

## BOOK REVIEWS

**Hatim, B. and Mason, I. 1990. *Discourse and the translator*. London: Longman.**

*Discourse and the translator* seems a very promising title for translation studies, a field with particularly intractable problems. Although the publications on the subject have dramatically increased in the last ten years, the answers proposed so far for the main questions appear to be highly controversial. This book, according to the explicit stance of the authors intends to "narrow the gap" between theory and practice in translation through the use of some insights of "several but related areas": semiotics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, artificial intelligence. Obviously intention and achievement rarely match and this work is a case in point.

Considering translation "as a communicative process which takes place within a social context", the authors believe to place themselves in the mainstream of the linguistic debate of today. In so doing they naturally tend to value the process above the product. In fact, a great part of the book deals with the ideal appropriateness of the text vis-à-vis the context and is therefore far less concerned with what happens with actual translated texts. One awkward consequence of this approach is that the old normative position prevails, hardly disguised in recent specialized terminology. Hatim and Mason could have chosen to examine the devices and problems that make translations be what they are, but instead they have preferred to try to explain why translations are not what they ought to be.

The excessive task of summarizing the latest developments in linguistics in a bare 258 pages alongside the supplementary burden of finding some relevance to translation studies seems to have limited from the start the authors' chances of saying much of their own on translation itself. The whole book can thus be considered a painstaking effort to single out some key concepts in heterogeneous theoretical attempts of the last decade or so in order to form a useful set for the translator. Hatim and Mason have been almost exhaustive in their review of the basic ideas of functional linguistics, pragmatics, speech act theory, text linguistics and even of the French theorists Barthes and Foucault. The coverage does look comprehensive but it lacks cohesiveness and, most important, there seems to be no clear utility for those interested in the theory of translation or indeed for the practical translator.

The authors use a great number of examples which could be particularly helpful for the understanding of the phenomenon of translation. Nevertheless, the examples come too often from Arabic, overrepresenting this language and focussing too much on the differences between this

language and the culture conveyed by it and the so-called Western culture. Perhaps "western" is too broad a concept to be handled productively in translation theory and in translation criticism and should not so easily be taken for granted. Another inconvenience of their examples, interesting in themselves as they are, is the fact that in most cases they are too short or too fragmentary. On the other hand the analyses provided are disappointingly partial and the reader keeps waiting for a proper textual approach that never occurs. Only some well chosen features come under scrutiny and we are given isolated commentaries on translated phrases, clauses or sentences but nowhere is an entire piece of discourse fully discussed.

On one occasion Hatim and Mason choose a very good example that could have been well explored: an article published in the French newspaper *Le Monde* and its English translation published in *The Guardian*. Sadly the opportunity of an overall analysis is missed and we remain without a demonstration of how the concepts displayed along the whole book would work in real text analysis. What we do see are some interesting but rather vague observations on the cultural differences between French and English norms of journalism and a rapid application of speech act theory to a pair of lines of the text.

It could be argued that if there is no global analysis of a translated text in this book it is because such was not the authors' intention. In fact their aim appears to have been a succinct presentation of the latest linguistic theories ("discourse" of the title) to the practical professional (the "translator" of the title).

In the few instances where they expose their own views about translation the result looks more uncertain than in their didactic presentation of the main linguistic theories. According to Hatim and Mason, Translation consists of two phases: 1) comprehension of source text and 2) transfer of meaning. The first phase consists of a) parsing of text (grammar and lexis), b) access to specialized knowledge and c) access to intended meaning. The last is the most problematic since it implies that the author has realized his intended meaning in actual text, which we may say seldom happens, if at all. The translator would be a sort of "competent processor of intentions", that is to say a sophisticated or at least an adequate reader. The problem is that the real translator is a producer of texts besides. And about the process and the possible products of textualization the authors have unfortunately not much to say.

*Discourse and the translator* does not bring fresh ideas on translation, even less new ideas on the textual aspects of translation. Its major merit resides in a correct account of some achievements of linguistics and in reminding us that they may perhaps be used in a

comprehensive theory of translation and that constitutes a good service to the discipline of translation studies.

Walter Carlos Costa

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Hoey, M. 1991. *Patterns of lexis in text*. Oxford University Press.

As the author himself explains, this book aims at describing a system of cohesion analysis concerned not with "itemising cohesive features" but with "observing how cohesive features combine to organise text". That is to say, unlike previous approaches, cohesion is seen here not as a classification of devices, but as processes at work in a complete text.

What does Hoey's system consist in? Basically, in considering which sentences are lexically linked to others in a text and how those connections work. The sentences that have a high number of bonds (i.e. lexical links) with other sentences are *central*, while those which have few or no bonds are considered *marginal* sentences. The former contain significant information essential to the understanding of the text, while the latter could be easily left aside when doing a summary or abstract. In order to represent these two types of sentences graphically, Hoey considers the number of links and draws matrices from which nets of lexical bonding can be developed.

