Lecture 14

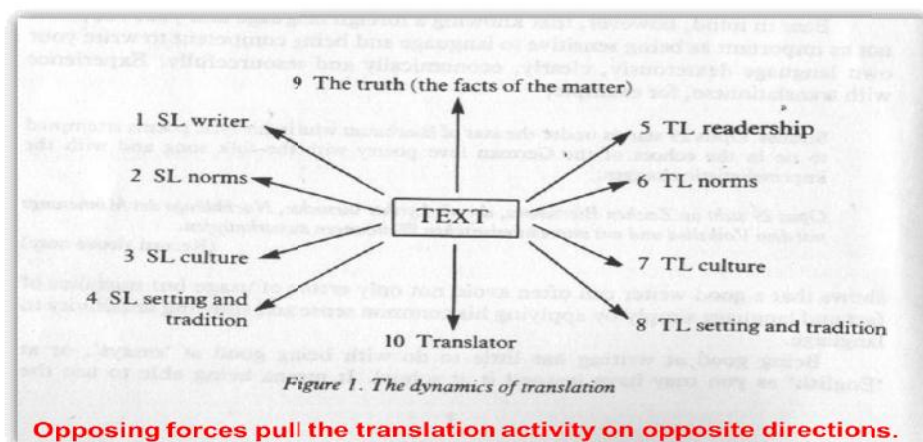## What does "Translation" mean?

The term "translation" can refer to:

- **the general subject field**

- **the product** *(the text that had been translated)*

- **the process** *(the act of producing the translation)*

(Munday: 2008)

Figure 1. The dynamics of translation

Opposing forces pull the translation activity on opposite directions.

(Newmark :1988)

SL = Source Language
TL = Target Language

What does "Translation" mean?

Many authors tried to define "Translation"

" Rendering the meaning of a text into another language in the way that the author intended the text."

(Newmark :1988)

"author = the originator of the text whether it is oral or written"

What does "Translation" mean?

Translation is the general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language (source) to another (target), whether the languages are in written or oral form; whether the languages have established orthographies or do not have such standardization or whether one or both languages is based on signs, as with sign languages of the deaf.

(Brislin, 1976)

What does "Translation" mean?

Translation is often regarded as a project for **transferring meaning** from one language to another.

(Farghal, 1999)

All the previous mentioned definitions of the term "translation" talk about two key words:

transfer   (interlingual communication)
and
meaning   (denotative and connotative)

Related Basic Definitions

Source Text (ST): The text requiring translation.

Target Text (TT): The text which is a translation of the ST.

Source Language (SL): The language in which the ST is written.

Target Language TL): The language into which the ST is translated.

Strategy: The translator's overall plan consisting of a set of strategic decisions taken after an initial reading of the ST, but before starting detailed translation.
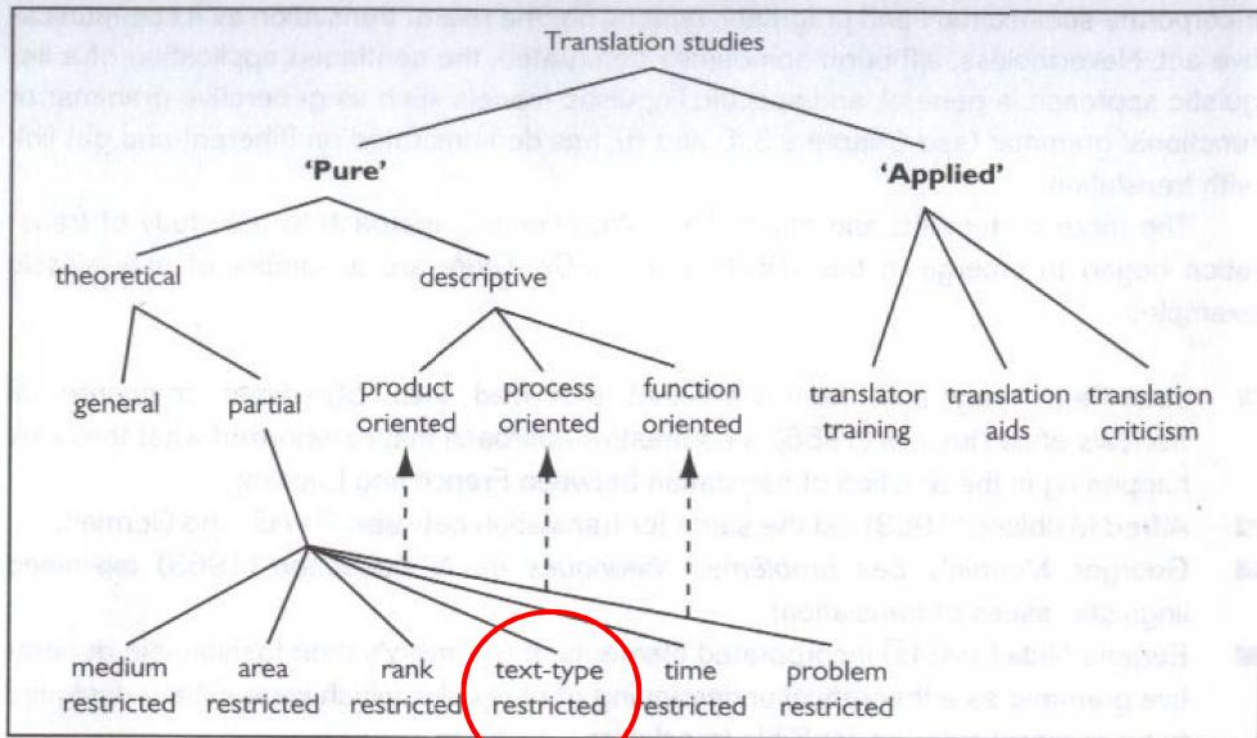
Translation Studies

