaning across languages and cultures, linking practice and theory since the seventeenth century. Nicolas d'Ablancourt and his circle—including *preface writers* such as Madame Dacier, Jacques Amyot, and Du Bellay, pioneers of the *belles infidèles* and inheritors of Conrart's legacy—embody the delicate equilibrium between fidelity to the source text and stylistic refinement. Their aim was to render the text elegant and intelligible while respecting the spirit of the original work, accepting certain stylistic liberties to enrich the target language. (Ballard, 2007)

The tradition of the *belles infidèles* stands at the very genesis of translation studies as a discipline. In his severe criticism of Amyot's translation of Plutarch, De Méziriac formulated rigorous principles of translation and emphasised that one of the means of enriching the French language was to place it in dialogue with ancient authors, particularly the Greeks, thereby freeing it from barbarity. De Méziriac (1715) reproached Amyot for altering the meaning of the source text and defined strict principles of fidelity: *add nothing, omit nothing* and *alter nothing.*

B. *Inception of Systematic Translation Practice*

Around 1650, in an intellectual milieu where calling d'Ablancourt's pre-eminence into question was scarcely imaginable, the pedagogical Jansenists of Port-Royal—among them Vaugelas and the brothers Antoine and Isaac Lemaistre de Sacy—maintained that translation could claim legitimate status among the *literary genres* only by adhering to rigorously formulated rules. Approaching translation through a distinctly didactic framework, they codified precise norms intended to secure fidelity, clarity, and stylistic refinement. In sympathy with Cartesian rationalism, they upheld reason as the paramount guide for both intellectual inquiry and linguistic practice.

Gaspard de Tende, in his Règles de la traduction (1660), Standardised these principles into nine essential rules, He begins by laying out nine fundamental principles of translation, which he considers indispensable. These include: the translator's bilingual competence; fidelity to the author's words; fidelity to the spirit and genius of the translator; adherence to established norms of usage; the search for accurate equivalences capable of rendering "beauty for beauty" and "figure for figure"; the use of étoffement (semantic or syntactic expansion) and développement, grounded in the maxim that the shortest and most natural expressions are the most beautiful and the best; clarity of discourse; compensation (the inverse procedure of étoffement); and finally, the enduring tradition inherited from the Renaissance and the *belles infidèles*; the ambition is to embellish the translation, to "render the copy in some respects more beautiful than the original" (1660, preface, pp. X-XL)),

The overarching aims were to enrich the French language, to facilitate the teaching of Latin, and, not least, to produce a translation aesthetically superior to its source**.** distinguishing *literal* from *oblique* translation. His objective was to produce a text that was *intelligible, stylistically polished* and capable of *enriching the French language*, while also reinforcing its *pedagogical* function. (1660)

C. *Transition from Empirical to Hermeneutic Translation in Europe*

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, theoretical inquiry into translation crystallised around debates on fidelity, paraphrase, and stylistic adaptation. English translators such as Cowley (1656), Denham (1656), and Dryden (1697) explored forms ranging from imitation to strict *verbatim* rendering, while Pope (1711) privileged the preservation of poetic effect. In parallel, German translators championed rigorous literalism as a means of asserting their language's capacity to convey foreign texts with precision and nuance.

The treatises of George Campbell IN *the Four Gospels, translated from the Greek, with preliminary dissertations, and notes critical and explanatory* (1789) and Alexander Fraser Tytler in *Essay on the principles of translation* (1791), formulated fundamental *principles of translation*—fidelity to meaning, respect for the *author's spirit* and *style*, and *readability* of the target text. These works marked the end of a primarily empirical period and heralded the emergence of a more *systematic*, *theoretical* and *hermeneutic* approach. In the nineteenth century, under the influence of the German tradition epitomized by Walter Benjamin, translation came to be conceived not merely as the reproduction of meaning but as the expression of a work's spiritual

essence—an approach that soon radiated across England and continental Europe, notably shaping the thought of writers such as Carlyle in *Sartor Resartus* (1833–34), Matthew Arnold in *On Translating Homer* (1861), and Francis Newman in *Homeric Translation in Theory and Practice: A Reply to Matthew Arnold* (1861) all strove to convey the period and atmosphere of the original. seeking to convey the original atmosphere of the texts.

