

## The Importance of Text-Typology and Field of Discourse in Teaching Translation

أهمية تصنيف النص ومجال الخطاب في تدريس الترجمة

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**المخلص** تركز هذه الورقة على بعض الصعوبات التي يواجهها المترجمون في ترجمة النصوص الإنجليزية إلى العربية والعكس. يحاول تحديد المشكلات التي يواجهها مدرسو الترجمة أثناء تدريس ورش عمل الترجمة. تنشأ هذه الصعوبات من سوء فهم أنواع النص ومجال الخطاب.

من سمات النص تشابهه أو اختلافه عن النصوص الأخرى. في هذا الصدد ، جرت محاولات بين الشكلية والوظيفية والخطابية. يعتمد النص الرسمي بشكل كبير على السجل. يربط تصنيف النص مع التمييز المسجل السائد بين أنواع النص مثل المؤسساتية والتقنية والأدبية (راجع Neubert and Shreve 1965). نيومارك (1982) وآخرون يدعمون النموذج الترميزي الوظيفي. يقسمون النصوص وفقاً لوظائف بوهلر (1965) الرئيسية الثلاث للغة ، وهي التعبيرية والإعلامية والتنفيذية. هاليداي وحسن (1976) وحاتم وميسون (1990). من ناحية أخرى ، اذهب إلى التصنيف البلاغي. يمكن القول أن استغلال كل طريقة يعتمد على نوع ومجال النص الذي تتم ترجمته. قد نقول أيضاً أن المترجم هو أولاً وقبل كل شيء محلل نصوص يحدد نوع النص الذي يتعامل معه. سيحتاج بعد ذلك إلى التلاعب بوعي بسمات النوع الضرورية والجمع بينها لجعل النص المترجم مثيلاً لنوع النص في اللغة الهدف والثقافة.

يتطلب تقييم الترجمة ، في المقام الأول ، تحديد نوع النص الذي يمثل الأصل (من حيث نوع النص وتنوع النص). ثم يمكن للمرء أن يختار نموذجاً مناسباً للترجمة لنوع معين من النص. ومن المؤمل أن تكون النتائج التي توصل إليها هذا المقال مفيدة للمعلمين والمتدربين من المترجمين.

**الكلمات الدالة:** التصنيف، النص، الخطاب، التدريس، الترجمة.

**Abstract:** This paper focuses on some difficulties that translators encounter in translating English texts into Arabic and vice versa. It attempts to determine the problems that teachers of translation confront while teaching translation workshops. These difficulties arise from the misunderstanding of text types and field of discourse.

One of the characteristics of a text is its resemblance or difference from other texts. In this respect, attempts have been made between formal, functional and rhetorical. The formal text draws heavily on the register. It associates text-typology with the prevailing register distinction between text-types such as institutional, technical and literary (cf. Neubert and Shreve 1965). Newmark (1982) and others prop the functional typological model. They divide texts according to Buhler's (1965) three main functions of language which are, expressive, informative and operative. Halliday and Hasan (1976) and Hatim and Mason (1990). On the other hand, go for the rhetorical typology. It can be said that the exploitation of each method depends on the type and field of text being translated. We may also say that the translator is first of all a text-analyst who determines the type of text he is dealing with. He will then need to consciously manipulate and combine the features of the type that are essential in order to make the translated text an instance of the text type in the TL and culture.

The assessment of translation requires, in the first place, a determination the kind of text the original represents (in terms of text type and text variety). Then one can choose a suitable model of translation for the particular type of text. It is hoped that the finding of this article will be of some help to the teachers and trainees of translators.

**Key words:** classification, text, discourse, teaching, translation

## The Importance of Text-Typology and Field of Discourse in Teaching Translation

### Introduction

Translation has played a key role in the enhancement of communication among people of the world. Newmark (1988: 5-7) describes translation as "*a craft consisting of the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by the same message and/or statement in another language.*" Still, there are many others believe that translation is an art. It becomes highly dependent on the idiosyncrasies and intuition of the translators. Translators like any other artisans, such as, composers or painters often find their moods and personalities reflected in their work. However, in teaching translation, one has to take into account the merits and nature of translation, the proficiency of students in both source and target languages, and the objectives of the translation course itself.

