

## TRANSLATION IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT: BRIDGING DISCIPLINARY AND CULTURAL DIVIDE

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**Abstract:** The dichotomy between language and culture dominates the debate surrounding translation in the broad sense of the word, written and spoken. However important the delimitation and differentiation between the taxonomic types of translation such endeavour oversimplifies the way translation is theorised and practised today. Equivalence, implicitly or explicitly, has been framed as an umbrella term for translation. The equivalence paradigm, however, is increasingly called into question by profound changes translation is undergoing in recent years. Against the backdrop of the internalisation of translation and drastic technological changes translation is more than ever characterised by theoretical and practical complexification, blurring the lines between the taxonomic types. This article is an in-depth and broad-ranging examination of the field, to demonstrate the interrelation between the internalisation of the discipline and the effects of technological tools on translation. Overall, this article addresses the scanty attention paid to the interrelated broadening of linguistic and cultural transfers and innovations through translation and fundamental changes brought about by technological tools in a global context. Therefore, it argues for a reorientation in focus from restrictive, empirical, linguistics-oriented models – as well as heavily technology-embedded models – to integrating the cross-transformative effects of translation.

**Keywords:** Culture, global, language, transfer, translation

### LA TRADUCTION DANS UN CONTEXTE GLOBAL : COMBLER LE FOSSÉ ENTRE DISCIPLINES ET CULTURES

**Résumé :** Le dilemme langue et culture domine le débat autour de la traduction au sens large du terme, écrite et orale. Quelle que soit l'importance de la délimitation et de la différenciation entre les types taxonomiques de traduction, une telle entreprise simplifie à l'excès la manière dont la traduction est théorisée et pratiquée de nos jours. L'équivalence, implicitement ou explicitement, est conçue comme un terme générique pour la traduction. Cependant le paradigme équivalence est de plus en plus remis en cause par les profondes mutations que connaît la traduction depuis quelques années. Dans un contexte d'internalisation de la traduction et de changements technologiques drastiques, elle se caractérise plus que jamais par une complexification de sa théorie et de sa pratique, brouillant ainsi les lignes entre ses types taxonomiques. Cet article est un examen approfondi et large de la traduction, afin de démontrer l'interrelation entre l'internalisation de la discipline et les effets induits par les outils technologiques en traduction. Il s'applique, essentiellement, à mettre en évidence le manque d'attention accordée au lien entre l'élargissement des transferts linguistico-culturels et des innovations au moyen de la traduction ainsi que les changements fondamentaux induits par les outils technologiques dans un contexte mondial. Par conséquent, cet article soutient une réorientation des perspectives, en s'écartant des modèles restrictifs,

empiriques, orientés vers la linguistique ainsi que des modèles fortement intégrés à la technologie vers l'intégration des effets de transformation croisée induite par la traduction.

