

TEXT ANALYSIS IN TEACHING TRANSLATION¹

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Abstract

The idea that translators begin to translate once they get a hold of the source language (SL) text is widely spread and controverted. As a cognitive and metacognitive strategy, text analysis is vital in translation training in order to gain a good expertise in translation. A two-phase model is discussed in this paper: an overall text evaluation first and then a deep analysis are undertaken. In the former, students learn to apply and indentify background knowledge, document sources, text length, price, and difficulty among other factors. In the latter, students analyse titles, text layout, communication situation, text types, genre, etc. The strategies and methodology to attain these phases in the translation process are explained step-by-step. Additionally, student samples will be shown as further illustrations.

1. Relevance of Text Analysis

Velasquez (1994:2) states that text does not exist for the sake of it. It is a semiotized product due to production conditions or preceding situations. The text accounts for the conditions of these situations through the linguistic code. The statements, according to Discourse Analysis (AD), are not chains of words and syntactic rules, they are the expression of a situational context in which the sender, the recipient the medium or channel, space, and time, among other factors play a defined role in the SL text that must be reflected in the target text (Tt).

According to Muñoz and Quiroz (1994), text analysis is important in the translation process before going deep into the technical process of translation, because it allows translators:

1. To establish partially the price of translation depending on the "difficulty" of the text.
2. To decide if the translation should be accepted in terms of difficulty and delivery time.
3. To determine some cognitive strategies in order to activate long-term memory about the topic of the text and translator's background knowledge.
4. To establish text features of SI text in order to visualize TI text features.
5. To determine the type of translation to carry out, say, a recipient-oriented translation (communicative translation), or a sender-oriented translation (semantic translation) according to Newmark (1988, 45-46).
6. To locate possible document sources if necessary.
7. To identify the sender's intention and the possible effect on the recipient in SI text and the TI text recipient.
8. To choose some translation procedures in advance.

¹ Dedicated to Professors Ramiro Restrepo and Gonzalo Velásquez for their academic support and fulfillment.

9. To be aware of the possible problems of SL text and to overcome them.
10. To establish immediately the cohesion and coherence relationships in the SL text and see how they should be in TL text.
11. To search for the function of the terms and style in the text.

Furthermore, a good text analysis optimizes processes in time and quality and at the same time, it prevents some possible mistakes in the (re)production of SL text. Nord (1991, 43-44) and Holz-Mantari (1984, 45-46) mention the recovered rhetoric formula from the Stoic Hermagora of Temnos. "*quis quid quando ubi cur quem ad modum quibus adminiculis*" introduced in the book *American New Rhetoric* (Lasswell, 1946) as "who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?" This formula is augmented as a model of translation-oriented text analysis from the point of view of discourse analysis and pragmatics as follows:

Who transmits to whom, what for, by which medium, where, when, why a text with what function, on what subject-matter does he say, what (what not), in what order, using which non-verbal elements, in which words, in what kind of sentences, in which tone, to what effect.

Moreover, translation students can overcome many linguistic and pragmatic problems just by reading first the SL text before going deep into the transfer process.

2. A Two-phase Model for Text Analysis

We divide text analysis into two phases: Overall evaluation of SL text and deep analysis of SL text. The first phase is performed when the initiator (client) sends the SL text to be translated (Hölz-Mantari, 1984; Nord, 1991). Translators or students may carry out this phase in some minutes and establish, as we stated before, if the contract may be accepted. Later on, they can perform deeply the second phase at home. During this process, students can move from one phase to another in order to grasp correctly the meaning and the situation of the SL text.

2.1 First Phase: Overall evaluation of SL text.

During this phase students verify what they know about the text in the first place and the document sources they need to search in order to attain an accurate translation. Besides, students determine text length in order to establish the time of the whole process and in the case of a real translation, the price.

2.1.1 The Initiator

The initiator of the translation assignment is a very important factor in the translator's professional life. The translation's initiator can be either the client, a contact (or intermediary), or a translation agency. The originators of the text to be translated are relevant, because they may affect not only the price of the text but also the deadline for the delivery of the translation. However, and most important, it is the fact that the initiator can provide and even influence the instructions for the translation of a text.

