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Introducing

TRANSLATION STUDIES

THEORIES AND APPLICATIONS

Jeremy Munday



Introducing Translation Studies

Theories and applications

Jeremy Munday



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The case study in chapter 8 is a revised and abridged version of an article of mine: 'The Caribbean conquers the world? An analysis of the reception of García Márquez in translation', published in *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 75.1: 137–44.

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Jeremy Munday
London, September 2000

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Introduction

Translation studies is the new academic discipline related to the study of the theory and phenomena of translation. By its nature it is multilingual and also interdisciplinary, encompassing languages, linguistics, communication studies, philosophy and a range of types of cultural studies.

Because of this diversity, one of the biggest problems in teaching and learning about translation studies is that much of it is dispersed across such a wide range of books and journals. Hence there have been a number of 'readers' of key writings on the subject; these include Hans-Joachim Störig's *Das Problem des Übersetzens* (1963), Andrew Chesterman's *Readings in Translation Theory* (1989), André Lefevere's *Translation/History/Culture: A Sourcebook* (1992b), Rainer Schulte and John Biguenet's *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida* (1992), Douglas Robinson's *Western Translation Theory from Herodotus to Nietzsche* (1997b) and Lawrence Venuti's *The Translation Studies Reader* (2000). Others, such as *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (Baker 1997a) and *The Dictionary of Translation Studies* (Shuttleworth and Cowie 1997), have attempted to bring together the main concepts and give a description of the field.

The present book aims to be a practical introduction to the field. It sets out to give a critical but balanced survey of many of the most important trends and contributions to translation studies in a single volume, written in an accessible style. The different contemporary models are applied to illustrative texts in brief case studies so that the reader can see them in operation. The new research contained in these case studies, together with the 'discussion and research points' sections, is designed to encourage further exploration and understanding of translation issues.

The book is thus designed to serve as a coursebook for undergraduate and postgraduate translation, translation studies and translation theory, and also as a solid theoretical introduction to students, researchers, instructors and professional translators. The aim is to enable the readers to develop their understanding of the issues and associated metalanguage, and to begin to apply the models themselves. It is also hoped that a closer examination of specific issues and further reading in those areas that are of greatest interest to the individual student will be encouraged. In this way, the book can provide a stimulating introduction to a range of theoretical approaches to

translation that are relevant both for those engaged in the academic study of translation and for the professional linguist.

Each of the chapters surveys a major area of the discipline. They are designed to be self-standing, so that readers with a specific focus can quickly find the descriptions that are of most interest to them. However, conceptual links between chapters are cross-referenced and the book has been structured so that it can function as a coursebook in translation, translation studies and translation theory. There are eleven chapters, each of which might be covered in one or two weeks, depending on the length of the course, to fit into a semesterized system. The discussion and research points additionally provide substantial initial material for students to begin to develop their own research. The progression of ideas is also from the introductory (presenting the main issues of translation studies in chapter 1) to the more complex, as the students become more accustomed to the terminology and concepts. In general, the progression is chronological, from pre-twentieth century theory in chapter 2 to linguistic-oriented theories (chapters 3–6 *passim*) and to recent developments from cultural studies such as postcolonialism (chapter 8).

Clarity has been a major consideration, so each chapter follows a similar format of:

- an introductory table clearly presenting key terms and ideas;
- the main text, describing in detail the models and issues under discussion;
- an illustrative case study, which applies and evaluates the main model of the chapter;
- suggestions for further reading;
- a brief evaluative summary of the chapter;
- a series of discussion and research points to stimulate further thought and research.

Just like the readers listed above, this volume has had to be selective. The theorists and models covered have been chosen because of their strong influence on translation studies and because they are particularly representative of the approaches in each chapter. Exclusion of much other worthy material has been due to space constraints and the focus of the book, which is to give a clear introduction to a number of theoretical approaches.