**Mots-clés :** Culture, global, langue, traduction, transfert

## Introduction

The work environment, social status, and ideological positioning of translators have changed in lockstep with the broadening of discourses on translation theory and practice. Linguistically and culturally-oriented models of translation, with their sets of solutions for dealing with translation problems, developed from largely different theoretical stances on language and culture. These translation models, implicitly or explicitly, drew heavily on assumptions about monolithic language-culture, history, translation purpose, and traditions for their formulation (Pym, 2016; Tymoczko, 2010; Vinay & Darbelnet, 1972). The burst in translation in a globalising world heightened awareness of the need for having recourse to a wider range of perspectives to account for the complexities of translation beyond Western-dominated thinking. Translation, thus understood, does not lend itself to a clear-cut, stable, widely acknowledged definition (Chesterman, 2016: 17; Pym, 2023: 105; Williams, 2013: 27). To varying extent, translation is widely practised in all known human societies. This pervasiveness, repeatedly noted in scholarship must not, however, conceal the important fact that translation theory and practice is not symmetrical in time and places. This asymmetry suggests reorienting Jakobson's (1959/2021) taxonomic types of translation, inasmuch as this reorientation allows for including multifaceted translation practices in global context. Accordingly, it will be more appropriate to consider Jakobson's types of translation as an inverted continuum with intersemiotic translation, interlingual translation, and intralingual translation in decreasing degree of complexity and difficulty. This broadening context leaves many questions open with regard to what is translation. As a result, translation can be taken to include oral performance. This view of translation is in stark contrast to the stable view of translation as "a spoken or written text-based interlingual transfer" (Rizzi et al., 2019: 2). Adopting a more complex view of translation includes oral translation in the broad sense of translation, for it is largely determined by history and the prevalence of oral performance beyond the West (P. Bandia, 2009; Rizzi et al., 2019; H. van Hoof, 1991). Furthermore, intralingual spoken and written translation is largely resorted to for intergenerational transfer of language and culture across the world (Rizzi et al., 2019: 82; S. Tyulenev, 2014: 129). Finally, the rapid growth and diversification of translation practices cannot be accounted for by translation limited to *translation proper*. Gentzler (2017: 8), in particular, makes the case for a more dynamic view of translation with regard the numerous activities in translation, which he considers as a continual and continuous way of living and introducing new ideas and permanent change in a globalised world.

### **Problem statement**

Proceeding from linguistics-oriented approach to translation, many theorists, openly or tacitly, have framed equivalence as an overall concept for translation, although how they view equivalence is an open scholarly debate (J. Catford, 1965; A. Chesterman, 2016; J. House, 2016; E. Nida & C. Taber, 1969; A. Pym, 2014, 2023). In recent years, a growing body of literature shifted focus from the equivalence paradigm, viewed by P. Newmark (1991: 3) as “a common academic dead-end pursuit”, towards greater emphasis on the cultural and social dimensions of translation in the target language-culture (E. Gentzler, 2017; M. Tymoczko, 2010; S. Tyulenev, 2014). Although there is no shortage of definitions for translation as process, product, subject, and agency, the prevailing consensus among scholars holds that the age-old practice of translation, paired with its wide-ranging purposes, makes it increasingly difficult to set forth a generally accepted definition encompassing all its key theoretical strands and practical activities. More importantly, this definitional difficulty and pluralism can be accounted for by the evolving nature of translation. In a sense, a definition of translation put forward just a decade ago may fail to capture the ways in which translation is theorised and practised today, with globalization and digital tools giving rise to drastic and irreversible changes in translation. The wide range of non-equivalence theories of translation, with their primary focus on recipient language-culture, are no longer embedded in the monolithic source and target language-culture dichotomy. This reorientation in emphasis is a fundamental departure from the linguistic framework positing equivalence as a priori core concept, towards functionalist, descriptive, cultural, postcolonial, and digital turns in translation. However, our understanding of translation is incomplete if particular emphasis is not put on looking at the interrelated broadening of linguistic and cultural transfers and innovations through translation in a global world. Therefore, it is important to address this knowledge gap by highlighting how both the source and target languages-cultures can benefit from translation transfers.

This paper looks at translation as it is being conceptualised and practised in an ever-growing global context. The study is specifically focused on the changes translation is undergoing through the internationalisation of the discipline and increased applications of technological tools in translation. Identifying the causes of the changes and their implications for translation is thought to be of interest to researchers and end-users of translation alike. The current article examines a broad range of markedly different translation theories and practices with the view of identifying and describing the underlying thinking in the broadening and instrumentation of the phenomenon of translation. Therefore, the paper is built on the hypothesis that there are strong parallels between the broadening of thinking on translation and steady increase in instrumentation in aid to translation. The study is framed by one research question: What are the implications of the broadening of the field and increased application of technological tools for translation theory and practice?

