A DICTIONARY OF

TRANSLATION TECHNOLOGY

HAMT

Speech Technolog

UNICODE
UNICODE
DEFAULT TRANSLATION

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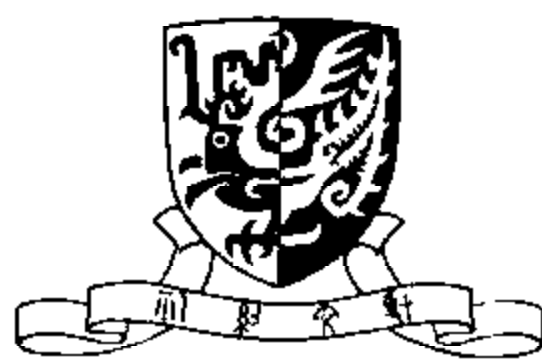
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Memory Database

Cultural Borrowing

Untranslatability
PIV

Exegetic Translatio

Chan Sin-wai

A Dictionary of Translation Technology

Chan Sin-wai

The Chinese University Press

A Dictionary of Translation Technology
By Chan Sin-wai

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Introduction

It took me some five years to complete *A Dictionary of Translation Technology*. At the beginning, my main goal was to produce a work of reference for general readers who might be interested in translation by acquainting themselves with the major concepts of the field. Gradually, I shifted my focus and collected a huge number of examples in Chinese-English and English-Chinese translation to illustrate the application of theory in translation practice. Eventually, with the proliferation of terms relating to computer translation, it began to dawn on me that in the present information age, it would be more useful, and academically and intellectually more rewarding, to explain in a concise manner these terms that will soon become a part of the language that we use in our work.

The changes are largely due to developments in translation circles in recent decades. Considerable effort has also been made to ensure that this dictionary is different from other references of a similar nature. There have been seven major considerations when preparing this dictionary for publication.

(1) A General Dictionary with a New Orientation

A Dictionary of Translation Technology is possibly the first dictionary in the field that serves as a comprehensive reference for general readers, as far as key terms in translation studies are concerned, with a new orientation to serve specialists in computer translation and translation technology. The comprehensiveness and focus of the dictionary have largely been determined by the evolutionary process it has gone through. It set out to be a comprehensive work and ended up with translation technology as its major component. This dictionary has 1,375 entries, all of which have been defined in a concise manner and arranged in alphabetical order. The number of entries is therefore considerably larger than other similar reference works, such as those by Chan Sin-wai and David Pollard (1995), which has 99 entries, by Mona Baker (1998), which has 79 entries in "Part 1: General," and by Mark Shuttleworth and Moira Cowie (1997), which has 420 headwords. This is due largely to the encyclopaedic manner that the entries have been treated in these works. The contents of all the entries in this dictionary, however, are not academic papers on specific topics, but brief and self-contained explanations of terms used in both human and machine translation. No attempt, therefore, has been made to put the entries in their historical context and discuss the variant viewpoints of translation scholars

on these entries. The references provided in the dictionary should serve as useful information for further research into some of the topics listed.

(2) A Glossary of Terms in Translation Technology

The bulk of the entries in this dictionary, as the title suggests, is in the area of translation technology, more specifically computer technology. It includes both "machine translation," which has 262 entries and "computer-aided translation," which has 60. Also included are terms in related areas, such as "computer science" (18 entries), "corpus" (27 entries), "pocket translator" (7 entries), "quality assessment" (34 entries), "software localization" (26 entries), "speech translation" (31 entries), "translation software" (121 entries), and "web translation" (39 entries), altogether 625 entries. These figures show that half of the entries in the dictionary are on translation technology.

(3) A Work Highlighting the "Technological Turn" in Translation

The preparation of this dictionary coincides with what would be called a "technological turn" in translation which is taking place in different parts of the world with varying paces of development. Translation tools are increasingly used in the work of translation. We use word processors for document processing, scanners for data-capturing, dictation tools for text inputting, concordancers for text analysis, online dictionaries for meaning clarification, translation memory systems for the reuse of previous translations, and automatic translation systems for informational translation. The application of translation tools in translation has become extensive and commonplace.