For this reason, detailed suggestions are given for further reading. These are designed to encourage students to go to the primary texts, to follow up ideas that have been raised in each chapter and to investigate the research that is being carried out in their own countries and languages. In this way, the book should ideally be used in conjunction with the readers mentioned above and be supported by an institution's library resources. An attempt has also been made to refer to many works that are readily available, either in recent editions or reprinted in one of the anthologies. A comprehensive bibliography is provided at the end of the book, together with a small list of

useful websites, where up-to-date information on translation studies conferences, publications and organizations is to be found. The emphasis is on encouraging reflection, investigation and awareness of the new discipline, and on applying the theory to both practice and research.

A major issue has been the choice of languages for the texts used in the illustrative case studies. There are examples or texts from English, French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish. Some additional examples are given from Dutch, Punjabi and Russian. Yet the case studies are written in such a way as to focus on the theoretical issues and should not exclude those unfamiliar with the specific language pairs. A range of text types is offered, including the Bible, *Beowulf*, the fiction of García Márquez and Proust, European Union and Unesco documents, a travel brochure, a children's cookery book and the translations of Harry Potter. Film and dialect translation, in French, German and Punjabi, are also covered. In addition, the intention is for some short supplementary illustrative texts, in other languages, to be available on the Routledge internet site for the use of students studying other languages.

(see <http://www.routledge.com/textbooks/its.html>). Above all, my hope is that this book will contribute to the continued development of translation studies by helping and encouraging readers new to the field to pursue their interest in this dynamic discipline.

Main issues of translation studies

Key concepts

- The practice of translating is long established, but the discipline of translation studies is new.
- In academic circles, translation was previously relegated to just a language-learning activity.
- A split has persisted between translation practice and theory.
- The study of (usually literary) translation began through comparative literature, translation 'workshops' and contrastive analysis.
- James S. Holmes's 'The name and nature of translation studies' is considered to be the 'founding statement' of a new discipline.
- The present rapid expansion of the discipline is important.

Key texts

Holmes, J. S. (1988b/2000) 'The name and nature of translation studies', in L. Venuti (ed.) (2000), pp. 172–85.

Jakobson, R. (1959/2000) 'On linguistic aspects of translation', in L. Venuti (ed.) (2000), pp. 113–18.

Leuven-Zwart, K. van and T. Naaijken (eds) (1991) *Translation Studies: State of the Art*, Amsterdam: Rodopi.

Toury, G. (1991) 'What are descriptive studies in translation likely to yield apart from isolated descriptions?', in K. van Leuven-Zwart and T. Naaijken (eds) (1991), pp. 179–92.

1.1 The concept of translation

The main aim of this book is to introduce the reader to major concepts and models of translation studies. Because of the rapid growth in the area, particularly over the last decade, difficult decisions have had to be taken regarding the selection of material. It has been decided, for reasons of space and consistency of approach, to focus on written translation rather than oral translation (the latter is commonly known as **interpreting** or **interpretation**).

The term **translation** itself has several meanings: it can refer to the general subject field, the product (the text that has been translated) or the process

(the act of producing the translation, otherwise known as **translating**). The **process of translation** between two different written languages involves the translator changing an original written text (the **source text** or **ST**) in the original verbal language (the **source language** or **SL**) into a written text (the **target text** or **TT**) in a different verbal language (the **target language** or **TL**). This type corresponds to 'interlingual translation' and is one of the three categories of translation described by the Czech structuralist Roman Jakobson in his seminal paper 'On linguistic aspects of translation' (Jakobson 1959/2000: 114). Jakobson's categories are as follows:

- 1 **intralingual** translation, or 'rewording': 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language';
- 2 **interlingual** translation, or 'translation proper': 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language';
- 3 **intersemiotic** translation, or 'transmutation': 'an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of non-verbal sign systems'.

Intralingual translation would occur, for example, when we rephrase an expression or text in the same language to explain or clarify something we might have said or written. Intersemiotic translation would occur if a written text were translated, for example, into music, film or painting. It is interlingual translation which is the traditional, although by no means exclusive, focus of translation studies.