### **Methodological approach**

My discussion of translation as a linguistic and cultural practice is primarily focused on translation in the broad sense of the word, written and spoken. Delimiting the scope of translation, in this way, is important for the purposes of this study, as criteria for delineation are then set to look at taxonomic types of translation put forth by R. Jakobson (1959/2021). Against the

background of this delimitation, translation will be looked at through the prism of growing theoretical and practical complexification of the discipline brought about by globalization and fundamental technological advances. As has been noted repeatedly in the literature, translation has been defined in markedly different ways over time. Thus, it is not possible and relevant to attempt to give a comprehensive account of definitions by translation theorists and practitioners. Therefore, this review framed in time presents the clear advantage of highlighting the shifting focus in the field of translation.

## 2. Review of related literature

### 2.1 *Delimitation of translation*

R. Jakobson's division of translation (1959/2021) is relevant to the view of translation as an international discipline as envisioned by M. Tymoczko (2010) and taken up by J. Williams (2013). Within his types of translation R. Jakobson did not, arguably, set explicit first-order hierarchy to the three types. He adopted a complex view of translation, encompassing intralingual rewording, interlingual rendering, and intersemiotic interpretation. As he explained: For us, both as linguists and ordinary word-users, the meaning of any linguistic sign is in its translation into some further, alternative sign, especially a sign "in which it is more fully developed" as Peirce, the deepest inquirer into the essence of signs, insistently stated. (R. Jakobson, 2021: 157). Central to this complex and open view of translation is the concept of equivalence in conveying the original message. R. Jakobson acknowledges the limitations of equivalence inherent in intralingual and interlingual translation alike. Achieving and maintaining equivalence becomes essential and difficult when the source text meaning is rendered through synonymy on intralingual level or recreated in verbal signs on interlingual level. As a result of the inability to achieve full equivalence, R. Jakobson rightly observed that the "entire message" is spread over the whole range of the three kinds of translation.

Traditionally, "interlingual translation or translation proper" was widely held to epitomize translation for interlinguistic communication. Interlingual translation, therefore, received much scholarly attention to the neglect of intralingual and intersemiotic translation. In the words of R. Jakobson (2021), interlingual translation is a speech reported by the translator. He pointed to communication deficiency and striking similarity on intralingual and interlingual levels. Subsequently, R. Jakobson (2021: 158) noted the ways in which "loan-words, or loan-translations, neologisms or semantic shifts, and finally circumlocutions" can be resorted to for satisfactorily handling differences across languages and cultures. Following R. Jakobson, translation scholars pointed to the close bond between intralingual and interlingual translation, and consequently conceptualised the two types as varying degrees of communicative success or failure (A. Chesterman, 2016: 20; L. Hewson & J. Martin, 2019: 27). Rizzi et al. (2019: 74) make the strong argument that 'indeterminacy' and 'engaged interpretation' feature in communication acts in general. These features gain increased salience primarily because of "greater interpretative risks" involved in moving from language to language in interlingual translation.

Jakobson's tripartite classification of translation has been taken a step further by M. Snell-Hornby (2006) in view of translation in stark contrast to the restrictive understanding of translation as predominantly interlingual transfer. M. Snell-Hornby (2006: 21) points out the theoretical richness and practical significance encapsulated in Jakobson's tripartite taxonomy of translation. For her, the open-ended intertwining of the three types of translation makes it possible for translation studies to account for emerging developments in the field. She explains that, on the one hand, TV subtitling between interlingual and intralingual translation, and multimedia and multimodal screen translation on the other, are practical applications for the three divisions of translation blurring into translation (*ibid.*). Regardless of how far the definition of translation can be stretched, translation is predominantly conducted through linguistic means (L. Hewson & J. Martin, 2019; House, 2016; N. Komissarov, 2009; A. Pym, 2023). This widely held viewpoints to the linguistic approach to culture-related translation problems. New types of texts, including treatises, legal documents, commercial contracts, advertisements, notices, websites, and machine translation outputs have become more significant to translation in a globalizing context. Similarly, these changing dynamics have accorded greater importance to translation theory and practice, most notably in relation to text function and translation purpose. This burst in translation practice resulted into focus shifting away from the perennial opposition between literal and free translation characterising the "pre-linguistics" stage in the periodisation of translation history. In addition to the complex view of translation as discussed in previous sections, recent developments in translation studies, driven by new technological tools and forms of translation, have called into question the narrow view of translation as derived from source text (E. Gentzler, 2017; A. Pym, 2016, 2023; Rizzi et al., 2019). J. Williams (2013), for instance, highlighted the interrelation between technology and translation theory and practice in the following words:

at the same time, advances in technology have played a part in developing new methodologies with which to investigate the translation product. The technologies that have enabled the global growth of the translation industry have also enabled the spread of theories across the globe.

