

SOURCE LANGUAGE TEXT,
PARALLEL TEXT, AND
MODEL TRANSLATED TEXT:
A PILOT STUDY IN
TEACHING TRANSLATION

TEXTOLINGUA ORIGEN, TEXTO PARALELO
Y TEXTO TRADUCIDO MODELO.
ESTUDIO PILOTO EN ENSEÑANZA
DE LA TRADUCCIÓN

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Abstract

The advance in cultural-oriented perspectives in Translation Studies has sometimes played down the text linguistic nature of translation. A pilot study in teaching translation was carried out to make students aware of the text linguistic character of translating and help them to improve their translation skills, particularly with an emphasis on self-awareness and self-correcting strategies. The theoretical background is provided by the Dynamic Translation Model (2004, 2005) proposed by the author, with relevant and important contributions taken from Genette's (1982) transtextuality phenomena (hypertext, hypotext, metatext, paratext, intertext) and House and Kasper's (1981) pragmatic modality markers (downgraders, upgraders). The key conceptual role of equivalence as a defining feature of translation is also dealt with. The textual relationship between Source Language Text (SLT) is deemed to be pivotal for performing translation and correction tasks in the classroom. Finally, results of the pilot study are discussed and some conclusions are drawn.

Keywords: *Translation Studies, Text Linguistics, Dynamic Translation Model, Transtextuality, Modality Markers, Equivalence, Parallel Text, Model Translated Text.*

Resumen

El desarrollo de las teorías traductológicas orientadas hacia la cultura en ocasiones ha opacado la naturaleza textolingüística de la traducción. Se llevó a cabo un estudio piloto para la enseñanza de la traducción con el fin de recalcar entre los estudiantes el carácter textolingüístico de la labor de traducción y para ayudarles a mejorar sus habilidades de traducción, con especial énfasis en las estrategias de autoconciencia y autocorrección. El marco teórico proviene del Modelo Traductológico Dinámico (2004, 2005), propuesto por el autor, con destacados aportes tomados de los fenómenos de transtextualidad de Genette (1982) (hipertexto, hipotexto, metatexto, paratexto, intertexto) y de los marcadores de modalidad pragmática de House y Kasper (1981) (atenuadores, intensificadores). También se aborda el papel conceptual fundamental de la equivalencia como rasgo determinante de la traducción. Se cree que la relación textual entre el Texto en la Lengua de Origen (tlo) es el eje para llevar a cabo la traducción y la corrección de tareas en el salón de clase. Finalmente, se discuten los resultados del estudio piloto y se sacan algunas conclusiones.

Palabras clave: *Teorías traductológicas, textolingüística, Modelo Traductológico Dinámico (MTD), transtextualidad, marcadores de modalidad, equivalencia, texto paralelo, texto traducido modelo*

1. Introduction

Since the so-called “pragmatic turn” in language studies in the 70s (cf. Helbig, 1986) it has been recognized that the linguistic unit of analysis in the communicative interaction is the discourse or text. This new unit of analysis is approached from a brand-new perspective of language use: every chunk of language produced by speakers of any language should be studied within its actual context of production taking into consideration as many intervening factors as possible. Disciplines such as pragmatics, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, and textlinguistics saw their heyday in this period of the evolution of linguistics. There was a clear interest in overcoming the traditional structural view of linguistics which considered that its proper subject-matter was *la langue* and not *la parole*, in De Saussure’s terms. Thus a shift of emphasis from the abstract, idealized linguistic system to the actual language use took place. On the other hand, traditional scholars in translatology (e.g. in the school of Leipzig, Kade, 1968) did recognize the communicative nature of translation, but restricted their analysis to the linguistic component of the communicative process, focusing almost exclusively on the coding and decoding of linguistic units. This view of the School of Leipzig was criticized, among others, by F. Apel for having stressed too much the regularities of the translation process, the establishment of equivalences between *languages*, and their exclusive interest in pragmatic texts (Apel, 1983)¹ [highlighted by me]. Shveitser (1988) also criticized the tenets held by the representatives of the School of Leipzig on the grounds that they did not take into account the socio-cultural and other extra-linguistic components of translation.²

It is also in the 70s that a new interest is expressed by representatives of the so-called Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) in favor of a non-prescriptive, history-oriented and context-sensitive approach, particularly

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- 1 Die sogenannte “Leipziger übersetzungswissenschaftliche Schule” unterscheidet zwischen allgemeiner und spezieller Übersetzungswissenschaft. Erstere untersucht die prinzipiellen Gesetzmäßigkeiten der Übersetzungsvorgangs, letztere das System der potentiellen Äquivalenzen zwischen zwei Sprachen. [...] und schränkt zudem ihren Gegenstandsbereich –vor allem bei der speziellen Übersetzungswissenschaft– auf pragmatische Texte ein. (Apel, 1983, p. 12).
 - 2 Отсутствуют социокультурные и другие экстралингвистические компоненты перевода. (Shveitser, 1988, p. 49).

with regard to literary translation. (cf. Hermans, 1999, p. 96). This new approach in Translation Studies is summarized by Hermans himself (Hermans, 1985, p. 10):

A view of literature as a complex and dynamic system; a conviction that there should be a continual interplay between theoretical models and practical case studies; an approach to literary translation which is descriptive, target-oriented, functional and systemic; and an interest in the norms and constraints that govern the production and reception of translations, in the relation between translation and other types of text processing, and in the place and role of translations both within a given literature and in the interaction between literatures.