1.2 What is translation studies?

Throughout history, written and spoken translations have played a crucial role in interhuman communication, not least in providing access to important texts for scholarship and religious purposes. Yet the study of translation as an academic subject has only really begun in the past fifty years. In the English-speaking world, this discipline is now generally known as 'translation studies', thanks to the Dutch-based US scholar James S. Holmes. In his key defining paper delivered in 1972, but not widely available until 1988 (Holmes 1988b/2000), Holmes describes the then nascent discipline as being concerned with 'the complex of problems clustered round the phenomenon of translating and translations' (Holmes 1988b/2000: 173). By 1988, Mary Snell-Hornby, in the first edition of her *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*, was writing that 'the demand that translation studies should be viewed as an independent discipline . . . has come from several quarters in recent years' (Snell-Hornby 1988). By 1995, the time of the second, revised, edition of her work, Snell-Hornby is able to talk in the preface of 'the breathtaking development of translation studies as an independent discipline' and the 'prolific international discussion' on the subject. Mona Baker, in her introduction to *The Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation* (1997a), talks effusively of the richness of the 'exciting new discipline, perhaps the discipline of the 1990s', bringing together scholars from a wide variety of often

more traditional disciplines. Now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the discipline of translation studies continues to develop from strength to strength across the globe.

There are two very visible ways in which translation studies has become more prominent. First, there has been a proliferation of specialized translating and interpreting courses at both undergraduate and postgraduate level. In the UK, the first specialized university postgraduate courses in interpreting and translating were set up in the 1960s. In the academic year 1999/2000, there were at least twenty postgraduate translation courses in the UK and several designated 'Centres of Translation'. Caminade and Pym (1995) list at least 250 university-level bodies in over sixty countries offering four-year undergraduate degrees and/or postgraduate courses in translation. These courses, which attract thousands of students, are mainly oriented towards training future professional commercial translators and interpreters and serve as highly valued entry-level qualifications for the translating and interpreting professions.

Other courses, in smaller numbers, focus on the practice of literary translation. In the UK, these include major courses at Middlesex University and the University of East Anglia (Norwich), the latter of which also houses the British Centre for Literary Translation. In Europe, there is now a network of centres where literary translation is studied, practised and promoted. Apart from Norwich, these include Amsterdam (the Netherlands), Arles (France), Bratislava (Slovakia), Dublin (Ireland), Rhodes (Greece), Sineffe (Belgium), Strälen (Germany), Tarazona (Spain) and Visby (Sweden).

The 1990s also saw a proliferation of conferences, books and journals on translation in many languages. Long-standing international translation studies journals such as *Babel* (the Netherlands), *Meta* (Canada), *Parallèles* (Switzerland) and *Traduire* (France) have now been joined by, amongst others, *Across Languages and Cultures* (Hungary), *Cadernos de Tradução* (Brazil), *Literature in Translation* (UK), *Perspectives* (France), *Rivista Internazionale di Tecnica della Traduzione* (Italy), *Target* (Israel/Belgium), *The Translator* (UK), *Turjuman* (Morocco) and the Spanish *Hermeneus*, *Livius* and *Sendebat*, as well as a whole host of other single language, modern languages, applied linguistics, comparative literature and other journals whose primary focus may not be translation but where articles on translation are often published. The lists of European publishers such as John Benjamins, Multilingual Matters, Rodopi, Routledge and St Jerome now contain considerable numbers of books in the field of translation studies. In addition, there are various professional publications dedicated to the practice of translation (in the UK these include *The Linguist* of the Institute of Linguists, *The ITI Bulletin* of the Institute for Translating and Interpreting and *In Other Words*, the literary-oriented publication of the Translators' Association). Other smaller periodicals such as *TRANSST* (Israel) and *BET* (Spain), now disseminated through the internet, give details of forthcoming events, conferences and translation prizes. In the year 1999–2000, for instance, international translation confer-

ences were held in a large number of countries and on a wide variety of key themes, including:

- translation and training translators (Bratislava, Slovakia);
- literary translation (Mons, Belgium);
- research models in translation studies (UMIST, Manchester, UK);
- gender and translation (Norwich, UK);
- translation as/at the crossroads of culture (Lisbon, Portugal);
- translation and globalization (Tangiers, Morocco);
- legal translation (Geneva, Switzerland);
- translation and meaning (Maastricht, the Netherlands and Lodz, Poland);
- the history of translation (Leon, Spain);
- transadaptation and pedagogical challenges (Turku, Finland);
- translation-focused comparative literature (Pretoria, South Africa and Salvador, Brazil).