J. Williams (2013: 61)

On a different pragmatic level, A. Pym (2016: 231) underlines the significant contribution of machine translation in lowering translation costs and opening up opportunities for translators to tailor machine translation output for the sake of cross-cultural communication. This foreseeable development, he underscores, will align with translation, for the term 'translation' "is not anchored to some eternal essence". Thus, the complexification of translation, on the back of its internalisation and the burst in machine translation, suggests a reinterpretation of R. Jakobson's original taxonomy.

## ***2.2 Jakobson's translation taxonomy reconsidered***

### ***-Intralingual translation***

Intralingua translation is, among the three types, less controversial. Although, there are significant differences in the ways in which there are more intralingual translation practices than accounted for by R. Jakobson's (2021) translation taxonomy. An example in point is non-Western tradition of intralingual translation such as practised by African griots, also known as

specialist linguists (P. Bandia, 2009). Griots are the prominent caste of interpreters. These hereditary interpreters engage in a broad range of intralingual translation activities, including advising dignitaries on policy matters, breaking important news, fostering peace talks, transferring oral legacy, and performing socio-cultural ceremonies. According to P. Bandia (2009), their caste was held in high esteem by society as a whole until the advent of translation in European languages. This assessment is strikingly comparable to the account of H. van Hoof (1991) in terms of translation history in the West. In his words, well-structured castes of professional interpreters existed in Carthage. Their caste was held in high regard by society, and bore distinctive insignias such as close-shaven heads and parrots tattooed on their arms. Remarkably, as with African griots, the position of professional interpreter could be filled by hereditary lineage.

Intralingual translation has been described by Jakobson (1959/2021) as rewording for bringing more clarity to the original utterance. On the other hand, he summarised interlingual translation as a speech reported by the translator. These descriptions take for granted a single source-text speaker or writer. The oral translation performed by griots is reported speech, as they foreground the originator and don't seek to create the illusion that they are the originators of the message. Instead, they are simply retelling or acting to make the sender's voice heard. Therefore, their oral performance brings together rewording, replacement, juxtaposition, featuring in intralingual and interlingual translation alike. S. Tyulenev (2014: 43; 129), who looks at translation from a sociological perspective, makes the point that intralingual translation is widely practised for intergenerational transfer in both its written and oral performance. Finally, Rizzi et al. (2019: 82), in examining the benefits and adverse effects of translation in Australia, see the post-vernacular retranslation of endangered languages as their empowerment for intergenerational transmission. Intralingual translation for intergenerational transmission is best illustrated with the help of the intralingual translation of the Bible for ease of understanding by present-day readership.

#### *-Interlingual translation or translation proper*

On a procedural level, interlingual translation has been decomposed into lexicogrammatical transformations and cultural adaptations performed by the translator for achieving communication between different languages-cultures. As has been pointed out previously, theoretical thinking on translation was primarily focused on *translation proper* understood as interlinguistic transfer.

#### *- Intersemiotic translation or transmutation*

Jakobson approaches language as a system of signs. For him, signs can be verbal or non-verbal. On his view, intersemiotic translation is more complex and difficult, and therefore open to a wider range of meaning-making signs. In intersemiotic translation, there is a complete change in the medium bearing the intended message (spoken or written word, image, sound, etc.). There is, however, great temptation to limit transmutation to the medium component, such as written word to sound or image. It is worth emphasizing that intersemiotic translation can be achieved within the same language and across a combination of languages. Intersemiotic interpretation is widely resorted to for filling pragmatic functions, largely viewed as the most

challenging in interlinguistic transfer (A. Chesterman, 2016; A. Pym, 2016, Rizzi et al., 2019), for context, implicature, presupposition, and allusion may concur to bring to communication acts more than can be predicted on the face value of verbal and non-verbal signs only. In other words, intersemiotic translation is to translation an umbrella term with greater pragmatic field for limited constituent words.