D.   *Advances in Translation Principles*

  French classical norms, reinforced by Malherbe's grammatical reforms, sought to impose linguistic purity and exacting stylistic rigor. In marked opposition, mid-eighteenth-century German translators embraced a consciously *literal* approach, aimed at demonstrating the expressive potential of their native tongue (Berman, 1984). Pioneers such as Bodmer, Breitinger, Lessing, and Herder, later systematized by Goethe and Schleiermacher, privileged fidelity to the source text while meticulously preserving both semantic subtlety and stylistic nuance. As André Lefevere (1992) notes, these figures laid the indispensable foundations for the development of German translation theory.

  Walter Benjamin in *The Task of the Translator* (1923) views translation as the art of conveying not only the original text's meaning and intent but also its underlying *mysticism* elevated the discussion by asserting that translation aims to express the spiritual essence of the work, while absolute fidelity remains impossible (Podkus, 1971). Translation thus transcends linguistics to include the *translator's psychology, social context, ethnology, philology* and *literary* studies. Benjamin, as cited by Podkus (1971), argues that true objectivity and exact replication in translation are impossible, emphasizing that the original work inevitably transforms over time, and that any faithful rendering must acknowledge this inherent change rather than merely striving for literal similarity. Benjamin's perspective broadened the scope of translation studies and inspired contemporary thinkers such as Henri Meschonnic (1990) and Roland Barthes (1953).

  Yet despite sustained critiques of the *belles infidèles*, European translation practices continued to fluctuate among literal, paraphrastic and free strategies, as evidenced by the incessant retranslations of canonical authors such as Homer and Horace. (Ballard, 2007)

E.   *Integrating Cognitive, Social and Cultural Dimensions*

  Translation theory demands a rigorously interdisciplinary perspective, encompassing linguistics, psychology, ethnology, literature, and theology. Walter Benjamin's seminal contributions exerted profound influence, subsequently elaborated, debated, and critically examined by successive generations of translators and theorists, including Henri Meschonnic (1990). Roland Barthes (1953) conceives writing as a socially situated act, wherein language and style constitute historical forces; writing mediates between linguistic form and societal exigencies, reconciling memory and creative freedom (Barthes, 1953, pp. 12–16).

  Within this framework, translation is understood as a cognitively, culturally, and philosophically engaged practice rather than mere linguistic transfer. Eugene Nida (1964) and Charles R. Taber (1969) emphasize the social and temporal situatedness of translation, situating it within the broader domain of social sciences. Georges Devreux's ethnological and psychoanalytic insights illuminate the translator's cognitive and cultural processes, likely informing the work of Jean-René Ladmiral (1979, 1994), who frames translation as a complex, philosophically grounded endeavor.

  Translation also intersects with literary studies, exemplified by Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958) stylistic analyses, and theology, notably in the prefaces of Jansenist scholars such as Gaspard de Tende and the Lemaistre brothers. Ladmiral (1979), Berman (1980), Nord (1997), and Delisle (1980/1984/1988) underscore, however, that despite its conceptual sophistication, translation theory has often been critiqued for its reductionism and abstraction. Overall, translation produces a target text semantically, stylistically, poetically, rhythmically, culturally, and pragmatically equivalent to its source while remaining philosophically and cognitively informed. (Ladmiral, 1994)

  Publications on translation expanded considerably with the professionalization of translators and interpreters, the growth of translation schools, and the creation of national translator associations under *the International Federation of Translators* (FIT). (Bühler, 2008). Yet, most works primarily reflected individual translators' experiences and practical know-how, and translation remained largely empirical, struggling to establish itself as a scientific discipline. Lederer (2005) and Pergnier (1980) emphasise the need to uncover what happens inside the translator's "black box" (Ladmiral, 1979), he distinguishes four types of approaches: *prescriptive*, *descriptive-linguistic*, *scientific* and *inductive*, and *productive*, centred on the verbalisation and conceptualisation of translational practices.

3. CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES TO TRANSLATION

Contemporary translation theory seeks to move beyond literal, word-for-word transfer toward target texts that are *functionally coherent* and *culturally appropriate*. It recognizes translation as a complex intellectual activity in which the translator *mediates* between linguistic systems and cultural contexts.

A.   *Equivalence as a Framework in Translation Theory*

Catford's (1967) strictly linguistic model proved insufficient, as it reduced translation to transcoding and neglected contextual and *pragmatic* dimensions. Mounin (1963) emphasized the indispensability of extralinguistic factors and later adopted Nida's notion of dynamic equivalence (1964), which foregrounds situational and cultural relevance. Nida further advanced translation studies by integrating *philological*, *linguistic*, and *semiotic* approaches, steering the field toward a *sociolinguistic* perspective influenced by Chomsky's generative grammar.

