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SFL and Descriptive Translation Studies: Systemic-functional grammar as a framework for the analysis of shifts in translation

Aage Hill-Madsen, Aalborg University

Abstract: This article is concerned with demonstrating the methodological relevance of Systemic-Functional Grammar (SFG) for Descriptive Translation Studies. More specifically, the article establishes a framework for the analysis of so-called shifts in translation, i.e. lexicogrammatical changes occurring between source and target texts. It is thus argued that SFG may serve to fill a methodological void within Translation Studies, since, while other typologies of microstrategies exist, these other taxonomies typically serve a pedagogic purpose, being aimed at alerting translator trainees to a relatively limited number of broad options available to them in the translation process. This means that, given the didactic nature of such frameworks, the level of granularity is typically too low to be suitable for the retrospective analysis of a translation product in comparison with its source. Hence it is argued that what is needed for retrospective research is a much more fine-grained framework with clearly defined categories derived from an elaborate grammatical theory such as SFG. Therefore, on the basis of key SFG concepts such as paradigmatic organization, metafunction, rank and cline of delicacy, the very nature of shifts in translation is theorized and an outline of a systems network is presented in the central sections of the article. The framework is exemplified first and foremost by means of English-into-Danish translations of LSP texts within the fields of medicine and business, but in order to illustrate the applicability of the framework to the retrospective analysis of any kind of derivational text generation, whether *inter-* or *intralingual*, the example material also includes the monolingual rewriting of a specialized source text into a lay-oriented version, and the registerial adaptation (also monolingual) of formal, standard documents from public-sector authorities into more accessible, modernized versions.

Keywords: Systemic-Functional Grammar, retrospective translation analysis, methodology, shifts, systemic network

1. Introduction

The present article¹ is situated at the cross-roads between Descriptive Translation Studies and linguistics, being concerned with demonstrating how the Systemic-Functional description of grammar and lexis may provide a framework for the analysis of so-called shifts in translation, i.e. lexicogrammatical changes occurring between a source text (ST) and a translational product (a so-called target text (TT)). The reason why SFL is well suited to such a purpose may be found in one of the key characteristics of the framework, viz. the fact that it is an applicable theory designed to address issues outside linguistics proper. In Halliday's own words:

Systemic functional linguistics may be characterized as a problem-oriented theory, in the sense that it is designed to assist towards identifying and tackling problems that arise from outside itself – that is, not problems that the theory identifies for itself. Typically, therefore, the questions it sets out to answer are questions faced by people who are not linguists but are engaged in, or at least interested in, some activity in which language plays a key role. [...] For these reasons SFL tends to neutralize the boundary between (theoretical) linguistics and applied linguistics (Halliday 2009: 61).

The 'applicability' of the theory is probably the reason why it – or at least parts of it – has in fact enjoyed long-time recognition within Translation Studies as a provider of valuable analytical concepts. The application, however, has mostly been within translation quality assessment (see e.g.

¹ This article is based on a keynote speech given at the 14th conference of the Nordic Association for Systemic Functional Linguistics at Aalborg University, Denmark, November 2018.

House 1997, 2001; Jiang 2010; Kim 2009), and as a tool for source-text analysis to support the practice of translation (see e.g. Hatim & Mason 1990; Kim 2007). For descriptive purposes, SFL has been used to investigate *specific* types of shifts or changes occurring in translation. Thus, using retrospective translation analysis, Blum-Kulka (1986), Kunz (2010) and Kunz and Steiner (2012) have all investigated shifts in cohesion between source and target texts, and Steiner (2002) and Hill-Madsen (2015b) have studied processes of grammatical metaphorization and de-metaphorization. Similarly, on the basis of Martin and White's (2005) Appraisal framework, shifts in *attitude*, *graduation* and *engagement* have been investigated by Munday (2010), to name just a few descriptive applications (for a more complete overview of the applications of Systemic-Functional theory within Translation Studies, see also Steiner 2005 and Manfredi 2008).

As the above references reflect, most applications of SFL within Translation Studies have been empirical ones, in many cases aimed at supporting the *practice* of translation. The aim of the present article, on the other hand, is a two-fold theoretical one: It is 1) to theorize, in systemic-functional terms, the very nature of translational shifts (Section 2), and 2) to formulate a general, SFG-based taxonomy for the retrospective analysis of *all* the different types of shifts that may occur in translation and other types of derivational text generation (see below). The teleology behind such an analytical framework, it should be emphasized, is a purely descriptive one, enabling scholars within the descriptive branch of Translation Studies to investigate translational products by means of the so-called *coupled-pairs method* (see Toury 1995), whereby source and target texts are compared (micro-)segment by segment. To formulate a framework for this purpose, the first steps in delicacy in a systems network of shifts will be drafted (Section 3) and exemplified (Section 4) first and foremost by means of English-into-Danish translations of LSP texts within the fields of medicine and business. However, it should be made clear that the framework's relevance extends beyond translation analysis, being in fact applicable to the retrospective analysis of any kind of derivational text generation, whether *inter-* or *intralingual*. Accordingly, the example material also includes the monolingual rewriting of a specialized English source text into a lay-oriented version, as well as a registerial adaptation (also monolingual, but in Danish) of formal, standard letters from a public-sector authority into more accessible, modernized versions.

2. The concept of shifts in translation (and derivational text production)

Within Translation Studies, the term *shift* is often used interchangeably with related terms such as *strategy*, *method*, *procedure* and *technique* (i.e. 'textual manipulation in connection with the phrasing of target-text units on the basis of corresponding source-text units'), all of which are surrounded by a high degree of conceptual confusion (Gambier 2010). As Chesterman (2005) points out, it is, for example, unclear whether the individual terms are invested with a cognitive or purely linguistic content, whether they refer to process or result and whether they are 'global' in scope (being concerned with the overall plan or design for the translation task) or 'local', pertaining to the manipulation of individual words, phrases and clauses 'inside' the text (cf. Molina & Albir 2002: 506). In answer to the terminological and conceptual confusion, Chesterman's (2005) solution (to be adopted for the present purpose also) is to reserve the term *method* for linguistic operations in the global sense (cf. Molina & Albir 2002: 507 for the exact same proposal). The term *strategy*, on the other hand, is to be invested with purely cognitive content to refer to the '*plan*' or '*decisions*' (Chesterman 2005: 26) behind linguistic operations. For the process of textual manipulation at micro-level he proposes the term *technique*. Finally, the classic term *shift* is to be restricted to a resultative sense, to denote the differences retrospectively observable between a source (ST) and a target text (TT) (Chesterman 2005: 26).

Chesterman's terminological solutions are useful, especially because they accommodate the separation between process and result and between the cognitive and the linguistic/textual aspect. Thus, the particular phenomenon to be taxonomized in section 3 below is *shifts* in the above sense,

i.e. the observable differences (and, in certain cases, absence of differences) in lexicogrammatical selection in derivationally related ST-TT units (cf. Bakker et al. 2009).

2.2. A short review of taxonomies of translation techniques²

Chesterman's (2005) cogent clarification of the above concepts (*methods, strategies, techniques* and *shifts*) has important implications for the degree of granularity appropriate in connection with the sub-classification of each of these categories. This is a consequence of the difference in application with which each category is to be associated: Taxonomies of *techniques, methods* and *strategies* can be made to serve didactic purposes, which *shifts* cannot (Chesterman 2005: 26). Thus, *contra* Bakker et al. (2009: 270), to whom shifts may (also) be prescriptive in status, Chesterman points out that “[w]e do not teach shifts” (2005: 26), meaning that in translation classes we teach *possibilities*, and not results: *techniques* (and *methods* and *strategies*) are what can be taught to translator trainees in the *guidance* of target-text production, i.e. to make students aware of the options open to them before and in the middle of the translation process. Examples of such didactic catalogues are found in textbooks of translation such as Newmark (1988) and Schjoldager et al. (2008), and they include the ‘classic’ typology of Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/2000), which must similarly be deemed prescriptive in purpose. For such typologies, a limited number of relatively broad categories would appear to be the didactically recommendable choice. This, presumably, is why Newmark's (1988: ch. 8) typology of techniques consists of no more than 18 items, Schjoldager et al.'s (2008: ch. 6) twelve and Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958/2000) merely seven.