### ***2.3 Bridging disciplinary divide***

Although the practice of translation, oral and written, has been established for millennia (H. van Hoof, 1991: 9), translation studies (TS) is a comparatively new academic discipline, which many accounts trace back to J. Holmes (1972/1988/2004). Translation studies, admittedly, originated from a range of adjacent disciplines, including comparative literature, applied linguistics, philology, philosophy, and machine translation. Consequently, the nascent discipline borrowed its theoretical frameworks and methodological tools from this diverse range of neighbouring disciplines. Describing valuable insights gained from these fields as intrinsic to establishing a breeding ground for the discipline, J. Holmes (2004: 172) did not fail to point out disagreement, confusion, and misunderstanding surrounding the name and subject matter of the discipline. In the course of his paper, he defined the new discipline as being concerned with “the complex of problems clustered round the phenomenon of translating and translations” (J. Holmes, 2004: 176). Furthermore, he mapped out the emerging discipline into two interrelated fields: (1) pure branch and (2) applied branch. In dealing with the theoretical and practical elements of translation studies, J. Holmes (2004) viewed its entanglement with contiguous disciplines as exerting beneficial and detrimental effects at the same time. In effect, derived from varying strands, chief among them linguistics and literary criticism, TS waxed into a discipline with indiscernible scope and ever-blurring lines between linguistic, cultural, descriptive, sociological, postcolonial, and digital turns (J. Munday, 2016; A. Pym, 2014; M. Snell-Hornby, 2006; M. Tymoczko, 2010; J. Williams, 2013). In stark contrast to most disciplines waxing and waning in the process of specialisation (V. Komissarov, 2009), TS is increasingly breaking, often contrived, barriers between disciplinary perspectives in an attempt to reorient itself to interdisciplinarity.

In her assessment of recent developments in translation studies, S. Bassnett (2002: 2) looked at translation through the lens of language and culture, describing it as interdisciplinary in a globalised world. From a methodological perspective translation scholarship took a turning point with the discipline “borrowing from and lending techniques and methods to other disciplines” (S. Bassnett, 2002: 3). S. Bassnett claims that the emancipation of translation studies from the ‘tutelage’ of comparative literature and applied linguistics makes translation feel “comfortable”, without undue “confrontation”. To that effect, the illustrative examples she provided to describe translation as an interdiscipline are characteristically overlapping linguistic and functionalist perspectives on translation. It is safe to argue that the competitive and complementary nature of language and culture through different stages of translation history does not position translation as an interdiscipline, since language and culture are but two aspects of the same phenomenon. At this stage, translation studies still struggles to establish a crossing point between self-sufficiency and interdisciplinarity.



