INTERACTION BETWEEN RESEARCH IN LINGUISTICS AND RESEARCH IN TRANSLATION

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Interdisciplinary research interaction might take one of (at least) two forms. First, one or both disciplines can adopt insights derived within the other; secondly, both might work together towards understanding which will advance both disciplines. In the best of all possible worlds, both things will happen, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes each at different times.

In this paper, I suggest that translation scholars borrow more from linguistics, and borrow in a more informed way, than the other way around; but that their zeal may cause translation scholars to borrow uncritically from linguistics, and to loose sight of the central issues in their own discipline, with the result that the borrowing helps neither discipline to advance.

I argue that advances in the core areas of translation studies have been made mainly in translation protocol studies, although large scale, computer aided research on translated texts holds out promise. Studies employing linguistic models to highlight Source Text reception and Target Language production have in general failed to address the translating component which mediates between the former and the latter. This neglect by linguistically minded translation scholars of the process of translating is not likely to work towards altering linguists' general disregard for translation as a discipline; and this disregard works directly against properly interactive research in the two disciplines.

I present a selection of studies which seem to me to hold interdisciplinary promise, hoping to indicate that by not interacting, both disciplines are letting slip away important opportunities to advance.

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1   INTRODUCTION

Interdisciplinary research interaction might take one of (at least) two forms. First, one or both disciplines can adopt insights derived within the other; secondly, both might work together towards understanding which will advance both disciplines. In the best of all possible worlds, both things will happen, sometimes simultaneously, sometimes each at different times.

As for the borrowing of insights, it seems that translation scholars borrow more from linguistics, and borrow in a more informed way, than the other way around. Linguists, on the whole, seem to take translation more or less for granted. If they use translations as data, they usually produce the translations themselves by introspection, or ask a bilingual to provide them. This may not always be the most helpful strategy, as I will try to show.

In a recently published Danish grammar (Allan, Holmes and Lundskær-Nielsen, 1995: 365-6)), the English equivalent for the Danish discourse particle *jo* is presented as '(as) you know'. The sentence 'Tom er *jo* en flink fyr' is translated as 'Tom's a nice chap, you know', and 'Han er *jo* i London' as 'He's in London, you know'. Given that *jo* has been found to be hearer-oriented (Davidsen-Nielsen, 1993: 8), giving 'you'; and to express the speaker's view that the information conveyed is shared by the hearer (who may have momentarily forgotten it) (Davidsen-Nielsen, 1993: 9), giving '(as) ... know', the proffered equivalent conveys the basic semantics of the particle. However, it tells us very little about the various ways in which hearer-orientation and speaker's assumption of sharedness of information can be expressed in English, or therefore, about the complex details hidden below the abstract, general view of *jo* as a hearer oriented indicator of shared knowledge.

Consider the following little Danish text-extract (Høeg, 1993: 11) (with a gloss below):

Han havde jo erfaringen,   han havde jo slået børn   jævnligt gennem 40 år
He   had   x the experience, he   had   x hit   children regularly through 40 years

and its published translation (Haveland's 1994 translation of Høeg 1993, p. 6):

'He certainly did have experience, after all he had been hitting children regularly for forty years'

This example suggests that Høeg's translator has not derived much inspiration from Danish grammarians' pronouncements on the standard translation equivalent for *jo* in producing her translation, and a small substitution experiment suggests that she has been wise not to:

'He had experience, you know, he had been hitting children regularly for forty years, you know'

Both Davidsen-Nielsen and the authors of the grammar referred to above point out that *jo* and its fellow discourse particles are difficult to translate into English. But instead of consulting experts in solving difficult translational

problems, that is, translators -- perhaps by means of Target Text - Source Text comparisons -- the authors of the grammar offer their readers highly stylised English translation equivalents of Danish sentences with *jo*. Although these equivalents reflect the basic semantics of *jo*, the Source Text - Target Text example above suggests that they may not prove particularly helpful to translators. The proliferation of this type of example in grammars and bilingual dictionaries goes some way towards explaining why some translation scholars have poured scorn on linguists' ideas about equivalence, and about translation.

