

## **“THE RHETORICS OF THE UN-SPEAKABLE AUTHORITY...” TRANSLATION LINGUISTICS BETWEEN METHODS OF INTERPRETATION AND TEXT PRODUCTION**

A Critical Study and Theoretical Approaches to Literal, Conceptual and  
Interpretative Translation, and the Limits of Cultural Indoctrination.

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the article is to analyze different ways of translation and processes similar to translation choosing historical examples and translation texts. This way we will discuss problems related to translation and the limits of translation starting from a definition of translation. Translation is the transfer of meanings by the exchange of words from one language into another. The translator serves as a message conveyor between two languages. In other words: A translator has not the status of an author. Languages serve as means for concepts of realities. If the transfer of meanings by choosing an adequate word is impossible, we can assume that their meaning implicates a lack of identical social, political, and historical conditions. Our interest is to demonstrate ways to be used for translations, when the case described above is given and a translation leaves the field of the basic language and enters the target language, while both languages do not share the same thesaurus or ideological concept. This situation we find, when two cultures are very different. Exemplified with different Eastern and Western languages, we discuss literal, conceptual and interpretative translation types and different theoretical concepts from a critical standpoint asking for their possibilities to serve as a tool as conveyor of messages. This paper contains also a final discussion about the relationship of hermeneutics and translation and proposes a theory of translation, which should be concerned with basic criteria of transfer of meanings and interpretation being aware of interferences leading to limits of translations. The approach of this article is to compare different methods of comparative studies in translations in order to find out the significant methods and criteria of translations. Any translation can be reduced to a theoretical background focusing on the dialogue between cultures. Any word in an original language contains an etymological history and a semiotic field of meanings. In the linguistic process of translation these qualities are the criteria for the selection of a non-literal word or words in the target language, which are identical with the ones of the source text. The second case is the simplest case, where the message is successfully conveyed. Any other case leads to a complicated process without the guaranty of successful translation. Therefore, we will apply translation theory for descriptions of historical and cross-cultural translations of literal and religious texts.

**Keywords:** meanings, literal translation, conceptual translation, interpretative translation.

**Abkürzung:** Die Aufgabe dieses Artikels ist die Analyse verschiedener Wege der Übersetzung und von Prozessen, die Übersetzung ähneln, wobei wir historische Beispiele und Übersetzungstexte wählen. So diskutieren wir ausgehend von einer Definition von Übersetzung die Probleme, die sich auf auf Übersetzungen und die Grenzen von Übersetzungen beziehen. Übersetzung ist die Übertragung von Bedeutungen durch den Austausch von Worten von einer Sprache in die andere. Der Übersetzer fungiert als ein Vermittler einer Nachricht zwischen zwei Sprachen. Mit anderen Worten: Ein Übersetzer hat nicht den Status eines Verfassers. Sprachen dienen als Mittel für Konzepte der Realität. Wenn die Übertragung von Bedeutungen durch die Wahl von angemessenen Worten unmöglich ist, dann können wir annehmen, dass ihre Bedeutung einen Verlust von sozialen, politischen, und historischen Bedingungen impliziert. Unser Interesse ist, die Wege zu demonstrieren, die für Übersetzungen genutzt werden, wenn der oben beschriebene Fall gegeben ist und eine Übersetzung das Feld der zu übersetzenden Sprache verlässt und den Text in der Zielsprache realisiert, wobei beide

Spachen weder den gleichen Thesaurus noch das gleiche ideologische Konzept teilen. Diese Situation treffen wir an, wenn Kulturen sehr verschieden sind. Wir diskutieren literale, konzeptuelle und interpretative Übersetzungstypen und verschiedene theoretische Konzepte von einem kritischen Standpunkt aus mit der Frage nach den Möglichkeiten, als ein Mittel zur Vermittlung von Nachrichten zu dienen. Dieser Artikel beinhaltet auch eine abschliessende Diskussion über die Beziehung zwischen Hermeneutik und Übersetzung und schlägt vor, das eine Theorie der Übersetzung sich auf grundlegende Kriterien der Übertragung von Bedeutungen und Interpretationen, die an die Grenzen von Übersetzungen führen. Der Ansatz dieses Artikels ist der Vergleich von verschiedenen komparatistischen Methoden bei Übersetzungen und Kriterien der Übersetzungen.

**Schlüssel Worte:** Bedeutungen , wörtlich Übersetzung , begreifend Übersetzung , Auffassung Übersetzung

## **Theory of Translation**

### **– Goals, Possibilities and Limits of Crossing Cultural Borders**

The goal of translation is to establish a relationship of equivalence between the source text and the target text. Both texts can be composed in different languages with different cultural backgrounds, which affect e.g. the terminology, the syntax, and idiomatic expressions. In other words: These linguistic qualities can be different in the language of the source text and the target text, and examples will be discussed later. Theoretically a translator has to take into account a number of conditions affecting the transfer of all meanings of the original text. These conditions include context, the rules of grammar of the source language and target language, their writing conventions, and the idioms and semiotic connotations of words of both languages. Any translation process has two steps: The translator needs to detect potential difficulties in the original text and know the equivalent words, which are intended to be conveyed. The translator has to choose the syntactic structure of the target text and then formulates the corresponding message in the target language. Translation leaving the level of literal translation becomes the sums of possibilities for the exchange of words between cultures, which may contain different forms of being or existing concepts. But translation is not an interpretation. If an interpretation is made within the translation, we must speak about it as a conceptual translation. There are several types of translation patterns for conceptual translations: For one single word we can use:

1. Transliteration and additional explanation
2. Explanatory term(s)
3. Replacement of a concept of the source language  
by a concept of the target language

For a group of words we can use:

1. Transliteration and additional explanation
2. Explanatory term(s)
3. The exchange of a whole phrase through another in the target language,  
which contains the same meaning
3. Replacement of a concept of the source language  
by a concept of the target language

In a strict way, a conceptual translation is a linguistic corruption during a transformation process from one language to another language. This type of translation is the interpretative translation, where the meaning of the original text is also important. Any word in an original language contains an etymological history and semiotic meanings. In the linguistic process of translation these qualities are the criteria for the selection of the target language's meanings within a non-literal or literal translation into the target language. In terms of generative linguistic grammar this aspect concerns the question of exchange of the surface of appearance and superstructure of meanings of the source language and target language. In the last case, a conceptual translation, the surface level is totally exchanged, while the superstructural meaning stays the same. This we can also call an exchange based upon stylistic possibilities of the target language in a translation. On the surface level another

aspect of text transfer is style. Style includes the writer's style, a genre's style, and a historical style. In general we can classify between translatable and untranslatable words or phrases. An alternative to the translation is a transcription of a word. Untranslatable words can be transcribed or described in order to transmit all of their meanings.

Each language has its thesaurus consisting of vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and terminological areas. For example, technical vocabulary is used only by specialists and so it is not generally known by non-specialists. Traditionally, translation has been a human activity and attempts to computerize the translation of natural language texts by machine translation (computer-assisted translation) are no guarantee for the finding of missing terms and phrasal lexical expressions. Computerized technology can be used as a translation tool for databases. Options of the specific language style and patterns to be chosen from the original language or the target language also exist. Here different possibilities can be chosen. E.g. Robert A. Dooley stated that many *Bible* translations, including one in Mbyá Guarani of Brazil, use natural target-language discourse patterns on 'micro-levels' within a thematic unit and usually within a sentence or two, but source-text patterns on 'macro-levels'. Dooley asked, if such a strategy should be used introducing concepts from such diverse areas as general cognition, text processing, genre innovation, information structure, and reader confidence.<sup>1</sup>

If we speak about the rhetorics of the un-speakable, we express this way the function of the translator, which lies beyond the level of the author facing the boundaries for meaning, but staying limited within the needs of conveying the text. The term 'rhetorics of the un-speakable' we can apply to both literal translation and oral interpretation, which is not identical with the interpretation mentioned above. Both translation and oral interpretation are rhetorical processes, when it comes to an exchange of words. A distinction must be made between translations consisting of transfer of ideas expressed in writing from one language to another, and from interpreting, which consists of

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<sup>1</sup> Dooley, R. A. Source-Language Versus Target-Language: Discourse Features in Translating the Word of God. Sept. 12, 1005.  
<[Http://www.sil.org:8090/siljot/2005/2/siljot2005-2-01.html](http://www.sil.org:8090/siljot/2005/2/siljot2005-2-01.html)>

transferring words expressed orally from one language to another. Interpreting can be considered a subcategory of translation as far as the analysis of the processes involved is concerned (translation studies). The talents required for these two activities are quite different. In *De Ratione Dicendi ad C. Herennium liber IV* is written, that the interpretation of a text is the replacement of one word by the use of another word instead of it (*interpretatio*), and not the repetition of the same word like in the following cases "*Rem publicam radicibus evertisti, civitatem funditus deiecisti.*" and "*Patrem nefarie verberasti, parenti manus scelerate attulisti.*" It is necessary to move the mind of the one, who hears, when the gravity of the former speech is repeated by the interpretation of the words:

*Interpretatio est, quae non iterans idem redintegrat verbum, sed id commutat, quod positum est, alio verbo, quod idem valeat, hoc modo: "Rem publicam radicibus evertisti, civitatem funditus deiecisti." Item: "Patrem nefarie verberasti, parenti manus scelerate attulisti." Necessum est eius, qui audit, animum commoveri, cum gravitas prioris dicti renovatur interpretatione verborum.*<sup>2</sup>

## **The Translation as a Linguistic Transformation Process**

We will now look at linguistic qualities of a text affecting the work of a translator. How can a translator transfer a specific style in one language to another? How can he/she deal with words, which have no exact equivalent in the target language? When does a translation turn into an interpretation in order to transfer meaning? The translation process both for translation or interpreting can be described as decoding process of the meaning of the source text, and re-

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<sup>2</sup> Anonymus: *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. IV. Scrineum. July 1, 2005.  
<[Http://dabc.unipv.it/scrineum/wight/herm4.htm](http://dabc.unipv.it/scrineum/wight/herm4.htm)>

encoding process of this meaning in the target language. In Europe even in the Middle Ages the function of the interpretation as means towards the understanding of another culture was recognized. Rabanus Maurus writes in *De Rerum Nature* (Book 15, 6), that the culture of idols (i.e. here the Greek culture) is interpreted (*cultura idolorum interpretatur*):

*Idolatria, idolorum seruitus siue cultura interpretatur.*<sup>3</sup>

*The worship of idols, the servitude or culture is interpreted.*

To decode the meaning of a text the translator must first identify its components, the ‘translation units’, as segments of the text. A translation unit can consist of a character, word, phrase or even one or more sentences. Behind this procedure lies a cognitive process to decode the complete meaning of the source text. The translator must interpret and analyze all its features. This process requires on the linguistic level knowledge of the grammar, semantics, syntax, idioms of both languages. On the higher level of the translation process, where it comes to the conversion of the meanings, the translator is concerned with the expression of meanings the culture of the target language, but also the culture of its speakers must be taken into account. Translation is decoding meanings and intents to encode them in a target language. On the deep structure-level and on the surface structure-level of linguistic operations different processes are applied:

Operations on surface structure-level are:

Grammatical / linguistic operations

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<sup>3</sup> Maurus, R. *De Rerum Naturis*. Book 15. July 30, 2005.  
<[Http://www.mun.ca/rabanus/drn/15.html](http://www.mun.ca/rabanus/drn/15.html)>

Turning grammar of the target language

into the operations deep structure-level

Semantic / Semiotic operations

Source text          Decoding the meanings of the texts

Target text          Encoding/Connoting the meanings of the texts

## **Translation Operations on Deep Structure-Level and the Surface Structure-Level**

A translator needs the knowledge of both languages to encode the meaning in the target language. Often translators' knowledge of the target language is more important. In general, a translator's knowledge needs to be deeper in the target language than their knowledge of the source language. Knowledge of the subject matter being translated is essential. Fidelity (*fidelitas*) is the ethical category of the translation process. Transparency (*perspicuitas* – the Latin term of a virtue of rhetoric) is the quality of the translation style: The translator must be capable to distinguish between translation and glossing. Glossing is an aid for the translation process based upon the translation of single words giving usually a one word-equivalent for each term. Translation is decoding meaning and intent at the text level. In certain contexts a translator may produce a literal translation. A literal translation is used, when the source text qualities are supposed to stay when translated. Literary translations and translations of religious works often relay on the source text as much as possible. A literary translation adopts words or expressions from the source language to provide local color in the translation.

When a message is conveyed, we also must think about the rhetorical style qualities of the text. One aspect of the rhetoric of translation is 'style'. Style is traditionally a category of rhetoric.

Within a translation, style is the quality of a source text, which may not be equal to the style of the target language. Style is from a historical or cultural standpoint a not stable quality of texts. Style concepts can be transferred in terms of rhetoric, but also other guidelines and relations we mentioned above and as follows. For example the author of this article demonstrated how in the 19<sup>th</sup> century categories of the rhetorical model changed and a variety of styles and guidelines for style developed in handbooks, but also out of the context of rhetorical tradition, so that the *topos* ‘Decadence of Rhetoric’ in European modern culture has to be modified if not completely eliminated.<sup>4</sup> The term style became in the 20<sup>th</sup> century a significant means to characterize the personal way of writing. Before this time it was reserved for the private texts, e.g. letters, and a term used for general guidelines of writing not interested in a personal writing style, but common writing types. Guidelines of the use of different levels of style are still applied in contemporary texts of international information exchange. So a news report refers to the plain style, while an ironic commentary may use forms of rhetoric in order to make a statement persuasive. This European example demonstrates how style developed to a cultural concepts of the arts in general. Style is as a characteristic feature of a language only as aspect of imitation translatable. In western culture stylistics became an element of artificial quality. According to Burton’s ancient rhetoric reception made in *Forest of Rhetoric* the four categories of change of any given text are addition, subtraction, transposition, and substitution: “Addition, subtraction, transposition, and substitution comprise the four categories of change. These are fundamental rhetorical strategies for the manipulation and variation of discourse across a vast array of linguistic levels such as word forms, sentences, paragraphs, entire texts or speeches, etc.”<sup>5</sup> The categories of rhetorical change can be used as a concept for any kind of changes, which produces new meanings

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<sup>4</sup> Haase, F.-A. “Warum sollte es einen Niedergang der Rhetorik im 19. Jahrhundert gegeben haben? Über die A-Historizität eines Topos der antiken und neueren Geschichte der Beredsamkeit.“ *Logo. Revista de retórica y teoría de la comunicación*. III. N. 4 (2003). June 2003, p. 188-201.

<sup>5</sup> Burton, G. O. *Silva Rhetoricae. Forest of Rhetoric*. June 16, 2003. Brigham Young University. June 17, 2006.

<[Http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/Four%20Changes/Four%20Changes.htm](http://humanities.byu.edu/rhetoric/Four%20Changes/Four%20Changes.htm)>

compared to the conventional linguistic usage and/or compared to a certain collective meaning. We can call the categories also extension (*adjunction*), distance (*detraction*), conversion (*permutation*), and replacement (*substitution*).

Adjunction

Detraction

Permutation

Substitution

### **Categories of Change for Rhetorical Linguistic Operations**

For example, when a translator adds an interpretative part in a text, he/she makes an adjunction to the target text. These categories can help us to describe the changes within a translation process and have a critical textual approach, when discussing the quality of a translated text.

### **Historical Examples for the Process of Translation as Literal Production Process**

In the first paragraph we stated that the position of the translator is different from the one of the author. Now we look at different translation aspects of examples of world literature, where obviously the intention of translation is not serving as a conveyer of messages, but interpretation on the level of linguistic corruption and un-awareness of the source text for the sake of an ethnocentric perspective of the translator. Historical examples give evidence that a translation process also can become a process of literary production. One example is the Josephus-story found both in the *Quran* and the *Bible*. The translation of philosophical and religious works has played an important role in world history serving as means of missionary work.

Translation here is a tool of the transfer of doctrine, false translation indoctrination. For the translation of the Christian *Bible* the Catholic Church used the translation known as the *Vulgata* for centuries. Many religious texts were transmitted orally and after the text later was written down it was translated. Such an orally transmitted form is a criterion of the quality of an orally transmitted speech, which claims to be ideological or sacred or containing any meanings beyond the plain linguistic one. Islam relies on orally transmitted texts as testimonies. The *Quran* consists of orally transmitted *hadiths*. Speech in the Buddhist dogmatic conception has the qualities of being true and useful. So we find here a combination of speech qualities that in the Western categories is divided into rhetoric and philosophy. When in a communication situation with speakers of different cultural backgrounds a translation is necessary, the receiver of the speech must be aware of speech expressions of this cultural context of the speaker, which have another meaning in the source language. When translating, the conversion of meanings brings changes. One example of translating a religious text, which totally changes according to the translator's background, is the *Salistamba Sutra*. The *Salistamba Sutra* is known in Tibetan original, Sanskrit reconstruction, and English translation next to Pali parallels, Chinese version and ancient Tibetan fragments. The Buddhist monks translating the Indian *sutras* into the Chinese language modified the translation to adapt it to China's different culture. The Indian epic *Ramayana* has numerous versions in many Indian languages. Words used for translation in Indian come either from Aryan or Dravidian language.

