

THE HISTORICAL AND EPISTEMIC PERSPECTIVES OF TRANSLATION QUALITY ASSESSMENT IN UKRAINE

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The author systematizes the development of translation quality assessment in Ukraine by identifying the critical features of textual analysis in the earlier historic periods (Middle Ages, Renaissance, Baroque, Enlightenment), tracing the foundation of the assessment of translations in the 19th century and presenting the progress of the full-fledged analytical procedures for studying translated texts in the framework of translation quality assessment during the 20th century. The historical background of this type of textual assessment helps deduce the epistemic principles of translation assessment at the turn of the 21st century. Postpositivism and constructivism are critical philosophical views that deeply describe the potential and limits of today's translation quality assessment, its terms and principles.

Key words: translation quality assessment, textual analysis, equivalence, postpositivism, constructivism.

Introduction. Translation quality assessment has evolved from the primary observations of asking what a good translation is, to the present expanded range of philological methods that include evaluating its quality in publishing enterprises, in teaching interpreters and translators, in legal practice etc. As translation studies have been recognized as an independent discipline with a rather extensive structure for a long time, it is the right time to establish which section of the translation studies translation quality assessment belongs to, what its objectives, principles, links with other divisions of translation research are as well as which of its methods can be used in practice for what purpose. The aim of this paper is to show the outlined development of ideas for the critical perception of a text in Ukrainian civilizational space and scholarship as well as reveal the epistemic conditions it can follow nowadays.

Topicality of the study. The insightful books by K. Reiss (1971), J. House (1977), V. Ivanenko (1984), and Ch. Nord (1988) have shaped the domain of translation criticism and the scope of translation quality assessment. However, after a number of 'turns' in translation studies, as well as owing to the progress of language and literature studies, the very methodology of translation studies is much more extended and, thus, needs reviewing

from the standpoint of its taxonomy and epistemic possibilities. The historical analysis helps identify the formation of the basic critical apparatus for translation analysis; it also offers insights in what philosophical trends can contribute to reassessment of today's methodology in translation studies. Besides, it is also necessary to debate that translation quality assessment is not only a procedure in translation theory, history and criticism, but a separate branch of translation scholarship.

Historiography of the topic. The sources of this studies were published in the series dedicated to the history of languages, literatures and book-printing on Ukrainian territories and the neighbouring lands. Meanwhile, the critical study of these sources never covered the successive line of research development which would help to realize the historical heritage for contemporary theoretical prerequisites and to revisit its value from today's understanding. The study of S. Mathauzerova revealed the oldest connections between translation views in South Slavonia and the Kyivan State as well as interpreted them from the viewpoint of structuralism [4]. D. Yakymovych-Chapran focused on the termsystem of pre-academic translation studies which had been established mainly by the 17th century [10]. The 18th century has most popular among researchers who tried to investigate the contribution of Ukrainian alumni of the Kyiv-Mohyla Academy to the translation situation in the Russian Empire [6; 2] and Hryhoriy Skovoroda's approach to translation matters [1]. The personality-oriented publications in 19th- and 20th-century translation studies help reconstruct the completeness of the development of translation theory [8; 9; 5].

Subject-matter of the study. The history of translation theory starts in Antiquity, and the ideas voiced by Horace, Cicero, Quintilian and St Jerome reverberated during the centuries of further development in the whole of Europe. Manuscript culture during the medieval period experienced physical limitations in the dissemination and exchange of ideas. For that reason, the lack of theoretical judgments on translation among scribes in the Kyivan State (Rus') can be justified by the fact that manuscripts evaluating the quality of existing translations may not have survived since the earliest period. The more known judgments are those by Balkan – mainly Bulgarian – writers (St. Cyril the Philosopher and St. John the Exarch in the 10th century as well as Constantine of Kostenets at the turn of the 15th century) which were transferred into Ukrainian culture along with religious literature as the result of two South Slavonic influences. Evidently, it is impossible to unmistakably specify the criteria for semantic analysis on the basis of very short texts and vague expressions, but the fact is that there was already a term for designing the notion of *equivalence*. This fact also indicates the existence of a clear-cut understanding that translation is a reproduction of the semantic content of a foreign-language lexeme, taking into account its symbolically-marked interpretation in the source culture. The Old Ukrainian lexical network of translation activities is very rich, both from the etymological viewpoint, and from the semantic one (nine lexemes designate translation activities). This network testifies to the then active political and social life of the Kyivan State. Meanwhile, the lexicographic sources record too few Early Middle Ukrainian contexts associated with translation (only two lexemes, which derive from different stems), but the lexemes naming the subject of translation and the very action enable us to think that the Old Ukrainian term system of translation continued functioning in the 14th and 15th centuries.

