
Christina Schäffner (ed.). *The Role of Discourse Analysis for Translation and in Translator Training*. Multilingual Matters: Clevedon, 2002, 95 pp.

This book reproduces the last issue of the journal *Current Issues in Language and Society* which records the seminar held at Aston University in November 2000 on discourse analysis and translation. It comprises an editorial, a position paper by Anna Trosborg from the Aarhus School of Business (Denmark), a Debate among Trosborg and other translation scholars, five response papers, and Trosborg's comments on the responses.

In her paper, Trosborg presents an approach to textual analysis which she uses "as part of a translator training for the teaching of university students at advanced level", and which is aimed "to create a deep understanding of the source text (ST) by means of a detailed analysis of it" (p. 9). For Trosborg, such an aim justifies the eclectic nature of the approach, which is informed by a number of theories, e.g. Speech Acts, Genre Analysis and Semantics,

having Halliday's register analysis as its backbone. And, since the approach is not intended to foster textual analysis *per se* but for the sake of translation, it also relies on the skopos theory of translation, drawing mainly on Nord's interpretation, as its outermost theoretical layer. Trosborg's paper is divided in 3 parts. In Part 1, she details her approach; in Part 2, she offers a sample application of the approach to a text; and, in Part 3, she presents some concepts of Translation Studies in order to discuss decisions about translation strategies in the light of the analysis undertaken.

The Debate, in which Trosborg discusses her model with 10 other scholars, is divided in 3 sections. In the first one, discussion revolves around the definition of terms (e.g., taxonomy, genre and function), the need for in-depth analysis, the need for using eclectic models, and criticisms of the skopos theory. In the second, the discussion is focused on the lack of a post-production analysis in Trosborg's model. The need to foster students' reflectivity about what they are doing is emphasized and different teaching practices concerning evaluation and grading at the different institutions are

reported on. In the third section, the main issue concerns the need for including linguistics and detailed text analysis as part of a translator training programme. Questions like time constraints and coordination difficulties between linguistics and language departments are arisen.

Although acknowledging the importance of text analysis for translation, all response papers present reservations towards Trosborg's approach. Adab calls attention to the fact that, within a functionalist approach, the decision process in a translation job is *prospective*, i.e., it is focused on the TL addressee. She cautions that it is not clear whether Trosborg's model makes students aware that "ST analysis is but the *first stage* in the translation process", and also that "no skopos was stated at the outset of the written analysis" (p. 71). Dimitriu is concerned with questions like time pressure, the distinction between extratextual and intratextual features and some terminological problems in Trosborg's model. Millán-Varela's main concern is "the absence of the pedagogical element" in Trosborg's model (p. 79), i.e., that there are no clear references to its "aims and learn-

ing outcomes". She also utters her deep concern with the ST bias in Trosborg's model and with the little attention it pays to the process of translation. She proposes to rephrase the aims of Trosborg's model so as to include "the production of accurate and acceptable texts in the target language" (p. 81) and she calls attention to the need for "visibility" (the student's voice) and "target-orientedness" (the process of translation). Newmark completely rejects Trosborg's model mainly by trying to undermine the skopos theory. Among others, he accuses Trosborg of using "dead", "irrelevant" concepts (e.g., "commissives", "representatives" and "declaratives"), and of failing to account for Grice's maxims, on which she says her strategies are based. For Zlateva, text comprehension "involves much more than an analysis of its linguistic structure" (p. 86). She discusses the impossibility of giving a "firm positive answer" to the question whether in-depth analysis "lead[s] to better translators or better translation" (p. 87) and she points out the need for considering "the particular circumstances" in which translation is taught, which can vary in relation to how the programme is

structured and which types of students it receives.

Taking the cue from Trosborg, I will now add a few comments. Consensus among the authors seems to build on the need for textual analysis prior to translation and the need to determine *how* to implement analysis and *to what extent*. As to the first issue, using frameworks (like Trosborg's) has been largely recognized as a "relevant tactic" (p. 71). That turns the second issue into *how to construct such frameworks*. Eclecticism (or rather "multiperspectivalism", cf Philips & Jorgensen 2002) can surely be profitable, but harmonizing the different theories brought together is indeed crucial. In this respect, Trosborg's approach does leave some loose ends, as indicated by the many critiques of terminology abuse or insufficient definition. But, instead of pinpointing or re-dressing any mistakes, I would like to focus on the overlooked question of "interpretation" as an essential element in communication and also as the cement of any theoretical model (especially eclectic ones). I endorse Adab when she says "most of us are eclectic and select the best of different models,

according to our interests, our focus and our students' needs" (p. 67). But I would caution that most of the time it is the teacher who *interprets* what "the best of different models" is. Why not let students do so? If analytical frameworks are "tools which students can use to cope with complexity and difference, to justify their own translation options, and to measure the quality and validity of their products" (p. 81), the broader their repertoire of (critical) tools the more resourceful they will be to make creative decisions while translating. No approach or model is ever complete or self-contained. It is only waiting to be constructed anew by a different interpreter. And, by the way, books like this one can contribute greatly to equipping not only translation students, but also translation teachers and researchers with such critical repertoire. They do so by unveiling the dialogic nature of language – an eternal process of (re)interpreting and (re)using words to produce meanings. It is only to be lamented that such a collection has come to an end and to be hoped that similar publications be offered in the near future.

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