Business translation

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BUSINESS TRANSLATION

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Abstract

*Most translation done today is professional, specialised translation. The purpose of this article is to analyse specialised business translation, summarising the theoretical approaches applicable in the field (that is the functional approaches) and identifying translation problems posed by the translation of economic texts. As a case in point, I shall consider the Romanian translation of an English textbook, **Principles of Marketing**, which will be discussed and assessed in terms of Christiane Nord's model of text analysis in translation. The discussion will reveal that the Romanian version – an import of knowledge as well as an import of terminology – preserves the overall effect of the original, namely knowledge acquisition. The target audience, however, misses much of the communicative action of the source text due to the omission of non-verbal elements.*

Theoretical approaches to translation

The institutionalisation of translation occurred in the 1950s and 1960s, at a time when linguistics was the main discipline informing the study of translation. In the 1970s and 1980s, Translation Studies became increasingly interdisciplinary as a result of borrowings from the conceptual and methodological apparatus of e.g. psychology, communication theory, anthropology, and, more recently, from cultural and gender studies. There are, therefore, a number of distinct perspectives from which translation can be studied: purely linguistic or linguistic-cognitive, communicative or functional, polysystem theory, philological, cultural-historical, and philosophical-hermeneutical.

The shift from predominantly linguistic translation theories to a more functionally and socio-culturally oriented view of translation originated in Germany in the late 1970s at a time of growing need for translation of non-literary texts. *Skopos* theory, which emerged in Vermeer's and Reiss' work, incorporates the social circumstances of text production and reception. It views translation as a specific form of human action driven by a *skopos* (Greek = 'purpose'). Unlike linguistic theories of retrospective fidelity to the source text, *skopos* theory *sets* translation in a prospective perspective. This is so because translation methods and strategies are conceived of as determined by the intended purpose of the target text, as indicated by the commissioner's needs and not as subject to source-text authority (Schäffner 2000: 236).

Skopos theory has brought about a significant change in the status of source and target texts. Whereas the source text is viewed as a primary 'offer of information' in the source culture, the translated text is a secondary offer of information in the target culture, an autonomous text created through a process of selection of source-text information according to the *skopos* of the translation. As a result, translation is not the reproduction of a previous text but the production of a new one. Since, at different times, the needs or expectations of the target-text receivers - which are instrumental in deciding the *skopos* - may differ, there is never a single correct or preferable translation. The standard, therefore, against which translation is evaluated is adequacy or appropriateness of *skopos*, not fidelity to the source text.

Skopos theory has been criticised for underplaying the role of the source text in translation. While still adopting a functional approach, Christiane Nord counterbalances this deficiency in *Text Analysis in Translation* (1991). She formulates guidelines for an analysis of the source text that are meant to be valid for all text types, and translation situations and she assigns a significant role to the 'players' in the translational action.[1]

Nord uses the intended function of a translation as a criterion to classify translation as *documentary* or *instrumental*. Documentary translations (word-for-word translations, literary translations, philological translations) are offers of information that "serve as a document of [a source-culture] communication between the author and the [source-language text] recipient" (Nord 1991: 72). Instrumental translations, on the other hand, are "a communicative element in its own right, conveying a message directly from the [source-text] author to the [target-text] recipient" (Nord 1991: 72). The function of the documentary translation, therefore, is not similar to that of its source text, while an instrumental translation can have the same or a similar function as the source text. Moreover, instrumental translation is intended to fulfil its communicative purpose without the recipient being conscious of reading or hearing a text which has already been used, in a different form, in a different communicative context (Nord 1991: 72-73).

Nord's model of text analysis in translation

Nord's comprehensive model of text analysis takes into account **intratextual** and **extratextual** factors by means of which the translator can establish the "function in culture" of a particular source text. This function is then compared

to the "function in culture" that the target text is expected to perform, the comparison revealing the source-text elements that have to be preserved or adapted in translation (Nord 1991: 21). Thus translation is a conscious problem-solving and decision-making process in which, with every step forward, the translator looks back to confirm or correct previous findings.