Within the broader trajectory of translation theory, the *concept of equivalence* continues to occupy a central position, serving as a crucial mechanism through which translations preserve not only semantic content but also stylistic nuance, cultural references, and communicative force. Bassnett (1980) identifies over fifty types of equivalence, yet nine emerge as particularly salient in both theoretical discourse and practical application. These encompass *linguistic* equivalence, which ensures direct, word-for-word correspondence; *paradigmatic* equivalence, involving grammatical substitution without semantic alteration; *stylistic* equivalence, adapting stylistic features to the conventions of the target genre; *semantic* equivalence, safeguarding meaning at the lexical level; *formal* equivalence, preserving structural and formal characteristics of the source text; *referential* equivalence, maintaining fidelity to subject matter and extralinguistic realities; *pragmatic* equivalence, aiming to produce similar effects on the target reader; and *functional* equivalence, which accommodates idiomatic and culturally specific expressions, such as proverbs or idioms.

Collectively, these forms of equivalence underscore the intricate interplay between linguistic precision, cultural mediation, and the translator's interpretive responsibility, framing translation as both an art and a disciplined communicative act.

B.   *Linguistic Approaches to the Text*

Translation debates in the 1950s–1960s focused on meaning and equivalence, while the 1970s, especially in Germany, saw the rise of functionalist theories inspired by linguistic developments and communication theory, including *Jakobson's* model of verbal communication (1987). Among these are Reiss's text-type theory and the Skopos theory developed by Reiss, Vermeer, and Nord (Reiss, 1984; Vermeer, 1996; Nord, 1997), all of which link text types to translation strategies.

Reiss and Text Type Theory

Reiss (1984) raised several fundamental questions: on *what grounds can the quality of a translation be assessed? What is or are the function(s) of a translation, and do they diverge from those of the original text? How are the source and target cultures interrelated within the translation process?* In addressing these issues, Reiss elaborated the concept of the *equivalent text*. She interrogated the parameters of translation quality, the multifaceted functions of translation, and the dynamic interaction between source and target cultures, advancing a tripartite schema of primary text functions consonant with Bühler's (2008) theoretical framework.

This schema distinguishes texts according to their predominant communicative orientation: the *informative* function, which privileges the transmission of factual knowledge and objective content; the *expressive* function, which foregrounds aesthetic and subjective dimensions, necessitating meticulous preservation of style and form; and the *operative* or appellative function, which is oriented toward eliciting specific responses or influencing the behaviour of the reader. While these functions may coexist within a single text, one invariably assumes primacy, guiding both interpretive and translational decisions with profound theoretical and practical implications.

Each text type contains subdivisions or *text sorts* (Fawcett, 1976; Reiss, 1989), and mixed forms, like biographies, combine types. The source text serves as the starting point, yet its use depends on its *function* or Skopos in the target culture. Critics like Koller (1995) suggest additional *functions*, while Vermeer (1996) and Nord (1997) note ambiguities in distinguishing primary *vs* secondary functions.

The Skopos theory conceptualizes the *target text* as an autonomous entity with its own distinct identity and function. Translation is regarded as a specific type of action, in which the translator must be able to explain and justify their choices based on the intended objectives or goals (Vermeer, 1996). Skopos can be applied at three levels: *process*, defining the aim; *product*, determining the function of the *translatum*; and *method*, specifying the intended approach. When source and target texts operate within different cultural contexts, their objectives may diverge. Aligning these functions ensures intertextual coherence. Vermeer (1996) clarifies that the Skopos can guide decisions on whether a source text should be *translated, paraphrased, or entirely re-edited,* with each strategy corresponding to a specific form of translational action grounded in the defined Skopos and its associated *commission*.