Contrary to our expectations, Hoey points out, most of the bonds do not take place between adjacent sentences; they expand throughout the text. That is, sentences far apart from each other, as might be, for instance, sentences number 10 and 35 in a text may be closely related through lexical devices. These links are naturally identified by readers as they read a text and are used by writers to refer to their own earlier sentences as well as to sentences they have encountered in other texts. These are actually strategies that we use naturally when reading and writing, but which could eventually be taught for students to improve their comprehension and production of texts.

One of the outstanding concepts explored in this book is that of *parallelism*, particularly hidden parallelism. This is presented as the product of a series of processes (lexical, syntactic, discursal) which enable "writers to produce bonded pairs and readers to recognize them". Hoey presents a classification of these processes and shows how they function

together. He shows, for example, how two sentences such as:

(19) A work of politics, it would have been said, is the handbook of an art, the art of governing. (26) If this entire conception of politics as an art and the political philosopher as the teacher of it were correct, the writers of political theory would need to be themselves past masters in the art of governing, statesmen would need to apprentice themselves to them in order to learn their job.

are related through parallels which can be spelled out by means of processes of syntactic equivalence and lexical expansion. This is certainly one of the points worth highlighting and suggesting for further research.

Besides the description of his system, Hoey also analyses the implications of his analysis for a theory of Language and Language Teaching. According to his proposal, lexis becomes an important element in textual studies, particularly collocations. In relation to this, Hoey's account of language acquisition and processing deserves special mention. Also, the implications of his analysis for reading and writing in language teaching, presented in the last chapter, a chapter of interest to language teachers. Actually, his proposals may not seem particularly new ideas in the teaching area but they reaffirm some significant points supported by his own research. Most important, Hoey's system of analysis helps us understand text both from a theoretical and practical point of view. That is, he shows how links work in a text and proposes a theory of language acquisition accounting for those processes. As regards how all this can be used to develop materials and strategies of better teaching, the questions remains to be answered by those who wish to further explore Hoey's proposal.

Altogether *Patterns of lexis...* is a welcome appearance in the Text Linguistics' scene. Besides the presentation of a system of analysis, it introduces several proposals which seem quite promising for Linguistics and Applied Linguistics. Among them is the idea of producing computerized abstracts based on the recognition of central and marginal sentences. Limitations obviously exist, and these are pointed out by the author himself. He deals basically with non narrative text and accounts for *some* of the processes at work in text. There are certainly many other processes linking central and marginal sentences which are not covered in this volume.

Like Hoey's previous volumes, this is a clearly organised, well-exemplified book. At times, especially in the descriptive part of the system, the pace of the book is somewhat slow, particularly because of the level of detail and technicity of some of the arguments. But the last chapters, where

Hoey discusses text building upon this description, reward the previous reading.

Adriana Pagano

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Tadros, A. A. 1985. *Prediction in text*. Birmingham: ELR.

This monograph presents a Predictive model of written text, i.e. a model delineating precise categories by which a writer predicts something to the reader. Prediction is defined as follows: "certain signals in a text predict the occurrence of particular linguistic events." (p. 5). The following example from Tadros illustrates Prediction:

- (1) Before discussing this question further, however, it is necessary to define consumers' and producers' goods.
- (2) *Consumers' goods*. The ultimate aim of production is to provide consumers with those goods which yield them satisfaction.
- (3) These are goods in the form in which they are wanted.
- (4) ...
- (5) *Producers' goods*. Unlike consumers' goods, these are not desired for their own sake, but only because of the assistance they render to the production of other goods.
- (6) They comprise ...
- (7) ... (p.56) (Tadros 1985:5)

According to Tadros, Sentence (1) "has an item *define* which predicts the occurrence of the act named, i.e. defining. The prediction is fulfilled in the piece of text that follows under the two headings: 'consumers' goods' and 'producers' goods'" (pp.5-6). And then she adds that "what is predicted is not an element of syntactic structure, but a discourse item, whose fulfillment transcends the boundaries of the sentence" (p.6). That is, prediction signals a relationship between a predictive item, which she calls V member, and (a) predicted member(s), which she calls D member(s). Besides, to fit her scheme, sentence boundaries are redefined.

The overall organization of Tadros's monograph has a clear-cut

structure, in which each section leads easily and coherently to the following one. Her monograph contains five sections, the first two of which, Section I, Introduction, and Section II, 'The Model', constitute the theoretical bases of her framework. On the other hand, Section III, 'The categories', is made up of the descriptions of each of the predictive categories: Enumeration, Advance Labelling, Reporting, Recapitulation, Hypotheticality and Question. Section IV, 'Complex Patterning', describes the possibilities of combination the categories have in order to form more complex relations in text. Finally, Section V, 'Conclusion', rounds off the monograph and presents some interesting issues for further research as well as possible pedagogical implications.

