Context and Pragmatics (Final Draft)

Shyam Ranganathan

1. Introduction

Pragmatics, semantics and syntax are basic distinctions in linguistics. Syntax has to do with rules that constrain how words can combine to make acceptable sentences. Semantics concerns the meaning of words and sentences, and pragmatics has to do with the practical aspects of communication—a matter so wide that pragmatics has been called the "wastebasket of linguistics," encompassing everything that does not neatly fit into syntax or semantics. Yet the three are connected. Syntactic constraints in language can entail semantic constraints. A language with (obligatory) gendered nouns (such as Latin-derived languages) introduces semantic layers that are absent in a largely genderless language. In French, nouns are gendered, so objects are either 'masculine or feminine', while in English they are not usually either, and hence speaking about the same object in French or English is semantically different to this extent. Semantic constraints can also influence the practical use we make of language. The English third person singular pronoun "it" is reserved for objects and not persons, and this makes it difficult to talk about a single third person in English without characterizing them as either "he" or "she" — pronouns that are inappropriate and misleading when referring to someone who is (biologically, psychologically or as a matter of choice) non-binary. We can, as some do, invoke "they" (originally a third person plural pronoun) for such cases, but this is semantically at odds with the plurality of "they" and may thus be pragmatically infelicitous: our interlocutors may believe we are speaking about a group when we use "they" in this progressive way. So while we may wish to easily separate syntax and semantics from pragmatics, it is complicated.

The need for translation can arise for multiple reasons, even within a language. We might want to

replace an acceptable original statement with an equally acceptable new statement, and the new statement will be a translation of the original statement. If we want to engage in such intralingual translation to get our point across, our motivation is pragmatic. But our interest in translation across languages is also *prima facie* a matter of pragmatics: we often want to understand what is said in a far removed context using symbols that we do not understand, and the correct translation will have the pragmatic effect of rendering something foreign, domestic (cf. Neubert 2003).

To flush out the elements involved in working out the place of pragmatics in translation, I shall distinguish between three possible criteria of translation: *S, M* and *P*. Because our motivation for translation is often pragmatic, it is difficult to imagine the need for *S*: accuracy in translation is about preserving syntactical features of a source text (ST), such that if the syntax of a target text (TT) is not the same as the ST then we have grounds for rejecting it as a good translation. The reason this is implausible is that we typically feel the need for translation in cases where an original communicative act occurs in a source syntactic system that is different from the target syntactic system, rendering the original syntax without some change inaccessible in the target system. For instance, Sanskrit words are heavily altered to show their syntactic properties to the point that word order does not matter. We cannot do this in English: *word order matters in English* for word order is part of how we understand the relationship of words within a sentence. We could not for instance write *English matters word order in*, and expect anyone to take the two sentences to have the same meaning. You can do that in Sanskrit so long as all the sentential components are properly formatted as each word would have a tag built into it that allows us to understand its relationship to other words in the sentence. However, if we were to translate Sanskrit sentences word for word in the order they come into English, the resulting sentences will likely not respect the rules of English syntax though the individual translated words would be meaningful—and the result would certainly be *pragmatically* infelicitous (uncommunicative), not just syntactically incorrect. If we expect the syntax of a TT to be the same as the ST, then translation would apparently be impossible in many cases. Far more plausible is *M*: accuracy in translation is about preserving the meaning of an original, such that if the meaning of the TT is not the same as the ST then we have grounds for rejecting the TT as a good translation of the ST. Even when the source language (SL) and target language (TL) are syntactically different, if we can produce a TT that has the same meaning as the ST (perhaps, sentence for

2

sentence, section for section), then we may have good reason to believe that we can understand what is communicated in the ST, for as noted, semantics seems to constrain the pragmatics of what is said.

If I start out with an unscientific ST of poetry about flowers, and I end up with a TT that is a botanical catalogue of flowers, then I will have reason to doubt the accuracy of the translation as these are *prima facie* semantically different: it is a failure by *M*. But the pragmatics of the ST and TT in this case are widely at odds, in no small part because of the divergence in meaning: poetry and botany occupy different communicative spheres of our lives. So on this score too, we might have grounds to doubt that translation in this case has been a success on the grounds of *P*: accuracy in translation is about preserving the pragmatics of an original, such that if the contextual use of a TT is different from the ST, we have grounds for rejecting it as a good translation.

To fix such problems, we might desire to combine *M* and *P* so that an accurate translation will preserve both meaning and pragmatics. But what preserves semantics in translation may not preserve pragmatics in translation.