For the purpose of academic investigation, on the other hand, i.e. for the retrospective analysis of *shifts* (this article's real concern), what is needed is a ‘toolbox’ of sufficiently fine-grained categories that will allow types of shifts to be distinguished from each other with as little ambiguity as possible. Given the high degree of granularity in systemic-functional grammatical categories, SFG is a highly suitable theory for such purposes, enabling such distinctions to be made with the necessary degree of delicacy. Moreover, the defining emphasis of SFL on the paradigmatic organization of lexicogrammar makes SFG particularly suited to retrospective translation analysis. The reason is the fundamental nature of translation as serial choice completely on a par with natural language generation. To quote Halliday's famous claim, “by ‘text’ ... we understand a continuous process of semantic choice. Text is meaning, and meaning is choice” (1978: 137, cf. 1970/2002: 174, cf. Halliday 2013). Halliday's claim applies to natural language generation (cf. Halliday 2013; Fawcett 2013; Hasan 2013), but is equally true of *derivational* text production such as translation, the only difference being that in derivational logogenesis, choices are made against the backdrop of a ‘point of departure’ in a prior text. This is why a paradigmatic representation of choice in translation (the formulation of which is the purpose of present article) must be possible and why SFG is particularly recommendable as a point of departure for such a framework.

2.3. Conceptualization of shifts in systemic-functional terms

Before an SFG-based classification of shift types can be embarked on, the nature of translational shifts as such needs to be further conceptualized. Chesterman's definition of what he terms *changes* (to be taken as partly synonymous with *shifts*³) is an illuminating starting point:

² Subsections 2.2 and 2.3 are partially based on corresponding sections in a PhD thesis (Hill-Madsen 2014).

³ It should be noted that Chesterman's concept of translational *changes* (which predates the conceptual clarification in the (2005) article), appears to be a mixture of *techniques* and *shifts* as defined above, thus conflating a prescriptive and a descriptive teleology. For the present purpose, however, this conflation need not be problematic: The definition can be used as a simple *starting point* for the conceptualization of either of the two categories.

At its simplest, such a taxonomy [of shifts] might consist of a single strategy only: Change something. [...] “Change something” could be informally glossed as follows: if you are not satisfied with the target version that comes immediately to mind – because it seems ungrammatical, or semantically odd, or pragmatically weak, or whatever – then change something in it. [...] This grand overall strategy also suggests that one way to look at strategies in more detail is in fact as kinds of changes. Of course, the source text is “changed” anyway in an obvious sense when it is translated into another language; but change as a strategy begins to apply beyond the scope of this obvious change from one language to another (Chesterman 1997: 92).

In other words, Chesterman appears to equate “the version that comes immediately to mind” with literal translation (in interlingual translation), which he may possibly be taken to view as a kind of default translation mode. In accordance with this definition, shifts in interlingual translation can centrally be defined as the results of all the types of changes that depart from the “*shadow text*” (Matthiessen 2001: 83) that would have been the result of a literal translation. The definition is easily applied to monolingual derivational text production as well (such as a registerial modification of a text): Since, according to Chesterman, changes only begin to operate beyond the switch from one language to another in *interlingual* translation, shifts in intralingual text derivation can similarly be seen as the manifestation of changes between source and target, only with no cross-over between languages involved in the process (cf. Hill-Madsen 2015a).

Considering the sense of ‘movement’ and ‘direction’ associated with the concept of shift, further conceptualization is possible through recourse to metaphors derived from geography and transport. Thus, within the ‘architecture of language’ (Halliday 2003), the lexicogrammatical stratum could be conceived of as a ‘space’ or ‘terrain’ within which the ‘route’ between a source-text ‘point of departure’ and a target-text ‘destination’ may be identified, with the ‘coordinates’ (of ‘departure’ and ‘arrival’) specifiable in terms of the dimensions organizing the lexicogrammar, i.e. a) the grammar-lexis cline, b) metafunctionality, and c) the rank scale. Hence, in accordance with Matthiessen (2001: 101-106), the following sets of general options emerge:

- Shifts may occur either in the grammatical zone or in the lexical zone, or it may occur *along* the cline, thus constituting a shift in delicacy.
- Shifts may be confined to the same rank, in which case they represent some kind of paradigmatic, i.e. intra-systemic, shift within one of the metafunctions, or constitute a movement between ranks (inter-rank shifts).

Contra Matthiessen (2001: 106), axiality as a possible fourth dimension relevant to translation, however, must be discounted. Whereas Matthiessen (2001: 106) holds that shifts may occur either along the paradigmatic axis or the syntagmatic axis (in the latter case manifesting themselves as some kind of structural expansion or contraction, presumably), the distinction must be considered a redundant one, in so far as any variation in structure is necessarily the interaxial *realization* of a different selection being made within some specific system or systems in the overall systems network constituting the lexicogrammar. Similarly, a distinction between *intra*- and *inter*-metafunctional shifts (Matthiessen 2001: 106) must be rejected: Whereas paradigmatic (intra-systemic) shifts at any rank are necessarily intra-metafunctional, the concept of *inter*-metafunctional shifts (shifts from e.g. the experiential to the interpersonal metafunction) must be deemed theoretically invalid⁴. This is due to

⁴ Matthiessen does acknowledge that “intermetafunctional shifts are likely to be rare in translation” (2001: 106), which, however, is not the same as questioning the very *possibility* of such shifts. In this article, the theoretical validity of the concept as such is challenged.

the very simultaneity of the metafunctions: Since, according to SF theory, any worded utterance manifests all three metafunctions at the same time, the possibility of shifts *between* metafunctions makes no sense. A logical consequence of the SF tenet of metafunctional diversity is that any shift must necessarily be *intra*-metafunctional, but also that any TT wording may represent a shift in more than one metafunction at the same time. A distinction more relevant than the one between *intra*- and *inter*-metafunctional shifts, therefore, would be one between *uni-metafunctionality* and *multi-metafunctionality* (of shifts). Nevertheless, as already mentioned, the possible multi-metafunctionality of shifts is inherent in the SF tenet of metafunctional simultaneity in logogenesis (derived or non-derived).

2.4. The nature of translational shift analysis in Systemic-Functional terms

While the nature of translational shifts was theorized in systemic-functional terms in subsection 2.3 above, this theorizing does not in itself answer what *analysis* of shifts entails. An answer to this question must take its point of departure in the fundamental nature of analysis in general, which may – prototypically, at least, and perhaps obviously – be defined as a classification process whereby specific instances are assigned to predefined categories (cf. Chesterman 2008). In the specific case of translational shift analysis, however, this process turns out to be nothing less than a four-fold operation: First of all, a comparative, lexicogrammatical analysis of corresponding ST and TT segments (typically the size of sentences) must be performed, equalling the previously mentioned coupled-pairs method of retrospective translation analysis (Toury 1995). Lexicogrammatical analysis as such, however, is a dual operation: It constitutes 1) a move along the cline of instantiation, viz. from instance to system (Matthiessen et al. 2010: 50). 2) At least as far as grammatical structure (at any rank) is concerned, this analytical move (from instance to potential) at the same time entails inter-axial decoding⁵, i.e. deduction from the syntagmatic to the paradigmatic axis (cf. Matthiessen et al. 2010: 52): An example would be the grammatical analysis of a syntagmatic structure such as *You shouldn't smoke so much*, where the categorization consists in recognizing the string as a clausal structure containing Subject^Finite, and next in matching this type of syntagmatic structure with its paradigmatic 'address' (here: a [declarative] in the SFG system⁶ of MOOD TYPE).

It is this deductive, analytical movement which amounts to identifying the 'address' or the 'coordinates' of the specific wording in the entirety of the lexicogrammatical 'geography'. This dual operation (the move from instance to system with its implicit inter-axial decoding), then, is doubled, since it is performed on the TT first and next on the ST segment, making the interpretation of a given shift from ST to TT a 'quadruple' analytical operation. Only when this quadruple operation is complete, will it be possible to identify the exact type of 'route' taken between the ST lexicogrammatical 'point of departure' and the TT 'destination'. A network of possible 'routes' as options in translation, then, is what a systemic model of shifts must be able to chart, which is what section 3 will be concerned with.