One example for the influence of a spiritual and ethic concept on the style of speech even in a translation we find in the principles of Buddhism. In Buddhism texts we find a close relation between ethic behaviour and 'perfection' of speech. The ethic concept of life-conduct is based upon several 'paths' as basic ideological construction. This concept finds in texts its application by the metaphor 'path'. Speech in the Buddhist conception has the three functions to be true, real and useful. The rhetoric of India, in both its Hindu and its Buddhist forms, has an ethical ground.

Buddhism is now popular in East Asia and is spitted into many sects. Truthful speech was thought to be a revealed aspect of the greater cosmic and social order of things. There are five paths, on which a Bodhisattva develops in succession and among the *Eightfold Path* there is the quality of 'perfect speech'. Geshe Rabten Rinpoche has listed the five successive paths for a Boddhisattva:

<i>Sambharamarga</i>	The path of equipment
<i>Prayogamarga</i>	The path of training
<i>Darshanamarga</i>	The path of seeing
<i>Bhavanamarga</i>	The path of intense contemplation
<i>Vimuktimarga</i>	The path of freedom

The term *path* later was used in Chinese, Korean and Japanese as *dao*. The 8-fold path consists of:

- Perfect view*
- Perfect resolve*
- Perfect speech*
- Perfect conduct*
- Perfect livelihood*
- Perfect effort*
- Perfect mindfulness*
- Perfect concentration*

The basic Buddhist concepts relays on the *Four Noble Truths*, which include the idea of 'perfect speech'. The *First Noble Truth* is that life is suffering mentally and physically in the forms of sickness, injuries, aging, death, tiredness, anger, loneliness, frustration, fear and anxiety. The *Second Noble Truth* is craving causes all these suffering. A self-centered person with continuous expectations

from others will cause mental unhappiness. The *Third Noble Truth* is that all sufferings can be overcome and avoided. When one gives up endless wanting and endures problems that life evolves without fear, hatred and anger, happiness and freedom will then be obtained. Overcome the mentality of selfishness, one will then spend time in meeting others needs and feels life more fulfilled. The *Fourth Noble Truth* says that there is a *Noble Eightfold path* leading to overcome the suffering. The *Eightfold path* includes *perfect understanding, perfect thought, perfect speech, perfect action, perfect livelihood, perfect effort, perfect mindfulness* and *perfect concentration*. Buddha gives in *The Eightfold Path* the *right speech* as an 'absence of lying and useless speech' the following definition:

*What, now, is right speech? It is abstaining from lying; abstaining from tale-bearing; abstaining from harsh language; abstaining from vain talk. There, someone avoids lying, and abstains from it. He speaks the truth, is devoted to the truth, reliable, worthy of confidence, is not a deceiver of men.*<sup>6</sup>

Examples follow:

*Being at a meeting, or amongst people, or in the midst of his relatives, or in a society, or in the king's court, and called upon and asked as witness, to tell what he knows, he answers, if he knows nothing: "I know nothing"; and if he knows, he answers: "I know"; if he has seen nothing, he answers: "I have seen nothing," and if he has seen, he answers: "I have seen.", he never knowingly speaks a lie, neither for the sake of his own advantage, nor for the sake of another person's advantage, nor for the sake of any advantage whatsoever. He avoids tale-bearing, and*

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<sup>6</sup> Buddha. The Word Index. Ed. Nyanatiloka Mahathera. The Pagan Library. Homepage Gunnar Reichert-Weygold. April 13, 2005.  
<[Http://www.paganlibrary.com/etext/buddha-word.php](http://www.paganlibrary.com/etext/buddha-word.php)>

*abstains from it.*<sup>7</sup>

Buddha describes with words such as *gentle, soothing to the ear, loving, going to the heart, courteous and dear right speech* in *The Eightfold Path*:

*What he has heard here, he does not repeat there, so as to cause dissension there; and what he heard there, he does not repeat here, so as to cause dissension here. He unites those that are divided; and those that are united, he encourages. Concord gladdens him, he delights and rejoices in concord, and it is concord that he spreads by his words. He avoids harsh language, and abstains from it. He speaks such words as are gentle, soothing to the ear, loving, going to the heart, courteous and dear, and agreeable to many.*<sup>8</sup>

In the words of Buddha's 'right speech' is called *sammaa-vaacaa*. In *Majjhima-Nikaya* (No. 21) Buddha explains the term 'right speech' as 'mundane speech' in opposition to the 'ultramundane speech':

*Now, right speech, let me tell you, is of two kinds: 1. Abstaining from lying, from tale-bearing, from harsh language, and from vain talk; this is called the "Mundane Right Speech, which yields worldly fruits and brings good results. 2. But the abhorrence of the practice of this four-fold wrong speech, the abstaining, withholding, refraining there from-the mind being holy, being turned away from the world, and conjoined with the path, the holy path being pursued-: this is*

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<sup>7</sup> Buddha. The Word Index. Ed. Nyanatiloka Mahathera. The Pagan Library. Homepage Gunnar Reichert-Weygold. April 13, 2005.

<[Http://www.paganlibrary.com/etext/buddha-word.php](http://www.paganlibrary.com/etext/buddha-word.php)>

<sup>8</sup> Buddha. The Word Index. Ed. Nyanatiloka Mahathera. The Pagan Library. Homepage Gunnar Reichert-Weygold. April 13, 2005.