In contrast, when borrowing has taken place from linguistics to translation, translation scholars have generally been very well informed about what has been borrowed. In another sense, however, the borrowing has tended to be uncritical, insofar as linguistic models are taken on board wholesale and enthusiastically by translation scholars, with little or no effort to adjust them to cope with the translational case. The result tends to be a re-writing of translation theory using the terminology of the favoured linguistic model. It is true that this can help to produce new understanding, as metaphorisation generally does. But it does not usually advance translation theory at the core, and nor can it, therefore, help linguistics itself to advance, by feeding back into it new insights about the nature of language, derived from advances in our understanding of the nature of translation. This is a pity, since the 1990s has seen a resurgence of interest among linguists, even those of a formalist bent, in Jakobson's (1953) dictum that 'Bilingualism is ... the fundamental problem of linguistics' . For example Cook (1996: 67) argues that 'The description of L1 linguistic competence is not explanatorily adequate if it fails to recognise the normal capability of the human mind to know two languages'. Clearly, the process of translating draws on this capability, so we might suspect that an account of the nature of translation would be enriching for a linguistic theory which took multi-competence seriously. Unfortunately, the manner in which linguistic models have tended to be used in translation theory offers little promise of advance on that front.

On the whole, theories of translation built on the framework of linguistic theories or models tend to contain no special translational elements, or at least to remain fairly vague about the nature of any such elements.

For example, Nida (1964: 68-9) sees translating as a process of "decomposition and recomposition". First, ST is analysed into its kernel sentences and the transforms that have gone into producing it. Next the ST kernel forms are, as he puts it 'transferred' to the equivalent kernel forms of the target language. Finally, these TL kernel forms are 'transformed' into a 'stylistically appropriate' TT. If there is anything particularly translational here, it must lie in the transfer of ST kernels to TL kernels, and, indeed, when it

comes to the chapter on the translator's role, we see that a 'simple model of one-language communication' is complicated with a 'transfer mechanism' (p. 146). This is essentially a re-conceptualisation of translation in terms of the metaphor of transfer; something more specific would be helpful.

Later studies, having wider or narrower scopes than Nida's but working more or less explicitly with the idea of linguistic or cognitive universals as the translator's touchstones are plentiful, but they do not become significantly more specific about the translationality of translation.

Catford (1965) explains what happens in translation in terms of an early Hallidayan grammar (Halliday, 1961). He relates translation equivalents to '*(at least some of) the same features of substance*' (p. 50). A translation is related to some of the same features of substance as those to which its ST is related. So in translat**ing**, we relate ST to substance, and then find a TT that relates to the same or a similar substance. I.e. there is SL reception and TL production, but nothing particular is said about the relationship between the two **except** the implied matching of text and substance twice, once in reception and once in production, rather than once only. But there is nothing especially translational in the relationship between utterance and substance, since any expression in any language is related to substance.

Later studies, typically with a wider, more explicitly textlinguistic or discourse analytic scope than Catford's, and working more explicitly with the idea of context and culture, are plentiful, but they do not become significantly more specific about the translationality of translation.

Explicitly cognitively minded studies tend toward the same pattern. Bell's (1991: 59) model of the translation process shows on the left-hand side a process of text comprehension and on the right-hand side a process of text production. Indeed, he says that 'the decision to translate takes the idea - now [after ST reading] stored as the semantic representation of the clause - through the reverse process' (p. 57). This is not very different, it seems to me, from a monolingual writer's decision making: having decided what s/he wants to say, s/he goes on to say it. The model does not show where the 'contrastive knowledge' (p. 36; p. 40) a translator also needs might come into the picture.

In the application of his model, Bell allows the ST to influence the TT significantly (p. 71). He says: 'Our decision was to try to replicate as much of the form and content of the original as possible', and clearly this is something that is explicitly translational. Bell applies the model to a translation of a short poem. But it is clear that the model does not model what Bell says about what is going on during this translation process. The model does not allow for the ST influence that the discourse dwells on: the

model has no room for translation competence, but only for text comprehension and text production.