2.1.2 Knowledge Areas

On the one hand, students learn and identify the most common areas in the market. Areas are divided into technical, technological, scientific and popular. The teaching of translation is oriented to the first three areas. At the same time, students see the difference between a popular text and a scientific one in terms of lexis, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics taking into account that a scientific text for asthma, for instance is different from a popular one. (Picht and Artanz, 1995; Pitch, 1995b-1996; Schmitz, 1996; Sager, 1990).

On the other hand, students verify that a text about medicine may involve other areas related to the topic e.g. pediatrics, immunology, allergology, statistics, etc. In this way, students can separate terms and words of different areas, and look them up not only in a linguistic dictionary or in a medical dictionary, but also in different specialized dictionaries depending on the area the term belongs to. Also, if they have the opportunity, they may consult an expert or specialized journals to look up terms or some style features. Finally, students analyze if the text is difficult or not for them and how much research they must carry out.

2.1.3 Translator's Background Knowledge

In the previous item, students can confront what they know about the topic. We always recommend our students to read any kind of texts. Knowledge can be achieved from magazines, journals, the press, the TV, the radio, conferences, some people, etc. (people are document sources too). Previous knowledge makes the difference in quality and speed. If a student knows or likes the topic she/he is translating,

normally, the translation (the product) is sent quickly and with a good quality, if not, the student must carry out a lot of document research. This knowledge experience is only learnt by reading or translating.

2.1.4 Research (Document Sources)

This depends on the previous knowledge students have. Normally, the translator has the linguistic and general knowledge, and the experts, the terms and usage. The first source students use is the dictionary (linguistic one), which we do not recommend very much. We advise our students to distance themselves from it, because it is hard to find some terms and usage. Students learn that they must carry out further research, resorting to other sources particularly bilingual informants or experts, native speakers, monolingual, bilingual, and specialized dictionaries, encyclopedias, and documents where they find terms, usage, or style. They may also take into account how much time is available before the deadline.

2.1.5 Text Length

In the translation market, the translation is sent double space and with 1250 characters. Students figure out how the SL text length is and how it may be rendered in the TL text in order to establish an overall price and time of delivery. Students may distinguish verbal and non-verbal elements and should also agree with the client if the non-verbal elements may be included. Students may also take into account the number of columns on each page, and font size. For instance, a page from a medical journal may occupy 5 or 6 pages in the SL. So students learn to explain the client that the price is not for a page of the SL text, but a page in the TL text. If non-verbal elements may be

included, edition may be time-consuming and the price should be higher. Sometimes, a written text could be translated and recorded on a tape for cost reasons. Thus, students should learn to manage this business, too.

2.1.6 Tools

Edition, time delivery, and length may depend on the available tools and the client demands. Good tools imply more speed and better quality. However, "speed goes against quality". In general, students translation average is half a page per hour and as an academic exercise, 500 words per week are recommended in intermediate and advanced levels. The most common and efficient tools are as follows: a video, a TV set, a pair of headphones, a tape, a microphone for spoken translation and a computer, a printer, a scanner, terminology and translation databases for a written translation. When students use these tools efficiently, they have more advantages over the other students in terms of time and quality.

2.1.7 Delivery Modes

According to the tools you use, you can deliver the translated text in different materials. Usually, the text has to be delivered on paper. You can meet the translation's initiator or the translation via post office or courier (make sure to agree how the extra charge is going to be paid for it). Also, you can record the translation and deliver it on a cassette as a result of your work. Besides these, you can use a computer to complete your job and the delivery can either be via a fax/modem or via electronic mail. Apart from these means, you have to make sure that some

software requirements can be met in order to make the file usable for the initiator.