NORD'S FUNCTIONALIST APPROACH

Nord builds on Skopos theory, emphasizing *target-text functionality* and *cultural orientation* over strict equivalence. She rejects equivalence for seven reasons: overemphasis on source structure, neglect of culture, divergent definitions, text-type dependence, disregard for norms, discrimination, and marginalization of the translator. Nord stresses the interaction of *extratextual* factors (initiator, intent, recipient, medium, context, function) and *intratextual* factors (subject, content, presuppositions, composition, non-verbal elements, lexicon, sentence structure, suprasegmental features) to determine *translation strategies*. Skopos theory shifts evaluation from equivalence to functionality: a translation's success is measured by its effectiveness in the target culture. (Nord,1997)

C. *Approaches Based on Discourse, Register, and Genre*

Anglo-Saxon linguists, particularly Halliday (1985), have strongly influenced translation theories based on discourse, register, and genre. Halliday's functional theory of language inspired scholars like Mona Baker (1992) and Hatim & Mason (1997). Discourse analysis addresses the limitations of sentence-focused linguistic approaches, enabling a fuller understanding of the text as a whole.

Halliday distinguishes between dialectal variation, which reflects social or geographical differences without affecting meaning, and functional variation, linked to register, which impacts semantics and is crucial for discourse-based approaches in translation. His three variables of register and genre, tenor and mode — correspond to the three metafunctions of language: ideational, interpersonal, and textual. The *ideational* function allows language to convey experience, the *interpersonal* function reflects participants' attitudes, and the *textual* function enables the creation of coherent and contextually appropriate texts.

BAKER'S APPROACH

Building on Halliday, Baker emphasizes the importance of coherence, defined as the network of lexical, grammatical, and other relations that link parts of a text and help the reader interpret words and expressions in context (Baker, 1992). Each language has its own cohesive devices — reference, substitution, ellipsis, conjunction, and lexical cohesion — which are crucial in translation, along with consideration of text types. She focuses on coherence and implicature: *cohesion* reflects surface-level links, whereas *coherence* involves conceptual relations emerging from the interaction between the text and the reader's knowledge. *Implicature* allows the translator to recover the speaker's intention and adapt the translation to the expectations and cultural sensitivity of the target audience.

She goes beyond purely linguistic analysis by integrating *pragmatics*, understood as the study of meaning as conveyed and negotiated by participants in communication rather than generated by the linguistic system alone. (Baker, 1992, p. 217)

Baker's approach, while foundational in highlighting cohesion and *discourse analysis* in translation, has been critiqued on several fronts. Hatim and Mason (1997) argue that her framework overemphasizes linguistic cohesion at the expense of pragmatic and cultural variability, limiting its applicability across diverse languages and communicative contexts. Snell-Hornby (1988) underscores its anglocentric orientation, noting that the model may inadequately address discourse structures in languages beyond English. Nord (1997) emphasizes that Baker underrepresents the translator's agency and the functional-situational dimensions that are essential in purpose-driven translation. Newmark (1988) critiques the practical utility of her model, highlighting challenges in applying it effectively within translator training. Collectively, these critiques suggest that while Baker's contributions remain seminal, her approach requires supplementation with functional, cultural, and pragmatic considerations to fully account for the complexity of translational practice.

Hatim and Mason (1997) conceptualize translation as a communicative act in which the translator assumes the role of a specialized mediator. Drawing on Halliday's framework from a *semiotic* and *pragmatic* perspective, they underscore the significance of register and communicative intention in the construction of meaning. The *field* (*ideational*) dimension reflects linguistic choices that encode reality and convey conceptual content, the *tenor* (*interpersonal*) dimension signals the relationship between sender and receiver, encompassing aspects of social distance and authority, while the *mode* (*textual*) dimension structures the text to ensure coherence and functional efficacy. Furthermore, Hatim and Mason position texts along a *static–dynamic continuum*. Static texts adhere closely to audience expectations and are amenable to relatively literal translation, whereas *dynamic* texts necessitate adaptive translational strategies aimed at achieving functional equivalence within the target context.

When a source text lies at the stable end of the *continuum*, a relatively literal translation may be appropriate, requiring *minimal* intervention by the translator unless specific briefings dictate otherwise. Conversely, texts exhibiting a high degree of dynamism present more complex challenges, rendering a literal approach impractical. (Hatim & Mason, 1997)

Critiques of these approaches often target the underlying models and certain ambiguities in key concepts. For instance, Halliday's framework, as he himself acknowledges, was designed for English and cannot be indiscriminately applied to all languages. By contrast, the textual analysis model developed by Bassil and Mason has proven highly suitable for Arabic, demonstrating the necessity of adapting analytical frameworks to the linguistic and cultural context of the target language.