What unites these models is their use of linguistics to illuminate those aspects of translation which translation shares with monolingual language reception and production -- the non-translational aspects of translation, that is. These are obviously very important aspects of the translation process, and the models to which I have referred, and numerous others which I have not mentioned, have done translation studies a great service in bringing to the attention of translation scholars, trainers and critics the immense complexity of that process at its centrally important periphery, so to speak. What they have not done, however, is illuminate the translation process at its core -- at the place where it becomes translation as opposed to reading in one language and writing in another. Unless this begins to happen, translation studies is unlikely to become the model and theory **lender**, as well as the borrower, *vis-a-vis* linguistics.

Gutt's (1991) application of Sperber and Wilson's theory of relevance (1986) goes one step further than any of the translation scholars discussed above in claiming quite explicitly that given relevance theory 'there seems to be no need for a distinct general translation theory'. Since Relevance theory is described by its own propagators as 'very speculative and, as it stands, too general to determine directly either specific experimental tests or computer simulations' (Sperber and Wilson, 1987: 709-10), it could be considered somewhat premature to sacrifice several centuries worth of research on translation on its alter; and even if Relevance theory is correct in its own terms, there remains, as I have argued elsewhere (Malmkjær, 1992), a serious questions whether it alone is able to account for translational phenomena. Gutt (1991) argues convincingly that many issues in translation theory can be seen as special cases of issues covered by relevance theory, but it is by no means obvious that this means that these issues therefore disappear. It may be useful for translators to know that it is important to employ the principle of relevance in translation, but it might still be useful to receive some more specific guidance about what the employment of this principle might entail, given different types of intended audience reading different types of projected Target Text for different types of purpose. It is interesting to ponder, in this connection, the curious contrast between the thirty-odd pages Gutt (1991: 129-59) spends discussing different kinds of 'communicative clues', that is, stylistic properties of texts which guide readers to the interpretation intended by the communicator, and his somewhat reluctant admission (1991: 164),

> it may well be that the concept 'communicative clue' will prove of some value in the practice of translation: it might help the translator to identify and talk about features in the source and target-language utterances that affect their interpretation.

I thought that stylistics had long been considered an important tool in the practice of translation. Renaming it 'the study of communicative clues', however, does not seem likely to advance either it or translation studies greatly.

I should like at this point to emphasise that although the focus in this paper is on interaction between research in linguistics and research in translation, the inference should by no means be drawn that I believe translation studies to be solely concerned with the study of the language of translations; this is just one aspect of translation studies. Nor do I wish to imply that linguistics is the only discipline which translation studies should interact with; there are many other areas which are relevant. And finally, I do not believe that translation studies can advance *only* as a result of interaction with linguistics or other disciplines; in fact, as I have already stressed, I think it is essential that it should advance in and for itself, mainly. If it did this more, people in other areas might become more aware of translation studies as a discipline in its own right, and pay more attention to its basic concepts.

Advances in this area have been made mainly in translation protocol studies (see, for example, Lörscher, 1991; Tirkkonen-Condit, 1991), although large scale, computer aided research on translated texts holds out promise (see, for example, Laviosa-Braithwaite, 1997). Studies employing linguistic models to highlight Source Text reception and Target Language production have in general failed to address the translating component which mediates between the former and the latter. This neglect by linguistically minded translation scholars of the process of translating is not likely to work towards altering linguists' general disregard for translation as a discipline; and this disregard works directly against properly interactive research in the two disciplines.

In the following section, I present three studies which hold interdisciplinary promise. By bringing the three studies together, I hope to indicate that by not interacting, both disciplines are letting slip away important opportunities to advance.

2   SOME EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE

In this section I outline three research projects carried out for the Degree of PhD. The three studies are mutually independent, and only two make explicit

reference to translation. Nevertheless, a comparison of the foci and results of each study highlights areas of common concern and insight relevant to both linguistics and translation studies.

In the first study, Taira (1996), the initial focus was on the translation into English of the Japanese sentence final particles *ne*, *na*, and *yo*. English does not have a similar linguistic category, nor even any one single linguistic category of some other type, which seems to perform the rather complex functions that these particles appear to perform in Japanese. Taira, herself an experienced translator, had seen repeated references to the particles as problematic for translators, and had experienced these problems. She set off to discover how other translators had coped.