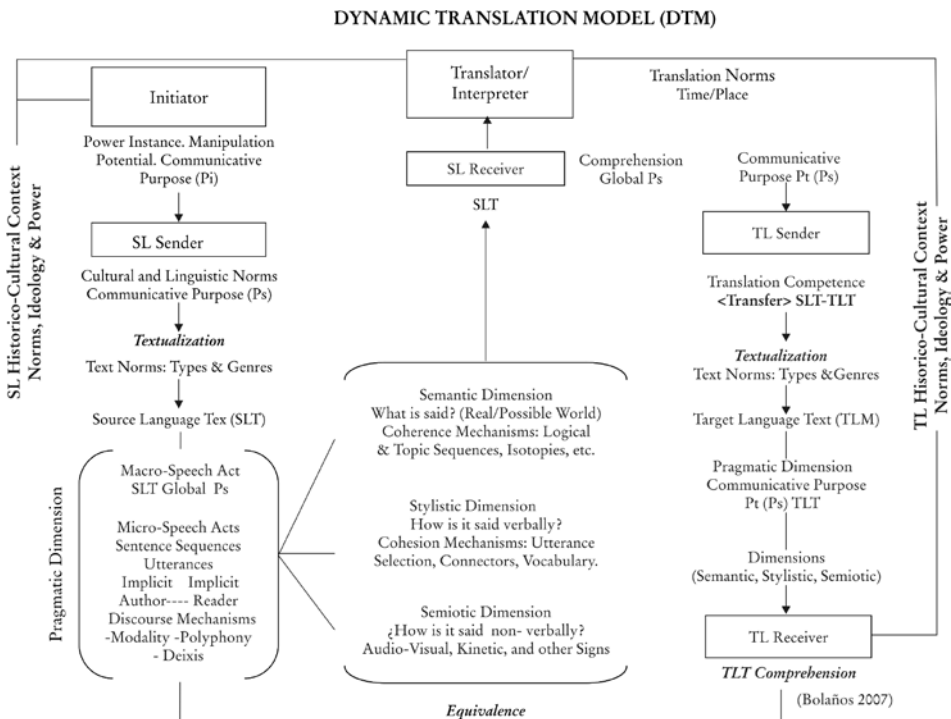
With DTS and the theories which developed afterwards in a similar direction, albeit with different emphases, (Polysystem theory, Skopos Theory, Postcolonialism, etc.), Translation Studies gained a new perspective on the contextual factors (norms, constraints) which affect the production and particularly the reception of (literary) translations. Unfortunately, this advance in the recognition and study of these contextual factors has sometimes led to an extreme position where the (text) linguistic nature of translation is dramatically played down. In translation theory both text (linguistic component) *and* context (cultural component *lato sensu*) form a dyad in continuous dialectic movement, i.e. they determine each other. The recognition of this very fact of the textual and contextual nature of translating will have positive consequences for the understanding of translation as a whole, for translation criticism (as has been demonstrated by House 1997), and for translation itself as a pedagogical or as a professional activity.

Based on the previous statements, in particular with regard to the linguistic textual nature of translation and its relevance for its teaching practice, in this paper I attempt to show the results of a pilot study that was carried out during the first semester of 2006 in the graduate program (Especialización) in translation at Universidad del Rosario in Bogotá. The 8 students of the third (last) semester of the program took part in it. They were provided with general informative texts (according to Reiss, 1971/2000, typology) to translate. In order to carry out their translations students were presented with parallel texts to help them in the translation process. Then a model translation prepared by the teacher was used as a benchmark for self-

correcting their versions. The global theoretical framework for this research was provided by our Dynamic Translation Model (cf. Bolaños 2001, 2004, 2005). The pedagogical input had already been spelt out in Bolaños (2003). G. Genette's distinction of transtextuality in intertexts, paratexts, metatexts, and hypertexts also proved to have a huge potential for application in translatology, and particularly in the case which concerns us here.

2. Theoretical background

According to our proposal of a Dynamic Translation Model (DTM), translation is understood as a human action (*Handlung*) which takes place at three interwoven, mutually interconnected levels, from the widest and most complex to the most readily apprehensible (for a detailed presentation of the model, cf. Bolaños, 2004, 2005). The outermost level corresponds to the historico-cultural context of both the Source Language (SL) and the Target Language (TL), then the intercultural bilingual communicative process appears where the translation activity takes place, and finally this activity is concretized at the text linguistic level.



2.1 Initiator's and Sender's communicative purposes (intention)

The actors of the translation process are described according to their action and their relationship with the three levels above mentioned. The Initiator of the translation process is located at the outermost level, i.e. the historico-cultural level. It can be a person or an institution which commissions the translation. It/He is endowed with a Communicative Purpose (Pi) which generally reflects a particular interest of a different kind: economic, political, ideological, aesthetic, scientific, etc. It/He commissions the translation according to its/his predominant interest. This communicative interest can be openly ideologically manipulative, for instance when a literary translation is commissioned with the explicit directive that the plot of a novel should be twisted so that the prevailing religious values in the target language community are not jeopardized (cf. Ben-Ari, 2002). At the pragmatic level of the intercultural communicative translation event (second level), we can observe a case of discrepancy between the Initiator's intention and the communicative purpose of the SLT. They need not coincide. If the Initiator openly intervenes in the SLT by changing its content (= textual semantic dimension) and initial communicative purpose (= textual pragmatic dimension), then the resulting text (TLT) is very likely not to be considered a 'translation' in traditional terms. In this respect, G. Toury's (1995) polysystemic tenet that a translation is a translation by the very fact of being recognized as such by the target community is somehow controversial to the extent that it overemphasizes the role played by this target language community in defining what is to be counted as a translation:

Strange as it may sound to the uninitiated, there is nothing too perverse in claiming that a text's position (and function), including the position and function which go with a text being regarded as a translation, are determined first and foremost by considerations originating in the culture which hosts them. In fact this is the most normal practice of the 'persons-in-the culture' themselves. Thus, when a text is offered as a translation, it is quite readily accepted *bona fide*, no further questions asked. Among other things, this is the reason why it is that easy for *fictitious* translations to pass as genuine ones (Toury, 1995, p. 26).

2.2 *Translation as a source language text-bound phenomenon* (a case of *hypertextuality*)

On the other hand, we share the viewpoint expressed by W. Koller: “As an *empirical* science translation science should say what relationship should exist between Source Language Texts and Target Language Texts, so that the latter, translations, are considered its subject-matter.”³ (Koller, 1993, p. 50). “Thus the *equivalence relationship* (translation relationship) is considered the *translation constituting element* between the Target Text and the Source Text.”⁴ U. Eco points out in the same direction: “The problem not only of the dictionary, of this book and of all translatology is what is meant by *giving the equivalent*.”⁵ (Eco, 2003, p. 25).

We would say that for the pedagogical experience we are dealing with here it is crucial to recognize that there exists a textual relationship between SLT and TLT, that it is not enough to say that TLT is a translation simply because it is considered as such by the target language community; between SLT and TLG should hold an equivalence relationship. This relationship could correspond to the hypertextual relationship G.