There have been increasing calls to enlarge TS beyond the limits of Western discourse (E. Gentzler, 2017; Rizzi et al., 2019; M. Tymoczko, 2010; J. Williams, 2013). In her call to take a fresh look at translation theory and practice, M. Tymoczko (2010) makes the forceful argument to break away from positivist Western paradigm towards a more constructivist paradigm. This shift would embrace largely different theories and practices across time and space. This departure from traditional thinking on translation is best illustrated with the help of “cluster concept”, an open-ended definitional approach M. Tymoczko took to translation. Yet, it is obvious that M. Tymoczko’s call clearly shows the need for developing methodological tools specific to translation studies. Furthermore, the underlying rationale is to frame the typicality of TS as independent scientific enquiry on par with traditional approaches to gaining knowledge. Yet, translation studies continues to be dominated by open scholarly debate rooted in the diversity of the discipline from its inception. As pointed out previously, translation encompasses a broad range of practices and has gone through widely different theoretical perspectives holding sway in the course of its ‘coming of age’. Like many translation scholars, A. Chesterman (2016: 41-44) put increased emphasis on the difficulty in providing a generally-accepted theory of translation despite the growing body of empirical data to lay down the groundwork for theory building. M. Tymoczko’s call to rethink the epistemological foundation of translation, and for researchers to spell out their positionality, is primarily aimed at breaking with the dominance of positivism in TS. This paradigm shift in the field of translation underlines the need for a holistic theory with generally agreed-on rigorous criteria for measurement, a theory grounded in empirical evidence, to take account of the diversity and growing blurring of lines between translation practices. For translation scholars who concerned themselves with articulating a formal, comprehensive, theory of translation, its scope is wide and increasingly complex. From a Western-dominated discourse based on periodical boundaries, which appear fuzzy and arbitrary in delineation, there is growing drive to move towards an open, not stable, view of translation as an evolving, multifaceted discipline.

J. Munday (2016), following A. Pym (2014) and J. Williams (2013), highlights the complexification of translation theory and practice, shifting from empirical and linguistics-oriented models, and subsequent socio-cultural and postcolonial turns, to heavily technology-embedded approaches. For J. Munday (2016: 25), the rapid growth of new technologies and their impacts on translation practice and theory can be summarised with the help of (1) audio-visual translations, (2) globalisation and localisation, (3) corpus-based translation studies. As an afterthought, he noted the unstable, evolving nature of the “relationship of translation studies to other disciplines”. Along similar line of reasoning, Rizzi et al. (2019: 20) argue that Western thinking dominating the field of translation is epistemologically and culturally limited. As a result, it fails to embrace other discourses falling beyond clear-cut categories, such as linear progression from source to target texts and monolithic language-culture translation directionality framing prevalent translation models. Rizzi et al. (2019) conclude that translation studies have to develop “its own conceptual tools and methodologies”. These can establish stronger linkage between separate disciplines, raise the visibility of translation, and strengthen “methodological confidence” among translation scholars.



## 2.4 Bridging cultural divide: translating language and culture

While translation models were shaped on dominant linguistic theories in the heyday of structuralism, resulting in a sterile dichotomy between linguistic aspects and cultural aspects of translation, language and culture are intrinsically interwoven and cannot be looked at separately in translation. L. Venuti (2017: 8) proceeds from a hermeneutic (his own term) approach to translation to set apart two strands of differences, linguistic and cultural. For him, “the variation is inevitable, driven in the first place by the structural differences between languages and by the differences in values, beliefs, and representations between cultures”. Ultimately, differences in language and culture have been put forward to explain translation difficulties, and even to justify untranslatability across languages and cultures. However, as underscored by scholars (Y. Gambier, 2014; E. Gentzler, 2017; J. House, 2018), it is more appropriate to consider translation as the recontextualization of an original language-culture production into another language-culture setting. This approach underlines more emphatically that compartmentalizing linguistic and cultural aspects in translation is a dead-end undertaking. Culturally-oriented translation models raised their criticism against the narrow view of translation as a linguistic problem-solving activity. While acknowledging the linguistic foundation of translation, S. Bassnett (2002) emphasised that translation activity is best approached as semiotic endeavour. This view is reinforced by the argument, drawn from semiotics, that language and culture are inextricably intertwined. However, traditional cross-cultural translation was seen as non-literal translation of culture-bound words and expressions by their cultural or functional equivalents (P. Newmark, 1991; J. House, 2016). For P. Newmark (1991), intercultural gap filling means cross-cultural awareness, to avoid prejudices, meliorative and pejorative alike, as well as culture shock, that can manifest itself in literal translation. P. Newmark (1991) and S. Bassnett (2002/2014) proceeded from a linguistically-determined processual approach to translation assessment, while warning against the impoverishing effect of literal translation. In the same vein, J. House (2016: 15) argued that “intercultural understanding is the success with which the linguistic-cultural transposition has been undertaken”. Thus understood, the integrative view largely embraces the processual linguistic and cultural aspects rather than the real transformations that take place as a result of translation (E. Gentzler, 2017; S. Jürgen & H-J Lüsebrink, 2021). As noted by E. Gentzler, post-translation analysis is the yardstick to be used for determining the “success or failure of the ideas or aesthetics of a translation”, against the backdrop of the cultural changes *after* the translation (emphasis in the text). Such an analysis will lead closer to the recognition that change is translational and that “translation is not merely a footnote to history” (Gentzler, 2017: 3).