The 16th century marks a transition from manuscript to book-printing culture that had an impact on the creation and dissemination of translation views. Using such sources as the prefaces by Frantsisk Skoryna, Mykhailo Vasiliyevych (in the Peresopnytsia Gospel), Hryhoriy Khodkevych, Vasyl Tiapynskyi, Valentyn Nehalevskyi, Leon Mamonych, as well as the prefaces to the Krekhiv Apostolos and the Ostroh Bible, one can reconstruct the then term-system which describes the perception of translation and the notions of its components and strategies. Translation theory in 16th-century Ukraine can be considered self-sufficient, as it possessed an appropriate number of terms, and it was guided by two goals: the accurate reproduction of a text and the satisfaction of the reader's needs. In the general European sociolinguistic context, when the writers preferred the national vernacular, we observe the desire to secure a high social status for the Ukrainian language.

The reconstructed Ukrainian 17th-century translation theory and criticism reveal richness in the theoretical consideration of translation, its process and strategies. Ukrainian authors voiced their ideas about the necessity, demands and strategies of translations in the prefaces, dedications, and afterwords of published books, mainly in the translations of religious texts (homiliaria, gospels, prayer-books), but also in some grammars and dictionaries. The theoretical system of perceiving and assessing translation is reconstructed on the basis of synonymic terms. The reconstruction makes it possible to state that 17th-century Ukrainian authors had a richly elaborated system of writing about and judging translations. However, their principles were not summarized in a separate philological treatise. Text was interpreted as a holistic phenomenon, whose target-language form was subject to change because of the practices of its usage (pronouncing and singing). The main criteria for the successful rendering of the original were linguistic norms and contextual contents, though the translators also paid attention to the aesthetic features of texts.

The Enlightenment added the issues of the language system and the reader's perception to the debate over translation problems. The Word was no longer a Divine mystery, but it was materialized in specific features, which were critically penetrated by translators. The contribution of Ukrainian translators (Teofan Prokopovych, Havrylo Buzhynskyi, Symon (Petro) Kokhanovskyi, Hryhoriy Polytyka, Petro Pidhoretskyi) to the framing of the Russian Empire instead of their homeland stimulated the discussion of translation as a way to define tasks and specific features of searching for and fixing up Ukrainian national identity. Petro Lody's main translation principle was to use all the registers of his native language so as to express the contents of the original. On the basis of Hryhoriy Skovoroda's texts, it is not possible to precisely determine the features of his translation term system due to a lack of contexts, although he used five Latin terms designating translation. It's not entirely clear if one should understand them as the hypernym *verto/converto* and the hyponyms *transfero (translator)/exprimo* and *interpreto (interpres)*, or as a coherent paradigm of *transfero (translator)/exprimo–interpreto (interpres)–verto*, which can be subject to overlap the paradigm of John Dryden (1680): *metaphrase –paraphrase–imitation*'.

Romanticism enriched translation discussions with the subject of linguistic identity: the mentality of a nation is reflected in its language, and the reader lives – feels, perceives, understands – according to the linguistic norms, and by them only (Hryhoriy Kvitka-

Osnovyanenko, Petro Hulak-Artemovskiy, Yakiv Holovatskiy, and later Oleksandr Potebnia and Panteleimon Kulish). Thus, untranslatability advanced to the forefront of translation theory. From the mid-19th century, translation criticism incorporated the practice of comparing texts and commenting on the results of this operation, which boosted the search for the means of interpretative justification. Back at this time Ukrainian scholars (Orest Novytskyi, Mykhailo Maksymovych, Pavlo Hrabovskiy) began applying the contextual and historical/ etymological methods of semantic analysis. The translators (Mykhailo Starytskyi, Borys Hrinchenko) were managing to develop the lexical meanings of the Ukrainian language for its conceptual enrichment, and their views served as criteria for defining a successful correspondence in Ukrainian-language translations.