Genette (1982) identified between a *hypertext* and a *hypotext*. According to him “I understand it [hypertextuality] as every relationship joining a B text (which I would call *hypertext*) to a previous A text (which I would call obviously *hypotext*) into which it incorporates itself in a way different from that of a commentary.”⁶ (Genette, 1982, p. 11). He further explains that transposition is the most important of all hypertextual practices and characterizes translation as follows:

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- 3 Als *empirische* Wissenschaft muß die Übersetzung angeben können, welche Beziehung zwischen ausgangssprachlichen Texten und zielsprachlichen Texten bestehen muß, damit letztere als Übersetzungen zu ihrem Gegenstandsbereich gehören.
 - 4 Als *Übersetzungskonstituierend* wird damit die Äquivalenzrelation (Übersetzungsbeziehung) zwischen Zieltext und Ausgangstext betrachtet.
 - 5 Il problema, non solo del dizionario ma di questo libro e di tutta la traduttologia, è che cosa significhi *dare l'equivalente*.
 - 6 J'entends par là toute relation unissant un texte B (que j'appellerai *hypertexte*) à un texte antérieur A (que j'appellerai, bien sûr, *hypotexte*) sur lequel il se greffe d'une manière qui n'est pas celle du commentaire.

Thus I arrange these elementary practices in an increasing level of intervention in the sense of the transformed hypotext or more precisely in an increasing level of the evident and assumed character of this intervention, by distinguishing basically two main categories: in principle purely *formal* transpositions which concern the sense only by chance or due to a non-investigated ill consequence as is well known for the case of translation (which is a linguistic transposition), and openly and deliberately *thematic* transpositions where the transformation of sense is evidently, even officially, part of the purpose.”⁷

According to Genette’s definition, translation is characterized as a case of hypertextuality where hypertext (i.e. Source Language Text) and hypotext (Target Language Text) only differ *formally*, whereas the *thematic* component of the texts involved remains somehow unaltered. In all other hypertextual phenomena where thematic changes do occur we cannot talk about translation any more but about commentaries, text reductions, amplifications, splits., etc. Similarly W. Koller stresses the fact that “At the same time *proper* translations should be differentiated from intralingual and foreign language rewritings, adaptations and text manipulation of the most diverse kinds.”⁸ (Koller, 1993, p. 51). Here a tension field is felt between two opposite positions: translation hinges either on the target language community that receives it (as stated by Toury and other context-related translation theories) or on the source language text where it comes from (as Genette, Eco and other text-bound approaches claim). A third option which embodies and reconciles these two apparently extreme positions is suggested by Koller himself: “Translations are characterized by a double

7 Je dispose donc ces pratiques élémentaires dans un ordre croissant d’intervention sur le sens de l’hypotexte transformé, ou plus exactement dans un ordre croissant du caractère manifeste et assumé de cette intervention, distinguant de ce fait deux catégories fondamentales: les transpositions en principe (et en intention) purement *formelles*, et qui ne touchent au sens que par accident ou par une conséquence perverse et non recherchée, comme chacun le sait pour la traduction (qui est une transposition linguistique), et les transpositions ouvertement et délibérément *thématiques*, ou la transformation du sens fait manifestement, voire officiellement, partie du propos.

8 Zugleich müssen die *eigentlichen* Übersetzungen abgegrenzt werden von intralingualen und fremdsprachlichen Bearbeitungen, Adaptationen und Textmanipulationen verschiedenster Art.

binding: on the one hand their binding to the *Source Language Text* and, on the other hand, their binding to the *communicative conditions* on the part of the *receiver*. This double binding should be the point of departure for establishing the concept of equivalence (and particularly for its differentiation).”⁹ (Koller, 1993, pp. 51-52).

2.3 Text categories

2.3.1 Text type

Let us review briefly some of the basic textual terminology used in our pilot research study. In her 1971/2000 pioneer work *Translation Criticism-The Potentials & Limitations*, Katharina Reiss clearly explained the need of a text typology in translatology:

In the present review of representative attempts to discern in the teeming variety of texts a pattern from which conclusions for a methodology and approach to translating could be derived, two things have come quite clear. First, it cannot be denied that the type of text plays a primary role in the selection of criteria for translating, and correspondingly also for translation criticism. Consequently it is not only justifiable but also imperative to develop a typology of texts to meet the demands of both translating and objective translation criticism. Second, the classifications thus far advanced have been inadequate, primarily because they have shown no consistent principles in defining the various types of text, and the reasons given for the distinctions that are drawn (if given at all) have been variable and weak (K. Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 23).

Her proposed typology was based on K. Bühler’s statement that “language serves simultaneously to *represent* (objectively), *express* (subjectively) and *appeal* (persuasively).” (Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 25). Consequently she classified texts into three basic types: the *content-focused type* (representation-informative) which “would include press releases and comments, news reports, commercial and correspondence, inventories of

9 Übersetzungen zeichnen sich durch eine *doppelte Bindung* aus: erstens ihre Bindung an den *Ausgangstext* und zweitens die Bindung an die *kommunikativen Bedingungen* auf der Seite des *Empfängers*. Bei der Bestimmung der Äquivalenzbegriffs (und das heißt insbesondere bei seiner Differenzierung) ist von dieser doppelten Bindung auszugehen.

merchandise, operating instructions, directions for use, patent specifications, treaties, official documents, educational works, non-fiction books of all sorts, essays, reports, theses, and specialized literature in the humanities, the natural sciences, and other technical fields” (Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 27); the *form-focused text* (expression-expressive), “In general ‘form’ is concerned with *how* an author expresses himself, as distinct from ‘content,’ which deals with what an author says.” (Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 31). “Thus in a form-focused text [persuasion-operative] the translator will not mimic slavishly (adopt) the forms of the source language, but rather appreciate the form of the source language and be inspired by it to discover an analogous form in the target language, one which will elicit a similar response in the reader. For this reason we characterize form-focused texts as *source language* oriented texts.” Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 33). “In summary, on the basis of the proposed principles we may say that form-focused texts include literary prose (essays, biographies, belles lettres), imaginative prose (anecdotes, short stories, novellas, romances), and poetry in all its forms (from the didactic to balladry to the purely sentimental).” (Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 35); “*Appeal-focused texts* do not simply convey certain information in a linguistic form; they are distinctive in always presenting information with a particular perspective, an explicit purpose, involving a *non-linguistic* result.” (Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 38). “What kinds of text should be assigned to this type? The above definition suggests they would include all texts in which the element of appeal is dominant, with advertising, publicity, preaching, propaganda, polemic, demagoguery or satire providing either the purpose or linguistic means of expression.” (Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 39).