The relevant **extratextual** factors that Nord envisages are the *author* or *sender* of a text, the *sender's intention*, the *addressee* or *recipient* that the text is directed at, the *medium* or *channel* that the text is communicated through, the *place* and the *time* of text production and reception, the *motive for communication*, and the *function* that the text can achieve. The **intratextual** factors, on the other hand, are the *subject matter* of the text, the *information* or the *content* presented in it, the *knowledge presuppositions* made by the author, the *composition* or *construction* of the text, the *non-linguistic* or *paralinguistic* elements accompanying it, the *lexical characteristics*, the *syntactic structures*, and the *suprasegmental* features of *intonation* and *prosody* (Nord 1991: 37).

Nord also offers a very useful classification of translation problems that are termed *pragmatic, cultural,* or *linguistic.* The *pragmatic* translation problems arise from the transfer situation with its specific contrast of source-text and target-text recipients, source-text and target-text medium, motive for source-text production or motive for translation, and source-text function vs target text-function. The *cultural* problems spring from culture-specific verbal habits, expectations, norms and conventions, and also from textual conventions, general norms of style, and norms of measuring. *Linguistic* translation problems, on the other hand, derive from structural differences between two languages, particularly in vocabulary and sentence structure (Nord 1991: 159).

Parameters for business translation
Time, costs and reliability

In combination with *skopos* theory, Nord's approach is particularly relevant for a discussion of business translation. Business translation involves not only functional equivalence to the *skopos*, or linguistic equivalence, to the source text but also such parameters as *time* and *costs*.

Most business translations are produced under temporal constrains, sometimes with impossible deadlines, and at a high cost. These drawbacks have fuelled the interest in machine translation. Initiated in the 1950s, machine translation, de-

spite efforts to improve it, has limited practical use in professional translation work unless it is post-edited by a human translator. It is, however, resorted to when the *skopos* allows for it: for instance, in the case of translation for internal use in some organisations – as well as on the Internet (between English, French, and Spanish) - where the user of the translation is mainly interested in the gist of the information contained in a text. Documents meant for publication, reports or newspaper articles, contracts, tenders, offers, and important business correspondence, on the other hand, are generally assigned to in-house or freelance translators.

Given the temporal constrains, translation in the real world of business more often than not involves trade-offs between reliability, speed, and the cost of translation to the effect that "the translator's goal can never be the perfect translation, or even the best possible translation; it can only be the best possible translation at this point in time" (Robinson 1997: 202).

Significantly, the notion of 'reliability' that Douglas Robinson mentions as particularly relevant in business concerns not only the translated text as such but also the translator as a person. A text is reliable in so far as it constitutes the optimum basis for a certain action that its user will undertake. Depending on the *skopos* (though Robinson does not use this term), a reliable text could be an instance of literalism or foreignism; it may be fluent, it may come in the guise of a summary, a commentary, a summary-commentary, an adaptation, or an encryption (Robinson 1997: 11).

The translator's reliability is judged in relation to the text, to clients, and to technology. First, it is ensured by the translator's attention to detail, by her sensitivity to the user's needs, by her careful research in reference books and databases, and by her careful proof-reading of the final document(s). Second, translators prove their professionalism if they are versatile enough to translate a wide range of text types in various fields, if they respect the deadline or renegotiate it in good time, and if they are friendly and confidential. Third, reliability with regard to technology implies the translator's proficient use of appropriate hardware and software (Robinson 1997: 12-14).

Translation and knowledge

Business translators are either language graduates who develop specialised research skills and learn a certain terminology, or professionals who have acquired

adequate foreign language proficiency. This is due to the fact that business translation is characterised by an extensive terminology and formulaic expressions. Advertisements for translators ask for applicants with mastery of terminology, the ability to cooperate with other translators and to use information technology. To give just one example, an advertisement issued by an international firm[1] required that applicants should have a university degree, a sound knowledge of business, experience in data processing, several years of experience in translating, commitment, a sense of responsibility and the ability to convince others, to work independently and as part of a team (Wilss 1999: 222).

Translators of technical texts (which use 'Language for Special Purposes', henceforth LSP) must, in the nature of things, have a good command of the source and target languages, and at least an informed layman's comprehension of the subject, together with mastery of the research skills needed. As Neubert has noted, specialised texts call for expert formulation and a genuinely expert understanding of the subject matter (Neubert 2002: 25).