James Holmes's Map

Figure 1.1   Holmes's 'map' of translation studies (from Toury 1995: 10).

(Munday: 2008)

Text Type

Are all those texts of the same text type?

Can you translate all of them following the same strategy?

"It is obvious that not all texts are the same type. We may distinguish between political texts, legal texts and medical texts; fairy tales, novels and short stories differ from newspaper reports, essays and scientific papers; food recipes, instructions booklets and advertisements may show similarities but they are not the same, expository texts differ from argumentative texts, etc. All these types of text differ in ways that are somewhat obvious, intuitively, but which nevertheless invite detailed analysis"
(Trosborg, 1998)

Katharina Reiss (1979/1989) views the text, rather than the word or sentence, as the level at which communication is achieved and at which equivalence must be sought.

Text Type Classifications

Hatim and Mason (1990) classified text types according to their **rhetorical purposes**:

argumentative, expositive and *instruction-based.*

They divide instructional texts into two types: instruction without option, and instruction with option. Instruction without option includes texts such as laws. One is required to follow the 'instructions'
(law, for instance); otherwise there may be a punishment.

Newmark depends on Buhler's functions of language to deal with text types. According to Buhler, there are three language functions:

Expressive: serious imaginative literature, authoritative statements,
Originator writer   autobiography, essays and personal correspondence

Informative: a textbook, a technical report, a scientific paper or agenda of a meeting
topic of knowledge

Vocative: notices, publicity, propaganda, persuasive writing and advertisements
readership

" Few texts are purely expressive informative or vocative: **most include all three functions, with an emphasis on one of the three**" (Newmark,1988: 42)

Reiss (1971)
Text types

Functional characteristics of text types and links to translation methods (adapted from Reiss 1971)

Text type	Informative	Expressive	Operative
Language function	Informative (representing objects and facts)	Expressive (expressing sender's attitude)	Appellative (making an appeal to text receiver)
Language dimension	Logical	Aesthetic	Dialogic
Text focus	Content-focused	Form-focused	Appellative-focused
TT should	Transmit referential content	Transmit aesthetic form	Elicit desired response
Translation method	'Plain prose', explicitation as required	'Identifying' method, adopt perspective of ST author	'Adaptive', equivalent effect

Text Type and Genre

The term "text type" is often used in a similar sense of "genre".

Dickins, Hervey and Higgins opted for using the term "genre" instead of "text type"

Genre

Dickins, Hervey and Higgins distinguished five broad categories of "genre" :

Literary
Religious
Philosophical
Empirical
Persuasive

Before Beginning to Translate a Text

Before you begin translating any text, you need to ask yourself the following important questions:

- What is the message content of this particular ST?
- What are its salient linguistic features?
- What are its principal effects?
- What genre does it belong to and what audience is it aimed at?
- What are the functions and intended audience of my translation?