

**Process of translation from the psycholinguistic perspective.
A review of: Krzysztof Hejwowski, *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu* (The cognitive-communicative theory of translation)
Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN 2004, 200 pp.**

Still it seems to me that translation from one language into another (...) is like looking at Flemish tapestries on the wrong side; for though the figures are visible, they are full of threads that make them indistinct, and they do not show with the smoothness and brightness of the right side; and translation from easy languages argues neither ingenuity nor command of words, any more than transcribing or copying out one document from another. But I do not mean by this to draw the inference that no credit is to be allowed for the work of translating, for a man may employ himself in ways worse and less profitable to himself.

The above quotation comes from Miguel Cervantes, a person that none could think of as lacking in finesse in the written word. A certain mysteriousness of the translation process, which is hard to define, has constituted the reason for many clichés to appear concerning the very nature of the translation process. An attempt to deal with those clichés has been successfully undertaken by Krzysztof Hejwowski in *Kognitywno-komunikacyjna teoria przekładu* (*The cognitive-communicative theory of translation*). Chapters of this book deal with different issues and the author's views constituting a coherent theory of translation.

Hejwowski starts with doubts about claims that no translation is possible. Among concepts that have contributed to this view, the author enumerates W. Quine's indeterminacy of translation thesis as well as the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. Hejwowski takes the opposite position arguing that translations are possible thanks to common human experience, similarity of mental and linguistic structures, and empathy. According to the author, this does not mean, however, that any text can be translated. Hejwowski deals with the issue of texts whose translation would not attract anyone's interest. He also speaks of so-called potential texts analyzed without context. In his considerations concerning translatability the author goes beyond questions of translation and deals with the issue of the imperfection of linguistic communication itself. Finally, in chapters 5 and 6, Hejwowski presents so-called relative or partial untranslatability.

The second chapter presents criticism of the view that the only permissible form of translation is the literal translation. This opinion is derived from the fact that free translation, characterized by care for form, falsifies the content of the original. Hejwowski demonstrates that division of translation into literal and free is artificial. He also points out that the reason underlying translating literally often comes from the fact that the translator does not understand the original and not

from the fact that he or she wants to render its content in the most exact way. Hejwowski then passes to the problem of dictionary equivalents and considers the real usefulness of dictionaries in the translator's work.

In the third chapter, the author criticizes the opinion contrary to the one described above, i.e., the opinion that functional translations are superior to other types of translations. This belief comes from the will to present reality described in the original in such a way that it is closer and more understandable to a potential receiver of the translation. Hejwowski presents E. A. Nida's theory of dynamic equivalence. Nida is one of the best known and renowned representatives of the functional translation concept. Hejwowski then investigates the use of dynamic equivalence theory in biblical translations. He also describes E. A. Gutt's theory of relevance and H. J. Vermeer's and K. Reiss' Skopos theory. Finally, he formulates his position concerning Venuti's distinction between "domestication and foreignization" – a concept which has become quite popular recently. Using several examples, Hejwowski demonstrates the usefulness of functional translation as a translation technique. He points out, however, to various dangers connected with the blind use of this technique.

In the fourth chapter the author presents his own concept of translation theory. His starting point is the belief that translation is not an operation on texts but on minds. Hejwowski's model is based among others on C. J. Fillmore's concept of case frames (Fillmore, 1968, 1970; Bivens, 1975; Grimes, 1975), R. Schank's and C. J. Fillmore's concept of scenes (Schank, 1982; Fillmore, 1977), developed by Schank (1982), Schank and R. Abelson's (1977) concept of scripts, and the concept of schemata described many times in psychology, psycholinguistics and linguistics, introduced by F. Bartlett (1932). This model uses also T. Herrmann's theory of propositional base and semantic input data (1983), H. P. Grice's (1975) concept of the cooperative principle and conversational implicature, the cognitive theory of metaphor whose 20th century representative was B. L. Whorf (1956) and which was further developed by G. Lakoff et al. (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Lakoff & Turner, 1989), F. Bartlett's (1932) concept of effort after meaning, and H. Hörmann's (1981) stability of meaning.

Hejwowski describes the process of production and understanding of a text based on organizational memory structures and then defines the role of a translator in such a communication process. Processes of production and understanding of a text can be presented by means of the scheme presented on Figures 1 and 2.

By cognitive base we understand "a totality of mental structures (...) activated by the sender in a precise situation" (Hejwowski, 2004:164), i.e., the sender's goals, opinions, feelings, and his or her representation of a situation, that of the receiver as well as of himself. Utterance base denotes those elements of the cognitive base that the sender wants to transmit to the receiver, while deep structure – the part of the utterance base, that according to the sender represents the whole, thus enabling the receiver its partial reconstruction.

Figure 1. Text production

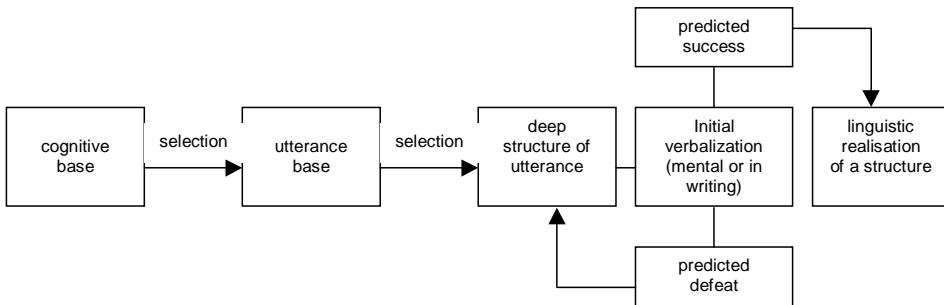
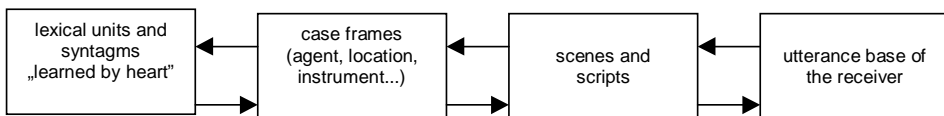