The expert formulation that Neubert mentions is a matter of mastering the rules of a certain genre or text type. The co-occurrence of (rhetorically) obligatory and (stylistically) optional text elements varies from one text type to another, and the translator has to proceed accordingly.

LSP literature, in a broad definition of the term, is ideally unambiguous, informative, accessible, comprehensible, and domain-specific. In contrast to the poststructuralist, deconstructive doctrine widespread in literary circles that insists on semantic mutability and dissemination of meaning, the meaning of an LSP text does not change essentially in multiple readings, thus increasing its sharability. The rigid methodology underlying such texts is reflected linguistically in that LSP texts contain conventionalised textual elements on the lexical and syntactic level. Seen against this background, "LSP texts display a specific communicative, referentially based calculus which is best documented in terminological standardization" (Wills 1996: 21). Moreover, terminology provides authors and translators with an essential communication-facilitating resource without which they would have to operate on an excessively explicit level.

Technical texts largely operate on certain orderly sequences of propositions and on sets of pre-structured, predictable text patterns which, once internalised, can be reactivated intralingually and interlingually on the spur of the moment without much or any searching in the long-term memory of the language user.

The characteristic feature of LSP texts is normativity, that is the unambiguous correspondence between notional aspects and linguistic realisations, standardisation, and neutrality. Predictability is more important than lexical variation, and for the sake of terminological precision, LSP is in principle synonym free.

According to Wills, the decisive yardstick for the qualitative assessment of LSP translation is not only "the degree of semantic (terminological) equivalence, but also the degree of syntactic transparency" (Wills 1996: 24). Syntax, therefore, is also relevant in translation, with its plethora of phraseological expressions and LSP rhetorical devices, and cohesion markers, as well as logically coherent organisation of text features such as a clear distinction of topic and comment, and of old and new information.

In addition, discussing the type of knowledge that a translator is expected to possess in order to make informed decisions when translating LSP texts, Sørensen argues that, ideally, the translator should be knowledgeable in the subject field and should be aware of the subject-dependent source- and target-world discrepancies as well as of text-type discrepancies. On the basis of this knowledge, she can afford to be unfaithful to the original. This "controlled unfaithfulness" is justified by the goal of optimising the translated text, so that it can fulfil its objectives more efficiently in a certain line of action (Sørensen 1994: 13-23).

Principles of Marketing in Romanian translation
The text

As mentioned, texts usually translated for business are contracts, tenders, international correspondence, etc. They are functional texts, that is "non-fiction texts which are tied to a specific time or span of time and whose sender(s) and receiver(s) are authentic persons or institutions that are able to pragmatically relate the text to place and time and thereby get the clue to the relevant line of action" (Sørensen 1994: 15). In most cases, translations are prepared by in-house translators or freelancers. The European Union, for instance, has specific units for the translation of business and finance texts located in Brussels and Luxembourg. Some multinational companies also have their own language services, including units for machine translation.

Access to such authentic translated material is, however, almost impossible, unless one is an insider in a company's translation unit. This is why, for the purpose of this article, I shall focus on practical problems raised by business transla-

tion by applying Nord's model of textual analysis to an international classic in the field of economics, *Principles of Marketing,* and by analysing how the Romanian version has coped with them.

The problematic 'original'

In terms of Reiss' text typology,[2] *Principles of Marketing* is an informative text. More exactly, it is a didactic-instructive text. From the point of view of translation, that is as a source text, the original poses several problems. First, the book has gone through many editions, each of them offering revisions of the previous ones. From the information that I could gather, there are at least three different editions: the international edition, which reached its ninth edition in 2001, the European edition, which reached its third edition in 2001, and the Australian edition. Oddly enough, the Romanian version purports to be a translation of the seventh European edition, even though there is only an international seventh edition, from 1996, and not 1995, as it is specified in the translated version.

The various editions of the book differ in their information-packaging strategies, in the content of the accompanying texts, and in the wording of the main text. The book as a product, or commodity, is fashioned differently with respect to the target market. The principles of marketing, therefore, are applied in the very production and distribution of the book.