The magnitude of this "technological turn" is indeed unsurpassed, if we make a distinction between "approaches" and "turns" in translation. Historically speaking, translation as a bilingual language activity and an academic subject has experienced several periods of development. For a very long time in the old days, the philological approach, also known as the pre-linguistic approach, was dominant. This approach to translation was based on generalizations drawn from literary translation and the translation of religious texts, such as Bible translation. It is characterized by statements of opinions which are mainly anecdotal, vague, subjective, and often unverifiable. Later, there was the emergence of the linguistic approach, which took linguistics as the key in translating. (Larson, 1994: 4685–94) Linguistics and the growth of a linguistically oriented translation theory is closely related, and it seems obvious that translation studies consistently reflects the trend of language studies.

Then several other "turns" in translation occurred. There was the "cultural turn"

in translation, an idea proposed by Mary Snell-Hornby (1990: 79–86) to refer to the shift of emphasis from linguistics to culture and ideology as a shaping force in translation studies. There was the "hermeneutic turn," which refers to the shift of emphasis from the linguistic to the hermeneutic approach. (Rose, 1992: 261–68) There was the "translator's turn," coined by Douglas Robinson (1991) to mean a new opportunity for the translator to have somatic interactions with a text. Now the "technological turn" is with us. It refers to the wide and frequent application of computers to translation studies and practice. It is due in part to the prevalence and importance of computer translation in the present age that this dictionary of translation technology has been prepared.

(4) A Reference Oriented to Corpus-based Translation Studies

It cannot be denied that the use of corpus in translation studies will be a major trend in the future. (Baker, 1995: 223–43) This dictionary includes terms in corpus linguistics, in anticipation of the advent of an approach in translation studies which is largely corpus-based. What one gets from corpora is verifiable, substantiable and widely practicable, while many of the ideas and concepts in the field are mainly empirical, prescriptive, and, most regrettably, unprovable, since they are not based on any systematic documentary analysis. We are faced with a huge number of terms that come from various people with different educational backgrounds and experience, and from different translators in different periods, working with different language pairs on different text types with different purposes in different cultural situations. Since there are so many different concepts drawn from so many different sources, it would not be advisable to simply select ideas from certain theorists out of context or apply concepts indiscriminately to translation practice without reference to their sources and contextualized applications. Translation is not about fiddling with concepts, dropping names, and least of all, saying something the meaning of which we do not actually know.

Corpus-based research in translation is based on a body of written or verbal data collected for textual and linguistic analysis for translational purposes. It is through the use of corpora that generalizations can be made, concepts formed, and methods created.

(5) A Book Introducing Commercial Translation Software

To avoid any conflict of interest, most academic works and references would avoid mentioning names of commercial products. But this should not be the case with computer translation. It is like discussing literature without mentioning the works, or talking about films without reference to their titles. Translation software needs

to be introduced and explained due to their presence in the market, their complexity in functionality and their directionality in translation.

Firstly, there are a large quantity of commercial translation systems on the market. It ranges from single to multiple directionalities, from one-to-many to many-to-one systems, from major to minority languages, from automatic to interactive operations, from offline to online software, from documentary to webpage translations, from simple to sophisticated functions, and from high-end to low-end products. It should also be noted that translation software and online translation systems are produced or upgraded almost on a weekly basis. By the time an entry on a machine translation system is made in the dictionary, a new version or product has been made.

Secondly, machine translation systems are produced with the use of one or several approaches, including the corpus-based, example-based, rule-based, knowledge-based, memory-based, pattern-based, probability-based and statistics-based approaches. A brief description of the computational approach that is adopted for a particular translation system would be helpful for potential users.

Thirdly, there are a large number of functions which are particular to automatic translation systems. These functions, which are different from those of human translators, should be explained in the dictionary so that users of translation software can make the best use of their products.

Fourthly, there are different kinds of translation software for both general applications and specific domains. The choice of a good translation system, needless to say, is an important factor in determining whether the user can get a reliable translation of the original or not. A total of 123 kinds of software have been introduced in the dictionary. Systems which are still under development or accessible only to restricted groups of users have not been included. The systems introduced are varied. Some are well-known products, such as Systran. (Yang and Lange, 1998: 275–85) Others are for languages which are not often used internationally, such as AbcThai for translation between English and Thai and German and Thai. (http://www.ablume.com.) Still others are systems built for specific translation directions, such as ArabTrans for English to Arabic translation. (http://www.arab.net/arabtrans.)