<[Http://www.paganlibrary.com/etext/buddha-word.php](http://www.paganlibrary.com/etext/buddha-word.php)>

called the "Ultramundane Right Speech, which is not of the world, but is ultramundane, and conjoined with the paths. Now, in understanding wrong speech as wrong, and right speech as right, one practices Right Understanding; and in making efforts to overcome evil speech and to arouse right speech, one practices Right Effort; and in overcoming wrong speech with attentive mind, and dwelling with attentive mind in possession of right speech, one practices Right Attentiveness. Hence, there are three things that accompany and follow upon right attentiveness.<sup>9</sup>

These texts demonstrate the inversion of means of translation: The speaker has the office to speak in a way interpreting the socially given context and rules. We can call this a dogmatic speech or dogmatic communication concept, which lays under the source text. Northern East Asian cultures are homogeneous regarding their style of communication using a cultural concept based upon Confucianism, Daoism, and Buddhism, where speaking is ruled by religious and social guidelines. So any translation of texts from this cultural background can be traced back to these ideologies. Under these conditions translation is an example showing the slight differences between terms of different cultures and/or the single translator for the target language. We demonstrate now the different contextual cultural concept in translations using the example of the first sentence of the *Analects* of Confucius taken from an international webpage representing the works of Confucius in translations of the original Chinese text into several languages. The German target text uses the terms *Freude* (joy), *Glück* (luck), *Gleichmut* (equal mind) and the archaic expression *Edelmut*:

*Konfuzius sprach: Zu lernen und das Erlernte immer wieder auszuüben - ist das nicht eine Freude? Freunde zu haben, die von weit her kommen-bedeutet das nicht Glück? Gleichmut*

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<sup>9</sup> Buddha. The Word Index. Ed. Nyanatiloka Mahathera. The Pagan Library. Homepage Gunnar Reichert-Weygold. April 13, 2005.  
<[Http://www.paganlibrary.com/etext/buddha-word.php](http://www.paganlibrary.com/etext/buddha-word.php)>

zu bewahren, wenn man von andern verkannt wird-beweist das nicht Edelmut?"<sup>10</sup>

The French text uses the terms *plaisir* (joy), *bonheur* (luck), *ne pas se de'courager* (not to get discouraged) and *digne de l' homme de bien* (with the virtue of a good man):

*Confucius dit: Apprendre et mettre en pratique maintes et maintes fois ce qu'on a appris, n'est-ce pas un plaisir? Avoir des amis venus de loin n'est-ce pas un grand bonheur? Ne pas se de'courager quand on 'nest appre'ci'e des autres n'est-ce pas digne de l' homme de bien.*<sup>11</sup>

The Latin text uses the terms *voluptas* (joy), *felicitas* (luck) and *aequus animus* (equal mind):

*Confucius dixit: 'Nonne discere et identidem tractare quae didicisti voluptas est? Nonne amicos habere qui ex longinquo veniunt felicitas est? Nonne aequo animo ferre quod ab aliis non recte aestimaris ingenui est'?*<sup>12</sup>

Not only the differences of chosen lexical units (nouns or verbal phrases) here serve as an indicator of the difference between different source languages in the translations. Also the concepts of *Freude* and *plaisir* (joy) connote other meanings than the Latin *voluptas*, which refers to affective joy or delight. If we look at the text of the translation, we can also identify the 'dogmatic parts' of the text. The rhetorical question refers directly to the political and social concept of Confucianism putting

<sup>10</sup> Confucius. The Lun Yu. German Translation. Ed. Nicholas P.C. Tsui. Confucius Publishing Co. Oct. 19, 2006.

<[Http://www.confucius.org/lunyu/gd0101.htm](http://www.confucius.org/lunyu/gd0101.htm)>

<sup>11</sup> Confucius. The Lun Yu. French Translation. Ed. Nicholas P.C. Tsui. Confucius Publishing Co. Oct. 19, 2006.

<[Http://www.confucius.org/lunyu/fd0101.htm](http://www.confucius.org/lunyu/fd0101.htm)>

<sup>12</sup> Confucius. The Lun Yu. Latin Translation. Ed. Nicholas P. C. Tsui. Confucius Publishing Co. Oct. 19, 2006.

<[Http://www.confucius.org/lunyu/latin/latin\\_nd0101.htm](http://www.confucius.org/lunyu/latin/latin_nd0101.htm)>

strong emphasis on teaching as a social hierarchical relation between ‘master’ and ‘student’. The content is an example of self-reference to its social context. Cua mentioned the ‘ethics of speech’ in Asian philosophy giving the example of Xunzi. Such concepts are related to the sensory aspects of our experience used for the expression of an ideologically based worldview. Conceptional over-estimation of certain formal terms or style elements can also be used as indicators for the transfer of an ideology or mind concept, when it comes to the examination of the quality of a text.<sup>13</sup> Now we look at the ideological conditions of different cultural concepts. Asian writing is considered more likely to spiral on itself, reiterating ideas in various ways. Western writing is more logically structured. Eastern writing has a circular repetitive composition. This is an example for writing style as a means of communication and culturally based forms of texts and the different level of interest and engagement in sharing a common cultural heritage. It also demonstrates the differences in terms of willingness to discuss and build up discourse and formalistic stagnation. Choosing a correct term for translation depends on the chosen words within a theoretical, native or pre-theoretical text.