This is not a singular case. I have myself come across other examples of different editions of the same book (e.g. Fred E. Jand's *Intercultural Communication: An Introduction*) that feature updated examples, a new ordering of the information, and other illustrations. Updating, however, is not the only reason behind these transformations. They are also influenced by the place of publication and distribution. In J. K. Rowling's celebrated Harry Potter novels, elements such as the school system vary depending on whether the books are marketed in Britain or in the USA. The text of John Updike's *Couples*, published in Great Britain in 1968, is different from the one published in the States (Dollerup 1998: 37). Similarly, stories with sad endings in the 'original', are often rendered with happy ends when targeted to American audiences.

Over the years, *The Principles of Marketing* has undergone changes in content, format, and even status. In the latest international edition, the book is only part of a larger product, which comprises a compact disc, video tapes, an instructor's manual, on-line interactive resources and an on-line course, colour

transparencies and advertising transparencies. Earlier editions also provided Internet links and slides, a study guide, an applications manual, and personal computer application software. These specifications, together with the acknowledgements, are left out in the translation as irrelevant or impracticable. This is due to the fact that Romanian society is not strong in technology and access to the Internet is still rather limited. The translated version, therefore, is conceived outside the net surrounding the original, and it is meant to stand as an autonomous product.

The pre-textual specifications, however, are not the only cuts operated and, in the (un)official policy of publishing houses, not reported to the readers. The translation omits illustrations and coloured highlights as well. Unlike the original, the latest editions of which are very colourful, the translation is in black (the letters) and white (the paper). The reason is, obviously, financial. The reproduction of illustrations and the use of coloured ink in general would have increased both the bulk and the cost of the book. Even without illustrations, the translated version has 1135 pages and costs more than half the monthly scholarship grant for the average Romanian student.

Extratextual factors

Since we are here analysing the book according to Christiane Nord's approach, the fact that *Principles of Marketing* is a joint effort of two authors, Philip Kotler and Gary Armstrong in earlier editions, and subsequently the combined efforts of four authors, may be termed an extratextual factor. The Romanian translation is similarly the result of team-work, involving three translators: Dan Criste, Cosmin Crişan, and Raluca Costescu. This fact is in keeping with the contemporary tendency to employ teamwork in technical text production, where several writers contribute to the text and where translators work in concert with documentalists, computer specialists, editors, and revisers.

The sender's intention is referential (to inform the recipient) and operative (to persuade the recipient to perform a certain activity). More exactly, the authors aim to transmit knowledge in the field of marketing and invite students to apply this knowledge by checking Internet links or studying video cases (in the latest international edition).

As far as the recipients are concerned, the book is targeted at a large audience, mainly business students in Europe, in Australia, and worldwide in the three dif-

ferent editions.[3] This vast readership allows for an instrumental translation. The frequency of subsequent editions speaks for the success of the book, which has rightfully gained the status of a classic marketing reference book.

The text is communicated in the written medium or channel; as mentioned, the text is accompanied by various other media as supporting teaching material. Together they form a high quality product that appeals to students by introducing and discussing concepts, classifications, and marketing strategies, which challenge them emotionally and perceptively by means of illustrations and various learning aids.

The 'original text production' took place in the USA in 1996. The place variable is relevant in that it immediately points to the variety of English used and to textual norms specific to American culture. The lapse of time between source-text and target-text production is relatively short, which again justifies the option of instrumental translation.

The motive for communication overlaps with its function, namely to instruct students and to disseminate knowledge. In addition, American genre conventions require that such texts should be not only informative but also entertaining to increase the students' motivation and interest in studying them. Thus the function-in-culture of *Principles of Marketing* is primarily to inform and, as a 'side effect', to entertain.

However, Romanian genre conventions maximise the informative function. The function-in-culture of the target text is solely to inform. Where the source text updates, with each new edition, information that has already been available for a while, the target text is realised in a community which does not have the same information.