An enquiry of this type tends to force the inquirer into descriptive linguistics, and into the theory which informs the description. Taira had to determine where in the language system the particles might be situated: in syntax? or semantics? or pragmatics?

The difficulty here was that a survey of the literature on *na*, *ne*, and *yo* produced a good deal of contradiction, and several descriptive and explanatory gaps. A new, fuller, more synthesised description and explanation of the syntax, semantics, and pragmatics of these particles was needed, and at this point, therefore, the dissertation, which started off as a dissertation in translation, turned into a dissertation on linguistics. Taira ended up using translational data to illuminate a topic in linguistics.

However, her data selection was informed by her understanding of the complexities of translation, and of the factors that may affect the end product. To take account of these complexities and to minimise the risk of distortion through translation, she used a Japanese novel, written in the style of Western novels, and its translation into English; and a novel written in English by an ethnic Japanese brought up mainly in Britain, about, and set in, Japan, and its translation into Japanese. She looked to see how the Japanese sentence-final particles were rendered into English, in particular circumstances, and which English expressions had been rendered as which sentence final particles in what circumstances, in the translation into Japanese. She checked her results against native Japanese speakers' intuitions about the uses of the particles in selected sentences from the Japanese versions of the novels and she checked the use in the literary texts against recordings of naturally occurring discourse. She was able to make some reasonably strong claims concerning the functions of the particles in various contextual and cotextual circumstances, and about their relationships with a variety of features of English. Finally, she was able to link the comparison between the Japanese and English linguistic sub-systems to similarities and differences in Japanese and English conceptions of self.

The interactional aspects of this dissertation are obvious: an interest in a translation problem led to an enhanced description of an aspect of Japanese. The description was based on data whose selection was informed by translation theory. The findings will be useful in both fields; yet this dissertation is clearly in linguistics. It is linguistic theory, essentially, that is advanced by it. Of course, in advancing linguistic theory through a better understanding of an aspect of Japanese, and, by way of this, of how language relates to culture, a specific translation problem has also received some clarification. But translation theory as such has not been advanced by this thesis; in fact, a planned chapter on the nature of translation was cut short, to function, simply, as a vindication of the use of translational data and an explanation of how and why these particular data had been chosen.

Of course, the fact that linguistic theory was in this case advanced by an examination of translational data is important. It suggests that, as Jakobson pointed out long ago, 'widespread practice of interlingual communication, particularly translating activities, must be kept under constant scrutiny by linguistic science' (1959: 233-4). As my second exemplar, Wu (1997) discovered, there are things which tend to remain hidden in a language except in translations from that language into another.

Wu wanted to compare spatial deixis in Chinese and English. She began with an attempt to supplement existing accounts of deixis in Chinese by way of analysing production data elicited in experimental conditions. However, as anyone engaged in this pursuit knows, it is difficult to get people to produce what you want them to produce; besides, the experiment could show only the most basic uses of the deictic terms, and did not illustrate uses which Wu knew existed. Existing contrastive studies concentrated on similarities between the two systems, and reported nothing about the differences between them, which Wu also knew existed.

Because of these problems, Wu found herself employing the same methodology as Taira, though on a smaller scale. Wu selected two chapters of an English children's book and its translation into Chinese, and two chapters of a Chinese children's book and its translation into English. She chose children's literature because it is replete with spatial deictic elements without becoming too sophisticated in its use of them, and because the subjects in her experiment had been pre-teenagers.

These data helped her considerably in developing a description of both core and peripheral spatial deixis in Chinese, and although her dissertation began and ended in linguistics, she added to it a chapter dealing with the nature of translational data. The data she used was less carefully selected than Taira's, but then Wu was more interested in how and at which point the

concept of deixis begins to vary between the two cultures, than in whether the concept is realised in them.

Taira set out to try to establish **which** concepts the particles helped to realise. She could not assume that there was only one such concept, nor which it would be, nor that it would be shared between the two cultures. Wu, in contrast, because she was working on deixis -- a concept which it is almost inconceivable that a language should not realise -- could make the assumption that the concept was shared between the languages, so she could afford to see the data as realising the concept, and she did not have to argue that the data was evidential of the existence of the concept.