3. A systemic network of translation shifts

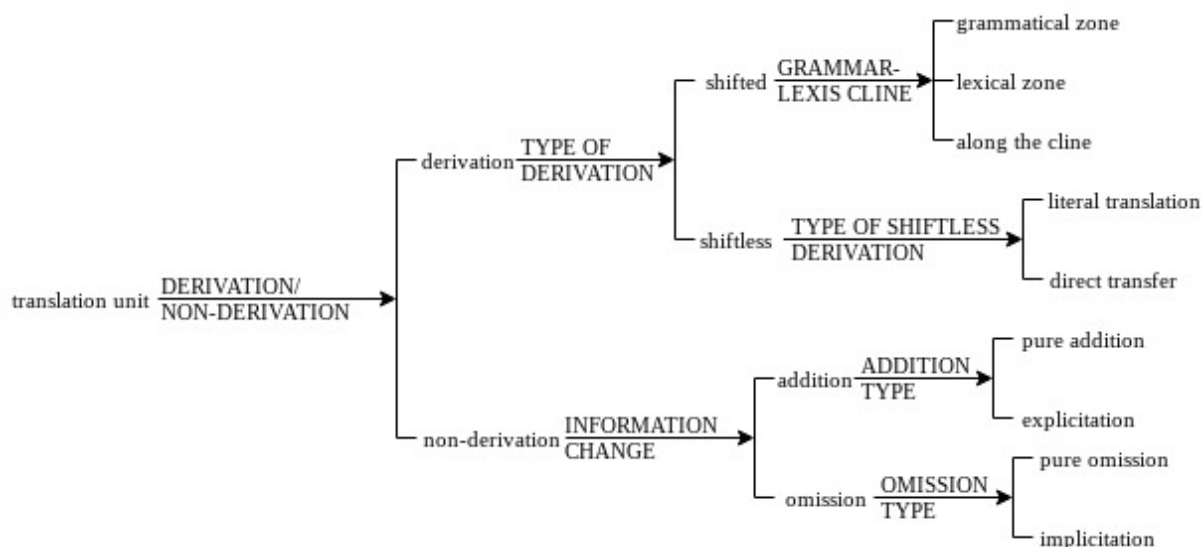
As Figure 1 below reflects, a number of non-SFG-specific distinctions must be incorporated into a model of shifts at the most basic levels *prior* to the appearance of SFG-based categories (which begin

⁵ An alternative to the term *decoding* would be preferable, considering that this term is mainly used about the upward movement between strata (particularly from lexicogrammar to semantics) as the central part of the comprehension process in verbal-language communication. For the present purpose, on the other hand, the term is used for a purely academic activity, i.e. analysis, which is confined to a single stratum only (lexicogrammar). For want of a better term, *decoding* is deemed the best terminological choice here.

⁶ To distinguish the shift-type systems modelled in Figures 1-3 from the lexicogrammatical systems represented in grammatical accounts such as Matthiessen (1995) and Halliday & Matthiessen (2014), the latter will be consistently referred to as *SFG systems*.

to appear only from the third step in delicacy):

Figure 1: The first steps of delicacy in a system network of translation shifts.



Altogether six non-SFG-specific sets of distinctions have been incorporated at the most indelicate end of the network, with the system DERIVATION/NON-DERIVATION as the most basic one, where the term [non-derivation] represents the option of either omitting ST units in the TT (termed [omission] in the system INFORMATION CHANGE) or, conversely, adding TT units with no ST base ([addition]) (cf. Chesterman 1997: 109-110; Schjoldager et al. 2008: 104-105, 108-109). Both terms ([addition] and [omission]) give rise to further options, in that a variant of [addition] is so-called [explication], which is the representation in the TT of an element of meaning that can be said to be implicit in, rather than completely absent from, the ST (cf. Chesterman 1997: 108-109; Schjoldager et al. 2008: 99). A classic case is the introduction of a short appositive explanation after the name of a culture-bound item that is deemed unknown to the TT reader, e.g. *Helsinki, the capital of Finland* (cf. Hill-Madsen 2015a). [Implication] (the negative counterpart of [explication]), then, constitutes the opposite movement, consisting in leaving unsaid something that can nevertheless be deemed inherent in the TT co-text (cf. Chesterman 1997: 109).

The other term in the system DERIVATION/NON-DERIVATION, i.e. [derivation], leads into what may be considered the area of shifts proper, viz. differences in lexicogrammatical choice between ST and TT items. In the system TYPE OF DERIVATION, nevertheless, the possibility of shiftless derivation must be recognized. [Shiftless] derivation, then, comes in two forms, with [literal translation] as the interlingual variety (term borrowed from Vinay & Darbelnet 1995: 33-34; Newmark 1988: 46), and [direct transfer] as the intralingual option, the difference being that [literal translation] involves a switch in languages, whereas [direct transfer] is mere reduplication of the ST item(s). (In interlingual translation, [direct transfer] typically occurs in connection with the (non-)translation of proper names.) Within Translation Studies, [literal translation] is generally defined as the choice of TL grammatical and lexical equivalents of ST items: “The SL grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest TL equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context” (Newmark 1988: 46). Similarly, Chesterman defines [literal translation] as “maximally close to the SL form, but nevertheless grammatical” (1997: 94). In systemic-functional terms, [literal translation] entails sameness of **selection expression(s)** (Halliday 1966/2002), on both sides of the

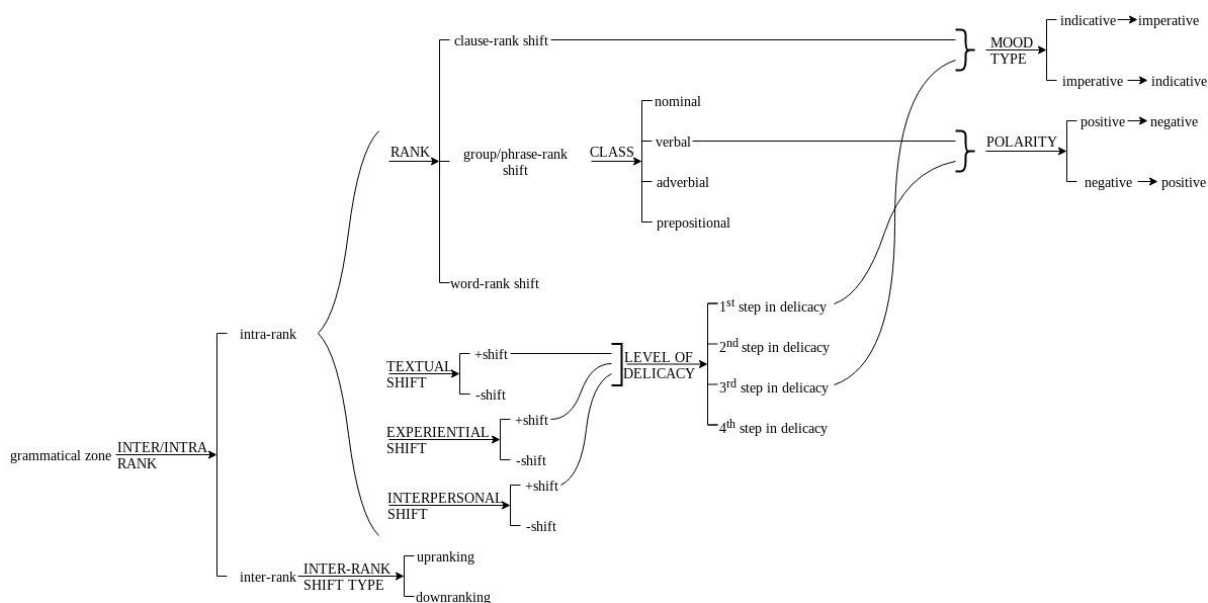
ST-TT divide, in the cases where a systemically identical option exists in the TL. [Shifted] derivation, on the other hand, entails a difference in selection expression(s) from ST to TT (opening up the options describable in systemic-functional terms), and it also applies in cases of systemic divergence between the two language, i.e. where no systemically equivalent option is available, and where a non-equivalent option must necessarily be chosen (cf. Teich 2001: 215).