Until a decade ago, the Romanian economy was dominated by a communist ideology that allowed no room for marketing. Moreover, a large number of the people who are currently working in business have been trained according to that ideology. This is why a book such as *Principles of Marketing* offers information that is perceived by Romanian readers as 'new' to a greater extent than by readers in the West. Therefore, the impact that the Romanian translation has on the Romanian target audience is different from the one the 'original' and translations of it have on readers from countries with a long tradition of capitalist economy.

The Romanian tradition of course books for students is author-centred.[4] University-level material for students tends to be quite cryptic at first sight, and

reader-oriented approaches are regarded as below academic standards. The translators have chosen to preserve the reader-oriented approach of the original, which allows the translation to be targeted towards an audience of both specialist and non-specialist readers. Consequently, the function-in-culture of the translation is to popularise basic marketing concepts and strategies that are introduced for the first time in a systematic and comprehensive way to a lay Romanian audience, not only to business students.

The attempt to target a wide readership accounts for some lexical adaptations in the preface. In the paragraph

> "*Students* also need to know marketing in their roles as consumers and citizens. Someone is always trying to sell us something, so we need to recognize the methods they use. And when *students* enter the job market, they must sell themselves. Many will start their careers with marketing jobs in salesforces, in retailing, in advertising, in research or in one of a dozen other marketing areas" [my italics],

the translators rendered "students" first as "angajatii" ['employees'] and then as "oamenii" ['people'].

The translation is published by a prestigious Romanian publishing house, Teora. It is easy to infer that Teora is the commissioner of the translation, and that its editorial team have made the final decisions on text organisation and on identifying and isolating the elements which have to be preserved, eliminated, or adapted in translation. These decisions must not only be in keeping with the function-in-culture of the target text but they must also ensure that the information reaches the public. To keep the price within reasonable limits, the non-verbal elements accompanying and supplementing the text have been sacrificed and the format has been reduced.

Intratextual factors

The first intratextual factor that Nord mentions is subject matter. In the book under discussion, the subject matter is highlighted by the title itself. Second, the information or the content presented in the text is factual. It covers a wide range of topics from the definition of marketing, marketing management philosophies, strategic planning, and marketing environment to consumer behaviour, market segmentation, targeting and positioning, pricing strategies, and product promotion and placement.

The third intratextual factor that Nord suggests is presuppositions, the information that the sender expects to be part of the recipient's prior knowledge and which often concerns objects and phenomena that pertain to the sender's culture. For practical reasons, it would be quite hard to analyse knowledge presuppositions of the whole text. In a book of this size, it is appropriate to differentiate between the *macrotext* (the book as a whole) and *microtexts* (various distinct texts within the macro-text). This distinction is needed, especially because the microtexts actually belong to different text types and perform various functions in the macrotext. As a result, they also require different translation strategies.[5]

Here I shall analyse presuppositions, lexical characteristics, and syntactic structures by focusing on several types of such microtexts: (a) the author-presentations, (b) chapter objectives, (c) the purely informative, conceptual text, (d) the "marketing highlight" as well as (e) the translation of tables.

The author-presentations

The book is prefaced by four brief biographical notes about the authors. The translation problems posed by these texts are closely connected to the readers' knowledge presuppositions. They concern names of institutions and abbreviations as well as names of awards. These names must be familiar to an American audience or to marketing specialists, but they are definitely unknown to the average Romanian.

I shall take as an example the text presenting Philip Kotler:

Philip Kotler is a Professor of International Marketing at the Kellogg *Graduate School of Management*, Northwestern University. He received his *master's* degree at the University of Chicago and his Ph.D. at *M.I.T.*, both in economics. Dr. Kotler is author of *Marketing Management: Analysis Planning, Implementation and Control (Prentice Hall)*... Dr. Kotler's numerous honors include the *Paul D. Converse Award* given by the American Marketing Association to honor "outstanding contributions to science in marketing" and the *Stuart Henderson Britt Award* as *Marketer* of the Year. In 1985, he was named the first recipient of two major awards: the *Distinguished Marketing Educator of the Year Award* given by the American Marketing Association and the *Philip Kotler Award for Excellence in Health Care Marketing*. Dr. Kotler has served as director of AMA. He has *consulted* with many major American companies on marketing strategies. (p.vi)[6]

The translation runs as follows:

> Philip Kotler este profesor de marketing internaţional la *Şcoala Superioară de Man-agement* J. L. Kellogg, din cadrul Universităţii Northwestern. Este *licenţiat* în econo-mie al Universităţii din Chicago şi doctor în economie la *Institutul de tehnologie* din Massachusetts. Dr. Kotler este autorul lucrării *Marketing Management: Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control (Managementul marketingului: analiză, planificare, implementare şi control – apărută în traducere la Editura Teora, 1997)*... Dintre numeroasele distincţii acordate dr. Kotler, amintim premiul Paul D. Converse, decernat de către Asociaţia Americană de Marketing (AMA) pentru „remarcabila sa contribuţie la ştiinţa marketingului" şi premiul Stuart Henderson Britt acordat *marketerului* anului. În 1985, i s-au înmânat, pentru prima oară, două premii: Profesorul de Marketing al Anului, acordat de AMA, şi premiul Philip Kotler pentru Excelenţă în Marketingul Serviciilor Medicale. Dr. Kotler a fost director al AMA, *consultându-se* cu directorii celor mai importante firme americane şi străine în prob-lema strategiilor de marketing (p. 21).

Kotler is introduced as a Professor of International Marketing at the J. L. Kel-logg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University. The translators have transferred the name of the school but they have resorted to cultural filter-ing[7] and translated "graduate school" as "Şcoala Superioară" [literally: 'superior school']. The phrase is not very frequent as a name for Romanian business insti-tutions but many Romanians are familiar with the French denomination, "École Supérieure". The calque, therefore, is not from English but from French.

Kotler received his master's degree from the University of Chicago, and his Ph.D. from M.I.T. The term "master" is still confusing to many Romanians al-though it is a direct loan, as a master's degree was recently introduced in the Romanian educational system. The translators therefore resorted to a more famil-iar term of French origin, "licenţă", which is actually the equivalent of a bachelor degree. They have also disambiguated the acronym "M.I.T." by giving the full name of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

At the mention of another book that Kotler has authored, *Marketing Manage-ment: Analysis, Planning, Implementation and Control,* they used a strategy Chesterman has termed "double presentation" (1997: 95). The translators have preserved the original title, but they have also provided it in Romanian in paren-thesis. In addition, they have made use of what Chesterman calls "visibility change" (Chesterman 1997: 112): whereas the original reports that this book was published by Prentice Hall, the Romanian translation omits this and instead in-

forms the readers that the book was published by Teora in 1997. Thus the voice of the printing house interferes in the text to speak *pro domo.*

At the level of lexis, one of the words that pose problems is 'marketer'. In the microtext under discussion, 'marketer' is directly transferred into Romanian as a loan, preserving the English spelling. In other microtexts it is rendered as "om de marketing" [literally: 'man of marketing'] or as "operator de marketing" [literally: 'marketing operator']. This inconsistency in translation, usually prohibited in technical texts, stems from the fact that the profession as such is new in Romania and there is no standard denomination for it yet.

"To consult" is another term that creates problems. In Romanian the verb 'a se consulta' means to ask for somebody's advice or opinion. Given the phonetic similarity, 'to consult' can be a false friend in Romanian. In the English context, the meaning of 'to consult' is that Kotler has offered expert advice to firms. The translators, however, wrote that Kotler has *asked for* expert advice from firms.

Chapter objectives

Chapter objectives constitute another type of microtext. They precede each chapter and specify the skills that students should have acquired by the end of it. I shall concentrate on the chapter objectives as found in the chapter on "The Marketing Environment" (p. 54 in English; p. 173 in Romanian).

All chapter objectives in the book foreground the relationship between authors and readers. The latter are directly addressed by the use of the pronoun 'you'. Since English does not have separate forms for the singular and the plural of the second person pronoun, this 'you' can be easily interpreted as singular. The implied relationship between author and reader is therefore close.

Romanian, on the other hand, makes the distinction between the 'T' form and the 'V' form, that is 'you' in the singular and 'you' in the plural. The Romanian conventions for technical and scientific texts require a formal relationship between author, text and reader out of deference for the latter or simply because informality would not be in keeping with the serious issues that the text elucidates. This is why verbs in translation are rendered in the second person plural.