Both dissertations follow a long tradition within comparative linguistics. It is familiar, particularly, from the work of Sapir (1921) who, as Fillmore (1971: 1) reminds us, used the now famous (or infamous) sentence 'The farmer killed the duckling' and its equivalents in a number of languages with the intention of demonstrating 'the wide number of ways in which concepts and relations get lexicalized and grammatized in the world's languages'. It is a tradition now carried on by researchers using machine-readable parallel text corpora, many of whom, unfortunately, share with many other linguists the tendency to disregard the nature of the translational activity discussed in section 1 above. There is also reason to believe that the quantitative advantages of the majority of computer aided studies are gained at the expense of the types of insight which may be derived from smaller scale, qualitatively oriented research, and which may be of particular value to translation studies. Large scale, machine aided studies comparing Source Texts and Target Texts tend on the whole to use only one Target Text per source; but comparisons of several translation of one Source Text tend to reveal wide variation among translators at specific points in the text. It may be expected that some of these points could be classed as problematic for translators, therefore. However, the corpus, containing only one translation, will fail to reveal such problem areas, and, if the translation at that point is odd compared to other instances of the same feature in different contexts, for example, then, because the corpus study is geared towards generalities, this instance will be lost as statistically insignificant in view of the overwhelming mass of other instances (Malmkjær, 1996a).

My third exemplar, McBride (1996), presents a method of corpus analysis which, although used with a monolingual corpus, might be adapted for use with translational data.

McBride (1996) compares the treatment of the concept of obligation in two sets of literary text, about a century apart, which might, therefore, be said to use different chronolects. The **word** 'obligation' is found in neither text set, but the concept, defined as 'a moral or legal constraint ... binding to

some performance', is in operation in both. Terms which are 'used in the texts in situations which involve the behavioural constraining force of obligation' are held to be semantically relevant to the concept of obligation, and the investigation focuses on the links which these terms form with other words in the texts, that is, on the terms as nodes in collocational searches such as those employed by many people working on massive corpora (see, for example, Sinclair, 1987; 1991). This method, however, is too dependent on a mass of data to be suitable for a study with a smaller data base; and the customary restriction of the search field to about five words either side of the node is too severe for an interpretative study of literary texts.

In McBride's study, aspects of Sinclair's (1987; 1991) approach to collocation are combined with aspects of Halliday and Hasan's (1976) work on cohesion. Sinclair's notion of collocation is used to establish lexical connections within the texts, but cohesion is used to determine what constitutes a collocational connection: a node collocates with terms which it is related to by conjunction or reference, not just with terms found within four or five word-places either side of it. The word also collocates with terms which occur within its immediate syntactic environment. Collocational significance is measured in terms of number of occurrences of a collocate-node pair, multiplied by the number of different syntactic frames the node occurs in that collocation. The graded lists of collocations produced in this way are divided into three zones, core, skirt and periphery, which makes it possible to establish how often a given node occurs as a member of core, skirt and periphery collocations; and to present the hypothesis that the closer a collocation is to the core for a given node, the more significant it is likely to be for the definition of the node in question.

The analysis of the connections between these and other lexical items in the two texts reveals that the conceptions of obligation displayed in the two sets of text differ, and the difference seems to reflect a cultural shift in the period, which has been independently documented by social historians.

3   SOME INTERDISCIPLINARY IMPLICATIONS

It should not be surprising to find that researchers interested in the language of translated texts will turn to linguistics for theoretical and descriptive frameworks, nor that researchers interested in comparing languages might turn to translational data (though see section 1 above). But the important point here is that the three studies I have described display a common

concern, which is essentially Sapir's: namely to discover how concepts are realised in different languages. One way or another, they assume the commonality of concepts in different cultures; or, to put it another way, they assume that concepts can remain stable under linguistic variation.

Taira sought to establish which concepts underlay different linguistic systems. She found minimal coincidence between concepts, with significant variation in the relationships between them. Wu assumed coincidence in the basic concept, found basic coincidence in linguistic realisation, and wide variation in extended uses of the deictic terms. This suggests a concomitant variation in the concepts at the skirt and periphery, to adopt the terminology employed by McBride. McBride held situation types stable, so to speak, while solving for concept, via an examination of the use in the two chronolects of terms used in situations of a type that had been defined in terms of the story action.