At the turn of the 20th century, the general search for a means for Ukrainian nation-building influenced Ivan Franko's conception of translation theory and criticism. The importance of translation for creating a cultural nation and establishing a common literary language for all Ukrainian territories as well as the demand for reproducing original formal and semantic features in translation were the main principles of translation voiced by Ivan Franko. The way he assessed the quality of a translation was elaborated in his reviews and articles, and it was of interpretational and stylistic character. The structure of the poem demands identical rhythm, the main task of which is both to create an aesthetic effect (because rhyme and rhythm border on music) and to present a semantic (psychic) loading – *vrazhennia* (impression). Another group of foci refer to convergent and divergent feature of languages in contact, esp. when even cognate languages (e.g. Ukrainian and Polish) possess fundamental differences. For example, the system of Polish stable accent (the second syllabus from the end, rarely the third one) distorts the poet's idea of Alexandrian verse, and the translation produces a more tender effect.

Ivan Franko's path to theoretical generalizations began within critical genres, namely forewords and reviews. In fact, it is a truism that, perhaps, covers all traditions of Translation Studies: theory follows criticism, which is the source of empirical knowledge. His activities accurately represent common tendencies of that epoch: the orientation toward a translation repertoire and the faithfulness of translations to their originals. The first reaction to the 1905 lifting of the prohibition of Ukrainian-language publications in the Russian Empire was a considerable increase in popular science and translated literature. Much was done by Ukrainian journalism, and new pedagogical and academic periodicals appeared soon. These factors stimulated the search for Translation Studies criteria. Therefore, the literary animation caused critics to begin settling theoretical generalizations concerning the translation demands and principles of translation analysis.

Significant social, political and academic circumstances undoubtedly influenced the progress of Translation Studies when it was shaped as an independent discipline in the 1920s. The 'Renaissance' of Ukrainian literature in the 1920s raised the following question: what from the previous epoch may suit contemporary demands? This question stimulated the development of translation history that deepened the understanding of the essence of the 'national literature' and expanded the limits of this notion (works by Mykola Zerov). It is evident that in this way history positively influenced the development of translation quality

assessment. Its various methods are contained in Hryhoriy Maifet's publications. Gradually, the system of Translation Studies terms was becoming established (including faithfulness, adequacy, literalism, translatability).

Great progress in translation theory is evident in the translation essence discussion involving the leading translation theorists like Volodymyr Derzhavyn, Oleksandr Finkel and Hryhoriy Maifet. It concerned whether a translation should be an analogy of the original or its stylization. Hryhoriy Maifet's centre of attention in translation leans on the idea of architectonics. In a way, his articles are very good samples of the 'close reading' technique: the analysis goes not vertically, on different grammatical levels as we could expect from a linguist, but horizontally, lineally, one passage after another while interpreting each fragment. Mykola Zerov's conception proved invaluable not only in providing a framework for developing translation history as an academic discipline, but also in guiding the practice of verse translation and the description of the translator's personality. Mykola Zerov shaped translation history as a distinct discipline, while Oleksandr Finkel advanced the linguostylistic theory of translation. A very important event for Ukrainian Translation Studies was the publishing of Oleksandr Finkel's book *Teoriya i praktyka perekladu* (Theory and Practice of Translation, Kharkiv, 1929 [6]), which became the first systematic monograph in translation theory to come from the territory of the Soviet Union and which was written in Ukrainian. He emphasized the stylistic aspect of translation assessment. The key positions in this domain are his views that 1) multiple translations can be of equal value, and 2) exactness is a historical value: what was exact at one epoch may not be such at another. The main criterion of assessing the quality of a translation is its stylistic adequacy. Oleksandr Finkel voices an idea of translation multiplicity which later received its development within the parameters of time, place and a translator's personality. This situation causes bipartite relations: original-translation relations within a complex of bilingual and bicultural issues and translation-translation relations which reveal the influence of a national literary process as well as that of an individual personality.