Much of the theoretical discussions on translation has revolved around the idea of equivalence with the original text. Therefore, many theories, models and approaches have sought to eradicate translational misunderstandings. One of these models is text typology which seeks to group texts into categories and types.

Unlike most university subjects, translation does not represent a well-defined body of knowledge. They are, instead, abilities which the practitioners barely understand. Unlike the student of law, engineering, or medicine, the student of translation can come from almost any background. The only request is that the individual be bilingual, or nearly so. Teachers are therefore in the awkward position of having to address an undefined body of knowledge to a diverse body of student. The second major issue confronting all teachers of any discipline is to achieve a defined goal by the end of the semester. These are, of course, the goals. However, because translators confront information from a wide array of disciplines, the expectations are difficult to define. To sum up, let us think deeply in this question. Should translators be able to maintain a certain rate of translation for all fields, even fields they do not understand in their native language?

One solution to this problem is to set up a text-typology and create categories for specialized fields. In my brief and modest experience in teaching translation, I have noticed that most of the instructors of translation neglect text-typology or field of discourse when they translate texts. In fact, the instructors focus is mainly concerned with models of translation or manipulating some grammatical or cultural problems instead. In addition, the communicative meaning is not achieved because some translators, particularly students do not translate the text as a whole unit, but they transfer it literally. They simply pick up the first meaning of ST word from bilingual dictionary. Therefore, students can be taught that rendering any term has to be according to its context and in order to be successful in teaching translation, instructors should be aware of the importance of text-typology and field of discourse in the process of translation.

My paper which is under the title of 'The Importance of Text-typology and Field of Discourse in Teaching Translation' focuses on some difficulties that translators encounter in translating English texts into Arabic and vice versa. It attempts to determine the problems that teachers of translation confront while teaching translation workshops. These difficulties arise from misunderstanding of text types and field of discourse. Now I would like to shed some light on text-typology.

### Text-typology

The main concern of text typology approach is to try and study the organization of language above sentence or clause level, i.e., the language people actually use in real situations. The most complete unit of expression in natural language is considered to be a text whose units are sentence or stretches of sentences (Beaugrand and Dressler, 1981:37).

In this respect, attempts have been made to set up a typology for texts. However, one can distinguish essentially between formal, functional and rhetorical typologies.

## 1- The Formal Typology

The formal typology draws heavily on the study of register, (a register is constituted by "linguistic features which are typically associated with configuration of situational features with particular values of field, tenor and mode). Each text-typology is mainly associated with the common register. Thus, a distinction can be made between text-types like institutional, technical and literary (cf Newbert and Shereve 1992).

Moreover, Reiss (1976) begins to set up a text typology to translation with the basic communicative situation in which texts fulfill quite specific and distinct communicative functions. According to Reiss (1976: 97-100), the assessment of a translation requires that in the first place one must determine the kind of text the original represents. She adopted Buhler's division of text with three corresponding text types and suggested that texts can be categorized according to their field of discourse with examples like "journalistic", "religious", "poetic", "technical" etc.

## 2- Functional Typology

Newmark (1981, 1988) divides texts according to Buhler's (196) into three main types: 2.1 The Informative Type

The main purpose of this type is to give information about something or to describe it. It concerns the facts of a topic such as textbooks, reported ideas, technical reports or agenda of meetings. The main function of language is to inform the reader about objects in the real world.

### 2.2 The Vocative Type

It is concerned with the readership or the addressee, i.e., the user of the text. The main purpose is to attract the readers' attention to feel or react in the way intended by the text. For instance, instructions, advertisements, notices, etc.

### 2.3 The Expressive

The predominant purpose is express feelings of the author or speaker regardless of any response. Examples, poetry, novel, short story, drama, philosophical works, etc.

## 3. The Rhetorical Typology

This type is based on the notion of dividing texts according to their rhetorical purposes. Proponents of this typology are (Halliday and Hassan 1976, Hatim and Mason 1990). According to this typology, each text involves a definite format, which helps the analyst in examining the communicative textuality of translation. Three main text-types besides other branching subtypes can be listed within this model (expository text, argumentative text and instructive text).

### 3.1 The Expository

The main intention is to inform or to explain. This subdivided into ;descriptive, narrative and conceptual. The descriptive text describes situations or objects and a narrative text arranges events in a particular order. 3.2

### The Argumentative

The purpose is to persuade the reader or to convince him. The argumentative text can be either a counter argumentation or through argumentation. The texture in the argumentative texts is bound to be least explicit. The vocabulary is emotive and the word order is highly marked.