A fourth type of text was proposed by Reiss: the audio medial text. “They are distinctive in their dependence on non-linguistic (technical media) and on graphic, acoustic, and visual kinds of expression. It is only in combination with them that the whole complex literary form realizes its full potential.” (Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 43). “What kinds of text belong to this type? [...] Primary examples would be radio and television scripts, such as radio newscasts and reports, topical surveys and dramatic productions. In these not only grammar and elocution but also acoustics (as in dramatic productions) and visual aids (in television and films) play a significant role.” (Reiss, 1971/2000, p. 44).

Despite the fact that K. Reiss’ text typology was initially proposed more than 30 years ago, it is still considered a valid and useful point of

reference for translating, translation criticism and translation teaching. Some more recent proposals (cf. Snell-Horby, 1988; Biber, 1989) which underline the prototypical nature of a translation text typology, where a cline or spectrum from literary to scientific texts is suggested, may have a more sound theoretical explanatory power for a modern translation text typology; however their actual application in translation criticism and teaching still pose some problems. This may be due to the fact that what is gained in a text prototypology which erases clear-cut boundaries between texts (i.e. that overemphasizes the “blurred edges”) in an attempt to approach the real intermingled reality of texts, becomes a problem when, for critical or pedagogical purposes, it is necessary to inevitably resort to some kind of categorization to be able to handle individual tokens of text types.

2.3.2 Parallel texts

Once a text type has been chosen for the translation teaching experience, in our case an informative text, a fruitful pedagogical strategy consists in finding parallel texts in the target language:

The best method to find out interlinguistic or intercultural differences in text type conventions is to carry out parallel text analyses or parallel text comparisons. Parallel texts are here understood as texts in different languages which were produced originally in a given language, ideally by competent native speakers. They are not translations from each other but deal with a very similar topic and coincide in their communicative function, i.e. belong to the same text type (variants).¹⁰ (S. Göpferisch, 1999, p. 184).

Parallel texts help students to understand text differences in the diverse text dimensions (pragmatic, semantic, syntactic, and semiotic). At the same time, they also help students to take advantage of any similarities found in the text analysis and comparison, so that they can transfer some SLT

10 Die beste Methode, interlinguale bzw. interkulturelle Textsortenkonventionen herauszufinden, ist die Paralleltextanalyse bzw. der Paralleltextvergleich. Unter Paralleltexten sind hier zu verstehen, die originär in ihrer jeweiligen Sprache –am besten von kompetenten Muttersprachlern- erstellt wurden, die also keine Übersetzungen voneinander sind, aber ein möglichst ähnliches Thema behandeln und sich in ihrer kommunikativen Funktion entsprechen, d.h. derselben Textsorte(variante) angehören (s. Spillner, 1981, p. 241).

features to TLT. As they also become aware of the observed discrepancies, they can avoid the ‘attraction force’ exerted by the vocabulary and the overall structure of the SLT, which leads to unnecessary lexical and syntactic calques. Obviously, when translating (especially but not exclusively) literary texts, the translator’s strategy may consist in allowing the target language reader to see the peculiarities of the source language text by transferring its vocabulary or sticking to its syntactic patterns. This deliberate ‘literalism’ would correspond to Venuti’s (1998) ‘visibility’ strategy of foreignizing and not domesticating the translation. In the theory of literary translation this thesis of literalism has also been advocated by authors such as W. Benjamin (1923) and Antoine Berman (1984).¹¹

Clearly, parallel texts constitute a rich translation resource to the extent that they provide the translation student with an accurate pool of words related to the topic of SLT and precise guidelines as to the TLT overall structure.

2.3.3 Paratext, metatext, intertext

Once the text type of SLT and TLT has been established and parallel texts in the target language dealing with a similar topic of the original have been found, then the detailed analysis and comparison of original and parallel texts begin. The initial comparison involves the corresponding paratexts of SLT and parallel texts. In G. Genette’s (1982, p. 9) terminology a *paratext* includes text title, subtitle, intertitle, prefaces, postscripts, etc.; marginal notes, footnotes, final notes; epigraphs, illustrations, jacket, etc. We would say that paratexts are text structural features which may coincide between SL and TL texts belonging to the same text type. According to the translation strategy implemented by the translator some paratexts not present in the original may be required to be added in the translated text. For instance, when translating a literary text, the translator may decide to keep many

11 In French translatology, Jean-René Ladmiral (1993) coined the terms ‘sourciers’ and ‘ciblistes’ which roughly corresponds to Venuti’s foreignizing and domesticating strategies « j’appelle ‘sourciers’ ceux qui, en traduction (et particulièrement, en théorie de la traduction), s’attachent au *signifiant* de la *langue* du texte-*source* qu’il s’agit de traduire ; alors que les ‘ciblistes’ entendent respecter le *signifié* (ou, plus exactement, le sens et la ‘valeur’) d’une parole qui doit advenir dans la langue-*cible* » (Ladmiral, 1993, p. 288).

culture-bound source language words by using a foreignizing translation strategy. In order to ensure that target language readers grasp at least some of the original's meaning, the translator may decide to include footnotes or final notes to facilitate the comprehension of strikingly unfamiliar terms due to cultural distance between the source language and target language communities. These added notes can have a descriptive or a more elaborate explanatory content.

A *metatext* (cf. Genette, 1982, p. 10) refers to the commentaries or to what is generally considered the genre of literary critique. It is an additional text in which some criticism is expressed with regard to the original. I think the category of metatexts is also very important in translatology because, depending on the text type, it can provide interesting insights for understanding the content of SLT. When translating a literary text, for instance, we can find very useful information with regard to the author's literary work, the literary movement or tradition he belongs to, and the impact SLT has had in the source language community. In the case of the translation of informative texts, metatexts can also be a very valuable resource in order to better understand the content and the importance of SLT.