We will now exemplify the differences of interpretative translations in a sample comparative study. The *Analects* of Confucius serve as an example for changing of translations for a classic Chinese text in the translation in Western languages. When it comes to Western-Eastern translations, Chinese words derived from an old history of a culture, which may not fit exactly with the meanings of Western language vocabulary. Basics of belief can be found in the philosophy of Confucianism in the *Analects*. ‘Dialogue’ (查詢) has in Chinese the meanings ‘a conversation between two persons’, ‘the lines spoken by characters in drama or fiction’, and ‘a literary composition in the form of a conversation between two people’. The *Analects* (論語) of Confucius is thought to be a composition of the late Spring and Autumn Period. It is the most influential text in East Asian intellectual history collecting discussions

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<sup>13</sup> Cua, A. S. “The Ethical Significance of Shame: Insights of Aristotle and Xunzi.” *Philosophy East and West* 53.2 (2003), p. 147.

between Confucius and his disciples. In this work most of the basic framework regarding Confucian values such as 'humaneness' (仁), 'righteousness' (義), 'filial piety' (孝), and 'propriety' (禮) build the main theme. The book begins with a sentence starting with the word 'learn', a constant term used in the *Analects*. In the opening verse the master asked if to learn and at due times to repeat what one has learned cannot be considered a pleasure. The master says that if friends should come to someone from far away, this is delightful. We will look now at the different ways of translation of this part of the dialogue used by different translators into Western languages for these three initial rhetorical questions. The *Analects* of Confucius in the translation by Charles Müller:

而 之，不亦 乎？有朋自 方，不亦 乎？人不知而不，不亦君子乎？

[1:1] Confucius said: "Isn't it a pleasure to study and practice what you have learned? Isn't it also great when friends visit from distant places? If people do not recognize me and it doesn't bother me, am I not a superior man?" <sup>14</sup>

The *Analects* by Confucius in the translation of James Legge are translated as follows:

而 之，不亦 乎？有朋自 方，不亦 乎？人不知而不，不亦君子乎？

[1:1] The Master: "Is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application? "Is it not delightful to have friends coming from distant quarters? "Is he not a man of complete virtue, who feels no discomposure though men may take no note of him?" <sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Confucius. *Analects*. Website Charles Müller. Aug. 8, 2006.  
<[Http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/contao/analects.html](http://www.hm.tyg.jp/~acmuller/contao/analects.html)>

<sup>15</sup> Confucius. *Analects*. Website Hugh Blackmer. Aug. 8, 2006.  
<[Http://home.wlu.edu/~blackmerh/anth230/analects.html](http://home.wlu.edu/~blackmerh/anth230/analects.html)>

The *Analects* by Confucius in the translation of *JohnWorldPeace* are this way translated:

而之，不亦乎？有朋自方，不亦乎？人不知而不，不亦君子乎？

*[1:1] The teacher said, "To learn something and then to utilize it gives one a harmonious sense of attainment. To have friends come from far away to visit is uplifting. To be indifferent to recognition by others of one's talents is a keystone to a life of peace and harmony.""<sup>16</sup>*

In the *EAWC Anthology: The Analects* the following translation is made:

而之，不亦乎？有朋自方，不亦乎？人不知而不，不亦君子乎？

*[1:1] The Master "Is it not pleasant to learn with a constant perseverance and application?" Is it not delightful to have friends coming from distant quarters? "Is he not a man of complete virtue, who feels no discomposure though men may take no note of him?"<sup>17</sup>*

The *Analects* of Confucius in *Wikipedia* is translated in this way:

而之，不亦乎？有朋自方，不亦乎？人不知而不，不亦君子乎？

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<sup>16</sup> Confucius. *Analects*. Johnworldpeace. Aug. 8, 2006.  
<[Http://www.johnworldpeace.com/confucius1.html](http://www.johnworldpeace.com/confucius1.html)>

<sup>17</sup> Confucius. *Analects*. EAWC Anthology. Aug. 8, 2006.  
<[Http://eawc.evansville.edu/anthology/analects.htm](http://eawc.evansville.edu/anthology/analects.htm)>

*[1:1] Isn't it a pleasure to study and practice what you have learned? Isn't it also great when friends visit from distant places? If people do not recognize me and it doesn't bother me, am I not a superior man?<sup>18</sup>*

Here we see that in the translations different styles in the target language are used: *pleasure – pleasant - gives one a harmonious sense of attainment* and *great - delightful – uplifting* and *superior man - man of complete virtue - a keystone to a life of peace and harmony* are used for the same Chinese character. In the case of *pleasure* and *to be pleasant* a grammatical difference occurs, while in the last case *superior man - man of complete virtue* are totally different from the metaphorical expression *a keystone to a life of peace and harmony*, where the conceptual translation does not refer to the source text. The topic of how translation is intercultural communication can be demonstrated by showing the transfer of messages, which depends on several aspects of differences between the language of the original source text and the target text. Changes through translation have been involved in cultural influence, since lacking of a lexical identity between languages is the case, when cultures are different. The four different examples of translations from the Confucian *Analects* demonstrate how the text of the target language is different. It depends on the chosen words of the translator we can describe as 'personal style', containing chosen lexical thesaurus of the target language, grammar and style. One historical example of a permanent tradition of missing a qualified translation is the historical translation process of Buddhist literature from India to China and other Eastern countries. The earliest translation activities in China date back to the Zhou Dynasty (1100.B.C.). Documents of this time indicate that translation was carried out by government clerks, who were concerned primarily with the transmission of Confucian ideology and had to integrate Buddhism into their ideology. The result of the translations, which modified and adapted the

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<sup>18</sup> Confucius. *Analects*. Wikipaedia. Aug. 8. 2006.  
<[Http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Confucius](http://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/Confucius)>

translation into the Chinese and other Eastern language vocabulary was

1. A variety of texts, which were different from each other because of the different translations
2. Differences in colloquialism, word order differences, and other conventions unfamiliar
3. The establishment of new cults and sects.