For instance, the Christian Bible in a devout Christian culture has a certain use, communicative and contextual cachet (as the culture's most basic sacred text) that it will not enjoy when *semantically* translated (by way of *M*) into the language of a devout Muslim culture, even if the resulting translation is semantically equivalent to the original. Muslims will be able to acknowledge such a translation as accurate by way of *M*, but they would reject it as their most basic religious text. Similarly, the translation of the Quran into the language of a devout Christian culture could be faithful according to *M*, but the Christians in such a culture would not thereby give up acknowledging their Bible as their most basic religious text. Yet, conservative Christians and Muslims in the two cultures would agree that the Bible and the Quran play isomorphic social roles in the two cultures (as the most basic religious text)—indeed, if the Christians and the Muslims in these cultures want to disagree with each other about what text each other should adopt as the basic religious text, they would have to grant that much. But, surprisingly, if we were to adopt *P*, then we would thereby treat the Bible and the Quran as translations of each other because of their isomorphic contextual roles as the basic sacred book in the two cultures. This is *prima facie* absurd, but the absurdity requires an explanation. Otherwise, it is a mere prejudice.

Naïve views about translation are frustrated because neither *M* nor *P* seem to be without problems

3

(not to mention that S is not an option) and merely combining them seems implausible as they seem to be in competition with each other. What complicates the matter is that meaning, context and pragmatics are (philosophically) controversial. What you take to be pragmatics depends in part on what you take to be semantics, as *pragmatics* is the use we can make of meaning in a context, while *semantics*—meaning—is context-transcendent (cf.Szabó 2006). So we might agree to M, for instance, but arrive at very differing translations if our picture of meaning differs. But correlatively, what we take to be the pragmatics of a text or an utterance to be translated will not be absolutely divorced from its semantics, as the pragmatics is the use of such meaning. Hence, we might agree to P and yet arrive at different translations of an ST due to their differing accounts of the ST's semantics There is no way to consider the question of pragmatics in translation in isolation from questions of meaning.

In this chapter on pragmatics and context as it relates to translation, I will take a closer look at M and P, after reviewing historical perspectives on semantics and pragmatics. M and P are translation-theoretic counterparts of two divergent approaches to the relationship between semantics and pragmatics. M is associated with the prioritization of semantics in an account of pragmatics (semantics-first), while P is associated with a prioritization of pragmatics in an account of semantics (pragmatics-first). The trouble with M as we shall see is that it sacrifices P, and the problem with P is that it sacrifices M—and either way something about the contextual significance of an ST is lost in the process. We shall review recent research in translation theory that recommends a bridge principle in the assessment of translation to help us be selective about the semantic and pragmatic features of an ST that are to be preserved in translation. This strategy leads to acknowledging a distinct meaning to be preserved, defined in part by pragmatics. We arrive back at M, but not without taking P seriously.

2. Historical Perspectives

Gottlob Frege may be seen as an early proponent of a semantics first approach. In his 'Über Sinn und Bedeutung' (Frege 1892: translated as 'On Sense and Reference', 1980), for example, he famously proposes that proper names have a sense and a reference. To take a standard example, 'Mark Twain' and 'Samuel Clemens' have the same reference – the man in question – but express different senses, where the sense of a proper name is, roughly, the way in which one represents its reference to oneself. It is this that explains the difference in 'cognitive significance' between 'Mark Twain is identical to Mark Twain'

4

and 'Mark Twain is identical to Samuel Clemens' – both are true, but the latter is informative, in a way in which the former isn't, to someone who doesn't associate the same 'modes of presentation' with 'Mark Twain' and 'Samuel Clemens', and thus doesn't know that the two names denote one and the same man. (Frege's view is challenged by Kripke (1980).)

Frege's account leaves little room for pragmatics, it seems – sense and reference do all the communicative work. But J.L. Austin (1955) showed, with his theory of speech acts, that mere meaning does not tell the whole story. Consider the making of a promise. Arguably, the words 'I promise to take you to lunch' have the same meaning in the performance of a play as they do in a conversation with a colleague at work, but only in the latter context do they place the speaker under an obligation. Austin also noted that most meaningful claims, such as "it is raining outside", are never true in isolation: rather they are true or false when they are statements (said at a particular time and place by some persons) and this shows us that the pragmatics of language use is important to questions of truth—but also more broadly to the question of what we are talking about. Similarly, Paul Grice later showed that there is a host of *pragmatic implicatures* in communication —implications that are understood by listeners, which go beyond the mere meaning of what is said (Grice 1961: §3; 1975: 24). An example of such implicature is my claim in English that "I am full" when someone asks me whether I want a second serving of food. Those who understand English will typically infer, pragmatically, from this declaration that I do not want more food (true in this case) even though I did not say that I did not want more food. Here the implicature reveals a distinct meaning (*I DO NOT WANT MORE FOOD*) with its own truth.