2.1.8 Activities for the First Phase

As there is not enough literature about some of the topics explained here, we give a detailed outline (see Appendix #1). Then a small discussion is carried out in order to clarify some points. As a practice, a workshop of small texts is given to the students to identify knowledge areas of each text. At the same time, students may differentiate similar knowledge texts saying if texts are technical or "popular" and why. Even though the difference may depend upon syntax, style, or pragmatics, vocabulary features are used as a guide. In a second workshop, students apply the five items explained before in different types of texts. Students are asked to be as explicit as possible in their answers. This is to avoid general or open answers. Regularly, workshops are resolved in an open discussion to get each other's feedback in order to improve their analysis day by day. Furthermore, students are invited to discuss teacher's or classmates' points of view. In order to reinforce this phase, a workshop is assigned out of classroom. For this homework, students should go for assistance. Finally, students have no tools, only their background and intuition, and pair work is highly recommended.

2.2. Second Phase: Deep Analysis of SL Text

In this phase, students perform further analysis and research in order to grasp correctly the meaning and text situation. Here, students determine many factors of SL text that may vary in TL text. For this

phase, a workshop is performed for each item explained. However, each time students are asked to recycle all items in order to master the process. Some topics are done in just one class, others are done in four or five classes, because feedback in the classroom is a major hint. Activities and methodology are included in each item of this phase.

2.2.1 Titles

Newmark (1988,56) distinguishes two kinds of titles: allusive and descriptive. He also shows that titles can be translated in a different way into the TL text and that translators and students may be aware of this fact. In this item, students read about titles at home. Then at a library, they should choose 10 allusive and 10 descriptive titles. In addition, they may suggest a translation according to the context as well as add the references of each title. There is no discussion, because they may put into practice the theory and the report should reflect what they have read. This workshop is also carried out in pairs.

2.2.2 Text Layout

This item concerns mainly with text edition and relevant verbal and non-verbal information. At the same time, some translation procedures are discussed in order to see how text layout may vary in the TL text. First, letter size, fonts such as *italics*, **bold**, and underline, and signs and symbols are identified and treated meaningfully, e.g. a proper name in *italics* must be transferred into the second language, because it is a scientific name. In turn, these *italics* give a

technical style to the SL text as well as TL text. Second, photos, tables, seals, graphics, icons, and footnotes should be reproduced in some types of text. Thus, students learn to handle the layout together with the client in terms of reproduction edition and time. In a workshop of micro-texts, students identify text layout explaining its function with the meaning and discussing if it should be reproduced in TL text. Besides, they discuss what tools and time they need to perform a translation of one of the texts.

2.2.3 Communication Situation

Together with text types, this is the topic students enjoy the most, because the analysis of communication situation involves a great deal of background knowledge in SL text (English in this case). sender (author), recipient (reader), intention and effect, and medium or channel are elements discussed for each text (Nord, 1991; Hölz-Mäntäri, 1984). Before this, students read about the topic in translation and discourse analysis books (Escandell 1993, Nord, 1991; Hölz-Mäntäri, 1984; Newmark, 1988 and 1994). During discussion, students notice a lack of parameters to identify such elements. Thus, a questionnaire taken from Nord (1991,20-90) and adapted (Quiroz, 1996) is provided in order to coin accurately these elements (appendix # 2). Later on, two students share their viewpoints and the rest of the group tries to discuss them. In this way, students enrich each other's backgrounds. This is the reason why we always recommend our students to work in pairs. Texts are chosen with or without authors' name and from political and cultural

contexts in order to perceive different senders or receivers. For instance, in a letter sent to the editor of a magazine, students find two senders: the ambassador and the Colombian president. Some argue that the ambassador is talking on behalf of the president of the nation (see appendix # 3). Finally, students are asked to support their answers from a pragma-linguistic point of view searching for verbal or non-verbal features that may reveal one of the elements, especially the sender and the intention.

2.2.4 Type of Text

Types of texts are generally based on Jakobson's and Bühler's functions of language, but they are aimed from a translation point of view. Newmark (1988,39-44), Reiss (1972,1976), Reiss and Vermeer (1984) have typified texts in linguistic and pragmatic aspects. For practical and punctual reasons ; we chose Newmark's parameters. Newmark distinguishes six functions: vocative expressive, informative, metalinguistic, phatic, and aesthetic. Even though we discuss all functions, we centered workshops on the first three, for they are the most common in the market. In the classroom, students realize that a text may hold more than one function, but one is more relevant. In general, we give a good importance to the informative function which is divided into four sub-functions that mix at some point in some texts (Newmark: 1998,40-41). A workshop is used for common discussion, but then students are asked to bring three texts: vocative, informative, and expressive. Texts are

shown with full details and examples on an OHP. After that, the classmates and we discuss if the texts are properly chosen and the examples are correctly selected or if some features were not taken into consideration. Finally, students should answer if any SL text features from the chosen texts vary in TL text and why.