### 3.3 The Instructive

This type is used to control future behavior. It can be either instruction with option as advertising or instruction without option as in treaties and contracts. That is the rhetorical function can provide the general framework of the method that the translator is likely adopt if he is likely to match communicatively the SL text.(Hatim 1997: 146).

### Field of Discourse

Most of the problems the students of translation face when rendering the field of discourse can be attributed to the fact that students did not understand the ST properly. This lack of understanding is due to some factors, such as, inability to analyze the ST; their competence in English is not up the standard, and their concentration on literal translation .

Hatim and Mason (1990) argue that the field of discourse is a kind of language use which refers to the social action of a text. On the other hand baker (1992) explains that this action determines the language items the speaker use. According to Holliday et al (1964), the field of discourse is defined in terms of what is going on inside a text and the nature of the social action taking place there. Bill (1991: 190-195) talk of domain rather than field, for him, field/domain is connected with language functions. He considered two models of language function; the traditional model and Jackbson's six function model. Within the traditional model, language has three roles; the cognitive which refers to concepts and ideas; the affective function indicates emotions and feelings and evaluative function expresses attitudes and values. Whereas Jackobson's six functions of language defines languages function in terms of communication event. Language can be referential-emotive-phatic-poetic-conative and metalinguistic function.

Hatim and mason (1990: 51) suggest that the three variables of register (field, tenor and mode) can cause problems especially if there are great differences between the cultures of the source language and target language. Thus, shift in register is considered as an error at the macro level because the meaning of ST is violated and the intended meaning is not rendered probably. Therefore, when register is shifted the translation does not achieve the similar effect and it will fail to transfer the intended meaning. For instance, in military context, sentence (1) would be more appropriate than sentence (2) .

Ex: 1

(1a) The soldier executes military orders.

(1) ينفذ الجندي الاوامر العسكرية

(2) يؤدي الجندي الاوامر العسكرية

(2b) The soldier performs military orders.

Ex: 2

(1) Tony blare would be in downing street.

(2) توني بلير سيكون في شارع داون

The problem, here, is that the translator is unaware of the context and shifted the field of discourse of the ST. An appropriate translation could be.

توني بلير لامحالة سيصل الى رئاسة الحكومة.

In brief, one can say, field is a selection of words and structure that suit appropriate social activity. It is an event or activity which surroundings the particular language used; technical, scientific, medical, religious, musical, legal, military, fashion or other lexicons characterize the typical discourse used in each of these

fields. It refers to what actually taking place (the event or the activity) that is to what the participant is doing with language in different setting. In other words, it is a term refers to what the text is a bout. Therefore, field of discourse is crucial in translation. Students and teachers of translation can understand the concept of field and take notes of language which is used (social action taking place), what is going in inside the text, and determine the language items speakers use, i.e. they can verify what is being communicating and how the language items contribute to this.

### Data analysis

Let us think of the following samples which show how important text types and field of discourse.

#### Sample One

#### *Evaporation*

*Evaporation is the process that changes a liquid into a gas .it can occur at any temperature, and is due to the movement of molecules in the liquid . for example, water left in a saucer will gradually evaporate.*

Analyzing this text according to the text typology and field of discourse enables the instructor of the course or the translator to find an appropriate translation for it. Even the students have to be trained by their teacher to do so. However, this text seems to be an argumentative scientific text.

Here the writers intention is to persuade. It is a scientific text which accounts for scientific substances. The text is evaluative as it presents preponderance of evaluative terms, such as changes, movement, escape and evaporate. Therefore, the more suitable translation for this text can be as follows.

#### **البخر**

البخر هو عملية تحول السائل الى غاز ,ويمكن ان تحدث هذه العملية عند اي درجة حرارة وهو ناتج عن حركة الجزيئات في السائل .وعلى سبيل المثال, عند ترك ماء في صحن الفنجان فسيحدث البخر تدريجيا.

Hence, knowing the kind of the text from the teachers of translation and their students help them to use a suitable language for translating it. Particularly, if they know that some characteristics of the language of science can be listed as follows.