The possibility of systemic divergences between SL and TL necessitates a caveat in connection with the SF-based modelling of shifts suggested in the following: Since point of departure is being taken in Halliday & Matthiessen’s (2014) and Matthiessen’s (1995) systemic description of *English*, the model is primarily applicable to translation between English and other typologically close languages, first and foremost Germanic languages such as Danish, Swedish, German and Dutch, and even in these cases there will be points of systemic non-correspondence. In actual fact, a separate model would be required for every specific language pair, which is obviously far beyond the scope of an article like this.

3.1. Grammatical-zone shifts

In the system of GRAMMAR-LEXIS CLINE in Figure 1 above, the term [grammatical zone] functions as the entry condition of the network below:

Figure 2: The first steps of delicacy in a system network of grammatical-zone shifts.

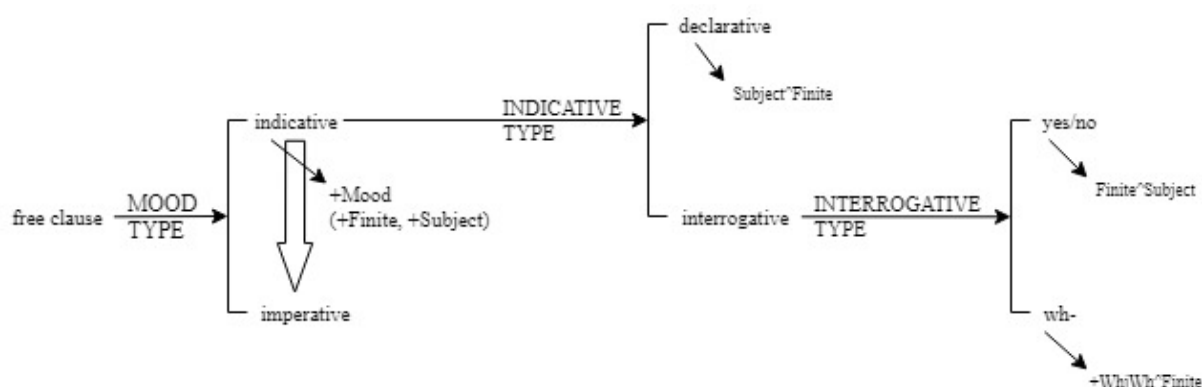


To start ‘from below’ in the network, in the system of INTER-RANK SHIFT TYPE, the term [downranking] reflects a phenomenon that has been richly treated in Systemic-Functional literature. It should be noted, however, that there is a slight difference between the usual sense of the SFG term **downranking** and the way it is used for the present purpose: In SF literature (e.g. Halliday & Matthiessen 1999: ch. 6; Halliday 1989/1993: 79-82, 1997/2004, 1998/2004; Halliday & Matthiessen (2014): ch. 10; Taverniers 2006), the term is largely synonymous with **grammatical metaphor** within the ideational metafunction, i.e. the incongruent realization of semantics in grammar, particularly the realization of an experiential participants-and-process **figure** at group rank rather than clause rank, where the *congruent* wording is absent. In translation/derivational text production, on the other hand, [downranking] refers to the situation where a congruent wording is actually present in the ST, but has

been replaced with a downranked version in the TT. It should also be noted that apart from the conversion of (entire) clauses into nominal groups, the term [downranking] will also be used to refer to the situation where an individual item functioning at clause rank in the ST is relocated at group rank in the TT (see example 7 in section 3). The term [upranking], then, covers both types of opposite movement, i.e. the relocation of an ST item at a higher TT rank or the conversion of an entire nominal group into a clause.

The other term in the INTER/INTRA-RANK system, i.e. [intra-rank], concerns shifts that constitute a paradigmatic ‘move’ between terms within a given SFG system. The nature of such shifts is illustrated in Figure 3 below:

Figure 3: Graphic illustration of an intra-systemic shift in the SFG system of MOOD TYPE.



The vertical, down-facing arrow in Figure 3 illustrates a possible shift within the SFG interpersonal, clause-rank system of MOOD TYPE (e.g. Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 162), as in a rewording of a clause such as *You shouldn't smoke so much* into *Don't smoke*. Since intra-systemic shifts may occur at any rank, in any of the three metafunctions (and in even more than one simultaneously)⁷ and at any point in delicacy, i.e. anywhere in the well-known metafunction-rank matrix (e.g. Matthiessen 1995: 88; Matthiessen 2004: 538; Halliday 2009: 85; Halliday & Matthiessen: 87) of the lexicogrammatical system, an SF modelling of intra-systemic shift types requires the parameters of the SFG metafunction-rank matrix to be made explicit in the model. This is the rationale behind the systems RANK, CLASS, EXPERIENTIAL SHIFT TYPE, INTERPERSONAL SHIFT TYPE, TEXTUAL SHIFT TYPE and LEVEL OF DELICACY in the model in Figure 2. It is the combined selection of terms from these systems, then, from which sets of specific, intra-systemic shift types can be modelled: To arrive at the possibility of shifts within the SFG verbal-group system of POLARITY⁸, e.g., the terms [group/phrase-rank shift], [verbal], [+shift] (in the system INTERPERSONAL SHIFT TYPE) and [1st step in delicacy] must be selected, with the selection in LEVEL OF DELICACY reflecting the fact that the SFG system of POLARITY occurs at the first step in delicacy in the SFG system network of the verbal group (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: 410). It should be noted that each term in the most delicate systems in Figure 2 (e.g. SHIFT IN MOOD TYPE and SHIFT IN POLARITY) is necessarily dyadic, encompassing the ‘departure’ term as well as the ‘arrival’ term

⁷ As previously noted, the SF tenet of metafunctional simultaneity entails that one and the same target-text lexicogrammatical unit may represent an ST-to-TT *shift* in more than one metafunction. This is why in Figure 2 the three systems TEXTUAL SHIFT, EXPERIENTIAL SHIFT and INTERPERSONAL SHIFT are represented as simultaneous systems.

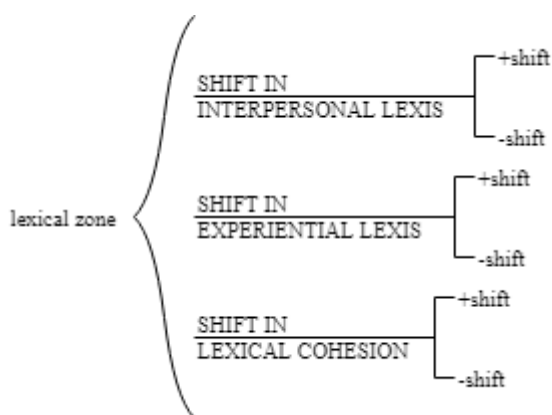
⁸ The representation of the particular systems SHIFT IN MOOD TYPE and SHIFT IN POLARITY in the model (Figure 2) is only intended as examples of the way the model remains to be completed with systems at all ranks, levels of delicacy, etc. A fully-fledged model is obviously far beyond the scope of the present article.

from the original SFG system (e.g. MOOD TYPE). In the shift-type system, e.g. SHIFT IN POLARITY, the terms are thus [positive→negative] and [negative→positive].

3.2. Lexical-zone shifts

The term [lexical zone] in the system of GRAMMAR-LEXIS CLINE in Figure 1 is the entry condition of the system below (Figure 4), with the three simultaneous systems SHIFT IN INTERPERSONAL LEXIS, SHIFT IN EXPERIENTIAL LEXIS and SHIFT IN LEXICAL COHESION being grounded in the SFL metafunctional perspective on lexical semantics, i.e. the tenet that lexical items in instantiated discourse encode not only experiential, but also interpersonal and textual meaning (e.g. Matthiessen 1995: 110-115). Hence, three simultaneous systems, each with the options [+shift]/[-shift], are needed to reflect the fact that, exactly as was the case with grammatical-zone shifts, a lexical-zone shift may be uni-, bi- or tri-metafunctional.