Finally, *intertexts* are defined by Genette as a co-presence relationship between two or more texts, i.e. by the actual presence of one text in another. (cf. Genette, 1982, p. 8). The most explicit and literal form of intertextuality is the *quotation*; a less explicit and less canonical form is *plagiarism*, and an even less explicit and less literal form is *allusion*. (Genette, 1982, p. 8). Quotations are generally a common textual feature in informative texts. They are used as a kind of 'reinforcing' strategy, so that the writer's dictum is backed up by the voice of an expert or a first-hand experiencer. Allusions are often present in literary texts which activate and exploit this intertextual resource. Obviously, these subtle textual mechanisms can easily escape an inexperienced reader.

2.4 *Equivalence range*

Equivalence in translation does not mean absolute correspondence between SLT and TLT. As pointed out by Koller (see above), equivalence is a *relational* concept, which embraces the existing linguo-cultural link between an original (hypertext) and its translation (hypotext). In our DTM, once the

textualization process of SLT has taken place, the text is articulated in four dimensions mutually imbricated: pragmatic (concretization of initiator's and sender's intention and potential effect on readers), semantic (reference to real and/or possible worlds; what the text actually says), syntactic (SL and TL lexical and structural resources; how things are verbally said in the text), semiotic (how the text is constructed with additional non-verbal resources).

Both SLT and TLT have the same textual dimensions, i.e. pragmatic, semantic, stylistic, and semiotic. The content of each dimension will vary from close resemblance to total differentiation. If TLT is to be considered a translation of SLT, then there should be some strong link between them: the original's communicative intention should remain somehow unaltered, the content of TLT may vary if the target language linguistic and cultural norms call for a modification in order to maintain the SLT's textualized intention, and the stylistic devices will vary as they are bound to the TL text and language typology. Any modification of the SLT's communicative purpose outside the above mentioned parameters will yield TLT which may have a hypertext-hypotext relationship, but which cannot be called *translations proper*. They will be adaptations, summaries, commentaries, etc., but not translations. Even if the target language community insists on calling these TL products translations, this will be a non-technical, popular designation. Then we would say that this is an interesting phenomenon to be studied in the sociology of translation or the so-called cultural studies. But even in this case, I think a previous translational exercise of finding SLT and TLT equivalences is an unavoidable step, if we don't want to be wholly speculative and unscientific.

Thus, by *translation equivalence range* we understand the degree of coincidence and discrepancy between the diverse SLT and TLT dimensions (pragmatic, semantic, stylistic, and semiotic), which keeps the closest resemblance at the pragmatic dimension and modifies the semantic, stylistic and semiotic dimensions accordingly. By definition the translation equivalence range allows for more than one right solution to particular translation problems and corroborates the fact that one single SLT can be translated by using different translation strategies ranging from more SLT adherence to more TL audience focus.

3. Method

Students were presented with informative SL texts, and the corresponding parallel texts found on a website. Parallel texts were used as guidelines for establishing text typological features of the target language texts, analyzing coincidences and discrepancies in paratexts, metatexts, and intertexts, and determining peculiarities in the diverse textual dimensions: pragmatic, semantic, stylistic, and semiotic.

3.1 Source Language Text

The SLT was chosen on account of the interesting and timely topic it deals with (bird flu) and, consequently, on its likelihood to be translated to Spanish. It's a real text published on the Internet. Its length does not exceed one page.

Bird Flu Spreads to Germany

The EU wants to spend more to track infected birds

European Union veterinary experts are holding talks in Brussels Wednesday to discuss the growing threat from bird flu. The deadly disease has now already reached four EU countries, including Germany.

It has come as a shock to health conscious Germany to learn that bird flu, once a mystery ailment from Asia, has now arrived on the picturesque Baltic Sea island of Rügen. Holiday makers on a ferry found the lifeless remains of four swans on Friday, two of which initially tested positive for the deadly H₅N₁ strain of avian influenza.

Dick Thompson from the World Health Organization (WHO) said the virus was particularly worrying because it has been known to spread to humans.

“For the most part this is an animal disease. It is deadly to chickens and other birds, but this virus has been shown to leap to humans, which is unusual for an animal virus,” he explained. “In half the cases we have identified, people have died from it.”

Avian influenza cannot jump easily from one human to the next as normal influenza viruses can. However, scientists are worried that the two viruses, bird and human flu, could combine to produce a new virus that is both deadly and highly infectious—the two ingredients for a pandemic.

Germany takes action

Health officials in Germany as elsewhere are anxious to contain bird flu and keep it as far away from humans as possible. At a press conference on Tuesday, German Agriculture minister Horst Seehofer stressed the urgency of the situation.

“We must do everything possible to ensure the virus is not passed from wild birds to domestic birds,” he said and added that final confirmation of laboratory test results would come on Thursday.

The government has declared a three-kilometer (two-mile) security zone around the place where the swans were discovered. It has also ordered all poultry farmers within 10 kilometers to immediately shut their livestock indoors. The ruling to keep poultry cooped up will apply across the whole Germany starting March 17.

Seehofer appealed to members of the public to report to the authorities any dead birds they may find in the countryside, but warned they should under any circumstances touch the birds. “This is a very dangerous animal virus and there is also a risk for humans,” he said. “All our efforts must be focused on eliminating the danger of spreading the virus to humans.”

Preparing for the worst

Thompson of the WHO said acquiring the disease from animals is extremely rare, but one cannot be too careful.

“We have been encouraging governments to begin or continue with their pandemic preparedness. We have been encouraging them, if they have the resources, to stockpile certain materials which they may find helpful during a pandemic, to encourage the development of vaccines, to think through how they will handle a very sudden or massive demand for health care services and whether or not they want to cancel mass gatherings. These are all things countries need to think through,” Thompson said.

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3.2 *Parallel Text*

A parallel text in the target language (Spanish) was also found on the same website. As it dealt with the same topic, it was assumed that the text structure (text type features, paratexts, metatexts, intertexts) and particularly

the vocabulary would be very helpful for the corresponding SLT Spanish translation.

Gripe aviar, al alcance de todos

Uno de los cisnes infectados con H5N1, en la isla de Rügen en Alemania

La gripe aviar llegó a Alemania. Se ha empezado a aplicar las medidas preventivas que rigen a nivel europeo para evitar la propagación del mal entre las aves. Evitar el contagio ave-humano está en manos del ciudadano.