In a global context, the term localization gained wide currency in the software industry and translation studies. Specialists in the industry take localisation to mean the process and accessories designed for adopting a product to a specific lingua-culture environment or locale, while translation scholars (A. Pym, 2014: 117) view localization as a paradigm in translation studies and best conceptualised as problem-solving comparable to adaptation in intercultural communication. In the same line of reasoning, J. House (2016: 13) points out that “translation is part and parcel of all worldwide localization and globalization processes, for to localize, you need to apply “cultural filter”, a concept introduced by J. House to describe the culturally-

determined pragmatic function of target text in covert translation. As can be noted, the narrow view of cultural translation and its theoretical conceptualisation as localization is predominantly thought of as a linguistic transfer process, albeit with thrust on cross-cultural understanding. Intercultural transfer, however, is not limited to translation procedures for achieving interlingual communication.

By contrast, the transformative approach offers a perspective on translation departing from the binary language-culture constitutive strands of translation. This points to a shift in focus towards a view of translation based on linguistic and cultural transfers between languages and cultures. Translation, thus understood, is cross-cultural mediation and agency beyond the prevalent linguistic transfer approach. On this view, “translators may introduce new phenomena into the cultures they deal with. This is their innovative influence” (S. Tyulenev, 2014: 107). Similarly, S. Jürgen & H-J Lüsebrink (2021) argue for the cultural transfer approach derived from a critique of traditional and dominant thinking in the field of “cultural relations”, “cultural exchanges”, “cultural mobility” and traditional views of “influence”. This new approach argues against the traditional concepts of “diffusion” and dichotomy between stronger and weaker cultures, whereby the weaker culture is influenced by the stronger culture in their contact. The cultural transfer occurs on two levels. On a practical level, the culturally transferred artefact, admittedly, undergoes the process of transformation, of re-semanticization, re-interpretation. Theoretically, cultural transfer can be compared to “dynamic functionalism” described by Even-Zohar, who stressed the close relation between “translation procedures and cultural transfer between different language-culture systems” (S. Jürgen & H-J Lüsebrink, 2021: 16). The same observation holds true for the development of individual languages brought into closer contact in our global world.

Reflecting on the history of English language through different waves of borrowings from other languages before it gained its current status of global language, J. McWhorter (2008) described English as “our magnificent bastard tongue”. In this pithy title, he sought to draw attention to the ‘obscure’ origins of English and its remarkable ability to accommodate words from different languages, building up its lexicogrammatical features and set of values. In perspective, J. McWhorter’s pronouncement on English language, ‘our magnificent bastard tongue’, illustrates the intricate process of translation through sociocultural lens: new words and concepts are borrowed, assimilated, altered beyond recognition, or discarded as unsuitable to the target language-culture, fostering the development of language and culture in the process. S. Jürgen & H-J Lüsebrink (2021: 3) based the theoretical framework guiding the cultural transfer approach “on the fundamental conviction that translation always means shifting not only between two languages, but also between two cultures”. As we saw with Y. Gambier (2014), J. House (2016) and E. Gentzler (2017), translators decontextualize and recontextualize, and they domesticate or foreignize in the process of translating.