Informative text

The text in *Principles of Marketing* is predominantly informative. The text that I have selected for analysis are the opening lines of a classification of indus-

trial goods. (p. 246-247 in English and p. 656 in Romanian). It mainly consists of definitions and examples, together with information on how these goods are marketed. The style in the source text emphasises scientific rigour and it uses repetitive patterns in the construction of paragraphs. Since the main function of the text is to convey factual information, the best translation strategy is to come as close as possible to a literal translation.

The English text does not pose many translation problems. The Romanian version, therefore, is very close to the English one. English terminology is rendered by Romanian equivalents. "Supply", for instance, is regularly rendered into Romanian by "ofertă" ['offer']. In this context it is correctly rendered by the technical term "furnituri".

Syntactic transformations involve an explicitation of the relationship between determiners and the words that they determine, together with changes in word order. English predeterminers are usually post-determiners in Romanian. A phrase such as "consumer goods" is rendered as "bunuri de consum" [literally: 'goods for consumption'] and "manufactured materials and parts" as "materiale şi componente prefabricate" [literally: 'materials and components prefabricated'].

The cultural filter is still at work. In the introductory paragraph, in the rendition of the sentence "If a consumer buys a new Snapper lawnmower for use around the home, the lawnmower is a consumer good", the translators have left out the brand name since it is not familiar to the Romanian audience.

Marketing highlights

Marketing highlights are present in all chapters to offer practical examples that students can relate to and to illustrate the theory introduced in the purely conceptual microtexts.

The knowledge presupposition involved in the text discussed – the first two paragraphs in a marketing highlight dealing with the use of reference groups (p. 123, and 347) – is that the reader is familiar with the brands Avon, Mary Kay Cosmetics, and Tupperware. Whereas Avon is a company that has been on the Romanian market for nearly 10 years, Tupperware is generally unknown. This knowledge presupposition could have been disambiguated had the translation preserved the illustrations featuring a home-party, cosmetics sales, and a presentation of plastic food containers.

At another level, translation problems may stem from the fact that home-party and office-party sales not a regular practice in Romania. There is, therefore, no standard Romanian phrase equivalent for the English one. The translators had to resort to the pragmatic strategy of "explicitness change". The Romanian rendition, in back translation, is 'sale meetings at home and in the workplace'.

In terms of lexis, the first phrasal verb, "capitalize on", is fairly rare and can easily read as a false friend. Instead of transmitting the meaning of making a profit, the translators have changed it to 'focus'. The style of the source text is altered in translation and it acquires an increased level of formality. The expressive value of "throwing sales parties" is neutralised. "Women" are "persoane de sex feminin" [literally: 'persons of female sex'] and "homes" are "domiciliu" ['residence']. In addition to this, the phrase title "Marketing Highlight" itself is changed into "marketingul in lume" ['Marketing in the World'].

The translation of tables

Table 9.3 has a repetitive structure (p. 246-247 and p. 457). Each entry is a direct question comprising the words "should we focus on". Consequently, the table has a strong cohesive pattern, reinforced by the use of parallelism and repetition.

In my opinion, the most appropriate way to translate the table would have been to preserve the repetitive pattern of the table in English and to render "should" as 'ar trebui'. The translators, however, have opted for a schematic change. They have preserved the interrogative form but have broken the "should we focus on" parallelism. "Should" is translated as the Romanian word for 'must' ['trebuie'], and "should we focus on" is rendered as the present or the future form of the Romanian word for 'focus'. Furthermore the English phrase is rendered by other main verbs a number of times. Thus "what geographical areas *should we focus on*?" is rendered in Romanian as "Care sunt zonele geografice unde vom vinde produsul?" [literally:'which are the geographical areas where we shall sell our product?'].

Translation assessment

By and large, the Romanian version is a covert translation from English. But there are two obvious Romanian intrusions on the text. I have already mentioned the first one, namely the publishing house's information that it has also published

Kotler's other book. The second is the translators'. The original from 1995 mentioned three international airplane producers, 'Boeing', 'McDonnell-Douglas', and 'Airbus' in its presentation of how the sales agents employed by Airbus market the company's product and negotiate sales. The translators have added a note in which they correct this information, announcing to the readers that Boeing and McDonnell-Douglas merged in 2001 while the translation work was in progress (p. 905 in the Romanian text). This second intervention can only be termed a pragmatic expediency dictated by the fact that the business world is subject to continual change, and consequently, there is always the possibility that some information in the original is no longer valid at the time of translation.