(6) A Bibliography with Electronic and Paper References

In the past, most of us used printed references in the writing of academic publications. Now, a lot of information can be found on the Internet. This means that both printed and electronic references should be included in scholarly works. With the inclusion of translation software in the dictionary, a total of 235 website

addresses are placed in the references for easy consultation. The major advantage of consulting websites is the acquisition of the latest information on the latest translation products. Printed references, totalling 1,389 entries and mainly in English, have been given for the majority of entries. The bibliographical information given for the entries should serve as a useful tool for readers to delve further into the various aspects of translation and translation technology.

(7) A Work on the Development of Machine Translation in the World

In this dictionary, concepts and ideas in the form of key terms are placed separately and their significance cannot be revealed in their proper historical context. This explains why there is an appendix to this dictionary, "Machine Translation in the World: Major Events and Publications." Included in this appendix are most of the significant happenings in the field from 1933 to 2003 and major works on computer and computer-aided translation published during the last seventy years. There are several aims in preparing this appendix. Firstly, it puts together the major happenings in the field to assess their historical and global significance. Secondly, it delineates the application of different linguistic and computational theories in the evolution of machine translation systems in different temporal and geographical contexts. Thirdly, it gives a comprehensive survey of the numerous issues that emerged through the ages to serve as a basis to search for future directions in the field of machine translation. Fourthly, it puts together most of the works on machine translation as they reflect the changes in academic research on machine translation and represent the contribution of individual scholars and experts to the field. All entries in the appendix, indicated by a square box, have been chronologically arranged according to the year of occurrence. Entries within a specific year have been arranged alphabetically according to the country to which they belong. Within a particular country, entries with specific dates have been arranged according to the month of occurrence. Entries with dates have been followed by entries without dates, which have been arranged alphabetically according to the key terms highlighted in boldface. Major works for further reading and relevant websites for individual entries are given in square brackets, and details of these references are given in the References section.

Through the chronological representation of entries in the appendix, it is hoped that the significance of the isolated concepts and ideas in the dictionary can be grasped historically and holistically.

Chan Sin-wai
May 2004

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Abbreviations

assess	quality assessment
CAT	computer-aided translation
commu	communication
compu	computer science
corpus	corpus
cult	culture
gen	general terms
gram	grammar
herm	hermeneutics
inform	information science
interpret	interpreting
jour	journals of translation
lexi	lexicography
ling	linguistics
liter	literature
local	software localization
mach	machine translation
meth	translation methods
pocket	pocket translator
poet	poetry
prag	pragmatics
prof	professionalism in translation
psy	psycholinguistics
rhet	rhetoric
sem	semantics
software	translation software
speech	speech translation
stan	standards in translation
teach	teaching of translation
text	text types
textling	textlinguistics
tran	translation studies
web	web translation

Contents

A

A language

(*tran / interpret*) This refers to the mother tongue or language of habitual use of a translator or interpreter.

abbreviation

(*gram*) This term refers to a shortened form of a written word or phrase by clippings (e.g. *lab* for laboratory), acronyms (e.g. NATO for "the North Atlantic Treaty Organization"), and blends (e.g., *brunch* for "breakfast and lunch"). In translating abbreviations, it should be noted that (1) the same abbreviation can be drawn from different originals, depending on the sources; (2) short forms for proper nouns are often preferred, particularly in journalistic translation; (3) abbreviations for common nouns are frequently used in newspapers; (4) English abbreviations of proper names cannot be translated in an abbreviated form when put into the target language; and (5) abbreviations can be a source of word-play. [Berger, 1985: 61–65.]

AbcThai

(*software*) Software produced by Axel Blume for English and Thai and German and Thai translation. [http://www.ablume.com.]