As with words crossing between languages, S. Jürgen and H-J Lüsebrink (2021: 4) do not consider cultural relations as unidirectional or unbalanced; rather, at their core, these relations are “dynamic and multilateral, as well as asymmetric – in numerous cases – as reciprocal”. More notably, they observe “often, such acts of cultural transposition intersect with actual, linguistic translation. They require acts of localization – the linguistic and cultural rendering to fit the purpose and the idiom of a place” (Trauz 2018, cited in S. Jürgen & H-J

Lüsebrink, 2021: 6). In other words, a linguistic and cultural change occur concomitantly in transitioning from an original artefact or text to a derived linguistic or cultural production. This process of transformation involves adaptation, imitation, rewriting for productive reception. This view of cultural relations and exchanges harks back to A. Chesterman's view, who borrowed the theoretical concept of memes from Dawkins to mean transmission and spread of ideas (2016: 6). For A. Chesterman, imitation and language are vehicles for 'meme transmission'. Translation, therefore, is an attempt to achieve meme transmission across cultures. In a global digital era bringing closer languages and cultures, removing physical boundaries between people and their creative productions, translation introduces profound linguistic and cultural changes. Thus, the translated texts, ideas, artefacts undergo the process of recontextualization (A. Chesterman, 1997/2016; Y. Gambier, 2014; S. Tyulenev, 2014; J. House, 2016; E. Gentzler, 2017; S. Jürgen & H-J Lüsebrink, 2021). Put another way, new words, concepts, and artefacts are borrowed, assimilated, changed beyond recognition, or discarded as unsuitable to the target language-culture. More often than can be expected, the linguistic or cultural transfer may undergo the process of back-loan by the initial lender. The main strength of the transformative approach stands out most prominently in the cross-fertilizing effects of translation within and across languages and cultures.

### ***2.5 Historicizing equivalence through technological tools***

It is generally accepted that defining and maintaining a relationship between a source text and its translation is central to the equivalence paradigm. While acknowledging that equivalence as a central concept in translation theory and practice has been heavily criticised by descriptivists and functionalists, and called into question by fundamental changes in technological advances, A. Pym (2014: 5-9) and J. House (2016: 76) consider equivalence to be the defining feature of translation in relation to other text productions. Increasing recognition of the need to expand translation studies as an international interdisciplinary, institutional translation policies, and advances in technological tools put into question the inbuilt assumption at the core of equivalence as a relation between the source and target texts (P. Newmark, 1991; J. Williams, 2013; Rizzi et al., 2019).

P. Newmark (1991: 16) foresaw the growing importance of translation activities in the widening range of translated literature, from narrowly limited interest in religious, philosophical, political, scientific texts, to literature and broad variety of pragmatic texts covering all "human knowledge". Furthermore, he stressed the ever-growing number of language combinations involved in translation, the instrumental role played by information technology, resulting in a re-evaluation of translation. New information technologies questioning the assumption underpinning equivalence, including the relation between source and target texts, have irreversibly reshaped the concept of equivalence through incremental updates.

Historically, technological tools have been a driving force behind pivotal changes in translation. First, the shift from parchment to paper resulted into collaborative translation involving growing numbers of translational players, and written translation gaining more importance than spoken translation. Second, the advent of the printing press profoundly changed translation practice and theory by introducing a stable, fixed, original text to be

accurately reproduced in target text (A. Pym, 2016, 2023; Rizzi et al., 2019). With drastic technological changes and their long-lasting impacts on translation in mind, Rizzi et al. (2019: 78) foresee that the takeover of communication technologies over the printing press will entail a fresh look at “equivalence and accuracy; the important point, though, is that the basic technologies change our ideas about what translation is or should be”

### Conclusion

The diversification of translation theory and practice followed the internalisation of the discipline on the back of increased developments in communication and technological tools. Upon closer look, the main driving force behind the turns in translation appears to be text type and technological advances, which determined translation theoretical models over time. The interrelation of translation and technological advances in a globalised world resulted in far-reaching changes in translation as a concept and profession. These rapid changes are assessed from different perspectives and, sometimes, with pitched advocates at the opposite extremes of the debate. It is safe to conclude that languages and cultures are enriched through transfers brought about by translation.

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