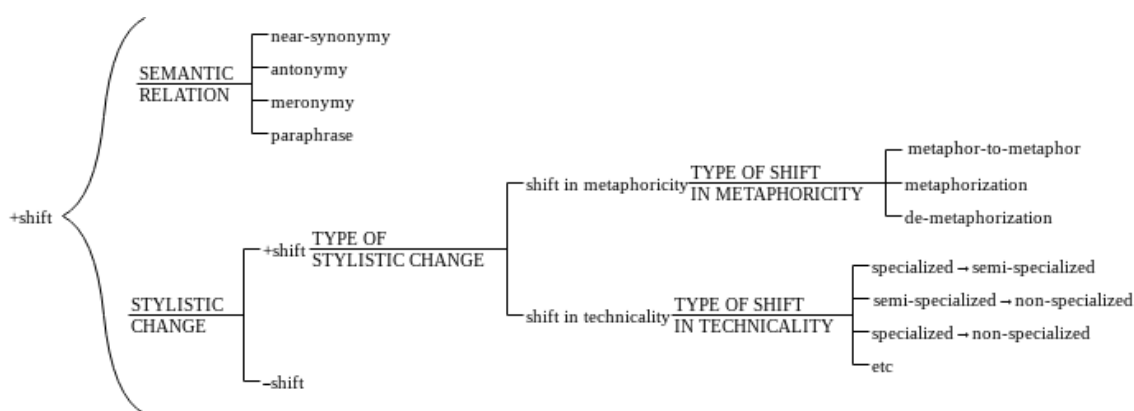
Figure 4: Lexical-zone shift types.



3.2.1 Shifts in experiential lexis

The term [+shift] in the system of SHIFT IN EXPERIENTIAL LEXIS in Figure 4 above is the entry condition of the following network:

Figure 5: Experiential shifts.



As Figure 5 shows, a shift in experiential lexis must select from two simultaneous systems:

SEMANTIC RELATION and STYLISTIC CHANGE. In the former system, the first three terms are the well-known paradigmatic sense-relation types [near-synonymy], [antonymy] and [meronymy] (e.g. Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: 644-648; Lyons 1977: ch. 9; cf. Chesterman 1997: 102-103). In each case, the term refers to the translation of a lexical item by what would be a near-synonym/antonym/meronym of the ‘shadow item’ that would result from a literal translation (cf. Section 2.3). A fourth lexical shift type that needs to be recognized is [paraphrase], defined as “a strategy [that] results in a TT version that can be described as loose, free, in some contexts even undertranslated. Semantic components at the lexeme level tend to be disregarded in favour of the pragmatic sense of some higher unit such as a whole clause” (Chesterman 1997: 104). In other words, [paraphrase] creates a semantic distance between a ST and a TT lexical item which is greater than [near-synonymy], and which defies precise definition in paradigmatic terms.

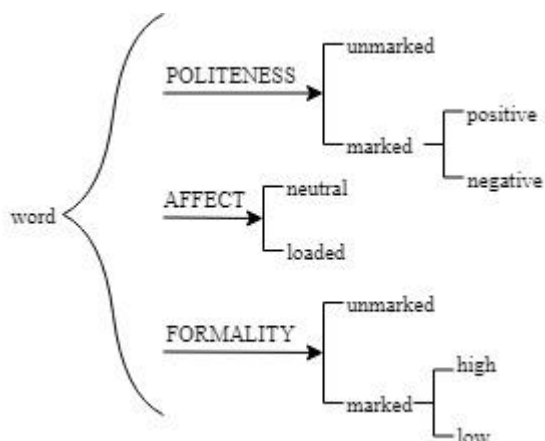
The fact that SEMANTIC RELATION and STYLISTIC CHANGE (the latter with the terms [+shift]/[-shift]) are represented as simultaneous systems reflects the possibility that the choice of a near-synonym/antonym/meronym/paraphrase may be accompanied by a shift in either metaphoricity or in technicality. In TYPE OF SHIFT IN METAPHORICITY, the terms are more or less self-explanatory, consisting either in the replacement of a ST metaphor with a different target-language metaphor (the term [metaphor→metaphor]⁹), or in the replacement of a metaphorical ST item with a non-metaphorical expression in the TT ([de-metaphorization]), or vice-versa ([metaphorization]) (cf. Chesterman 1997: 105-107). With regard to shifts in specialization (TYPE OF SHIFT IN TECHNICALITY), the terms need a little more explanation: In formulating the terms, point of departure has been taken in the so-called **cline of technicality** posited by Matthiessen et al. (2010: 5), i.e. the idea that there is a range in the experiential lexicon from highly specialized terms at one end of the cline to non-technical vocabulary at the other. What is not sufficiently clear, however, is what sort of terms occupy the intermediate zone on this cline. For present purposes, a category to be named *semi-specialized terms* will be posited here: These are terms which originate in highly specialized registers, but which have ‘filtered down’ to registers accessible to the general public. Examples are chemical terms like *oxygen*, *hydrogen* and *helium*, and medical terms such as *diabetes*, *pneumonia* and *pancreas*, all of which are terms that most (in this case anglophone) adults with a childhood and adolescence spent in a modern science-based education system will be familiar with. Matthiessen et al.’s (2010: 5) cline of technicality will therefore be operationalized here as a three-term system: [specialized]/[semi-specialized]/[non-specialized], enabling the formulation of a system of shifts in specialization (TYPE OF SHIFT IN TECHNICALITY) with systemic terms such as [specialized→semi-specialized], [semi-specialized→non-specialized], etc. (for examples, see section 4).

3.2.2. Shifts in interpersonal lexis

In theorizing the second type of lexical shifts (see the system of LEXICAL SHIFT TYPE, Figure 4), viz. the [interpersonal] type, point of departure must be taken in the SFG interpersonal lexical system network of CONNOTATION, which encompasses three different aspects, viz. politeness, affect (or attitudinal loading) and formality (Matthiessen 1995: 111). A proposal for a systemic modelling of these three aspects (not included in Matthiessen (1995) or in any other systemic-functional account) may take the following shape:

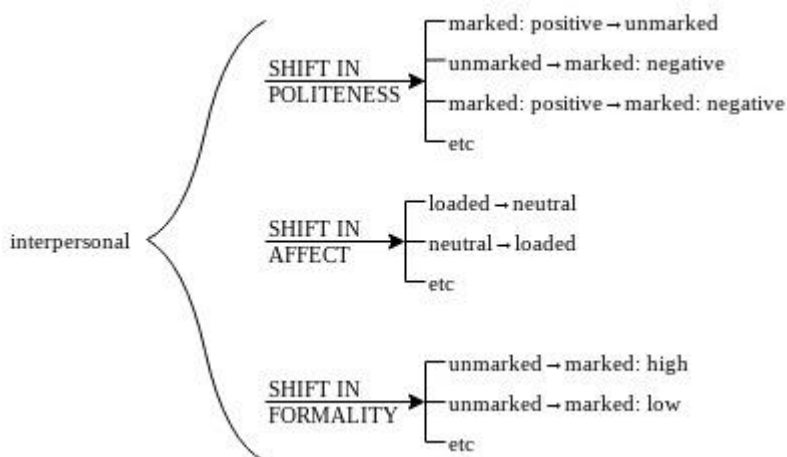
⁹ If the same metaphor exists in the SL and TL (and is used in translation), this would count as ‘literal translation’, whereas the term [metaphor→metaphor] in the system TYPE OF SHIFT IN METAPHORICITY covers a *difference* between the ST and TT metaphor.

Figure 6: A proposal for an SFG model of interpersonal lexical semantics.



On this basis, a system of translational shifts in interpersonal lexis will be the following:

Figure 7: A system of translational shifts in interpersonal lexis.



In interlingual translation, shifts in interpersonal lexis may occur in connection with translation tasks where a certain degree of registerial modification of the TT is deemed necessary by the translator. The same applies to experiential shifts in the level of technicality.