2.2.5 Discourse Genre

Larson (1984:365-381) makes an analysis of discourse genre from a translation point of view. Texts can be identified as narrative, procedural, expository, hortatory, descriptive, and repartee. Each genre is explained under the following parameters: person, orientation, time, backbone (core), and primary structure. Semantic and pragmatic analysis is the core of this item while text-types (2.2.4) are mainly based on lexical and syntactic features. With these two approaches, we try to cover linguistic and non-linguistic analysis of text for translation purposes. In this item, students may read theory in advance. In the classroom, a table of discourse genre is filled up while a discussion is carried out. Students argue intuitively that the features given by Larson are not always the same as their Spanish counterparts. At this stage, discussion is enriched and enjoyed very much. In the next class, a discourse genre workshop identifies and analyses 13 different texts in which supporting examples and explanations are given. Then, groups are invited to expose their answers. Thus, viewpoints and thoughts are enriched very much and students correct each other by giving reasons based on examples and theoretical reasons. In this way, they learn

to rely on sources in order to make learning more scientific than they normally do. As a recycling exercise, we prepare a workshop in order to cover the two phases. The workshop consists of a 400-500-word text on a specialized topic (see Appendix # 4). Here, students analyze and identify step-by-step the items of each phase giving them examples and theoretical reasons. We always make emphasis on giving them full examples and theoretical reasons because, at some stage, students think they understand the whole process and thus they can omit the complete analysis. The analysis is performed in and out of classroom with four days for the analysis and the translation. Also, they should include comments about the problems they had during the process and the product. During this period of time, students may look for the assistance of the teacher or an expert. In this report, all sources and references must be included in order for it to be valid as a piece of scientific work.

3. Conclusion

Since we always ask students for feedback about the different activities done in and out of classroom, we think that text analysis is very relevant for translation training for several reasons. First, students see that translation is a process and not only a product. Second, students enjoy those activities very much, because they are challenged with "difficult things" and further research outside the classroom. Thus, they may outdo themselves, seeing that the difficulty depends on each person's background knowledge. Furthermore, students attain a good level of analysis and

critical thinking due to classroom feedback and group work, which is the core of the process. During workshops, students learn to work in groups, having in mind that translation is not a process to work on alone. Third, students realize that good analysis is basic for grasping the meaning of a text and in getting involved with the translation process. Thus, the transfer process could be easier and faster. Finally, it is important to mention that text analysis is just one process, and that the transfer process (synthesis) is another. The transfer process implies the development of other skills (translation techniques) which students should master after text analysis in order to accomplish expertise in translation.

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This bibliography includes both books discussed in this paper and those from which we have been taking ideas to build our own point of view.

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Appendix # 1

OVERALL EVALUATION OF SL TEXT

The initiator

Knowledge areas	1. Technical & technological	Lexis
	2. Scientific	Syntax
		Semantics
		Pragmatics

Interdisciplinary studies	Medicine	Pediatrics Immunology Allergology Statistics Management
	Music	Physics-acoustics Musical system Physiology

Advantages	type of dictionary	monolingual	linguistic	thesaurus
	document sources	bilingual	Sci & tech	synonyms

Translator's background	Magazines		txt difficulty	
	Journals	yes		individual
	lectures	no		not from txt
	mass media		research amount	

Yes No	Experience	Translators	Mass media
	Speed	Quality	Readings

Document sources : It depends on the background knowledge you have

	Translator	general knowledge	usage	Experts
		linguistic knowledge	terms	
Where ?	Dictionaries Enciclopedia Experts Document research	Genre Lexis Style	Time availability for research	
			Genre Txt type	

SI Text Length	pages columns fonts size	Non-verbal information	tables photos graphics icons
		Verbal information	

TI text Length	(re)produce ?	Spoken
		Spoken-written

Delivery	yes	Edition	no
	+	Cost	-

Tools	Video TV set, headphones Typing machine (?) Tapes, microphone Computer, scanner, printer... informants, pencil...	Availability Vs. Client needs (initiator)
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More quality, more speed

SPEED GOES AGAINST QUALITY

Average	A professional	One page in word processor per hour
	A student	The half. As an academic exercise : 500 word per week in two courses.

