

CORPUS LINGUISTICS IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

Mirzayeva Maftuna Baxtiyor qizi

Annotation: Corpus-based methodology clearly has some applicability within the broad theoretical framework of descriptive translation studies, since it appears to provide a method for the description of language use in translation. Unlike much multilingual corpus linguistics research, corpus-based translation studies focus on the translation, not in terms of its relationship to a source text but instead foregrounding it as an instance of text production and communication in its own right. The discussion of what we understand translation to be is therefore important for a number of reasons. Firstly, researchers' viewpoints on the concept of translation form an important basis for the application of corpus-based methodology to the study of translation, since they will underpin the choice of object of study what kind of translation, produced when, by whom, for what purpose.

Keywords: Corpus-based methodology, attention to translation studies, translations.

Introduction. They thus form the basis of decisions in corpus design and issues of representativeness, i.e. decisions as to which particular texts might be included in a corpus to be used to study that particular kind of translation. Teaching translation, but not translation studies, is covered in one paragraph in the language teaching section. The lack of attention to translation studies may be because the use of corpora in translation studies is relatively new, or perhaps because the exchange of knowledge between linguistics and translation studies has tended to be rather mono-directional. Moreover, the perception of translations has traditionally not been particularly favourable in linguistics; their exclusion from so-called language reference corpora (such as the British National Corpus) would indicate that they are not considered as representing language use, in English-speaking contexts at least. Often, the way in which they are used in parallel corpora indicates that translations are not seen as texts which exist and function in their own right in the target language system, nor as being subject to a range of constraints which differ from other text production situations. Few translators have the luxury of the leisurely lunch conjured up here, but many translation scholars will be familiar with views of translation, held within neighboring disciplines, which do not necessarily take account of advances and current concerns in translation theory and translation research. However, with an increase in interaction between translation scholars and corpus linguists comes greater understanding of translation; acknowledgement of the difficulties inherent in using a corpus of texts and their translations for cross-linguistic study, while still viewing translation very much in terms of its 'equivalence' to a source text, also reflects some awareness of the contextual, contextual and extratextual influences on translators and translation, and an interest in studying features of translation. This means looking at features which are likely to be shared by prototypical translations but which less prototypical translations may not exhibit; the latter are not invalidated as objects of research by virtue of not having all of these features. Norms tell us about the expectations on particular translations in particular contexts; prototype effect are category judgements from subjects on a concept. Thus, in a sense, the extent to which a translation displays prototype effects is measured on the basis of normative expectations. The norms and the prototype effects are cognitively, socially and culturally determined and vary across time and space. This discussion leads to the conclusion that we cannot talk about universals of translation or universal laws of translation because we cannot account for all translation, all variables etc. and the approach does not accommodate the existence of a decontextualized concept of translation. However, as with all other abstract and complex notions, we often use more concrete ones in a metaphorical way to help us to understand translation. These more concrete concepts are usually grounded in basic human experience and there may therefore be commonalities in how different cultures, societies and