Both Austin's and Grice's observations show how semantics alone is insufficient to account for communication, truth and even meaning. Rather, pragmatics fills the gap. Pragmatics is largely context-bound and hence the pragmatics of language cannot be abstracted from contexts of use: rather it has to do with the impact language has on language users use in the context of utterance. The importance of pragmatics is *prima facie* evidence for *P*. In response to this kind of insight, philosophers in the early part of the twentieth century began moving away from a semantics-first theory to a radical pragmatics-first approach called '*functionalism*', according to which the meaning of a word is its effect on a speaker. It was explored and defended in C. K. Ogden and I.A. Richard's *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923) and in Bertrand Russell's *Analysis of Mind* (1921). If *functionalism* were true, then we would have to collapse

the meaning of a term, with its influence on us. Ludwig Wittgenstein in his unpublished notes shows why this account is too crude. He writes: "If I wanted to eat an apple, and someone punched me in the stomach, taking away my appetite, then it was this punch that I originally wanted" (quoted in Monk 1990: 291). In conflating the meaning of a word with its influence on us, an apple's ability to remove our appetite would be equivalent to an injury that does the same thing. Wittgenstein's own view in his *Philosophical Investigations,* with its focus on 'meaning as use' (*Investigations* 43), is in line with a stress on pragmatics.

Much of contemporary philosophy of language can be characterized as a debate between the proponents of a semantics-first position, and those who are more open to the importance of pragmatics (see Salmon 2005). In the post-Wittgensteinian world, it is difficult to find proponents of functionalism. Yet, it is popular outside of philosophy. The linguist J.R. Firth accounts for meaning thus: "What do the words 'mean'? They mean what they do" (1964: 110). This view has been taken up with vigour among translation theorists, for example, Susan Bassnett:

> In translating… it is the function that will be taken up and not the words themselves, and the translation process involves a decision to replace and substitute the linguistic elements in the TL. And since [a] phrase [in English] is, as Firth points out, directly linked to English social behavioural patterns, the translator putting the phrase into French or German has to contend with the problem of the non-existence of a similar convention in either TL culture. (Bassnett 2002: 27)

Bassnett concludes: "The emphasis always in translation is on the reader or listener" (2002: 30). But Bassnett is not alone. We find a similar position defended by Eugene Nida. Nida's *Toward a Science of Translating, with Special Reference to Principles and Procedures Involved in Bible Translating* (1964) is one of the most cited works in Translation Studies over the last fifty years. Nida endorses a functionalist account of meaning (Nida 1964: 37), cites other theorists who agree, and, more importantly, proposes a functionalist criterion for evaluating translations (Nida 1964: 162-4). This trend of adopting functionalism is mirrored in *skopos* theory, according to which what normatively guides translation is not fidelity to the ST, but rather a goal (Greek *skopos*) that is a result of the negotiation between the translator—who is in all matters related to translation an expert—and the agent who *commissions* the translation. The commissioning of a translation, on this account, *assigns* a purpose both to the ST and the process of

translation, and the norms that govern a translation are those set out by the commission of the translation (Vermeer 1989: 174-184). This approach to textual reconstruction might be called *localization* by others who endorse *M*. Companies and businesses have to engage in the process of localization to render their products user-friendly for a target market, and this process will arise out of a dialogue between the commissioning agents and the facilitators of localization, who should be knowledgeable about the pragmatics of the target culture. But for *skopos* theory, this is also the core of translation.

3. Critical Issues and Topics

In this section we will investigate the challenges and conflicts that arise from semantics and pragmatics in translation. These are the critical issues of translation in relation to pragmatics, and the topics we shall address are the indeterminacy of translation and possible pragmatic solutions.