Abrates

(*jour*) This is the official bulletin of the Association of Brazilian Translators (Associacao Brasileira de Tradutores). The inaugural issue was launched in 1976. [Congrat-Butlar, 1979: 75; http://www.sintra.ong.org.]

absolute equivalent

(*tran*) This term refers to the only translation equivalent possible for the source

language term. According to K. Balasubramanian, "absolute equivalence requires that the lexical unit be identical in all the three components of lexical meaning, viz. designation, connotation, and range of application and occur in all the typical contexts in which source language lexical unit occurs." There are a number of cases where absolute equivalents are possible: (1) numerals; (2) ordinals; (3) parts of the body; (4) measurements; (5) weights; (6) chemical elements; and (7) geographical terms. [Balasubramanian, 1988: 13–20.]

absolute translation
(*tran*) A type of translation in which the entire source text is transferred into the target language without making any changes to the form or content of the original work. [Gouadec, 1989, 1990.]

abstract translation
(*meth*) This refers to a condensed translation from the contents of a text which, according to Peter Newmark, consists of: (1) straightforward resumes of the original; (2) abstracts for a particular kind of reader or readership, "where the emphasis may be on description or function, causes or results, details or generalisation, the sequence of the events or the present position, dates or approximations, etc." [Gouadec, 1990; Inches, 1987: 79–81; Newmark, 1993: 17.]

abusive translation
(*tran*) A term used by Philip E. Lewis to refer to a type of "strong, forceful translation that values experimentation, tampers with usage, seeks to match the polyvalencies or plurivocities or expressive stresses of the original by producing its own" so that the aim of the translator is to "rearticulate analogically the abuse that occurs in the original text ... [and] also to displace, remobilize, and extend this abuse in another milieu." [Lewis, 1985: 39–45.]

academic translation
(*tran*) This term refers to the translation of serious scholarly writings. It is also used by Jean Delisle to mean a kind of translation pedagogy intended to help students acquire the rudiments of a language or to perfect their style at a more advanced level. [Delisle, 1988: 26.]

accent

(*ling*) This term refers to: (1) the stress on a syllable so that it stands out from the other syllables in a word, e.g. *import* as a verb and as a noun; (2) a diacritic to mark a difference in pronunciation, as in French phonetics from which some of the most common accent marks take their names: the primary stress is known as the acute accent (e.g. *b*), the secondary stress, the circumflex accent (e.g. *y*), tertiary stress, the grave accent (e.g. *a*), and the weak stress, the breve accent (e.g. *t*); and (3) a particular way of speaking which tells the listener about the speaker's background — the region or country they come from and their social class. [Altano, 1988: 152–56; DuVal, 1990: 27–31; Schogt, 1988.]

acceptability

(*textling*) A term used to denote how the audience receives the text. Minor errors are usually tolerated provided that the text fulfils its overall purpose. Context is crucial to acceptability and is determined by the extent to which readers understand the text and by its adherence to the target linguistic and literary norms. For a text to be accepted as intended, there has to be a process of translation mediation as a form of textual interaction and basic acceptability standards must be met, such as correct grammatical usage and lexical patterning. [Barnwell, 1983: 19–25; Dooley, 1989: 49–57; Nida, 1988: 301–8; Puurtinen, 1989: 201–13; Puurtinen, 1994: 83–90; Toury, 1980, 1995.]

accreditation

(*prof*) A service provided by an authorizing institution to confirm the competence of a translator. In Australia and the United States, accreditation can be given by sitting examinations organized by translator associations. In the United States, for instance, accreditation in nineteen language pairs is offered by the American Translators Association (ATA). [Cline, 1987: 541–45; http://www.atanet.org; http://www.naati.com.au/; Kamal, 1986: 463–64; Park, 1987: 551–55; Stern, 1984: 109–12; Young, 1985: 3–8.]

accredited interpreter

(*prof*) This refers to an interpreter who has gained accreditation from a professional institute. [Fiola, 2000: 121–27.]

accredited translator

(*prof*) This refers to a translator who has gained accreditation from a professional institute, such as the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters in Australia (NAATI) and the American Translators Association (ATA), based on examination and experience. [http://www.atanet.org; http://www.naati.com.au.]

accuracy

(*stan*) This refers to the extent to which a translation matches the original text. It is sometimes equated with "faithfulness." [Chukovsky, 1984; Pedersen, 1999: 47–55; Popovych, 1985: 43–48; Smith, 1992: 113–20.]