Figure 2. Text understanding



The role of a translator analyzing a source text is in a way similar to that of an “ordinary” receiver. The difference is based on the fact that the “ordinary” receiver satisfies himself with a low level of stability of meaning and creates his own utterance base which is more or less different from the utterance base of the sender. The translator on the other hand aims at recreating the largest possible part of the cognitive base of the sender. In order to achieve this the translator bases himself on the knowledge of other texts and the culture of the target language, knowledge of described facts, and various communicative strategies. The translator tries as well to position himself as the primary receiver and to estimate the receiver’s capabilities of understanding. The translator then tries to estimate the position of a translated text on the map of other texts in the target language. The process described above is not linear as very often we have to deal with a return to lower levels of analysis. Passing to the creation of a translated text, the translator tries to imagine future readers, to estimate the translation’s position on the text map in the target language, to estimate the level of understanding of the translated text in comparison to what would be understood by readers of the original and finally to compare the position of both texts on both maps mentioned above. In this way, the translator creates a certain model of his translation and uses this model at different stages of translation.

Both phases of the translation process, namely, analysis and creation of a text may overlap. The author underlines as well that the model he presents constitutes, to a certain extent, an idealization. Some stages of the translation process may be in reality omitted, for example with stereotypical texts the beginning of transla-

tion is already possible when surface structures are analyzed. From such understanding of the translation process a specific concept of equivalence may be derived. According to the author, we can speak of equivalence only on the level of the sender's and receiver's utterance base and not on the level of the text itself. An important role in this translation process is played by the representation of the receiver of a translation. In his view on this subject, Hejwowski takes a position on various concepts of the "implied reader", accepting the bipolar concept created by L. Hewson (1995) and modified by J. Brzozowski (2001). The chapter ends with an analysis of a short press text based on the presented model of the translation process.

Chapters 5 and 6 are dedicated to two sources of relative untranslatability: cultural and linguistic differences. The author presents methods of dealing with translation problems resulting from cultural differences, basing his observations on classifications by J.-P. Vinay and J. Dalbernet (1958/ 2000) and Newmark (1988). He also presents his own classification of those methods. An important part is devoted to translation of proper names. The author presents some linguistic phenomena which may constitute difficulties in translation and considers possible ways of resolving such problems.

In the seventh chapter the author criticizes a postulate of idealization in research on translation. Hejwowski assumes that the theory of translation, being a science dealing with a particular form of communication, should examine also imperfections of this communication, which result from lack of competence of the translator. The author points to possible reasons for errors appearing at different stages of the translation process. He also presents his own classification of those errors. The chapter is logically connected with the next and final one. It is devoted to issues of competence in translation. Hejwowski criticizes B. Harris' concept of natural translation (Harris, 1977; Harris & Sherwood, 1978). He is also against treating translation competence as a general communicative competence.

The author treats translation competence in a "maximalist but not idealist" way and distinguishes the following elements:

1. knowledge of both source and target languages,
2. ability to adjust various structures on the basis of their relative similarity,
3. knowledge of the culture of countries in which the source and target languages are spoken,
4. general and specialized knowledge,
5. communication skills,
6. astuteness in search for meaning,
7. knowledge of the theory of translation,
8. specific capacities and personality (Hejwowski, 2004:154).

Hejwowski ends with conclusions concerning methods of teaching translation. These methods result from the above-presented way of understanding translation competence.

These are, in short, the main concepts presented in the book. It is impossible to enumerate here all the theories that the author refers to. Besides, as he states himself in the introductory chapter, his goal was not to present the totality of the history of translation, but only those concepts that according to him have had the most important influence on the development of the discipline and the views of modern translators. *The cognitive-communicative theory of translation* is primarily a very useful position for those interested in translation who are willing to deepen their knowledge in this matter. The book enables a possibility to verify generally accepted and very often opposite views concerning translation. The author criticizes in an argumentative way the most popular views. He also describes in a very accessible language some concepts important for the theory of translation. Hejwowski's work is as well a source of extremely useful practical observations and considerations concerning possible solutions to problems in translation encountered by students of translation studies and those working as professional translators. *The cognitive-communicative theory of translation* is based on the author's solid translation experience in scientific, popular science and literature translations, many years of scientific work in the domain of translatology as well as his own work as teacher of translation.

A big advantage of the book is a multitude of vivid and original examples of translation problems, taken from literature and the press. Press texts, from which originate some of the examples, and a short discussion of translation problems found in them, constitute a supplement to the book. The cognitive-communicative theory of translation presented by Hejwowski finds a place in psycholinguistics. It may also inspire empirical research on the translation process. It can be considered vital as the number of experiments and analyses in this domain is still insufficient, and research is in its initial phase. The interesting and clear way of presenting theories, logical arguments as well as multiple examples, all those factors lead to conclude that *The cognitive-communicative theory of translation* can be interesting reading for all receivers. It is a pity, however, that most probably it will be read only by a limited group of specialists. It should also be introduced to those who tend to declare popular opinions about translation but are totally unconcerned in deepening their knowledge in this domain.

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