Consider the translation of South Indian kinship terms, from languages such as Tamil. In Tamil, one's parent's same-sex siblings are considered parents, not aunts and uncles. One's mother's older sister is one's "Periyama" ("periya" is BIG, "amma" is MOTHER: BIG MOTHER) and her husband would be Periyappa (BIG FATHER). One's mother's younger sister is "Chiththi" (SMALL MOTHER) and her husband is your Chiththapa (SMALL FATHER). Likewise one's father's brothers would be respectively Periyappa or Chiththapa (if they are older or younger than your father) and their wives would be your Periyama or Chitti. Your mother's brother is your "Māmma" and his wife Māmy, which are also the terms of address that juniors would use for their unrelated seniors in informal settings. One's father's sister is one's "Aththai," and her husband (in high caste Tamil) is "Athimbēr" (a term that also refers to one's older sister's husband) or more standardly "Athai kozhunan." What is the right translation of these terms? In English, we would collapse most of these into "Aunt" and "Uncle" but this would not translate the literal meaning of these expressions. The problem is that the pragmatics of "big mother" in English is not at all what it is in Tamil. (Indeed in Tamil, unlike in English with the rare exception of "big brother or sister," the concepts of BIG and SMALL can also generally do for "older" and "younger.") A literal translation will consist in loss of meaning and distortion, and nevertheless, translating "big mother" as "aunt" is semantically inaccurate and would result in a pragmatic loss of implications of parental intimacy, care and responsibility involved in acknowledging one's big mother.

W.V.O. Quine (1960) had noticed a similar problem in his *Word and Object*: we can arrive at

competing incompatible translations that are consistent with the totality of (empirical) evidence with no (possible) evidentiary way to decide the case. This is the empirical component of what Quine dubs the '*indeterminacy of translation*' (see Chapters 5 and 7 for further discussion). Translations of "Periyamma" into English as either "big mother" (literal translation) or "aunt" (pragmatic, functional translation) are likely examples of this kind of indeterminacy, as these are not compatible in English and yet both are suggested by the evidence. The indeterminacy here arises because we are faced with equally bad or good literal and pragmatic translations that are not compatible. Given that the pragmatics of our expressions are context-bound and often particular to languages and cultures, we should not be surprised that translators will be faced with such dilemmas in translation as a matter of course and moreover that we are led to these dilemmas because both the literal and pragmatic translations of expressions are suggested by the evidence.

Problems like this are what motivate the adoption of *P* and the rejection of *M* by translation theorists: we get rid of the dilemma of indeterminacy by merely siding with the user-friendly pragmatic translations. If we reject *M*, we would reject trying to semantically translate "Periyamma" as (the infelicitous) "big mother" and settle for "Aunt" when we are moving from Tamil to English.

One might try to justify this kind of translation via *M* by identifying a sentence in Tamil and a sentence in English as semantically equivalent on the grounds that they have the same truth conditions. There may be a sentence in English about one's Aunt that is true and false in exactly the same cases as a Tamil sentence about one's Periyamma and while the words "Aunt" and "Periyamma" are not semantically equivalent, the sentences they occur in may be taken as a single unit. Sentences such as "My Aunt is coming for dinner" and "My Periyamma is coming for dinner" seem to share a truth condition (said by me, in a specific context—when my mother's older sister is coming for dinner) and hence are translations of each other.

A problem with this approach is that it sacrifices "compositionality": the principle that the meaning of a sentence is a function of the meanings of its parts. Compositionality is a central tenet of a semantics-first approach, for it explains how the meaning of words, not their use, is central to the meaning of what is said. Disregarding compositionality in favour of treating sentences as units is to move into an Austinian frame where we take the context relative utterance of a sentence as critical to understanding its

significance. Then it is the pragmatics of these sentences that allows us to treat them as translationally equivalent, and so we are committed to *P,* not *M.* François Récanati (2010) argues that, in general, the way we understand the significance of sentences is by grasping their contextual use, which overrides compositionality. This is a pragmatics-first approach to significance that would license *P.*

So *P* on balance looks like the more honest way to understand how a Tamil sentence about one's Periyamma is translatable into an English sentence about one's Aunt as equivalent statements. *P* does not require us to pretend that such sentences share a meaning: it rather asks us to judge the accuracy of the translation purely on pragmatic grounds.

The problem with *P* is that on its own, it is absurd. It is absurd because it does not guarantee that a TT has to be a derivation of an ST. If a conclusion is derivable from premises, logicians say that the premises and conclusion relate to each other as a *valid* argument. In this case, if the premises are true the conclusion has to be true. (Validity is not about whether a premise is true or whether they can be true, and hence valid arguments can contain within them claims that are necessarily false, like contradictions, and even those that cannot be true or false, such as commands such as: P1 If you better run, then take the umbrella; P2 You better run; Therefore, take the umbrella. They can contain interrogatives: P1 To be or not to be, that is the question. Therefore, to be or not to be?) So for instance, the inference *q* therefore *q* is a valid inference for this reason, as are many rules of inference (such as Modus Ponens: if p then q, p therefore q). If translations conformed to *M* then an accurate TT would be a mere semantic restatement of an ST and would hence have to meet the minimal requirement of being a deductive derivation from the ST. Hence, if the Christian Bible ST is true, then the candidate Christian Bible TT would be true too. (This is a minimum standard, for TTs can meet it and fail to be accurate STs, when for instance, they are partial translations of the ST. Yet, it is rational to expect it as a minimum requirement of translation.) But if the Christian Bible ST is true, it does not follow that a TT Quran is true, and correspondingly if a Quran ST is true, it does not follow that a Bible TT is true. Yet, this is exactly what we would have to contend with if we adopted *P*: we would have to put up with the notion that the Bible and the Quran are inter-translations in respective conservative Christian and Muslim societies irrespective of the fact that we cannot derive the one, logically, from the other. So *P* is objectionable because it is irrational: it violates a most basic standard of reason, namely validity. But defenders of *P* might note that the problem here is not