Delivery Modes

DEEP ANALYSIS OF SL TEXT

TITLES	Allusive Descriptive	SL titles = TL translation	
TEXT LAYOUT	Non-verbal inf. Verbal inf.	Photos Tables Seals Graphics Icons Footnotes... Capitals, small case Size of letters Fonts : Bold , <i>Italics</i> , <u>underline</u>	EDITION
COMMUNICATION SITUATION		Sender-recipient Intention-effect Medium...	Discourse markers
TYPE OF TEXT	Vocative Expressive Informative Metalinguistic Phatic Aesthetic	Functions	<i>LEXIS</i> & <i>SYNTAX</i> Newmark
	Informative function features SL TL	Passive Voice Present and perfect tenses Jargon (terms) Multi-noun compounds Empty verbs, latinised vocabulary No metaphores, literal language...	
DISCOURSE GENRE	Narrative Procedural Expository Hortatory Descriptive Repartee	Genre	Person Orientation Time Backbone Primary structure
LINGUISTIC AND NON-LINGUISTIC FEATURES		SEMANTIC & PRAGMATICS	Larson

Appendix # 2

List of Parameters to Identify the Communication Situation

In order to clarify and to have some points of reference, apply the following test to your text and homework assignments.

This test is taken and adapted from Nord (1992 :20-90). Remember that all these questions cannot be applied totally to any text. They vary from text to text.

QUESTIONS

1. SENDER

- 1.1 Who is the sender of the text ?
- 1.2 Has the sender written the text himself ?
- 1.3 Is he an expert in text production or in the subject ?
- 1.4 What information about the sender can be obtained from the text environment ?
e.g. age, geographical and social origin (culture), education, status, relationship to the subject matter...
- 1.5 What clues as to the characteristics of the sender can be inferred from other situational factors ? (medium, place, time, motive, intention, function...)

2. INTENTION :

- 2.1 Are there any extratextual or intratextual statements by the sender as to his intention concerning the text?
- 2.2 Can the intention be inferred from lexic, syntactic, semantic, or pragmatic features of the text ?
- 2.3 What clues as to the sender intention can be inferred from situational factors ?
(medium, place, time, motive, intention, recipient, function...)
- 2.4 Can the intention be inferred from sender's environment ?

3. RECIPIENT

- 3.1 What information about the recipient can be inferred from text environment ?
- 3.2 What recipient (readership) can be drawn from the sender's and intention's environment ?
- 3.3 What clues as to the characteristics of the recipient can be inferred from other situational factors ?
(sender, medium, place, time, motive, intention, function...)

4. CONTEXT

- Channel or medium

- 4.1 Has the text been taken from a spoken or a written communication ? By which medium was it transmitted ? Radio, magazine, conference, journal, newspaper, TV, etc.
- 4.2 Can the medium be inferred from text features or layout ?
- 4.3 What clues as to medium or channel can be inferred from other situational factors (sender, intention, recipient, etc.)

- Place :

- 4.4 Where was the text produced or transmitted ?
- 4.5 What clues as to dimension of space can be inferred from other situational factors ? (sender, recipient, medium, motive...)

- Time :

- 4.6 When was the text written or produced ?
- 4.7 What clues as to dimension of time can be inferred from other situational factors ? (sender, recipient, medium, motive...)

- Motive :

- 4.8 Why was the text written ?
- 4.9 Was the text written for a special occasion ?
- 4.10 Is the text intended to be read or heard more than once or regularly ?