La gripe aviar ha llegado a Alemania. Lo que después de los casos detectados en Italia, Grecia y España era un temor, se ha vuelto una certeza. Si bien las autoridades y los institutos correspondientes declaran haber tomado providencias y estar preparados para afrontar esta anunciada llegada de la variante H5N1 del virus de la gripe aviar, el estado de alarma cunde en el país.

Medidas vigentes

Aunque aún se espera la confirmación oficial definitiva, que vendrá del laboratorio de la Unión Europea localizado en Weybridge (Inglaterra), las autoridades germanas han puesto en práctica las medidas decretadas por la Unión Europea. Éstas incluyen el establecimiento de una zona de protección de tres kilómetros en torno al sitio del hallazgo y otra de vigilancia en un radio de 10 kilómetros. Se ha empezado, también, a realizar inspecciones y exámenes médicos en las granjas avícolas de la región. Así mismo, la prohibición de vender carne, huevos y productos de aves, así como mercados y exposiciones avícolas rige desde hoy en la zona de 10 kilómetros por 21 días. Por otro lado, a nivel federal, rige a partir del viernes (17.02.06) que las aves de corral no pueden estar al aire libre.

Evitar la pandemia

En primera instancia, se trata de no escatimar esfuerzos para que el letal virus no se propague entre las aves. En segunda instancia, para que no haya contagio ave-ser humano. Para esto último, las medidas sanitarias a nivel local son tan básicas como urgentes. Hasta el momento la cepa del virus H5N1 se transmite entre las aves, de las cuales, según información del Instituto Friedrich Loeffner para Veterinaria, los cisnes parecen ser la presa más fácil. Por contacto con excrementos y fluidos, la mortal cepa se transmite al ser humano. Este contagio, que se ha cobrado numerosas vidas humanas, es el más peligroso para el hombre, pues es latente el peligro de que el virus mute y pueda ser

transmitido entre seres humanos. En este caso, la gripe aviar podría convertirse en una pandemia mortal.

Esfuerzos a todo nivel

En el foro realizado en Pekín –con el auspicio de la Unión Europea, China y el Banco Mundial– se logró recaudar fondos para combatir la gripe aviar. Éstos están destinados a la investigación y desarrollo de una vacuna, a equipos de laboratorio y a campañas de información, sobre todo en los países más afectados.

Si las víctimas humanas hasta el momento llegan al centenar, las vidas aladas que se ha cobrado “la gripe del pollo” –sea por contagio o por medida de seguridad– se cuentan en millones. El que sean las aves migratorias las que propagan el virus hace muy difícil una erradicación del mal. Evitar y prevenir el fácil contagio entre aves migratorias y aves de corral supone un esfuerzo aún mayor en las amplias regiones, cuya economía se basa en el ramo agropecuario, supone también un esfuerzo económico adicional tanto para los estados como para la comunidad internacional. Y equipara, en realidad, el evitar el contagio ave-hombre al grado de información y conciencia del ciudadano.

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3.3 *Model Translated Text*

As students were translating SLT using the parallel text as a guideline, they had to list the main translation problems they encountered, classify them according to the textual dimensions, discuss the solutions they found and assess their general degree of satisfaction with their translated texts. Then, students had to exchange their translations with other partners in class in order to correct them. Afterwards they had the opportunity to discuss with their partners any corrections made. Later the teacher would present a model translation of the original and both students and teacher would discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the solutions provided taking into account the available range of equivalences.

Gripa aviar se propaga a Alemania

La Unión Europea dispuesta a invertir más dinero para detectar aves infectadas

Expertos en veterinaria de la Unión Europea llevarán a cabo conversaciones el día miércoles en Bruselas para discutir la amenaza de la gripe aviar. Esta

enfermedad mortal ya ha sido detectada en cuatro países de la Unión Europea, incluso en Alemania.

En Alemania, país preocupado por el tema de la salud, ha causado un verdadero impacto conocer la noticia de que la gripa aviar, otrora enfermedad misteriosa de Asia, había llegado ahora a la pintoresca isla de Rügen, en el mar Báltico. Los turistas que viajaban en un ferry encontraron el día viernes los restos sin vida de cuatro cisnes, dos de los cuales inicialmente arrojaron positivo en el examen de la mortal cepa H₅N₁ de la influenza aviar.

Dick Thompson, de la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS), dijo que el virus era motivo especial de preocupación porque se sabía que se transmitía a los humanos.

“En gran medida es una enfermedad de los animales. Es mortal para los pollos y otras aves, pero se ha comprobado que este virus se transmite a los humanos, lo que resulta poco común para un virus animal”, explicó Thompson. Y agregó: “En la mitad de los casos que hemos identificado, las personas han muerto a causa del virus”.

La influenza aviar no puede transmitirse fácilmente de un humano a otro, tal como lo hacen los virus de la gripa normal. Sin embargo, los científicos están preocupados porque los dos virus, el de la gripa aviar y la humana, puedan combinarse para producir un nuevo virus que sea tanto mortal como altamente infeccioso, los dos ingredientes necesarios para una pandemia.

Alemania toma medidas

Los funcionarios sanitarios de Alemania y otros lugares están preocupados por contener la gripa aviar y por mantenerla tan lejos como sea posible de los humanos. En una conferencia de prensa el día martes, Horst Seehofer, Ministro de Agricultura de Alemania, recalcó la urgencia de responder a esta situación.

“Debemos hacer todo lo que esté en nuestras manos para asegurar que el virus no se transmita de las aves silvestres a las aves domésticas”, señaló el ministro y agregó que la confirmación de los exámenes de laboratorio se daría a conocer el jueves.

El gobierno declaró una zona de seguridad en un radio de tres kilómetros alrededor del lugar donde se descubrieron los cisnes. También se ordenó a los granjeros avícolas 10 kilómetros a la redonda que encerraran de inmediato a las aves de corral. La disposición de mantener bajo techo a las aves de corral entrará en vigencia en toda Alemania a partir del 17 de marzo.

Seehofer solicitó al público en general que diera aviso a las autoridades en caso de encontrar aves muertas en el campo, pero advirtió que, bajo ninguna circunstancia, deberían tocarse las aves. “Este es un virus animal muy peligroso y también existe riesgo para los humanos”, puntualizó. Y añadió: “Todos nuestros esfuerzos deben centrarse en eliminar el peligro de propagar el virus a los humanos”.