Across Languages and Cultures

(*jour*) This is a multidisciplinary journal for translation and interpreting studies which was launched in 2000 in Budapest, Hungary. [http://www.nytud.hu/kk/across/acrmegrend.html.]

active terminology recognition

(*mach*) This refers to a component in a term database which displays a term record that has been matched with a term in the source text in automatic dictionary lookup.

Active Translator

(*software*) Translation software produced by abitz.com Multilingual Software in Germany for the translation of the following languages: Danish, English, Finnish, French, Italian, Croatian, Dutch, Polish, Rumanian, Spanish, Swedish, Tagalog, Ungarian. [http://www.abitz.com.]

active word

(*speech*) Active words refer to the most commonly used words which are stored in computer memory in a speech recognition system. The list of active words in the memory is long and it changes as the user makes corrections.

ad hoc formulation

(tran) This term refers to the establishment of an equivalence on the lexical and syntagmatic levels which are appropriate only within the current text.

ad hoc interpreting

(interpret) Often used as a synonym of liaison interpreting in the United Kingdom, this term refers to spoken translation between two languages in informal conversations between two or more people often used in business meetings, phone calls, and social events. The term is sometimes used loosely to include consecutive interpreting. Also called "bilateral interpreting," "contact interpreting," "dialogue interpreting," "liaison interpreting," "public service interpreting," or "three-cornered interpreting." [Erasmus, 1999; Gentile, Ozolins and Vasilakakos, 1996; Keith, 1984: 308–17; Ozolins, 1995: 153–60; Parnell, 1989: 253–56.]

adaptation

(tran) This term refers to changing the translation in such a way as to suit the target readers. This is generally considered to be the "freest" form of translation, and is mainly used in plays and poetry. Adaptation is seen as a kind of modification of the translation to achieve a particular kind of equivalence. According to Louis Nowra, adaptation is the transposition of a written dramatic text from the page onto the stage. [Farghal, 1993: 257–67; Johnson, 1984: 426–41; Nord, 1994: 59–72; Nowra, 1984; Remael, 1995: 125–31; Vinay and Darbelnet, 1958 / 1995.]

addition

(meth) A common method used in translation. This is the provision of information needed to better comprehend the translated passage. According to Eugene A. Nida, it is used for the following purposes: (1) filling out elliptical expressions; (2) obligatory specification; (3) grammatical restructuring; (4) amplification from implicit to explicit status; (5) answers to rhetorical questions; (6) classifiers; (7) connectives; (8) categories of the receptor languages that do not exist in the source language; and (9) doublets. Interpolation, explanation, and annotation are all methods of addition. Addition can help bring out the

semantic and contextual meaning of the original. [Barik, 1971: 199–210; Newmark, 1988; Nida, 1964.]

address translation

(*mach*) This term refers to a function of machine translation which can translate an address in the source text into the target language with the proper format. *TransWhiz*, for example, can translate addresses between Chinese and English.

adequacy

(*tran*) This term refers to the fulfilment of textual function in the target text or culture. It is the relationship between a source and a target text that is based on the fulfilment of a specific purpose ("skopos") for which the translation is carried out. [Reiss, 1983: 301–8; Schäffner, 1991: 111–20; Shveitser, 1993: 47–56.]

adjustment

(*meth*) A method proposed by Eugene A. Nida in 1964 to achieve dynamic equivalence in Bible translation. Adjustment techniques include addition, subtraction, annotation, and literal translation. [Nida, 1964.]

adulterated translation

(*tran*) A term used by the French bishop Petrus Danielus Huetius (1630–1721) to refer to a translation which has been corrupted by the translator with the addition of spurious substance. He compares this kind of translation to a woman's face plastered with cosmetics. [Lefevere, 1992: 88–89.]

aesthetic translation

(*tran*) This refers to a type of translation which strives to preserve in the target text, particularly in the case of literary writings, the formal and content beauties of the source text. In modern aesthetics, the source language text is considered to be an aesthetic object in which graphological, phonological, lexical, and textual aesthetic devices are used; this object is to be reproduced by the translator as the aesthetic subject whose readjustment will result in the reader's fusion of