In addition, various translation events were held in India, and an on-line translation symposium was organized by Anthony Pym from Spain in January 2000. The fact that such events are now attempting to narrow their focus is indicative of the richness and abundance of the activity being undertaken in the field as a whole. From being a little-established field a relatively short time ago, translation studies has now become one of the most active and dynamic new areas of research encompassing an exciting mix of approaches.

This chapter sets out to examine what exactly is understood by this fast-growing field and briefly describes the history of the development and aims of the discipline.

1.3 A brief history of the discipline

Writings on the subject of translating go far back in recorded history. The practice of translation was discussed by, for example, Cicero and Horace (first century BCE) and St Jerome (fourth century CE); as we shall see in chapter 2, their writings were to exert an important influence up until the twentieth century. In St Jerome's case, his approach to translating the Greek Septuagint Bible into Latin would affect later translations of the Scriptures. Indeed, the translation of the Bible was to be – for well over a thousand years and especially during the Reformation in the sixteenth century – the battleground of conflicting ideologies in western Europe.

However, although the practice of translating is long established, the study of the field developed into an academic discipline only in the second half of the twentieth century. Before that, translation had normally been merely an element of language learning in modern language courses. In fact, from the late eighteenth century to the 1960s, language learning in secondary schools in many countries had come to be dominated by what was known as the grammar-translation method. This method, which was applied to

classical Latin and Greek and then to modern foreign languages, centred on the rote study of the grammatical rules and structures of the foreign language. These rules were both practised and tested by the translation of a series of usually unconnected and artificially constructed sentences exemplifying the structure(s) being studied, an approach that persists even nowadays in certain countries and contexts. Typical of this is the following rather bizarre and decontextualized collection of sentences to translate into Spanish, for the practice of Spanish tense use. They appear in K. Mason's *Advanced Spanish Course*, still to be found on some secondary school courses in the UK:

- 1 The castle stood out against the cloudless sky.
- 2 The peasants enjoyed their weekly visits to the market.
- 3 She usually dusted the bedrooms after breakfast.
- 4 Mrs Evans taught French at the local grammar school.

(Mason 1969/74: 92)

The gearing of translation to language teaching and learning may partly explain why academia considered it to be of secondary status. Translation exercises were regarded as a means of learning a new language or of reading a foreign language text until one had the linguistic ability to read the original. Study of a work in translation was generally frowned upon once the student had acquired the necessary skills to read the original. However, the grammar-translation method fell into increasing disrepute, particularly in many English-language countries, with the rise of the direct method or communicative approach to English language teaching in the 1960s and 1970s. This approach places stress on students' natural capacity to learn language and attempts to replicate 'authentic' language learning conditions in the classroom. It often privileges spoken over written forms, at least initially, and tends to shun the use of the students' mother tongue. This focus led to the abandoning of translation in language learning. As far as teaching was concerned, translation then tended to become restricted to higher-level and university language courses and professional translator training, to the extent that present first-year undergraduates in the UK are unlikely to have had any real practice in the skill.

In the USA, translation – specifically literary translation – was promoted in universities in the 1960s by the **translation workshop** concept. Based on I. A. Richards's reading workshops and practical criticism approach that began in the 1920s and in other later creative writing workshops, these translation workshops were first established in the universities of Iowa and Princeton. They were intended as a platform for the introduction of new translations into the target culture and for the discussion of the finer principles of the translation process and of understanding a text (for further discussion of this background, see Gentzler 1993: 7–18). Running parallel to this approach was that of **comparative literature**, where literature is studied and compared transnationally and transculturally, necessitating the reading