The style used in all the sections of the monograph is clear, simple and matter of fact, with abundant exemplification meant to clarify the theoretical concepts, and devoid of the complex technicalities which are very common in this kind of writing. Nevertheless, it becomes a bit obscure at times, mainly when the author borrows notions and concepts from the realm of propositional logic. *Prediction in text* is addressed to the reader with a fair knowledge of Discourse Analysis but not to the specialist.

The predicting categories constitute the real originality of this monograph. The descriptions of each of the categories share some characteristics, although they also present important differences. All of them include: definition of the category, criteria for V or D membership or both and present interesting comments and remarks relevant to the analysis of the category on focus. The most important difference in the presentation of the categories is qualitative as well as quantitative. Some categories are deeply and thoroughly described, while others are superficially and not exhaustively explored.

To conclude, taken as a whole, Tadros's scheme is very insightful and a rich source for further research. Her main achievement is actually to create a framework where the predictive aspect of written text is shown at work. Because of its innovative and experimental nature, her scheme is prone to criticism, but she was the one who cultivated the land, which should not be forgotten. New ideas can grow here, and this is exactly what science is about: extending and opening new horizons for new ideas to develop.

Gloria Gil

Coulthard, M. 1991. *Linguagem e sexo*. São Paulo: Editora Atica.

Discutir o sexo dos anjos pode não ser um empreendimento tão inútil como sempre pareceu. Dessa forma, perguntar por que falamos de "Homens" quando nos referimos a toda a humanidade -- incluindo as mulheres --, ou perguntar por que afinal Deus é "ele", e não "ela" ou "aquilo", significa refletir sobre as conseqüências para a sociedade da escolha (intencional?) do gênero masculino como o gênero não marcado. Significa, também, refletir sobre as linguagens faladas por homens e mulheres, se elas são diferentes entre si e quais são as diferenças; e, uma vez constatadas as diferenças, refletir sobre como elas se manifestam, de onde vêm e quais são suas conseqüências. Esse é objetivo de Malcolm Coulthard em *Linguagem e Sexo*: mostrar as diferenças lingüísticas relacionadas ao sexo do falante.

*Linguagem e Sexo* está organizado em seis capítulos, determinados, conforme o autor, por tópicos lingüísticos. Assim, os quatro capítulos que seguem a introdução são dedicados à fonologia, ao vocabulário, à gramática e às regras de interação. O último capítulo (número 6) tece algumas considerações sobre a lingüística feminista. Vocabulário crítico e bibliografia comentada, praxe da série Princípios, fecham o livro. Coulthard ressalta que, embora os capítulos tenham sido escritos para serem lidos em seqüência, podem ser lidos de acordo com o interesse específico de cada leitor. No final de cada capítulo, o autor apresenta sugestões para pesquisa. Embora pareçam simples, essas sugestões podem ter alto valor didático e científico em sala de aula e revelam um aspecto interessante do assunto desenvolvido por Coulthard: sabe-se pouco sobre as relações entre linguagem e sexo -- e existe ainda muito campo para pesquisa.

Portanto, para os leitores que pensavam descartar o livro como mera simplificação para leigos, vale a pena conferir. Já na segunda página de sua introdução, Coulthard lembra que "poucas pesquisas foram realizadas sobre as variações que dependem do sexo" e que "infelizmente" a maior parte dessas pesquisas foi realizada nos Estados Unidos e na Grã-Bretanha. Além dos tópicos para pesquisa sugeridos no final de cada capítulo, *Linguagem e Sexo* está recheado de frases como "precisamos investigar" e "não existe pesquisa sólida nessa área".

Por outro lado, para o leitor declaradamente leigo ou interessado apenas em saber que existe algo acontecendo no setor, o livro respeita o objetivo da série Princípios, de comunicar sem complicar. Em outras palavras, mesmo não sendo sobre pornografia, paquera e cantadas (como Coulthard faz questão de esclarecer já no primeiro parágrafo), *Linguagem e Sexo* não corre o risco de ser chato.

Finalmente, o livro ainda tem o mérito de ter contado com a

participação dos alunos de mestrado do curso de pós-graduação de Inglês da UFSC. Como *Linguagem e Sexo* foi escrito em inglês, os alunos traduziram para português o primeiro capítulo. Os outros capítulos foram traduzidos por Iria Werlang Garcia, aluna de doutorado do mesmo programa de pós-graduação (primeira versão do capítulo 2) e por Carmem Rosa Caldas-Coulthard. Casada com o autor, Caldas-Coulthard, além de tradutora, é objeto de uma das mais simpáticas dedicatórias de que se tem notícia. Não perca.

Cláudia Buchweitz Garcez

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