Among the most important achievements by West Ukrainian scholars – Yevhen Malaniuk, Luka Lutsiv, Bohdan Lepkyi, Mykhailo Rudnytskyi – who physically stayed in Ukrainian territories when they were under the occupation of other countries (Poland, Czechoslovakia, Romania) during this period were studies of translation history, Bible translation, verse translation and ideology in translation that also contributed to translation criticism. A great contribution was made by the East Ukrainian émigré scholars Ivan Ohiyenko, Vasyl Koroliv-Staryi, Pavlo Zaytsev, Oswald Burghardt. These research papers constitute a rightful part of all-Ukrainian scholarship.

The late 1940s saw a revival of translation reviews, showing an interest in many current issues of translation criticism and history. Since the 1950s, the range of topics had grown wider, and research into translation history was stimulated by Hryhoriy Kochur's translation and research activities as well as by literary magazines, esp. *Vsesvit*. Translation research was facilitated most by the development of linguostylistics and semasiology; since the 1960s, inspiration has come from contrastive linguistics. This period witnessed theoretical investigations into translation within a linguistic framework, carried out by Yelyzaveta

Starynkevych and partially Maksym Rylskiy, Oleksiy Kundzich's and Stepan Kovhaniuk's theory of poetic language in prose translation strove from the outset for semantic exactitude and displayed a resistance to the Russification policy of the Soviet government. Simultaneously, Maksym Rylskiy's views of the 1950s may be regarded as the logical continuation of Mykola Zerov's conception of the 1920s.

The presence of two, partially contradictory, approaches in translation studies about whether to define translation as an art or as a science became the reason for the fact that since the 1970s researchers began considering translation as a wide-range philological discipline, without differentiating language- and literature-oriented nuances. In many of his articles, Viktor Koptilov elaborated an integral knowledge system of translation studies and scrutinized fundamental theoretical problems (basic terms and concepts of translation studies, translation multiplicity, interpretation, methods of translation quality assessment). It was him who introduced the term *perekladoznavchyi analiz* (literally: translation studies analysis) into Ukrainian scholarship. In his views, the perception of a translation as well as any literary work is indeed subjective, but each translation has an objective genesis and function, so a translator has to evaluate a translation as an outcome of *two epochs, two milieus* and *two stylistic systems*. Viktor Koptilov selected the following main principles for translation evaluation [3]: 1) accurate attention to artistic (subjective) and scholarly (objective) aspects of a translation; 2) the obligatory contrasting of a translation to the original; 3) the real subject of artistic translation is the imagery structure of the original (the author's images are intertwined according to his/her intention that creates the uniqueness of a literary work). Translation criticism is based on establishing correspondences (*vidpovidnosti*) between the original and a translation on five lingual levels – phonetic, rhythmical, lexical, morphological and syntactic.

In the last two decades of the 20th century, the linguistic theory of translation developed alongside general linguistics, contrastive linguistics, sociolinguistics, text linguistics and other areas of linguistic research. The broad concept of macrolinguistics allowed for the extensive use of linguistic methods to describe the formal, semantic and cognitive aspects of translation. Most translation problems have received a new aspect of evaluation by applying oppositional, componential, distributional, transformational and statistical analyses. This was when it became evident that translation assessment was no longer an independent analytical tool but had gained the features of a methodology within the frame of which it was possible to develop analyses and analytical tools of a smaller scale.