Another example of missing translation qualities is the way, in which a language derived from another language is used without recognizing its history. Despite the differences, bilingual dictionaries for Korean and Chinese language tend to contain expressions used in Korea as loanwords, since many Korean words were originated from Chinese and other languages. But since original Chinese main meanings are no longer in use, the translation process becomes a failure. Newly integrated loanwords from Western languages also have lost their original meaning resulting in the lack of understanding, when these loanwords are understood with their Western original meanings (e.g. German 'Arbeit' (work) stands in Korean for 'part-time job'). Intercultural communication is only possible when communicators use a term/terminology both cultures can rely on or translations must contain interpretation. When a literal translation from one national language to another is not possible, a conceptual translation must be made to transfer the meaning. This hermeneutic process of interpretation starts when the cultural concept of the original language is different from the cultural concept of the target language. Theoretically this process is a hermeneutical one; in practice it can also turn out to be an ideological one. Basic terms can become new meanings. One example for an *abstractum* used in different cultures is the term 'ascension', a neologism derived from the Latin 'ascendere', 'to go upwards', which is used as a special noun for 'going to heaven' of religious leaders after death. The concept of ascension can be found in different religious cultures (Christianity, Buddhism, Jews) in their sacred texts. Here the literal meaning has been exchanged through an ideological meaning of religious dogma.

## **Criteria for Translation as Intercultural Communication**

We will now discuss criteria for translation as tool of intercultural communication.

### **1. Possibility of Back-Translation**

Translations play an important role in enhancing dialogues. Translation humanizes relationships between cultures. As an intermediary between languages, thoughts, and cultures, translations contribute to the respect of difference and alterability. In this concern translation is a positive intercultural communication process. On the other hand we must be aware, that failure translation is the background for linguistic corruption or –in the worst case- backdoor for indoctrination and manipulation. When the translation causes trouble in understanding or results in ineffective communication, it is a failure translation. Translation is under these conditions not a conversion of meanings between languages from the source language into the target language. When research of the source language is made, specific meanings are found. We can see differences between the meanings associated with the source and target languages, meanings attributed to the author, and meanings from the reader. This way, translation is an activity including the interpretation of the meaning of a text in one language (source text) and the production of a new, equivalent text in another language (target text /translation). The quality of translation can be proved and assured by a back translation; if a back translation is not possible, it translation is a failure translation, linguistic corruption or indoctrination.

### **2. Hermeneutic Quality**

If the translation is a derivative from the source language and contains meanings based upon interpretation of the source text, we can call it a hermeneutic translation. Hermeneutic translation is

the opposite to the translation, which is indoctrinated by an adoption of the target language by words/meanings of the target language. This double dimension needs to be taken into account by the translator in his work. The viewpoint of the reader/listener should be kept in mind at all times. The rhetorical virtue of *perspicuitas* is here a quality of the translation serving as guideline. Any interpretation different from a literal translation tends to be denying the fact that naturally different translators have different interpretations. Hermes was the Greek god who interpreted the message of the gods to humans. The verb *hermeneuo* is used in Luke 24:27 where Christ interprets or explains the *Old Testament*. It means ‘to verbalize’, ‘to translate’, and ‘to explain’. Theological exegesis, synthesis, and application are determined by hermeneutics. This concept is also called the ‘hermeneutical spiral’, since the process is closed to dogma. This allegorical method regards the plain meaning of the words as a vehicle through which the deeper, mystical or spiritual meaning comes. Since the publication of Hans-Georg Gadamer’s *Truth and Method* in 1960, philosophical hermeneutics has become one of the most influential currents of modern thought. Gadamer’s theory of hermeneutics continues the traditional discipline of the interpretation of texts. Gadamer transforms the problems of the art of textual understanding into a philosophical issue. The problem of relativism and emphasis on the historicity of understanding, which Gadamer’s philosophy contains, is also elementary in the translation process. The effect of ‘foreignizing translation’, a translation, which is closer to the source language-culture than to the target language-culture, raises questions such as the ability of a back translation, the understanding, and the change of meanings. Gadamer writes in *Wahrheit und Methode* about the use of terms by a historian and the possibilities of interpretation:

*We reach this way a dimension, where the commonly accepted self-understanding of the historical sciences in general is not reached as an aim, since the historian chooses in most cases terms to describe the historical quality of his objects without a specific reflection concerning their origin and their legitimation (...). The historical consciousness ignores*

*itself, if it likes to exclude for the purpose of understanding that one, which is the only thing making an understanding possible. Thinking historically means truly to fulfill the transformation, which happened to the terms of history, if we try to think within them. (...) Avoiding the own terms in the interpretation is not only impossible, but also obviously nonsense. (...) Interpretation indeed means: playing the own pre-terms, so that the meaning of the text really becomes a speech.”*

(Translation by author of article)

*Wir dringen damit in eine Dimension vor, die von der herrschenden Selbstauffassung der historischen Wissenschaften im allgemeinen verfehlt wird. Denn der Historiker wählt in der Regel die Begriffe, mit denen er die historische Eigenart seiner Gegenstände beschreibt, ohne ausdrückliche Reflexion auf ihre Herkunft und ihre Berechtigung. (...) Das historische Bewußtsein verkennt sich selbst, wenn es, um zu verstehen, das ausschließen möchte, was allein Verstehen möglich macht. Historisch denken heißt in Wahrheit, die Umsetzung vollziehen, die den Begriffen der Vergangenheit geschieht, wenn wir in ihnen zu denken suchen. (...) Die eigenen Begriffe bei der Auslegung vermeiden zu wollen, ist nicht nur unmöglich, sondern offenbarer Widersinn. (...) Auslegen heißt gerade: die eigenen Vorbegriffe mit ins Spiel bringen, damit die Meinung des Textes für uns wirklich zum Sprechen gebracht wird.”<sup>19</sup>*