3.2.3. Shifts in textual lexis

In lexis, the textual metafunction is identical with cohesive meaning, with the SFG system of LEXICAL COHESION encompassing the five terms [repetition], [synonymy], [hyponymy], [meronymy] and [collocation] as options (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 644). A system of translation shifts between the terms in this SFG system, then, will consist of altogether 20 dyadic terms, e.g. [repetition→synonymy], [repetition→hyponymy], etc. It is to be noted that translational shifts in cohesion will in many cases be intertwined with experiential shifts and vice-versa, as in the following example:

Example 1:

Victoza is a solution for injection available in pre-filled pens (6 mg/ml). *Victoza* is given by the patient once a day by injection under the skin in the abdomen, thigh or upper arm.

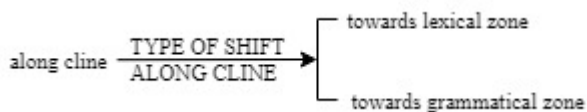
(From a report published by the European Medicines Agency (2018) on the medicinal product *Victoza*).

In the example, the product name *Victoza* occurs as the first word in two successive sentences, thus establishing a cohesive link consisting in [repetition]. If, on the other hand, we imagine a translation of the text in which, e.g. for the sake of lexical variation, the second occurrence of the name had been replaced by the pharmaceutical term *liraglutide* (which refers to the so-called active substance, i.e. the curative ingredient of the drug), then in terms of an experiential shift, the replacement would constitute [meronymy], exactly because the ST item, representing the ‘whole’, is replaced by a TT item denoting a ‘part’. Simultaneously, the replacement would effect a textual shift consisting in [repetition→meronymy].

3.3. Shifts along the grammar-lexis cline

Finally, in the GRAMMAR-LEXIS CLINE system (see Figure 1 at the beginning of section 3), the term [along the cline] opens up the two options of either replacing a ST grammatical item with a TT lexical one ([towards lexical zone]) or vice versa ([towards grammatical zone]), as shown in Figure 8 below:

Figure 8: Types of shifts along the cline of delicacy.



Either term in the system TYPE OF SHIFT ALONG CLINE, however, also covers shifts that are located entirely in the lexical zone of the cline, viz. towards increased delicacy of lexical meaning (hyponymy) or the opposite move (hyperonymy). It may need to be pointed out that the reason for identifying these two particular lexical shift types (hyponymy and hyperonymy) with each of the two terms in the system TYPE OF SHIFT ALONG CLINE is the systemic-functional tenet that the progressive semantic delicacy of hyponymically related lexical items (such as *plant – tree – beech*) constitutes a move along the grammar-lexis cline. In other words, the ‘move’ from superordinate items to ones of increasingly specific lexical meaning constitutes a traversal of interrelated systems from ‘left to right’ on the cline (Halliday & Matthiessen 1999: 86-87).

4. Examples

In this section, examples of shift types will be given of (some of) those types of shifts that are only recognizable by virtue of an SFG-based framework. This means that, with regard to [shiftless] derivation, [addition] and [omission] (in the primary translation-shifts network, Figure 1, section 3), exemplification is deemed unnecessary, since these are all shift types recognized outside the present framework.

For the exemplification, a small corpus of the following LSP/non-literary texts has been assembled:

- An English>Danish translation of an annual report from the Danish pharmaceutical company *Novo Nordisk A/S* (Novo Nordisk A/S 2010a, 2010b).
- An English>Danish translation of a so-called *Summary of Product Characteristics*, which sets out the pharmaceutical particulars of a medicinal product named *Victoza* (an insulin product for diabetic patients) (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018a, 2018b).
- An interregisterial adaptation of a Summary of Product Characteristics (as source text) into the lay-oriented text type named the *Patient Information Leaflet* (to be treated as a target text)¹⁰. The two texts are concerned with the insulin product *NovoEight* (NovoNordisk A/S 2019).
- A registerial modification of two official, standard letters used by the Danish Customs and Tax Administration to send out to taxpayers under various circumstances (SKAT n.d.a, n.d.b, n.d.c, n.d.d). Both ST and TT in each pair are in Danish. The rewritten versions stem from a major linguistic effort by the Danish tax authorities to adapt the heavy and linguistically dated officialese of the originals to a less formal and more accessible modern idiom.

The exemplification will be divided into three subsections in accordance with the three systemic terms [grammatical zone], [lexical zone] and [along the cline] in the translation-shifts system GRAMMAR-LEXIS CLINE (see Figure 1 at the beginning of section 3).

4.1. Shifts within the grammatical zone of the grammar-lexis cline

Examples 2-5 below are all instances of [intra-rank] shifts, with 1-3 occurring at clause rank and example 4 at group/phrase rank:

¹⁰ Patient Information Leaflets are the small brochures found in the packaging of medicinal products. The leaflets provide the pharmaceutical and medical information about the product that is relevant for the patient. The information is sourced from the specialized Summary of Product Characteristics, but lexicogrammatically rewritten in a non-expert register aimed at the general public (the two documents are published in a single document on the website of the European Medicines Agency). Elsewhere, this type of rewriting is conceptualized as a special case of translation, so-called *intralingual translation* (e.g. Hill-Madsen 2015a, Hill-Madsen 2019). Whether or not this is a valid conceptualization is a debate that will not be taken up here. The aim is to show how an SFG-based framework can be applied to the analysis of shifts between a source text and a rewritten version, whether, strictly speaking, this is to be regarded as translation or not.

Example 2:

RANK: [clause-rank shift], EXPERIENTIAL SHIFT: [+shift], SHIFT IN PROCESS TYPE (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: 219):¹¹ [relational→material].

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[From the Novo Nordisk annual report:] [×β] If preliminary results are confirmed, [α] <u>this new generation of insulins has the potential</u> [[[1] to offer better treatment for people with diabetes [2] and further strengthen Novo Nordisk's competitive position]]. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2010a: 3)</p> | <p>[Danish translation:] [×β] Hvis de foreløbige resultater bekræftes, [α1] <u>kan denne nye generation af insuliner forbedre behandlingen af diabetes</u> [α2] og yderligere styrke Novo Nordisks konkurrenceevne. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2010b: 3)</p> <p>[literal back translation: [×β] <i>If the preliminary results are confirmed, [α1] <u>this new generation of insulins can improve the treatment of diabetes</u> [α2] and further strengthen Novo Nordisk's competitiveness.</i>]</p> |
| <p>Comment: Owing to the verb <i>has</i>, the underlined ST clause is [relational: possessive]. This has been converted into a [material] clause in the TT (because of <i>forbedre</i> [EN: <i>improve</i>]).</p> | |

¹¹ Each example is accompanied by a reference to the relevant SFG system on which the translation-shift system in question is based.

Example 3:

RANK: [clause-rank shift], LOGICAL SHIFT: [+shift], SHIFT IN TAXIS (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: 438): [hypotaxis→parataxis]:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[From the Novo Nordisk annual report:]</p> <p>[×β1] <u>As the global economy struggles to rebound</u> [×β2] and governments and private payers face budget constraints [[that impact healthcare spending]], [α] what are the implications for the future of the healthcare industry?</p> <p>(Novo Nordisk A/S 2010a: 5)</p> | <p>[Danish translation:]</p> <p>[1] <u>Den globale økonomi kæmper for igen at komme op i gear</u>, [2] og regeringer og private indkøbere overalt i verden spænder livremmen ind. Det går bl.a. ud over sundhedsbudgetterne. Hvad betyder det for lægemiddelindustriens fremtid?</p> <p>(Novo Nordisk A/S: 2010b)</p> <p>[Literal back translation: [1] <i>The global economy is struggling to gear up again</i>, [2] <i>and governments and private payers all over the world are tightening their belts. This among other things affects health budgets. What does that mean to the future of the pharmaceuticals industry?</i>]</p> |
| <p>Comment: The ST clause complex is a hypotactic α^β construction, which has been replaced by a paratactic 1² construction in the TT. The underlined ST clause is thus changed from a dependent to an independent clause in the TT.</p> | |

Example 4:

RANK: [clause-rank shift], TEXTUAL SHIFT: [+shift], SHIFT IN THEME SELECTION (Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: 106): [subject theme→other]:

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[From the <i>Victoza</i> product summary:] <u>Signs and symptoms of dehydration, including renal impairment and acute renal failure,</u> have been reported in patients [[treated with Victoza]]. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018a: 4, section 4.4)</p> | <p>[Danish translation:] <u>Hos patienter, [[behandlet med Victoza,]]</u> er tegn og symptomer på dehydrering, inklusive nedsat nyrefunktion og akut nyresvigt, blevet indrapporteret. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018b: 4, section 4.4)</p> <p>[Literal back translation: <i>In patients [[treated with Victoza]] signs and symptoms of dehydration, including reduced kidney function and acute kidney failure, have been reported.</i>]</p> |
| <p>Comment: Conflating with the Subject, the Theme of the ST segment is an unmarked one. In the TT segment, no such conflation takes place, making (parts of) what is Subject in the ST a marked theme in the TT.</p> | |

Example 5:

RANK: [group/phrase-rank shift: nominal], LOGICAL SHIFT: [+shift], SHIFT IN MODIFICATION (Matthiessen 1995: 645): [classified→qualified]

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[From the <i>Victoza</i> product summary:]</p> <p>[1] Patients [[treated with liraglutide]] should be advised of the potential risk of dehydration in relation to <u>gastrointestinal side effects</u> [2] and take precautions to avoid fluid depletion.</p> <p>(Novo Nordisk A/S 2018a: 4, section 4.4)</p> | <p>[Danish translation:]</p> <p>[1] Patienter, [[der behandles med liraglutid,]] skal informeres om den potentielle risiko for dehydrering i relation til <u>bivirkninger fra mave-tarm-kanalen</u> [2] og tage forholdsregler for at undgå væskemangel.</p> <p>(Novo Nordisk A/S 2018b: 4, section 4.4)</p> <p>[Literal back translation: [1] <i>Patients</i> [[<i>who are being treated with liraglutide</i>]] <i>must be advised of the potential risk of dehydration in relation to <u>side effects from the gastrointestinal tract</u> [2] and take precautions to avoid fluid depletion.</i>]</p> |
| <p>Comment: The TT exhibits a change in the SFG system of MODIFICATION, in that the ST item occupies the position of Classifier in the nominal group, whereas in the TT the item has been shifted to postmodifying position to serve as Qualifier. The change in word class from adjective to noun can be regarded as a consequence of the change in MODIFICATION.</p> | |

Examples 6-8 below are all [inter-rank] shifts:

Example 6:

INTER-RANK SHIFT TYPE: [upranking] through de-nominalization:

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[From the <i>Victoza</i> product summary:] Animal studies have shown [[that <u>the transfer of liraglutide and metabolites of close structural relationship into milk is low</u>]]. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018a: 5, section 4.6)</p> | <p>[Danish translation:] Dyreforsøg har påvist, [[at <u>liraglutid og metabolitter</u>, [[der er nært strukturelt beslægtede]], kun i ringe omfang udskilles i <u>modermælken</u>]]. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018b: 5, section 4.6)</p> <p>[Literal back translation: <i>Animal studies have demonstrated</i> [[<u>that liraglutide and metabolites</u> [[<u>that are closely structurally related</u>]] <i>are only to a small extent secreted into the breast milk.</i>]]]</p> |
| <p>Comment: The TT embedded clause is a ‘de-nominalized’ version of the ST ideational metaphor <i>the transfer of liraglutide and metabolites ... into milk</i>. Similarly, the embedded TT clause <i>der er strukturelt beslægtede</i> is a de-nominalized translation of the ST ideational metaphor <i>of close structural relationship</i>.</p> | |

Example 7:

INTER-RANK SHIFT TYPE: [downranking] through nominalization:

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[From the <i>Victoza</i> product summary:] [×β] <u>If pancreatitis is suspected</u>, [α] liraglutide should be discontinued. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018a; 3, section 4.4)</p> | <p>[Danish translation:] [×β] Hvis der er <u>mistanke om pankreatitis</u>, [α] skal liraglutid seponeres. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018b: 3, section 4.4)</p> <p>[Back translation: [×β] <i>If there is suspicion of pancreatitis</i>, [α] <i>liraglutide must be discontinued.</i>]</p> |
| <p>Comment: The ST string <i>If pancreatitis is suspected</i> is a clause that has been nominalized (and hence downranked) in the TT as the nominal group <i>mistanke om pankreatitis</i>.</p> | |

Example 8:

INTER-RANK SHIFT TYPE: [upranking] of phrase constituent to clause constituent:

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[From the <i>Victoza</i> product summary:] There are no <u>adequate</u> data from the use of <i>Victoza</i> in pregnant women. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018a: 5, section 4.6)</p> | <p>[Danish translation:] Data for anvendelse af <i>Victoza</i> til gravide er <u>utilstrækkelige</u>. (Novo Nordisk A/S 2018b: 5, section 4.6)</p> <p>[Literal back translation: <i>Data for the use of Victoza for pregnant [women] are inadequate.</i>]</p> |
| <p>Comment: The ST word <i>adequate</i>, which serves as Premodifier/Epithet in the nominal group <i>adequate data</i>, has been upranked to a clausal function (Complement/Attribute) in the TT.</p> | |

4.2. Shifts in the lexical zone of the grammar-lexis cline and along the cline

Since shifts in textual lexis have already been illustrated by means of an imaginary example in section 3.2.3, the present subsection will be confined to the exemplification of experiential and interpersonal shifts. Moreover, the majority of experiential subcategories, more specifically [antonymy] and [meronymy] in the system of SEMANTIC RELATION and the various types of shifts in

metaphoricity (see Figure 5 in section 3.2.2), will be ignored, since these categories are already recognized elsewhere in Translation Studies theory (e.g. Chesterman 1997: 102-103). Despite being another well-known category within Translation Studies, [paraphrase] (e.g. Chesterman 1997: 104-105; Schjoldager et al. 2008: 100-102), *will* be exemplified, since this particular lexical shift type gives rise to certain critical reflections. The final example (no. 11) will include an instance of a shift along the grammar-lexis cline.

Example 9:

Shifts in experiential lexis: SEMANTIC RELATION: [near-synonymy] in combination with TYPE OF SHIFT IN TECHNICALITY: [specialized→non-specialized] and [semi-specialized→non-specialized]:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[From the <i>NovoEight</i> product summary:]</p> <p>insomnia hypertension sinus tachycardia arthropathy (NovoNordisk A/S 2019: 7, section 4.8)</p> | <p>[From the <i>NovoEight</i> Patient Information Leaflet, i.e. the lay-oriented adaptation of the specialized product summary:]</p> <p>difficulty sleeping increased blood pressure fast heartbeat joint disease (NovoNordisk A/S 2019: 49, section 4)</p> |
| <p>Comment: The two word lists each originate in a list of potential side effects of the medicinal product in question: The ST list is from the Summary of Product Characteristics and the TT list from the corresponding Patient Information Leaflet. One by one, the TT items are non-specialized renderings of the medical terms on the ST list. <i>Insomnia</i> and <i>difficulty sleeping</i> thus belong together, as do <i>hypertension</i> and <i>increased blood pressure</i>. Since both <i>insomnia</i> and <i>hypertension</i> are medical terms that are likely to be generally known among adult native speakers of English, the shift from ST to TT item may in these two cases be classified as [semi-specialized→non-specialized]. <i>Sinus tachycardia</i> and <i>arthropathy</i>, on the other hand, (rewritten as <i>fast heartbeat</i> and <i>joint disease</i> in the TT, respectively) must be considered highly specialized medical terms unknown to the general public. The rendering of the former term as <i>fast heartbeat</i> in the TT and the latter as <i>joint disease</i>, then, instantiates the shift type [specialized→non-specialized]. In terms of SEMANTIC RELATION, all four cases must be considered instances of [near-synonymy] simultaneously with the changes in technicality.</p> <p>It may be noted that the lexical shift is in all four cases accompanied by a grammatical one, viz. [upranking] from word to group rank. This is because in all cases, the morphemes of the Greek- or Latin-derived ST terms are converted to words that together form a nominal group. Thus, in the case of <i>arthropathy</i>, <i>arthr-</i> has been upranked to the word <i>joint</i>, and <i>-(o)pathy</i> to <i>disease</i>. (For an in-depth study of the rewriting of specialized medical terms into a non-expert register, see Hill-Madsen 2014, Hill-Madsen 2015a and Hill-Madsen & Pilegaard 2019).</p> | |