- 1- Generally, the language of science is characterized by its vocabulary rather than its grammar or style.
- 2-It is written and formal.
- 3-It emphasizes accuracy and objectivity.
- 4- It is highly technical and many scientific words have been imported from other languages.
- 5- Scientific texts tend to be written in highly formalized prose, often in the passive voice and without metaphor, hyperbole or humor.

Sample Two, is a piece of a literary work.

*"when she was a little child, she dreamt of a brilliant, bright future. She spent years dreaming of blossoms and roses blooming her flowery future. To translate her dream into reality, she dedicated herself to story-writing to become a great novelist"* (Ghazala 1995:244).

The text type of this text is expressive within a literary field. It is also an evaluative text. It is rich of metaphor and literary collocations. The most expressive words and phrases in Arabic can be used to fit perfectly such a highly expressive text. Thus, the following translation can be suggested:

(حين كانت طفلة صغيرة، حلمت بمستقبل مشرق زاهر. قضيت السنوات تحلم بالأزاهير والورود تنور حياتها الوردية. ولكي تترجم هذا الحلم الى حقيقة واقعه، كرسست نفسها لكتابة القصص لتصبح روائية عالمية).

### Sample Three

It is agreed this 27 day of August AD 2005 by and between:

.....(landlord), and

..... (Tenant):

That landlord hereby lets to tenant, and tenant hereby leases from landlord, the following described premises situated in.....

Apartment no.....in the apartment building locally known as....

Hereinafter referred to as the "dwelling unit", in consideration of the mutual promises of the parties herein, and upon the following terms, provisions and conditions:

1- TERM. The duration of this rental agreement shall be from August 27 2005 to and including 12.p.m. on May 31 2006.

2-RENT. Tenant agrees to pay landlord, as rental for said term, as follows: 500 per month advance, the first rent payment becoming due upon the execution of this rental agreement, and the same amount per month in advance on the 1st day of each month thereafter during the term of this Rental Agreement, with interest on all delinquent rental at 9% per annum.

The text type of this text is informative and its kind is legal . according to this determination which would be of a great help, one may choose the more appropriate translation for such text . however, the following is the Arabic translation of this text.

تم الاتفاق في هذا اليوم الموافق السابع والعشرين من شهر اغسطس 2005 ميلادية بين كل من:.

.....(مالك العقار)

.....(المستأجر)

يؤجر مالك العقار بموجب هذا العقد للمستأجر, والمستأجر بموجب هذا العقد يستأجر من مالك العقار, المبنى المبين فيما يلي والكائن في .....مبنى رقم .....

في مبنى سكني يعرف محليا.....يشار له في هذا العقد "كوحدة سكنية" اخذا في الاعتبار التعهدات المتبادلة بين الطرفين في هذا العقد بموجب الاتفاقات و الفقرات والشروط التالية:-

1-المدة. تبدأ مدة اتفاق الايجار اعتبارا من 27 اغسطس 2005 وتنتهى الساعة الثانية عشر ظهرا من يوم 31مايو 2006.

2-الاجرة. يوافق المستأجر علي ان يدفع لمالك العقار اجرة على المدة المذكورة على النحو التالي: 500 دولارا شهريا مقدما, تصبح دفعة الايجار الاولى واجبة السداد حين تحرير اتفاق الايجار هذا, ونفس القيمة تدفع مقدما شهريا في اليوم الاول من كل شهر من ذلك الحين وخلال مدة الايجار المتفق عليه بفائدة على كل اجرة متأخرة نحو 9% في السنة.

Generally speaking, one can notice that the legal language can be characterized as follows. 1-Sentences are long made on an array of subordinating devices, long and complex clauses which would likely to appear elsewhere as separate sentences.

2-Repetition of lexical items for exactness of references (anaphora).

3-Adverbial mobility as a means of clarifying meaning and avoiding ambiguity. This mobility may seem unusual by normal standards.

e.g. Legal: a proposal to effect with the society an assurance.

Normal: a proposal to effect an assurance with the society.

4-Highly formal words are used in legal translation (e.g. duly, deemed, expiration, terminated....).

5-An adverbial of place to which a preposition –like word has been suffixed is useful for precise reference (e.g. hereto, hereon, hereby, hereunder, thereof, thereafter....).