language communities conceive of translation over time and through space, although there will certainly also be differences. Much of the comparable corpus research carried out to date in translation studies has focused on syntactic or lexical features of translated and non-translated texts which might provide evidence of such processes of exploitation, simplification or normalization. It should be stressed that, while translators may at times consciously strive to produce translations which are more explicit or simplified or normalized in some way, the use of comparable corpora is also seen as a way of investigating aspects of translators' use of language which are not the result of deliberate, controlled processes. Translators may not be aware of these processes but the translation product may provide indirect evidence of cognitive processing inherent to translation. This was posited as being a reflection of exploitation, based on the hypothesis that exploitation will usually involve the use of a longer surface form in preference to a shorter one, leaving less room for ambiguity. This is without doubt the most challenging area of corpus-based analyses, whether of translated or non-translated texts, and there is much scope for improvement in methodological approaches to these kinds of investigations. While quantitative "text-crunching" is relatively straightforward, it must be acknowledged that corpora provide certain kinds of data (e.g. frequency lists, concordances) which need to be integrated into an appropriate theoretical framework and combined with other data from other sources if studies are to transcend the trivial or the obvious. Thus, to return to Hermans' example, the extent to which translations are peripheral at a given time in a given culture can best be discerned, not through corpus analysis but perhaps through evidence of the nature of their reception (reviews, distribution figures etc.). However, study of a corpus of translations deemed peripheral or non-peripheral could provide valuable evidence of the degree of normalization or creativity in the linguistic make-up of these texts and thus go some way to establishing links between text and reception. Apart from the decline of the semantic view of translation, another, and very exciting, development has been the emergence of approaches which undermine both the status of the source text vis-à-vis the translated text and the value of the very notion of equivalence, particularly if seen as a static relationship between the source and target texts. One such development is the decline of what we might call the semantic view of the relationship between source and target texts. For a long time, discourse on translation was dominated by the idea that meaning, or messages, exist as such and can, indeed should, be transferred from source to target texts in much the same way as one might transfer wine from one glass to another. The traditional dichotomy of translating word-for-word or sense-for-sense is a product of this view of meaning. At about the same time that the notion of equivalence began to be reassessed, or perhaps a little earlier, new ideas began to develop about the nature of meaning in translation. It is hypothesized that translated literary text exhibits a different kind of speaker-hearer or writer-reader interaction than comparable texts; not only are these texts characterized by less explicit interaction between characters or narrators in the form of direct speech and dialogue, but these data also suggest that the interaction or involvement is played down by less use of this set of degree-modifying adverbs, the function of which is primarily to signal the writer's or speaker's perception of the propositional content of an utterance. Corpus-based translation studies is confronted with issues related to the concept of 'translation' itself, the universality of translation as an activity, of features and norms of translation, before it can proceed to corpus compilation and data gathering. The study of data on the translation product cannot be separated from study of the translation process – the 'features of translation' discussed here and throughout much of the corpus-based translation studies literature would perhaps be more aptly labelled 'features of the translation process', since they refer to processes of a cognitive nature which may be constrained and influenced by social, cultural and other factors. In order to do this, it will be necessary to develop tools that will enable us to identify universal features of translation, that is features which typically occur in translated text rather than original utterances and which are not the result of interference from specific linguistic systems. It

might be useful at this point to give a few examples of the type of translation universals I have in mind. Based on small-scale studies and casual observation, a number of scholars have noted features which seem, intuitively, to be linked to the nature of the translation process itself rather than to the confrontation of specific linguistic systems. At the same time, as a phenomenon which pervades almost every aspect of our lives and shapes our understanding of the world, the study of translation can hardly be relegated to the periphery of other disciplines and sub-disciplines, those listed above being no exception. . The importance of this change in orientation, from a conceptual to a situational perspective and from meaning to usage, is that it supports the push towards descriptive studies in general and corpus-based studies in particular. Yet, our means of empirically investigating these aspects of the translation process are far from perfect. The need to contextualize and contextualize translation and our study of it means that predominantly quantitative studies of corpus data are limited in their usefulness.

References

1. Baker, M. (2000). "Towards a methodology for investigating the style of a literary translator." *Target* 12(2), 241-266
2. Barlow, M. (2000). "Parallel texts in language teaching." S. P. Botley, A. M. McEnery & A. Wilson (eds) (2000). *Multilingual Corpora in Teaching and Research*. Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 106-115
3. Fawcett, P. (2000). "Translation in the broadsheets." *The Translator* 6(2), 295-307.
4. Halliday, M.A.K. (1973). *Explorations in the Functions of Language*. New York: Elsevier
5. Hermans, T. (2000a). "Self-reference, self-reflection and re-entering translation." D. de Geest et al. (eds) (2000). *Under Construction: Links for the site of literary theory*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 259-274
6. Kenny, D. (2001). *Lexis and Creativity in Translation: A corpus-based study*. Manchester: St. Jerome.
6. Mason, I. (2002). "The Analyst's Toolbox." Lecture given at Translation Research Summer School, Manchester, 28 June 2002