9

P but *functionalism*. Rather, if we adopt Récanati's approach, then we only ever treat an SL and TL utterances as equivalent when they share a truth condition relative to a context of use. So it would seem in such cases, the TT could never be false if the corresponding ST is true. Yet, it is not clear that this defence is successful.

When we evaluate validity, we are not typically evaluating statements, but rather propositions in the abstract: it is the relationship of these propositions in the abstract that can entail each other. So too with translation. Translation does not obviously take statements as its objects. When we convert statements in one language into another, we are engaged in (what we could call) *interpretation*. An example of such activity is *simultaneous interpretation* (when for instance, an interpreter converts what an SL speaker says into corresponding TL sign-language for a deaf audience, in real time). Is this not mere hair splitting? Why is this pairing of SL and TL claims not also a form of translation? The difference between interpretation and translation is the preservation of truth (as we find in valid deductions). As Davidson notes in his "A Nice Derangement of Epitaphs" when people err in speech, we interpret what is said much like Récanati later claims: we understand the content of what is said as what we take to be true in the context and we ignore the error (1996: 472-3). So too with interpretation: the goal is to follow the content of what is said in context and so interpreters would be obliged to ignore errors of speech when producing interpretations (this is an aspect of the 'principle of charity': see Chapter 7 for further discussion). While to avoid absurdity, translations need to be derivable from an ST, in the case of interpretation, the TT correction is not derivable from the ST, but the ST usage. Interpretation is guided by pragmatic considerations that characterize *P*. Also in the case of translation we are often interested in preserving errors for two reasons. First, in the translation of science, or philosophy, we are often unsure what is true or relevant so we are not in a position to match sentences on the basis of their truth or relevance—even when relativized to a context. Secondly, errors can be important for the translator to preserve. For example, the translation of the testimony of a witness in a court case that sanitized the witness's errors would be tantamount to tampering with evidence that bears on the credibility of the witness. Yet *P*, with no concern for meaning, takes us here.

4.   Current Contributions and Research

P and *M* are the oddcouple of translation. If we choose either, we land in trouble: preserving literal

meaning and pragmatic features of the ST is a competitive endeavour. If we save literal meaning, we often sacrifice pragmatics, and if we save pragmatics, we often sacrifice meaning.

The plausible solution to this problem of needing both M and P is to propose a bridge principle that leads us to account for, and preserve, both the semantic and pragmatic features of the ST. So we assess the accuracy of the translation not in terms of M or P but in terms of the bridge principle.

The bridge principle in the Translation Studies literature has been called a "text-type" (cf. Holmes 1988: 74-76; Laviosa-Braithwaite 2001: 277-278; Neubert and Shreve 1992; Reiss 1981). A text-type is like a genre, except it has widespread institutional recognition and pertains to structural features of texts that exceed what is usually understood under the heading of a "genre." Examples of text-types include the philosophical text, the novel, the scholarly paper on natural science, and text-types can include among them sub-text-types: biology or chemistry texts may be sub-types in the natural sciences.

In acknowledging that texts come in types we are not committed to the notion that a single text is characterizable by only one type—nor are we committed to some sort of functionalism as early defenders claimed (cf. Reiss 1981). Plato's *Republic* for instance seems equally a great work of literature and of philosophy, and acknowledging text-types brings us to this appreciation. Rather, the utility of acknowledging that texts come in types is to allow us to *choose* a type as the *governing type* in translation, which allows us to treat contrary text-type features of a text as contributing to the governing type's objectives. A text so viewed through the lens of a type that we elect as the governing type may be called a *work*: something whose translatable content is determined by the governing type.