Research of this kind is clearly central to a field like translation studies which, whatever else it is concerned with, is certainly concerned with the representation in texts in the target language of concepts which the translator believes the Source Text to represent.

Traditionally, the justification of any assumption of what for ease of expression I shall call sameness of meaning has been left to philosophers of language, who deal with it in terms of a set of principles called things like 'the principle of prudent economy', 'the principle of rationality' and 'the principle of charity' (see, for example, Davidson, 1984). The principle of charity allows us to assume that the other person is enough like us to share our baseline concepts -- and in the case of one language, our baseline terminology. The question in philosophy is not **whether** we assume such a principle, because it is obvious that we do. The question is whether the assumption is **warranted theoretically**; and although research of the kind that I have outlined does not prove it, it indicates that the assumption of sameness is, if not exactly proven, then at least warranted **empirically**. The studies show that it is possible to discuss in a sensible, fairly objective way apparent degrees and levels of sharedness. To use a botanical metaphor, the picture they provide is of a common soil of a shared human cognitive system in which concepts are rooted (the roots, possibly, drawing nourishment from various mental modules -- John Williams, personal communication), and of a basic conceptual stem for each concept, with a possibility of separate branches further up for different language/culture (and possibly twigs for dialects/registers/sub-cultures). Concepts appear to differ in terms of how tall the stem can become before branching for separate languages/cultures.

4 NON-CONTRASTIVE LINGUISTIC RESEARCH USING TRANSLATIONAL DATA

The studies mentioned in the previous section were concerned, mainly, with discovering the basic similarities between languages -- universal semantic features against the background of which more peripheral variations between languages can be discussed as variations on a given theme. The first two studies discussed were classifiable as studies in contrastive linguistics, employing translational data.

It is, however, also possible and fruitful to use translational data to illuminate a phenomenon in one language only; and in such studies, it is particularly useful to use several translations of one Source Text. The feature to be illuminated can be a feature of either the language of the translations or the language of the source texts, and in my own research I have used this methodology to illuminate aspects of English, the language of my preferred body of translations, and Danish, the language of my preferred body of Source Texts. I shall provide a brief example with a focus on a feature of Danish (for a focus on English, see Malmkjær 1996b). The question addressed in the example is whether existential 'der' in Danish is deictic.

Consider four translations of the two opening clauses of Hans Christian Andersen's (1844) story, 'Den grimme Ælling' (The Ugly Duckling), *Der var saa deiligt ude paa Landet; det var Sommer,*

Corrin	It was glorious out in the country.It was summer.
Haugaard	It was so beautiful out in the country. It was summer.
Kingsland	It was so lovely out in the country! It was summer:
Spink	It was so lovely in the country! It was summer.

Notice that the original begins with a so-called existential sentence, followed by an impersonal construction, but that the translations uniformly employ the impersonal construction in both cases (for other options used by other translators see Malmkjær, forthcoming). Neither the impersonal construction nor the existential are normally considered deictic. However, further analysis of themes in the first paragraph of the source text, and a comparison with the translations, show that an effect of progressive movement towards the central character with whom empathy is finally established in the clause '*og her laae an And paa sin Rede'* ('and here lay a duck on her nest') is created in the original by the consistent employment of place-deictic terms in clause theme position; but that this progression is less clearly marked out in the translations. It is as if the potentially deictic term, 'der' in the Danish text takes on full deictic force through interaction with the remainder of the deictic themes in the paragraph, in a manner which the standard use of the

impersonal 'it' in this context in English forbids. There are grounds, therefore, to take issue with Allen, Holmes and Lundskær-Nielsen's classification of the 'der'- subject in impersonal constructions as related to the pronoun system (1995: 160), and to argue that it is, in fact, more closely related to 'der' as a locative adverb. Although this insight could have been gained by a study of the source text alone, it stands out more clearly when the paragraph in question is compared with the translated paragraphs. Discovering what features of the Target Texts cause the difference in effect between them and the Source Text forcefully highlights those aspects of the Source Text by means of which its effects are created.

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