6-The use of collocations where synonyms or near synonymous are coordinated show a degree of formality (e.g. term of years-upon the death-made and signed-terms and conditions-able and willing)

7-There have been also graphic and graphological devices used as means of revealing structure and logical progression(capitalization, underlining, or different style of script).

Sample Four

### خطبة حجة الوداع (631م-10هـ)

"يا ايها الناس.....اسمعوا قلوبي, فاني لا ادري لعلي لا القاكم بعد عامي هذا.....ان ربكم واحد, وان اباكم واحد, كلكم لادم وادم من تراب. ان اكرمكم عند الله اتقاكم. لا فضل لعربي على عجمي الا بالتقوى. اللهم فاشهد اني قد بلغت, اللهم اني قد بلغت, اللهم اشهد اني قد بلغت.

### The Speech of the Farewell Pilgrimage (631 a.d-10 h)

"Oh people your god is one, you belong to Adam and Adam was created out of dust. The best one of you to Allah is the one who is devout and pious. An Arab is not better than a Persian save by piety. "I declare, as God is my witness, that the message has been conveyed".

Here the text type is argumentative, aiming at persuading and convincing and its field religious. The text has cultural and linguistic problem. One can solve this by omitting the repetition in the English text because it reproduces a natural text. The communicative function of emphasis is re-expressed by converting the SL active voice to a passive voice structure TT (Mijrab 1999:7)

Sample Five

*He also hinted that the IMF's strict supervision would be used as weapon in the battle between reformist and conservative factions within the current government, which is intensifying as the June 16 election approaches.*

Let us take the following students translations as examples of misrepresentation of the field of discourse:

Student A: لمح ايضا بان اشراف صندوق النقد الدولي الصارم سيسعمل كسلاح في المعركة

بين الفئات الإصلاحية والمحافظه ضمن الحكومة الحالية التي تشهد على اقتراب انتخاب 16 يوليو.

Student B: اشار ايضا الى ان رقابة صندوق النقد الدولي الصارمة ستستخدم كسلاح في

الاشتباك بين الاحزاب المحافظه والمصلحة داخل تيار الحكومة كوسائل الانتخاب في السادس عشر من شهر يوليو.

Student C: وقد اشار الي ان المراقبة الصارمة من قبل البنك المصرفي الدولي ستستخدم

كسلاح في المعركة بين عملية اعادة الاصلاح والانشقاقات الحزبية مع الحكومة الحالية باقتراب موعد الانتخابات في 16 من يوليو.

From the above examples, the students made errors in their translation .for example. The item: weapon and battle, in the source text are translated by student B as سلاح and اشتباكات .the items current and intensifying translated as "تيار" and "وسائل" . The word reformist and conservative were rendered by student A as "الفئات" "اعادة الاصلاح والانشقاقات الحزبية" and by student C as "المحافظين والمصلحيين"

All these translation are macro errors because they shifted the field of discourse. A proper rendering for these items could be as follows:

وقد اضاف مدير صندوق النقد الدولي بان رقابة صندوق النقد الدولي ستستخدم كوسيلة ضغط في المعركة الانتخابية بين احزاب المحافظين والاصلاح في الحكومة الحالية والتي ستستد ذروتها عند اقتراب موعد انتخابات 16 يوليو.

## Conclusion

Translation is a form of communication; in this sense, it is important for any translation to account for the characteristics of the language use. In other words, the language use has to be according to the situation. Dividing texts into different types could be useful for translation because it maintains that text is the unit of translation .in addition, it assigns types of texts according to their purposes. Thus, it enables translators to make their analysis and translation thorough and elaborative. Translators should also have communitive knowledge about the text before translating. We can say that translation approaches are of great help to the translator, but the exploitation of either method depends on the type of text being translated. The concepts of text types were discussed in this paper. This paper, also, had dealt with the identification of field of discourse and its role in realizing the communication values. The difference in text types can cause problems due to the different parameters of each type.

We may also say that the translator is first of all a text-analyst who determines the type of the text he is dealing with. He will then need to consciously manipulate and combine the features of the type that are essential to make the translated text an instance of the text type in TL and culture.

The assessment of translation requires, in the first place, one must determine the kind of text the original represents (in terms of text type and text variety). Then one can make the right choice for the suitable model of translation for a certain type of text. It is hoped that the finding of this article will be of some help to the teachers and trainees of trainees of translation.

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