If we choose to read Plato's *Republic* as primarily an example of philosophy, we then treat the poetic, dramatic, comedic, historical, and empirical-scientific aspects of the text as contributing to its philosophical objectives. The ST so understood would be a work of philosophy that we can thereby translate into a TT. Our goal is to reproduce a TT that has the same text-type features of the ST including the subservient features: hence the literary and other text-type features of the text (what we identified as subsidiary types) would be reproduced in so far as they aid in the philosophical objectives of the text (which we chose as the governing type). But the reason we have to choose just one type as the governing type is that there can be conflicts between differing types in a text that come to light in translation: $type_1$ of a text may render the literal, linguistic meaning salient, while $type_2$ brings attention to its pragmatic

features, such as implicature. As noted in the literature, and in our previous investigation, we often cannot preserve both in translation—translation is a series of 'moves, as in a game', where 'every single move is influenced by the knowledge of previous decisions' (Levý 2000). In choosing one type as the governing type, we decide in advance how such conflicts are to be resolved. There may hence be multiple treatments of the same text as differing works that result in differing translations, but, as these were produced according to differing text-type considerations, they do not conflict. Correlatively, there may be multiple alternate translations of the same work that are, by virtue of the single *governing type* under which they were produced, equivalent.

A text-type, one that we elect as the *governing type*, serves as a protocol for designating features—pragmatic and semantic—of an ST to be preserved in a TT. Moreover, in so far as we are able to recreate a TT that has the relevant text-type features of the ST, we can call upon the text-type as providing rules for the preservation of content that show how it is that the TT is a genuine translation of the ST. So, looking back on our example of translating texts from Tamil that contain familial terms such as "Periyamma", the invocation of text-types as a mediating principle in translation shows that there is no absolute answer to the question of what the correct translation of such terms are. Rather, the question of whether "Aunt" will do for "Periyamma" has to be judged relative to the type that we elect as the governing type. It may be that in certain works "Aunt" is the best translation for "Periyamma", while in others, "Big Mother" would be preferable given the text-type theoretic objectives. But either way, the right translation will be determined not by fiat, nor on the basis of its effect on the audience, but by what is salient in an ST understood via the governing type.

Looking back on our example of purely pragmatic translation from the ST Bible into the TT Quran, we can see why this is implausible. It is hard to imagine a text-type that would license this type of transition—though *a priori* we cannot rule out that in the translation of some texts, perhaps texts of comedy, fiction, or drama, it may be that the pragmatics of an ST Bible quotation necessary for the objectives of the governing type is best served by a quote from the Quran in the TT, given the target language and audience. If for instance the intelligibility of a prayer by the audience is crucial for the intelligibility of a work of drama, the purposes of translation would be served by using a prayer that the TT audience could identify, which may not be what the ST audience would easily identify.

Yet, it may seem that we are back to the absurdity that lead us to a dissatisfaction with *P*, choosing translations on the basis of pragmatics that are not in any straightforward sense equivalent to the ST. But our set of theoretical resources is now richer, for we can invoke the governing text-type to show that the pragmatics of the TT should in some important and nontrivial reflect those of the ST. Relative to the text-type considerations, we could identify duly produced translations as being derivations of the ST. But, no doubt, the dissatisfaction can be reframed too again: the problem with pairing parts of the TT with parts of the ST on the basis of pragmatic considerations is that we are helping ourselves to features of a text that are by definition context bound. So there is no obvious sense—even with a bridge principle—to the idea that we can preserve the pragmatics of an ST in translation.

A solution to this problem has been defended at length in response to the usual criticisms about the feasibility or determinacy of translation in Translation Studies and philosophy (Ranganathan 2011, 2007). This solution is to treat the translatable content of a work—a text viewed through the lens of a governing type—as having a distinct kind of meaning: textual meaning, which is the meaning of the work from the perspective of this governing type. And just as literal meaning has uses that go beyond literal meaning (irony and metaphor, for instance), so too does textual meaning function pragmatically beyond the scope of its textual significance. But it is only textual meaning, according to this solution, that we preserve in translation. For example, "Plato's forms" and "Plato's ideas" are intertranslations in philosophy not because they share a linguistic meaning or because the pragmatics of "form" or "idea" in wider English are the same (one can say "that's a great idea!", but "that's a great form!" is infelicitous), but because they share the same pragmatics relative to the text-type of philosophy. The common (governing) text-type use of these phrases yields a textual meaning, which can be shared by an analogous construction in another language—a target resource use that a translator may even need to institute if no previous usage is available. It may be that the pragmatics of such a translation end up being culturally infelicitous, and perhaps even jarring for the target audience (especially if their philosophical intuitions are anti-Platonic). But this is not the fault of the translation, for the wider cultural pragmatics of the ST are not anything that the translator always has to preserve. If they are relevant in specific cases, they contribute to a certain textual meaning, which comes apart from wider pragmatic considerations in translation.