Example 10:

Shift in experiential lexis: SEMANTIC RELATION: [paraphrase] (with no concomitant stylistic change):

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[Danish ST:]</p> <p>[1] Klagen skal være skriftlig, [+2] og det skal fremgå, [[hvilke punkter der påklages]], [+3] ligesom <u>begrundelse</u> for de enkelte klagepunkter skal fremgå.</p> <p>(SKAT n.d.a.)</p> <p>[Literal English translation: [1] <i>The complaint must be in writing, [+2] and it must appear [from it] [[which points are complained about]], [+3] just as motivation for the individual points of complaint must appear.</i></p> | <p>[Danish TT:]</p> <p>Klagen skal være skriftlig. I skal skrive de punkter [[I vil klage over]]. [α] For hvert punkt <u>skal I skrive</u>, [“βα] <u>hvorfor I mener</u>, [“β’β] at SKATs afgørelse er forkert.</p> <p>(SKAT n.d.b)</p> <p>[Literal English translation: <i>The complaint must be in writing. You_{plural} must write the points [[you_{plural} want to complain about]]. [α] For each point you_{plural} must write [“βα] why you_{plural} believe [“β’β] that the tax authority’s decision is wrong.</i></p> |
| <p>Comment: The ST is an excerpt from one of the standard letters used by the Danish Customs and Tax Administration to send out to taxpayers, and the TT a rewritten, more colloquial version of the same text (for a more elaborate description of the texts, see the beginning of section 4). The underlined elements, ST <i>begrundelse</i> [EN: <i>motivation</i>] → TT [I skal] <i>skrive</i>, <i>hvorfor I mener</i> [EN: <i>you must write why you_{plural} believe</i>], are an example of [paraphrase], in that there is no sense relation (synonymy, antonymy, etc.) between any of the individual words of the TT version and the ST word. Rather, the TT clause as a whole is rendering of the ST nominalization. Incidentally, being a ‘clause-ification’ of a <i>nomen actionis</i>, the rewriting also instantiates the grammatical shift type [upranking]. In Hill-Madsen (2015b), this combination is termed <i>clausal paraphrase</i>.</p> | |

As a more general comment on the category [paraphrase], it must be acknowledged that in a critical search for weaknesses in the framework being elaborated here, [paraphrase] would be a strong suspect. What may jeopardize the analytical reliability of this particular concept is that it is considerably broader in scope and less rigorously defined (see section 3.2.1) than the rest of the shifts categories. Since [paraphrase] involves shifts between lexical items that are more vaguely related and semantically too far apart to count as [near-synonymy], the category defies exact identification in

terms of paradigmatic ‘route’ between ST ‘point of departure’ and TT ‘point of arrival’ in lexical territory. To avoid the vagueness of this important category, it appears that the only remedy would be for the systemic descriptions of SFG to be extended much further in delicacy, i.e. well into the lexical zone, to enable the exact paradigmatic ST-TT ‘route’ between any two lexical items to be specified. Considering the formidability of this task (cf. Halliday & Matthiessen 2014: 67), however, this must, to quote Halliday (1961/2002: 54), indeed remain “the grammarian’s dream” (and the translation analyst’s!).

Example 11:

Shift in interpersonal lexis: SHIFT IN FORMALITY: [formal→neutral]:

| | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>[×β] Såfremt ovennævnte tidspunkt for besigtigelsen ikke er <u>belejligt</u>, [αα] bedes De venligst <u>kontakte</u> undertegnede, [α×β] for at aftale et nyt tidspunkt. (SKAT n.d.c)</p> <p>[Literal English translation: [×β] <i>In the event that the above-mentioned time of inspection is not convenient</i>, [αα] <i>you are kindly asked to contact the undersigned</i>, [α×β] <i>in order to schedule a new time.</i>]</p> | <p>[×β] Hvis tidspunktet ikke <u>passer dig</u>, [αα] kan du <u>ringe</u> [α×β] og aftale et nyt tidspunkt. (SKAT n.d.d)</p> <p>[Literal English translation: [×β] <i>If the time does not suit you</i>, [αα] <i>you can phone [us/me] [α×β] and schedule a new time.</i></p> |
| <p>Comment: The ST is another linguistically dated, standard letter from the Danish tax authorities, and the TT the modernized version. The pair <i>belejligt</i> → <i>passer dig</i> (EN: <i>convenient</i> → <i>suits you</i>) and <i>kontakte</i> → <i>ringe</i> (EN: <i>contact</i> → <i>phone</i>) both illustrate a move from formal to interpersonally neutral lexis, i.e. [marked: high→unmarked]. The replacement of ST <i>kontakte</i> by TT <i>ringe</i> may at the same be seen as involving hyponymy, i.e. a shift along the grammar-lexis cline towards the lexical pole.</p> | |

5. Concluding remarks: Evaluation of the SFG-based shift analysis framework

This article has been concerned with formulating (the beginnings of) an SFG-based taxonomy of shifts in translation and derivational text production, aimed at descriptive research within Translation Studies and neighbouring disciplines whose object field includes monolingual rewriting and registerial adaptation. In rounding off, a handful of different analytical purposes to which the framework may be put should be mentioned:

Firstly, the framework may be applied within the subfield of Translation Studies concerned with literary translations. Here, the framework may be used to investigate the general orientation of a given

translation on the well-known scale ranging from ‘literal’ to ‘free’: The more frequent and diverse the shifts represented by a target text are, the more ‘free’ the translation can be said to be. Such analysis may, for example, be used to investigate the norms governing literary translation within a given historical period or within a given target culture (cf. Toury 1995), and to investigate the extent to which literary translation norms have changed from one epoch to another. Along the same lines, the framework may be used to test a conjecture such as the so-called re-translation hypothesis (see Berman 1990), which holds that when a classic work of literature is re-translated, the new target text is often more literal, and thus more ‘faithful’ to the original, than when it was first translated.

Secondly, the framework may be used for the particular endeavour known as Translation Quality Assessment. It may thus be combined with contrastive linguistics in assessing whether appropriate types of shifts have been applied to achieve stylistic adequacy within a given translation or number of translations belonging to a specific language pair and a specific register. Thus, in the translation of written texts from Danish into German, one would expect [upranking] to be a frequent strategy, given that contrastive research has shown written registers of German to be characterized by a greater preference for ideational metaphor than written-style Danish (cf. Christiansen 2018).

Thirdly, the framework may be used to investigate the characteristics of different *types* of translation/derivational text generation. Thus, example 10 above replicates one particular point from a larger investigation (Hill-Madsen 2014) which charted the exact types of shifts needed to transform specialized documents (within the field of medicine) into lay-oriented texts.

As a final example, the framework may form the basis of discourse analysis of translations. Hatim and Mason (1997), for example, have investigated subtle ideological changes from source to target brought about by translational shifts in lexis, cohesion and transitivity. Similarly, Munday (2010, 2012) has specifically been concerned with ST-to-TT changes in evaluation resulting from the translator’s intervention. It may be noted in this connection that, exactly as is the case with ‘ordinary’ discourse analysis à la Fairclough (2015), *translational* discourse analysis must be grounded in lexicogrammatical (shifts) analysis. Only by identifying the lexical and grammatical shifts occurring in a translation along the lines illustrated above will it be possible to decide what kind of change at the semantic stratum a given lexical or grammatical shift is associated with – whether, for example, the choice of [near-synonymy] in lexis or the [addition] of an item or a shift in modality effects a shift in the semantic system of APPRAISAL, or whether a shift in transitivity changes the ideological representation of some controversial social activity or phenomenon in, for example, a translated press report or political speech. It may be noted that although Matthiessen et al. (2010: 54) point to “*level skipping*”, i.e. the by-passing of a given stratum, as a possibility in text analysis (particularly the possibility of ignoring the lexicogrammatical stratum in semantic APPRAISAL analysis), it would appear that in translational discourse analysis such by-passing is not an option, simply because in order to chart discursive source-to-target modifications, such analysis will be forced to start by identifying deviations in ‘surface’, i.e. lexicogrammatical, features.

Corpus of example material

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