D.   The Interpretive Translation Approach (Théorie du sens)

The *théorie du sens*—or Interpretive Theory of Translation—conceives translation as a highly sophisticated act of interlinguistic communication grounded not in the mechanical transfer of linguistic forms, but in the interpreter's or translator's comprehension of intended meaning. Initially developed by Seleskovitch (1968, 1975) within the specific context of conference interpreting, the theory was subsequently systematized and expanded in collaboration with Lederer (1984). Delisle (1984) later extended and adapted this framework to the field of written translation.

Danica Seleskovitch, a conference interpreter turned trainer at ESIT, developed the Theory of Interpretive Translation (TIT) to systematize the daily practice of interpreters and the lived experience of conference interpreting (*L'interprète dans les conférences internationales*, 1968; *Langage, langues et mémoire*, 1975). Her approach was innovative in focusing *upstream* on the act of translation itself, unlike earlier structuralist, functionalist, or hermeneutic methods that analyzed translation only as a finished product, overlooking the mental transfer process at the source. She developed the TIT, a *practice-based* framework for oral translation. The process distinguishes three phases: *comprehension*, in which the translator identifies the author's intended meaning; *deverbalization*, a cognitive, non-verbal stage that liberates meaning from linguistic form; and *reformulation*, in which ideas are expressed in the target language. (1968; 1975)

Translation becomes a bilingual act of communication, following the same cognitive trajectory as monolingual communication. The linguistic formulation of the text provides the translator with only a portion of its meaning—the explicit part, termed *synecdoche*—distinct from the rhetorical synecdoche. This explicit component represents merely the visible tip of the iceberg. Linguistic theories of translation address only this overt, discursive aspect, whereas the post-translational cognitive process of deverbalization constitutes the submerged, non-verbal, and implicit portion of the text. The full meaning of a text emerges from the interaction between its explicit verbal layer and its implicit non-verbal dimension.

Critics of Seleskovitch's TIT, including Hatim and Mason (1997), Snell-Hornby (1988), and Nord (1997), recognize its pioneering focus on cognition and deverbalization but highlight its limitations, particularly its concentration on conference interpreting and its insufficient consideration of functional and cultural dimensions, which remain largely abstract.

Delisle's Approach

While D. Seleskovitch and M. Lederer applied the Interpretive Theory of Translation mainly to conference interpreting, a subsequent generation of TIT scholars from ESIT extended its application to written translation. J. Delisle (1984) expanded Seleskovitch's three-phase model by adding a *verification* phase, comparing source and target texts to ensure conceptual accuracy and appropriate equivalences (Fortunado Israël, 2005, p. 71).

Delisle also addressed the theoretical foundation of translation pedagogy, proposing that a didactic approach should clearly define translation as an *interlinguistic* activity, situate it within related disciplines, describe the cognitive and dynamic process, and link practice with theory. A translation educator should understand the translation operation, structure teaching around explicit learning objectives, use varied exercises to illustrate language use, and feed observations back into theoretical reflection. (Delisle, 1981)

He adapts the *Objectives-Oriented* Approach to translator training, tracing its intellectual lineage to the American behaviorist tradition, notably Tyler's curriculum theory (1949), Mager's *Preparing Objectives for Programmed Instruction* (1962), and Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives (1975). Behaviorists conceptualize learning as a stimulus–response association, rejecting *introspection* as a valid research method since mental processes are unobservable, rendering the mind a *black box*. Consequently, attention is confined to measurable, reproducible behaviors, excluding consciousness, emotion, and perception (Watson, 1925). Skinner further refined this paradigm by introducing reinforcement to classical Pavlovian conditioning, demonstrating that behavior can be systematically shaped through operant conditioning and positive reinforcement (Skinner, 1968). Learning is thus segmented into small, attainable steps, each validated by observable success, forming the theoretical foundation for teaching machines and early computer-assisted instruction. Delisle's OOA applies these principles rigorously to translation pedagogy, emphasizing clearly defined objectives, incremental learning, and measurable, observable outcomes.

His work on the theory of meaning represents a major contribution to translation pedagogy, yet several scholars have underscored its limitations. Rastier (2001) argues that Delisle's conceptualization of "meaning" is overly stable and insufficiently compatible with the dynamic, contextual, and semiotic nature of textual signification. Other critics, particularly within the field of translator education, contend that Delisle's distinction between *correspondence* and *equivalence of meaning* is difficult to operationalize in the classroom, as it rests on a level of abstraction that does not always reflect the complexity of discursive, cultural, or metaphorical phenomena (Gambier, 2003). Moreover, several specialists observe that the theory of meaning is rooted primarily in a Francophone intellectual tradition, sometimes perceived as insufficiently attentive to developments in functionalism, semiotics, and intercultural approaches, thereby limiting its applicability in more diverse translation contexts (Snell-Hornby, 1995).