There is no translation without an understanding and interpretation of texts. This is the initial step in any kind of translation. Hermeneutics can be defined as the science and methodology of interpreting texts. One must consider the narrator in the writing who is usually different from the

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<sup>19</sup> Gadamer, H.-G. „Sprachlichkeit als Bestimmung des hermeneutischen Vollzugs.“ Wahrheit und Methode. Grundzüge einer philosophischen Hermeneutik. 3., erweiterte Auflage. J.C.B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck): Tübingen 1972, Pp. 374-375.

writer. In hermeneutical translation the literal meaning is considered elementary and the hidden meaning is for the mature. The origin and spread of higher criticism's meaning is a category of translation, which must be taken in account either as hermeneutics or as other forms of interpretation.

### **3. Translation as Cross-cultural Process of Native Language-Style**

Since the native language is an indicator for the personal approach to a speech communication or translation situation, the speaker/translator will tend to the native language concept. It is not uncommon for an Arab speaker to use metaphors, while in Western cultures metaphors are used only in certain context systems, e.g. poetics. In order to convey native language style, the translator will chose these metaphors also in the target text. Participants in a speech situation mostly identify their speech partners with cultural elements such as nationality, religion, ethnicity, or social class. This can produce bias, prejudices or misunderstandings. Even the main categories of communication, space and time, are conditions of communicative situations and are differently recognized depending on cultural backgrounds.

Relation    Subject - Object

Time

Place / Space

### **Non-linguistic Conditions of Speech Communication. Basic Categories**

Now we make suggestions, how categories of change of the rhetoric system can serve as main guidelines for elementary principles of additional auxiliary tools for translations:

- Explanations: Transmission of speech contents and style understandable

for person from other culture background

- Commentaries: Addition of contents and style understandable for person from different culture background
- Exchange of contents and style of the own culture to foreign culture's contents
- Annotations: Explanations of expressions and symbols of national identity
- Addition of important data / informations not known to cultures with other backgrounds

## **Methods for Higher Understanding in Translations**

Using these guidelines we can analyze, interpret and judge a variety of speech communication forms like speeches, films, music, or rituals, which affect the translation. We can use them as means for the improvement of speech communication situations. Rhetoric has developed a style concept, which makes it possible to identify a style, which is above the level of an individual speech. How to organize an intercultural or cross-cultural style, which allows the translator to make communication between individual persons not sharing the same background possible and effective? 'Affect' and 'effect' are here the basic categories for power and influence of speech quality. When persons are in a situation with different communication styles, we can classify next to these types of powers the social conditions of different styles: On the one hand we have a personal style of language use of an individual person, on the other hand we find cultural heritage, which affects the speaker's, translator's, or writer's style. We have the means to find out style conventions, which are shared between individuals or groups.

Personal style of language

Individual person

Cultural style affecting speaker's / writer's style

Cultural heritage

Social style conventions

Social group

#### **4. Awareness of Cultural Specifica**

In a communicative situation of interpretation/translation an effective communication depends on the decisions to choose the most efficient type of communication background involved entities can share and specific qualities of a culture. Cultural interferences in communications base upon linguistic differences between the languages and their linguistic concepts. Rhetorical figures and style elements of the source text can lay over the primary grammar as secondary structures producing 'new meanings' and make a translation harder to be understood by persons with no experience writing in these language patterns. There is a difference between cultures regarding the question how information is to be delivered. Also the importance of literary texts, e.g. documents, for real use is different. Western cultures, especially Europe, relay on written documents, while in Asian cultures written texts are often considered as negotiable for further work processes and often modified versions of reality. The main forms of 'continuing media' are spoken texts, written texts and visual texts. They can be arranged in several forms and did this by changing and continuously establishing alternative forms.<sup>20</sup>

In order to exchange information a general effective way of interpretative translation reducing messages to a minimum volume of information or data. In a second step the information can be presented in the way they meet the common cultural background, e.g. depending on the decision whether to deliver the information orally or written. The relatively impersonal separation of the text of the author and the translation is typical. If we have our 'package of information' to be send to a receiver of another culture, we should care about the 'cultural format' to put it in. We can ask: Is there a format the culture of the sender and the culture of the receiver share and therefore can be considered

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<sup>20</sup> Cf.: Cooppan, V. "Ghosts in the Disciplinary Machine: The Uncanny Life of World Literature". *Comparative Literature Studies*. Vol. 41. N. 1, 2004, pp. 10-36.  
Loriggio, F. "Disciplinary Memory as Cultural History: Comparative Literature, Globalization, and the Categories of Criticism." *Comparative Literature Studies*. Vol. 41. N. 1, 2004, pp. 49-79.

as a successful medium? E.g. supporting footnotes, photographs are interculturally established as a medium of authenticity.

1. Option

Basic information package in ‘cultural format’ of the target culture

Cultural style according to the background of the receiver

2. Option

Pure information package in no ‘cultural format’

3. Option

Pure basic information package in sender’s ‘cultural format’

Interculturally may not understood style of presentation in target culture

### **Basic ‘Cultural Formats’ of Information Transfer**

In linguistic terms translation is a process of exchange of the surface of appearance and superstructure of meaning. In the last case the surface level is totally exchanged, while the superstructural meaning stays the same. In the transliteration the linguistic surface stays nearly the same. The interpretation is a part of a translation process. The understanding of the text is the basis search for an equivalent of the target language. The translator must be source of the differences – culturally and linguistically – between the source language and the target language and has to face them within a translation. Translation is a transfer medium of intercultural communication, since language is an unic cultural feature of culture. By the means of translations, a message is understood within another language.