Translation criticism stood at the origins of translation theory, but the development of the latter has obscured this crucial segment of theoretical and analytical translation studies and cast it out of researchers' main attention. Naturally, it is caused by its seemingly practical nature as theoretical principles and postulates are not always described with full clarity. This state of art can be reasoned by the coexisting balance of all translation areas: translation theory offers main criteria and concepts for translational analysis, and translation history supplies the vast majority of materials for analytical studies and applies their results. Thus, the question arises: what are the subject, the method and the target audience of translation criticism? Can a *theory of translation criticism* exist? It is difficult to draw the line between epistemic

aspects of translation theory and criticism, but it is possible to define a set of questions which are – ideally – more convenient to study within the frame of translation criticism as a separate field of knowledge: models of translation quality assessment, translation reviews as a genre, and editorial work. In this way, it is possible to avoid the vagueness of the subject: theory shapes notions, principles, and doctrines for criticism to build analytical patterns for studying a text. A compromise between translation criticism and translation history may be found in the division of temporal aspects: history covers diachronic dynamics, whereas criticism investigates a synchronic section. This division is entirely based on the practical aspects of printing. Meanwhile, it is not correct to suppose that translation criticism should only appear in literary magazines and academic journals, but it is also valuable for the book publishing industry, language teaching and legal practice.

A number of similar features, which are present in recent publications, can be credited to the current practices of critically considering translations: 1) interpretation is the main method of analytical consideration; 2) each study covers the limited number of works (and authors) for analysis; 3) the narration of the analysis follows the narration of the plot; 4) the study focuses on language and culture; 5) the analyst does not construct broad historical schemes that would present literary processes and translation practices. Thus, today's translation criticism is grounded on the following principles: 1) it focuses on texts (but not on notions and phenomena); 2) the analysis is the very aim of the operations conducted; 3) theoretical findings are not the aim of a study, but they may be revealed, too; 4) it does not qualify a translator/interpreter. On summarizing these ideas, we can state that one of the immediate tasks for the development of translation criticism is to expand the semantic analysis of testing models. They can be borrowed from various linguistic, literary, cultural theories and verified in the context of translation studies.

The epistemic background of contemporary translation studies lies in the domains of postpositivism and constructivism [13: 21–23]. Albert Einstein's relativity theory, Werner Heisenberg's uncertainty principle and Kurt Gödel's incompleteness theorem altered our knowledge significantly. The conditions for the perception of these ideas have been forged in the decades of translation researches in the multidirectional study of *original-to-translation* relations. An overview of the fundamentals of analysis underlines the importance of the availability of multiple translations, but it also suggests multiple approaches to analyzing translations: different analyses will not only lead to different results covering various quality indexes (which is negative from the viewpoint of the objectivity of criticism), but they can also indicate the significance of a certain translation under certain circumstances, from a certain point of view and for a certain audience. The principles of framework for translation criticism can be formulated as follows:

1. The analysis of an object is possible only after determining the reference system, which can only be local, valid only for a limited region of space and time. Thus, we analyze the conditions, objectives and functions of a text through the prism of particular tasks and conditions, and we exclude the absolute completeness of examination.

2. It is fundamentally impossible to simultaneously measure the characteristics and function of an object. Translation features change their functionality during the historical development of a language and a culture.

3. In every consistent formal system like the system of a literary text, there is an unresolved formal statement that should not discredit the whole analysis.

Critics of postpositivism identified its weak points: subjectivism, relativism and lack of standards [12: 213], but that is not so unacceptable for new translation criticism any longer. The study of ontological subjectivity through the lens of ontological objectivism had been researched by philosophers of language back in the 1960s. The relativism of examination gets more flexible and dynamic, i.e. dependent on the existential conditions of a literary piece, and the analytical needs of a semantic section and the very commissioner. However, the lack of standards does not refer to all standards, but only to those which are generally accepted and can operate absolutely in all contexts, as we do not always need this type of evaluation control, though theorists idealistically strive just for it. The constructivist approach shifts a focus from 'object', 'reality', 'text' to social communication, and thus, meaning is opposed by an event, i.e. a dynamic and permanent alteration [11: 4–5].

The terms critics use reveal their epistemic view. The discipline-based term *perekladoznavchyi analiz* is especially convenient for Slavonic languages, whereas the English-language tradition employs various terms: *translation analysis*, *translation comparison*, *translation quality assessment*. This signifies the absence of an elaborated theory of analysis per se. Besides, it is important to stress that translation assessment only takes place when two texts are involved, but not just a translated text (as it is often possible in language history studies).