E.   *Expansions in Translation Theory*

Since the late twentieth century, translation studies has expanded markedly, integrating poststructuralist philosophy, functionalist models, corpus linguistics, sociology, and cognitive science, thereby shifting the discipline beyond earlier linguistic or hermeneutic frameworks toward a broader understanding of translation as a culturally, socially, and cognitively situated act.

1) *Poststructuralist Approaches*

2) *Following Derrida's deconstruction, Lawrence Venuti (1995) reformulates translation as an ethically charged activity in which the strategies of domestication and foreignization expose the translator's visibility and the ideological tensions inherent in cross-cultural mediation.*

Translatorial-action model

Hans J. Vermeer (1978, 1989) and Katharina Reiss (1971, 1989) reconceptualize translation as a purposeful action whose strategies derive primarily from the intended function (Skopos) within the target culture, a view further systematized by Justa Holz-Mänttäri (1984) in her *translatorial-action model* emphasizing communicative efficacy and professional usability.

3) *Polysystem Theory*

Itamar Even-Zohar (1978, 1990) situates translated literature within a shifting literary polysystem in which translations may hold either *central* or *peripheral* positions, a dynamic later extended by Gideon Toury (1995) through empirical descriptive translation Studies and the analysis of translation norms.

4) *Corpus-Based Translation Studies*

Beginning with Mona Baker (1993, 1996) and Sara Laviosa (1998), corpus-based translation studies apply *electronic corpora* to identify recurrent patterns—such as simplification, explicitation, normalization, and levelling-out—thus providing an empirical basis for identifying putative translation universals.

5) *Sociological Approaches*

Drawing on sociological theory, Daniel Simeoni (1998), Moira Inghilleri (2005), and Michaela Wolf (2007) demonstrate how translation practices are shaped by *habitus, institutional frameworks, and actor-networks*, thereby foregrounding the translator's social positioning and the structural forces that authorize or constrain translatorial action.

6) *Cognitive Translation Studies*

Recent work by Sharon O'Brien (2006), Erik Angelone (2010), and Ricardo Muñoz Martín (2014) investigates the cognitive processes underlying translation through methods such as *eye-tracking*, *keystroke logging*, and *cognitive modelling*, revealing how translators manage uncertainty, attention, and embodied decision-making during task performance.

4. CONCLUSION

Translation has never been a mere conduit for words; it constitutes a complex intersection of languages, cultures, and minds. From the prescriptive rigor of De Méziriac to the cognitive sophistication of Seleskovitch's Interpretive Theory of Translation and Delisle's pedagogical frameworks, translation has evolved from an instinctive craft to a disciplined, interdisciplinary inquiry.

Across centuries, theorists and practitioners have navigated the persistent tension between fidelity to the source text and adaptation to target contexts, revealing translation as a cognitive, social, and cultural act rather than a mechanical procedure. Since the late twentieth century, the field has expanded to incorporate poststructuralist, functionalist, corpus-based, sociological, and cognitive approaches: Venuti (1995) emphasizes the ethical and interpretive agency of the translator, Vermeer (1978, 1989), Reiss (1971, 1989), and Holz-Mänttäri (1984) advocate purpose-driven strategies, Even-Zohar (1978, 1990) and Toury (1995) situate translations within dynamic literary systems, while Baker (1993, 1996) and Laviosa (1998) identify empirical translation patterns. Sociological and cognitive perspectives (Simeoni, 1998; Inghilleri, 2005; Wolf, 2007; O'Brien, 2006; Angelone, 2010; Muñoz Martín, 2014) further illuminate the social, cultural, and mental dimensions of translatorial practice. Yet critiques persist regarding the overreliance on abstract models, limited attention to intercultural and pragmatic factors, and the challenges of applying theoretical constructs in practice. These limitations simultaneously highlight the field's dynamism and signal fertile avenues for research.

As translation increasingly engages with technological tools, corpus analysis, and reception studies, the translator is reconceptualized not merely as a linguistic technician but as an active agent navigating complex cognitive, social, and cultural terrains. Ultimately, translation studies remains a discipline in motion, constantly evolving to capture the nuanced interplay of language, cognition, and culture in an ever-globalizing world.

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