Preparándose para lo peor

Thompson, de la OMS, manifestó que adquirir la enfermedad a través de los animales es extremadamente raro, pero que nunca está de más tomar todas las precauciones del caso.

“Hemos estado alentando a los gobiernos para que comiencen o continúen su preparación para una pandemia. Igualmente, les hemos pedido que, si disponen de los recursos necesarios, hagan acopio de ciertos materiales que pueden resultar útiles durante una pandemia; que fomenten el desarrollo de vacunas, reflexionen sobre cómo enfrentarían una demanda repentina o masiva de prestación de servicios de salud y determinen si desean o no cancelar encuentros multitudinarios. Estos son asuntos que todos los países deben examinar cuidadosamente”, señaló Thompson.

4. Results and discussion

The problems students encountered in their translations were classified according to the following parameters in each textual dimension:

4.1 Pragmatic dimension

A crucial aspect in this dimension has to do with the modality markers which indicate if the SLT author’ expressed subjectivity, that ranges from practically zero presence to a strong presence, has been maintained, slightly altered or wholly modified in TLT, thereby changing one of the most important elements of SLT sender’s intentionality. Two concepts worked out by House & Kasper (1981) to deal with the pragmatics of politeness markers in English and German prove very useful also in translatology pragmatics: *downgraders* and *upgraders*. Downgraders are defined as “markers which play down the impact X’s utterance is likely to have on Y”. Upgraders are defined as “modality markers which increase the force of the impact an utterance is likely to have on the addressee.” (House & Kasper,

1981, pp. 166, 169). In our discussion we would say that downgraders are text modality markers which play down the impact an SLT expression is likely to have on TLT readers; and upgraders are text modality markers which increase the force of the impact an SLT utterance is likely to have on the TLT addressees. As stated above with regard to the primacy of the textual pragmatic dimension, a translated text is said to be equivalent to the original basically if the SLT author's intention is maintained in the translating process and reproduced and perceived as such by the TLT readers. Thus the degree of faithfulness to the original, pragmatically speaking, will increase as the number of cases of downgrading or upgrading decreases or, ideally, approaches zero.

The number of cases of downgrading or upgrading reported by students was comparatively very low (5) taking into account the sum total of cases reported (84). This shows that they used a non-subversive translation strategy in Venuti's terms. They decided to be 'invisible' in their translations. It also reflects their views about what a translation of an informative text should be. These are some of the examples of discrepancy between SLT and TLT at the pragmatic level:

4.1.1 Upgrading

- a. E. It has *come as a shock* to *health conscious* Germany to learn that bird flu, once a mystery ailment from Asia, has now arrived on the picturesque Baltic Sea island of Rügen.

Sp. (1) Alemania, un país *muy cauteloso* en asuntos de salud, recibió con *gran asombro* la noticia de que la que una vez fuera considerada una enfermedad misteriosa del Asia había llegado a la pintoresca isla de Rügen en el mar Báltico.

Sp. (2) Como *un baldado de agua fría* les cayó a los alemanes, siempre pendientes de la salud, la noticia de la llegada de la fiebre aviar, anteriormente una misteriosa enfermedad asiática, a la pintoresca isla báltica de Rügen.

In *a.* (1) there is an additional emphasizing illocutionary force realized in the Spanish form '*muy cauteloso*' lacking in the English original 'health conscious' as well as in '*gran asombro*' as equivalent to 'come as a shock', due to the use of the intensifiers '*muy*' and '*gran*', respectively. In *a.*

(2) ‘come as a shock’ has been emphasized by the use of the idiomatic expression ‘un baldado de agua fría’, which, interestingly enough, simultaneously lowers the style to a more informal register.

4.1.2 Downgrading

- b. **E.** Health officials in Germany as elsewhere *are anxious to contain* bird flu

and keep it as far away from humans as possible.

Sp. (1) En Alemania, y en otras partes, funcionarios de salubridad *desean contener* la gripe aviar y mantenerla tan lejos como sea posible de los humanos.

Sp. (2) Funcionarios de la salud en Alemania, como en todas partes, *desean contener* la gripe aviar y mantenerla tan lejos de los humanos como sea posible.

In *b. (1)* and *b. (2)* the original English expression ‘are anxious to contain’ has been downgraded or deemphasized to ‘desean contener’, which in the original corresponds more to ‘están preocupados por contener’.

4.2 Semantic dimension

The most frequent problems encountered by students appear in this dimension (52). They correspond to omissions (3), additions (2), complete change of meaning (38), semantic calque (3), change of focalization (4), and change of connector (2). The most frequent case reported in this dimension was *complete change of meaning* of the original. It occurred because students often had problems finding out the appropriate Spanish equivalent. This reflected a deficient use of research strategies such as use of Spanish grammars, Spanish monolingual dictionaries, reference books, etc., and also a lack of self-revising strategies. Let us see some examples.

4.2.1 Change of meaning

- c. **E.** *It has come as a shock to health conscious Germany* to learn that bird flu, once a mystery ailment from Asia, has now arrived on the picturesque Baltic Sea island of Rügen.

Sp. (1) *Ha sido un completo choque para la salud mental de los alemanes*, el hecho de reconocer que la gripe aviar, enfermedad que en otros

tiempos se consideraba propia de los países asiáticos, en la actualidad se ha detectado en la pintoresca isla de Rugen, en el mar Báltico.

- d. **E.** We *have been encouraging* them, if they have the resources, to stockpile certain materials which they may find helpful during a pandemic [...], *to think through* how they will handle sudden or massive demand for health care services and whether or not they want to cancel mass gatherings.

Sp. (1) También los *hemos inducido* a que, si cuentan con los recursos, puedan almacenar ciertos materiales que podrían ser de mucha ayuda ante una pandemia. [...] De la misma forma, los *hemos inducido a pensar* en cómo manejarían una demanda repentina y masiva de servicios sanitarios, y en si desean o no cancelar los agrupamientos masivos.

In *c.* (1) there is a complete lack of understanding of the English expression ‘It has come as a shock to health conscious Germany’. In *d.* (1) the English verbs ‘encourage’ and ‘think through’ have been wrongly interpreted and translated as ‘inducir’.

4.2.2 Semantic calque

- e. **E.** Dick Thompson from the World Health Organization (WHO) said *the virus was particularly worrying* because it has been known to spread to humans.