Another point to be taken into consideration is the semantic division of the newly-suggested terms. If we look through the search results under the key words *translation criticism* and *quality assessment*, we observe a certain divergence in the fields of use: *translation criticism* refers more to fiction, whereas *quality assessment* is more widely used in the context of machine translation and translation didactics. This divergence, however, has not yet been described and fixed theoretically, and in this book, *translation quality assessment* applies to the domain of literary translation, too. This is why the *translation quality assessment of a literary text* is a system of linguistic and literary methods, focusing on the assessment of rendering the sense structure, communicative functionality and the interpretative potential of an original by means of a target lingua-culture.

Conclusions. The historical analysis has proven that translation quality assessment as an analytical procedure can be dated back to the mid-19th century, though basic terms and ideas existed overtly or covertly much earlier, especially we deduce that a well-balanced theory must have existed in the 17th century. The application of contextual and etymological analyses radically changed the prospects of translation assessment, and language and literature studies boosted it with a number of methods which were elaborated during the 20th century. This is why we can state that assessment is not a separate single method (or procedure), but a system of language-, literature- and text-oriented analytical tools, located between theoretical contemplation and routine practice. The analytical multiplicity of translation quality assessment unveil the immense space of textual, contextual and intertextual information content which triggers the demand to keep to the gradation of what is considered essential in a specific text. Thus, the key notion of assessment, equivalence, is formulated according to the commissioned demands of the analysis. The generalized practical observations of the

conditions, aims, and functions of a specific text have shaped some theoretical bases, which can be extrapolated to further their practical implementation among translation critics and teachers as well as translators. The involvement of linguistic theories contributes to a deeper critical analysis of the historical and social foundations of national existence, encoded in language and text.

Prospects for further studies. Translation quality assessment is also beneficial for the monolingual interpretation of texts, because interlingual communication highlights places which go past the attention of the native speaker/reader and draws towards possible points of contact with world literature and, ultimately, with the whole world polysystem. In Ukrainian literary history, even changes in the national perception of God are reflected in the complex system of mono- and polysemy that develop the ideas of Divinity in the Ukrainian language. In semantic space, there is a permutation of the category of concreteness and abstraction, and in the broader linguistic and cultural space, there is an amalgamation and permutation of the national worldview, where Christianity absorbs pre-Christian experience. Early Ukrainian literature is mainly religious, but this does not narrow down the way it can be interpreted. On the contrary, the transition from the theocentric worldview to the anthropocentric one emphasizes how scribes and readers knew God via language and text as well as how they interpreted the text through the prism of the Divine Intelligence and Ideal. The analysis of time-distant writings shows how the semantic function of lingual means in literary translation varies in temporal and spatial dynamics. These conclusions can be further developed in the domain of translation typology in order to find out the specific features of the reception of Ukrainian – Early and New – literature in various national translation traditions.

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*Стаття: надійшла до редакції 15.10.2018
прийнята до друку 13.11.2018*

ІСТОРИЧНІ ТА ЕПІСТЕМІЧНІ ПЕРСПЕКТИВИ ПЕРЕКЛАДОЗНАВЧОГО АНАЛІЗУ В УКРАЇНІ

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Систематизовано етапи розвитку перекладознавчого аналізу в Україні, розглянуто критичні характеристики текстового аналізу у раніші історичні періоди (Середньовіччя, Відродження, Бароко, Просвітництво), простежено зародження оцінки перекладів у XIX сторіччі та висвітлено розвиток повноцінних аналітичних процедур для вивчення перекладеного тексту в межах перекладознавчого аналізу впродовж XX сторіччя. Історичне тло такого текстового аналізу допомагає з'ясувати епістемічні принципи оцінки перекладу на початку XXI сторіччя. Постпозитивізм та конструктивізм є головними філософськими поглядами, які глибоко описують потенціал й обмеження сьогоднішньої оцінки якості перекладу, її положень та принципів.

Ключові слова: перекладознавчий аналіз, текстовий аналіз, еквівалентність, постпозитивізм, конструктивізм.