As meaning transcends context while pragmatics does not, textual meaning is something that we can preserve in translation. Textual meaning preserves the constituent literal-semantic and pragmatic features of a text in so far as their use is highlighted by the governing text-type (including subsidiary type uses). Textual meaning preserved in translation would pass the test of validity: if an ST of a certain textual meaning is true, then the corresponding TT with the same textual meaning would also be true. The difficulty is that in endorsing this approach we renounce trying to translate textual pragmatics—the practical role that a work enjoys in its source culture in the absence of governing type considerations. But we get to this austere position by understanding how the pragmatics of the text relative to a governing type is a distinct kind of meaning: textual meaning.

5. Main Research Methods

Mere adherence to *M* (assuming that linguistic meaning is what M preserves) would produce TTs that are unintelligible in proportion to their pragmatic divergence from the pragmatics of the ST. Mere adherence to *P* would yield absurd results. Thinking about translation as something that takes works under a governing type as objects avoids both problems, for such translation treats the governing type as determining how a TT can be equivalent to a ST (relative to that type)—and while the resulting TT may not always be culturally felicitous, it can be understood if the target audience has knowledge of the relevant type. It follows that linguistic competence in a SL and a TL are insufficient to produce an acceptable translation. One needs knowledge not only of the relevant source and target semiotic systems, but also the relevant text-types. In one respect, we should not be surprised. Linguistic competence in English is not sufficient to understand most English texts of philosophy, chemistry, or even poetry. Except for the odd prodigy, it takes an introduction into a text-type to render such texts intelligible. But we now see why it is not because we lack linguistic knowledge that reading chemistry, poetry or philosophy for the first time is difficult—in the cases of philosophy and poetry, novices usually know most if not all the words used. Until we understand a text-type, we are unable to evaluate how the semiotic resources of a text are *used* to express textual meaning, and our failure to appreciate textual meaning renders such texts opaque. In the case of many challenging types of texts, whether law, philosophy, empirical sciences, or mathematics, it often takes years of study to appreciate the type in question—we learn about the type by being challenged to understand several works of the same type.

What they have in common is the type and this is what we learn about via long-term, advanced study.

But as translating by types involves electing one as a governing type while relegating contrary types to subsidiary roles, it would seem that translators need to specialize not only in a type, but also have knowledge of types that play subservient roles relative to one's chosen type. It would seem then that the kind of knowledge that translators share is very general, and that we should avoid overgeneralizing strategies of translation based on narrow areas of translation research (Snell-Hornby 1988: 14). What translators have in common is the need to select a governing type, and understand the role of subsidiary types. The kind of rules that emerge from the specific constellation of types will depend upon the ranking of types.

The importance of type theoretic knowledge has not been lost on translators, who often specialize in specific types of texts. Indeed, it would seem that it behooves translators to familiarize themselves with text-types in order to apply them in translation. Most philosophy is translated by professional philosophers (Large 2014), and this is not an accident—who else would be able to figure out what is to be translated where philosophy is concerned? Yet it appears that we have a new challenge—one that requires research: the individuation of a type.

We can put the problem thus. To translate philosophy, for instance, we need to appreciate the text-type of philosophy. But philosophers disagree about what philosophy is. If we require some type of agreement on what the type of philosophy is in order to locate it, then there are apparently as many text-types of philosophy as there are schools of philosophy, or even individual contributions to philosophy. Thus we are in danger of trivializing the idea of a "type" of text that is philosophy, for our effort to locate it may lead us to regard each individual philosophical work as belonging to its own *sui generis* type.

A similar problem has been identified by Hans Georg Gadamer (1990): as "poetry," "science" and "philosophy" are merely words in our Western cultural and linguistic tradition, we have grounds to be skeptical not only that works from other cultures exemplify poetry, science and philosophy, but also that we have any means to adjudicate whether they do.