Apart from these two obvious interventions, translators are 'visible' behind the use of quotation marks which are found, for instance, in the 'marketing highlights'. The use of quotation marks is indicative of partial glossing and a certain level of terminological insecurity due to the scarcity of established Romanian LSP in the field. Moreover, it signals an effort towards reducing the cultural distance between the source-text and the target-text world.

The *skopos* of the Romanian translation is to correctly convey the referential information contained in the source text. This is why the translators' main concern has been to transfer the global effect and not every single effect-producing feature of the original, such as connection, word order, or text 'relief' (use of italics, blocks, bullets). Stylistic choices, influenced by Romanian genre conventions, have changed the rather informal tone of the source text into a very formal one in the target text.

Despite this, the translation manages to achieve its intended effect, namely knowledge acquisition. On the whole, the translation is accurate, and the communicative dynamics are preserved. The reader, however, misses a lot of the "communicative action" – to borrow Nord's term – due to the omission of most non-verbal elements, most obviously of course, the illustrations.

Conclusions

Business is a field where there is a huge demand for translation. Though the professional translator's work might be repetitive, it is nonetheless challenging. Any type of translation is more than a code-switching process, and despite the standardisation of genre conventions and technical styles problems are still bound to arise from the cultural and linguistic differences embedded in economic texts.

In addition, translation decisions are governed by the *skopos* of the target text in the target culture as part of a line of action.

Business translation requires more than linguistic skill. Familiarity with the specific field is needed to correctly decode the information in the source text. Mastery of source and target-language terminology is a must, as is knowledge of discrepancies between text and genre conventions.

As far as the specific case of the Romanian translation of *Principles of Marketing* is concerned, I would like to underline the sociolinguistic relevance of the practice of translation. Since marketing is a new social and economic reality in Romania, the Romanian vocabulary lacks 'native' terms in the field. Translation, therefore, not only constitutes an import of knowledge but also an import of terminology. To give just two examples, words such as "marketer" and "marketing mix" have already entered the local marketing jargon.

To conclude, business translation is more than just a business. It is also an analytical process of selection and adaptation, a decision-making process where various economic, cultural, and linguistic variables come into play. Apart from this, business translation is also a site of language change and innovation in cases where the information transfer is towards countries that are not familiar with, or are only beginning to familiarise themselves with new economic realities.

Notes

1. The firm is 'Systems, Applications, Products in Data Processing', a multinational firm with main offices in the US and Germany.
2. In *Translation Criticism – The Potentials and Limitations. Categories and Criteria for Translation Quality Assessment,* Reiss has devised a universal text-typology grounded in Bülers triadic model of language functions. Reiss distinguishes between the *informative*, the *expressive* and the *operative* text (Reiss 2000: 26), each performing the *informative,* the *expressive* and the *appelative* function of language, respectively.
3. In countries with a strong economy there is also an impressive market for business books. In the U.S. alone, this market was reported to be worth $750m (Czerniawska 1997: 18).
4. The distinction between an author-oriented and a reader-oriented approach is determined by the proportions of 'given' and 'new' information in a text. The author-oriented approach involves a high level of formality and a large amount of 'new' information. Reader-oriented approaches, on the other hand, provide much 'given' information so that the readers can relate the 'new' information to familiar situations or experiences (Gerzymisch-Arbogast 1993: 23-25).
5. The analysis of translation strategies is based on Chesterman's classification in *Memes of Translation.*

6. The page numbers cited for the English excerpts are from the fourth international edition. I have checked the content of the texts against the texts in the seventh edition which, in the library where I found it, could not be taken out for photocopying.

7. The notion is introduced by Juliane House. The translator who functions as a cultural filter views the source text through the glasses of a target-culture member, and makes the necessary changes so that the text should be transparent to the target audience (House 2000: 83).

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