5 EFFECT

- 5.1 What are the expectations of the ideal reader in TL towards the text or the sender ?
- 5.2 Are the expectations of the TL reader the same of the SL reader (not the ideal one) ?
- 5.3 Can the effect be changed in the SL, how is it changed ?

Appendix # 3
Indentication of Senders and Receivers

Targets of Colombian Cartels

YOUR ARTICLE ABOUT COLOMBIA'S PRESIDENTIAL elections cast doubts about the integrity of President-elect Ernesto Samper Pizano (Colombia, July 4). You reported on tapes of telephone conversations between a leader of the Cali cartel and a journalist known to be on the cartel's payroll, and quoted a senior policymaker as saying they provided compelling evidence that Samper "owes his victory to the narco-mafia". That is an erroneous conclusion. Yes, the cartels tried to give money to the campaigns of both Samper and his opponent, Andrés Pastrana, but they failed. Candidate Samper established an independent ombudsman whose primary job was to avoid the infiltration of drug money. Several donations were rejected because of their dubious origin. Samper has requested an exhaustive investigation of these allegations.

Many people in public life in Colombia are targets of the cartels. President elect Samper narrowly survived an assassination attempt in 1989. Now the drug traffickers have tried again to eliminate him-not with bullets but with lies, rumor and innuendo aimed at undermining his credibility. We have been on the front lines in the war on drugs. No one can doubt our commitment.

Gabriel Silva
Ambassador of Colombia
Washington

Appendix # 4

Identification of all Items in a Text

11:00-11:30 a.m.

Monday 29 , 1995

ASTHMA AND THE INDOOR ENVIRONMENT

By
Meyer Kattan, MD

Several factors in the indoor environment may play a role in the development of asthma or in aggravating symptoms in those children with asthma. These factors are mainly allergens or airway irritants.

Relative Risk of current asthma in 5-8 year old children

	Relative Risk
ETS	1.7
Gas cooking	2.0
Use of humildifiers	1.6
Damp homes	1.5

1. Allergens

A. House dust mite

1. Mite allergy :

Asthmatics - 45-85%

Controls - 5-30%

2. 90% of mite allergens in house dust in the U.S. Consist of 2 species:

Dermatophagoides pteronissinus

Dermatophagoides farinae

3. Mites thrive best in areas of high humidity and in temperate climates

4. 2 ug/gm of dust is risk factor for sensitization.

5. 10 un/gm of dust is risk factor of asthma symptoms in mite-sensitive individuals

6. Mite control:

Bedroom is most important place to reduce allergen exposure

Hardwood floors have lowest amount of allergen

Mites not effectively removed by vacuuming carpets

Acaracides

Substances that kill mites via chemical action e.g. benzyl benzoate, tannic acid.

Benefit is controversial and effects of long term exposure have not been adequately studied.

Cover bedding with plastic mattress covers (Note: Feather pillows and wool blankets are havens for mites)

B. Cats

C. Dogs

D. Molds

Mold growth is found in damp basement floors bathrooms, refrigerators, damp pens and humidifiers.

E. Cockroaches

In inner cities, 36% of children are sensitized to cockroaches. Cockroaches thrive on food and water. Therefore, control is more effective if leaks are repaired, dishes are dried and uncovered food is removed.

II. Irritants

A. Environmental Tobacco Smoke (ETS)

1. Prevalence of smoking in U.S. - 30%
2. Prevalence of maternal smoking in inner city asthmatics.
 - a. African Americans -39%
 - b. Latinos -26%
3. In utero exposure associated with:
 - a. Decreased lung function
 - b. Increased bronchial reactivity
4. The relative risk of asthma due to maternal smoking in the general population is 1.5-2.0
5. Asthmatics exposed to ETS have more frequent emergency room visits and symptoms than those not exposed
6. Pediatric choice based smoking intervention smoking cessation rates at 6 months (Wall et al, 1995)

	Smokers	Quitters
Minimal intervention	2.7%	45%
Extended intervention	5.9%	55%
	(p < .01)	(p < .01)

B. Nitrogen Dioxide

1. Main source - gas stoves
2. High exposure associated with higher incidence of asthma.