One promising solution that shows how text-types can be individuated despite these difficulties is to identify text-types with disciplines, as explored in the Indian tradition. According to Patañjali's 200 CE *Yoga Sūtra*, yoga, or "discipline", is a practice that we can undertake from differing perspectives, which

15

thereby enables us to isolate content for inquiry (for a philosopher's tranlsation of this text, please see Patañjali 2008). The content so identified is objective in the sense that it is not determined from a single perspective, but is converged upon from differing perspectives. Contemporary disciplines, such as mathematics, or philosophy, are examples of such practices that we can undertake from differing theoretical vantage points, from which we can triangulate on objects of research. This approach allows us to identify a discipline in the face of controversy, for the discipline is what renders the controversy intelligible: it allows us to take differing sides in a debate. For example, the discipline of philosophy, on this account, is not beholden to any individual perspective on what philosophy is, but, rather, this discipline is the procedural aspect of engaging in philosophical disagreement that individual perspectives have in common, and thus provides a common foundation upon which to build competing structures, and thereby disagree about what philosophy is without talking past one another. Hence, a discipline, such as philosophy, so understood, cannot be rejected because the question of what counts as philosophy is controversial: the discipline makes the controversy possible. In identifying a discipline, we have thereby identified the text-type of philosophy.

6. Recommendations for Practice

"Translation" is a term often used loosely. We have had occasion to distinguish *interpretation* and *localization* from translation. An ST that is interpreted into a TT preserves truth as the interpreter sees it. An ST that is localized into a TT serves a function desired by the commissioner of the localization. A translation of an ST into a TT can and often has to preserve errors—either, for example, as evidence or because we are not sure what is true in many cases of translation. P sheds light on both interpretation and localization, but we also need M in order to avoid the absurd results of merely preserving pragmatics in translation.

We have also discussed Quine's 'indeterminacy of translation', but, with the idea of text-type meaning in hand, it is worth another look. According to Quine , even at the limit of all possible empirical evidence, there would still be competing and incompatible, yet equally acceptable, translations of any given text (Quine 1960: 27). But a textual approach can avoid this concern. Quine's emphasis on empirical evidence is another way of talking about fixing translation by way of paring contextual word usage in the SL and TL—what Quine called "analytical hypotheses" (Quine 1960: 68). This is a version

of *P*. Given the trouble associated with *P*, we can see how it is that Quine can generate a skeptical conclusion in the face of all the empirical evidence: translations according to *P* are translations that violate validity, and derivations that are invalid can produce conclusions that are not consistent with their premises (such as *p*, therefore not *p*). Hence there is no guarantee of consistency between STs and TTs on this account, and hence no guarantee of the consistency of competing TTs—even and especially on the basis of the pragmatic (empirical) evidence. But in switching to a text-type, we identify textual meaning to be translated and the translation of text type theoretic meaning ensures that resulting TTs have the same text-type meaning as the ST: STs and TTs will always be consistent with each other, and competing TTs produced by the same text-type procedure would be equally consistent. No room for indeterminacy here as a matter of equally supported, inconsistent translation. Hence, the first order of business of a translator (who we assume to be knowledgeable both about the relevant semiotic systems (languages included) and about types) when confronted with a text to translate, is to:

(1) Designate one type as the governing type,

and then:

(2) Identify subsidiary types, and their instrumental roles.

The designation of the governing type in a translation is a choice, and one with consequences. If we choose, say, to read a journal article in chemistry as dramatic fiction, our efforts to translate it will be frustrated, for we will not be able to identify a plot. Hence, the choice of a governing type can either be acceptable or not. An acceptable choice for a governing type reveals to us something about the structure of a work as a semantic totality. It does not follow from this that acceptable choices will always reveal the workings of subsidiary types at play: some works are poorly written and a translator might have to contend with translating an imperfect work. But evaluating the merits of a work as a contribution to the literature is something only possible once we identify a governing type and look for subsidiary types. And we can always draw a distinction between cases where we have merely misunderstood the governing type of a work, and when we are confronted with a poorly written work: in the latter case, we see its faults relative to the governing type, while in the former we see ourselves at fault for incorrectly reading the text via a certain candidate type.

We can next look at:

(3) Isolation of translation units.

Translation units are the smallest parts of a text to be treated as indivisible. In some cases these may be words (especially technical terms), in other cases, sentences, and in others yet, whole passages. Such units are salient in light of (1) and (2).

Finally, what remains is:

(4) The recreation of the work in a target semiotic system by way of (1), (2) and (3).

We know we have succeeded when, translation unit for translation unit, the constituents of the units play the same role relevant to the governing and subsidiary types.

7. Future Directions

As we have seen, ideas from non-Western contexts can shed light on problems in translation theory. A largely underexplored future direction is to look to ideas from outside of the tradition in which puzzles about translation are generated for their solutions—solutions we learn about by translation.

8. Further Reading

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example of a class of texts, not a kind. The collection includes articles that explore functionalist strategies.)

9. Related Topics

Davidson; Derrida; Equivalence; Meaning; Quine; The translation of philosophical texts; Translation Theory; Wittgenstein

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