Sp. (1) Dick Thompson, miembro de la Organización Mundial de la Salud (OMS), dijo que *el virus era muy preocupante* porque se transmite a los humanos.

- f. **E.** Avian influenza cannot *jump* easily from one human to the next as normal influenza viruses can.

Sp. (1) La influenza aviar no puede *saltar* de una persona a otra con facilidad como pueden hacerlo los virus de la influenza común.

In *e.* (1) the English expression ‘the virus was particularly worrying’ cannot be simply calqued into ‘el virus era muy preocupante’, as semantically speaking ‘virus’ is marked as ‘alive’ and then it does not collocate with ‘preocupante’. Thus, the expression has to be paraphrased into something like ‘el virus era motivo especial de preocupación’. Likewise, in *e.* (1) in Spanish avian influenza cannot ‘jump’, which

evokes a funny image due to an implied prosopopeia. It is rather ‘transmitida’.

4.3 Stylistic dimension

Approximately half of the reported cases (27) had to do with expression- or form-related problems in the target language. The most frequent problem was lexical calque (16), then punctuation (4), syntactic concord (4), and prepositions (3). The cases of lexical calque showed that students were not always aware of the sociolinguistically determined use of words, i.e. words with a very similar meaning that differ in their degree of formality. Students and teacher discussed how it is possible to achieve a rather stylistically homogeneous text that reflects the nuances and emphases of the original.

4.3.1 Syntactic concord

- g. E. Seehofer appealed to members of the public to report to the authorities any dead birds they may find in the countryside, but warned they should not under any circumstances touch the birds.

Sp. (1) Seehofer le solicitó al *público* en general que *informaran* a las autoridades sobre cualquier ave muerta que *encontraran* en el campo; no obstante, *les* advirtió que bajo ninguna circunstancia tocaran las aves.

- h. E. Avian influenza cannot jump easily from one human to the next as normal Viruses can.

Sp. (1) La influenza aviar no puede, con facilidad, transmitirse de una persona a otra, como *ocurren* en los casos de influenza normal.

In g. (1) there is lack of concord between the Spanish singular noun ‘público’ and the plural verb forms ‘informaran’, ‘encontraran’, and the object pronoun ‘les’. In h. (1) the plural form ‘ocurren’ should be in the third person singular impersonal form ‘ocurre’.

4.3.2 Prepositions

- i. E. “These are all things countries need to think through”, Thompson said.

Sp. (1) Éstas son las cosas *sobre* las cuales los países necesitan analizar.

- j. E. Holidaymakers on a ferry found the lifeless remains of four swans on Friday, two of which initially tested positive for the deadly H₅N₁ strain of avian influenza.

Sp. (1) Algunos turistas encontraron el viernes los restos sin vida de cuatro cisnes en un ferry, de los cuales dos dieron positivo a la prueba del mortal tipo de influenza aviar H₅N₁.

In *i*. (1) the Spanish verb ‘analizar’ does not require the preposition ‘sobre’. In *j*. (1) the preposition ‘a’ should be replaced by ‘en’.

4.3.3 Lexical calque

- k. E. “It is deadly to chickens and other birds, but this virus has also been shown to leap to humans, which is *unusual* for an animal virus”, he explained.

Sp. (1) “Sin embargo, se ha demostrado que este virus se transmite a los humanos, lo cual es *inusual* por tratarse de un virus animal”, explico.

Sp. (2) “Sin embargo, se ha evidenciado que las aves pueden transmitirla a los humanos, lo cual es *inusual* para un virus animal”.

- l. E. Health officials in Germany as elsewhere *are anxious* to contain flu and keep it as far away from humans as possible.

Sp. (1) Funcionarios sanitarios alemanes, así como los de otros países, *están ansiosos* por contener la influenza aviar y mantenerla lo más alejada posible de los humanos.

Sp. (2) Funcionarios de la salud en Alemania, al igual que en otras partes, *están ansiosos* de apaciguar la gripe aviar y mantenerla tan lejos como sea posible de los humanos.

- m. E. The deadly disease has now already reached four EU countries, *including* Germany.

Sp. (1) La mortal enfermedad *ha alcanzado ahora* cuatro países de la UE, *incluyendo* Alemania.

Sp. (2) Esta enfermedad mortal ya llegó a cuatro países de la Unión Europea, *incluyendo* Alemania.

In *k*. (1) and (2) the English adjective ‘unusual’ has been transferred directly to Spanish as ‘inusual’, without noticing that ‘inusual’ does not exist in Spanish. In *l*. (1) and (2) the English word ‘anxious’ was calqued into its Spanish false cognate ‘ansioso’. In *m*. (1) and (2) the gerund form ‘including’

has been calqued into Spanish ‘incluyendo’, whereas the usual form would be ‘incluso’, ‘inclusive’ or ‘entre ellos/otros’.

This initial diagnosis of students’ translation performance would be used as a point of departure for the analysis and description of the evolution of their own learning process, i.e. the development of their translation competence. They would keep track of the evolution of their initial mistakes with the aim of dramatically lowering the number of detected mistakes by the end of the course.

5. Conclusion

During the whole pilot study students showed interest in enhancing their translation skills. They realized that self-awareness of one’s own mistakes is one of the best ways to advance in the learning process. By using a methodology based on sound theoretical foundations, it was also possible to prove that theory and practice do complement each other, even if an effort has to be made to approach one to the other.

The theoretical background provided by DTM and by other categories derived from textlinguistics, literary theory, pragmatics, sociolinguistics, etc., proved that an interdisciplinary approach in translatology has a huge potential for fruitful results. However, this interdisciplinary relation may not result from simply putting together different disciplines. It is necessary to have an organic and articulated model that serves as a guideline for the inclusion of one or another category.

Defining translation is and will always be a perennial problem. However, I think, in the same line as Koller, Eco, House, etc., that before we study the possible cultural effects (in the diverse literary, ideological, religious, etc., systems of the target community) of this hypertextual phenomenon, it is necessary to state clearly what it refers to. The study of the textual linguistic nature of translation, i.e. the corroboration of equivalence relationships at the diverse textual dimensions, is a *sine qua non conditio* to proceed to other culture-related surveys of this phenomenon. Obviously translation studies does not stop here, but without this initial (or even subsequent) TLT and SLT detailed comparison, only unscientific and superstitious nonsense will arise.

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