1. Introduction

A troubled relationship

Modern linguistics began in the early twentieth century with the work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure. He focused on the notion of language as a system at a given moment in time (a synchronic approach) at a highly abstract level that uncovered powerful principles about the way in which language in general is structured. The structuralist model he produced was so immensely influential when, much later, it was taken up by anthropologists, literary critics and philosophers as the one model that would apparently explain what we had always wanted to know about life, the universe and everything.

Since linguistics is the study of language and has produced such powerful and productive theories about how language works, and since translation is a language activity, it would seem only common sense to think that the first had something to say about the second. Indeed in 1965 the British scholar John Catford opened his book *A Linguistic Theory of Translation* with the words: “Clearly, then, any theory of translation must draw upon a theory of language – a general linguistic theory”. In exactly the same year, however, the famous American theoretical linguist Noam Chomsky was rather more sceptical about the implications of his own theory for translation, saying that his theory “does not, for example, imply that there must be some reasonable procedure for translating between languages” (1965:30). Although no expert in translation, Chomsky nonetheless divined that there was something about the activity that put it beyond reason. Perhaps he had read what the academic Ivor Richards (1953:250) said about translation: “We have here indeed what may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos”.

This uncertain relationship between linguistics and translation theory continued to be reflected in the literature. Eight years after Catford’s and Chomsky’s pronouncements, the German theorist Jörg Albrecht (1973:1) expressed regret and astonishment that linguists had not studied translation; yet the Soviet linguist Aleksandr Shvets, writing in the same year (although quoted here from the later German translation), made the opposite claim: many linguists had long since decided translation could indeed be an object of linguistic study (1987:13). He rejected the idea that linguistics can explain only the lowest levels of translation activity, saying this was based on too narrow a view of linguistics. He did, however, refer briefly to the future caused by the first major attempt by a Russian scholar to produce a
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The topic of translation in education is a complex and multifaceted one. It involves the process of conveying meaning from one language to another, often in a manner that preserves the essence of the original text. This process can be challenging due to the differences in cultures, idioms, and grammatical structures between languages. The importance of translation in educational settings cannot be overstated, as it plays a crucial role in the global development of knowledge and understanding.

In recent years, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of multilingual education. This approach emphasizes the value of learning multiple languages as a means of fostering cultural awareness, enhancing cognitive development, and promoting social inclusion. Multilingual education encourages students to develop a deep understanding of the world from multiple perspectives, which can lead to a more interconnected and enlightened society.

This document explores the various dimensions of translation in education, including its historical evolution, key challenges, and contemporary implications. It aims to provide educators and policymakers with a comprehensive understanding of the importance of translation and its role in promoting a more inclusive and culturally diverse educational landscape.
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the target-language signifier. According to this primitive theory of translation we would read the sign *sausage*, identify the language-independent signified denoted by the signifier, find its German signifier, and make a simple substitution: *sausage* would become *Wurst*. Translation would be a job for computers (a vast topic in itself which would be too technical for the present book to cover).

However, things are not that simple. Signs do not just signify (point to things in the real world). They also have value derived from language-internal structuring which is not the same from one language to the next. The words *cat* and *koshka* don't have the same range of meanings, so their value is different. English has two words *wood* and *forest* for the one Russian word *lies*, so again the values are different.

But words also carry a superstructure that is often referred to by the term 'connotation'. We think of some words as 'good' (*grandmother, baby, chocolate*) and other words as 'bad' (*spider, snot, slug*). But these connotational meanings are highly variable even within a language (some people don't like babies, others may have a fondness for spiders, while grandma may be the proverbial 'grandmother from hell') and they are often different between cultures. French people sitting down to eat remain calm in front of a plate of snails. Many English people would react differently, and so for them the menu may offer *escargots*, promising the exotic not the slimy. Connotation has proved difficult for linguistics to formalize, but we shall look at one useful attempt below.

Paradigmatic and syntagmatic: word sets and collocations

In addition to having its own internal structure, the sign can be structured in two other ways. Signs can be joined up in a string, and they can be grouped in a bundle. This is often called the 'chain and choice' model, and we shall see examples of how a translation problem that cannot be solved at one point in the chain may be solved by an appropriate choice at some other point. In the first case (making the chain) we produce word sequences: in the restaurant we can string words together to say 'I'd like sausage and chips, please'. The order in which we put the words is not normally random. It is governed by 'syntax', the rules of our language which tell us what kind of word can come in what place in a sentence. In another language we might have to say 'Like chips sausage would'. This is syntagmatic structure. Traditional linguistics handled syntax as a set of slots along the surface of the page or in the stream of spoken language; it tried to identify the function of each slot and what could go in it. Chomsky's revolution was to go below the surface and ask how the string was generated and from what.

In the second case (making the choice), we can pick words out of a 'bag' in place of other words. We could replace *sausage* in the above sentence by any number of words, such as *egg, pie or steak*. This is paradigmatic structure. But again the structure is not random. As we shall see below, words tend to group together to form semantic fields. Most people would associate *knives* with *forks* rather than with *cats and dogs* or any other non-cutlery items.

These groups may seem naturally ordered according to what is out there in the real world. But very often they, like the sign, are socially determined. Sticking with our food example, we find that the society we live in quite arbitrarily restricts what we are allowed to eat and in what combinations. *Tripe and chips* is not a combination found on English menus. Nor is *boiled potato and roast dog* or *broccoli and sautéed maggot*, although dogs and maggots are staple diet in other cultures, and this may pose problems for the translator. If we are translating a text in which the words *fish and chips* are chained together not to designate a particular combination of foods that somebody just happens to be eating but to convey the sociolinguistic connotation of 'typical national cheap meal', we may have to consider the possibility of some kind of cultural adaptation in our translation. This takes us outside linguistics, to a point where we can use linguistic concepts to describe the phenomena we find in language but where the guidelines on how to handle these phenomena in translation must come from other discipline.

As the example of tripe and chips shows, the paradigmatic (picking items out of our lexical bag) and the syntagmatic (stringing them together in a line) come together in the concept of 'collocation', a technical term for what some people call a 'set phrase'. Except in special circumstances, such as poetry or madness, we can't take any old thing out of our language bag and stick it next to any other old thing. We are subjected to what are called 'selection restrictions'. These may be quite rigid (we say *bats in the belfry* not *bats in the steeple* to say that somebody is mad) or they may be quite loose: a British prime minister caused surprise with the phrase *two bananas short of a picnic* to mean the same thing, and although most English people say *egg and chips*, the heroin in the film *Shirley Valentine* called them *chips and egg*.

Some collocations are quite arbitrary. What possible link can there be between rain, cats, and dogs? And yet the English say *It's raining cats and dogs*. Others can be clearly motivated. The equivalent French expression *Il pleut comme vache qui pisse* ("It's raining like a cow urinating") is quite graphic. Good translation is often a case of either knowing or serendipitously hitting on the appropriate collocation (which
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The reference above indicates that further understanding of what constitutes "the old world" and "the new world" requires a comprehensive examination of historical and cultural contexts. This approach not only allows for a deeper appreciation of the differences between these two regions but also highlights the importance of recognizing and valuing the unique contributions made by each locale.

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2. Sub-Word Components