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## **Introduction**

### **Jeremy Munday and Meifang Zhang**

It is now nearly four decades since the publication of the first edition of Juliane House's major work *Translation Quality Assessment* (1977) and a quarter of a century since the appearance of Basil Hatim and Ian Mason's groundbreaking *Discourse and the Translator* (1990), heralding the arrival of discourse analytic approaches in translation studies with particular application for translator training and translation analysis. This special issue seeks to consider the evolution of the use of discourse analysis in translation studies, to present current research from leading figures in the field and to provide some pointers for the future.

An initial conundrum is a definitional one: what do we mean by 'discourse' and 'discourse analysis' and how does the latter differ from 'text analysis'? Definitions abound and reflect the concerns of the different academic backgrounds of its proponents. House herself (this volume) draws on Widdowson's (2007, 6) distinction between text and discourse: text is the use of language for a specific purpose, and that communicative purpose is the discourse underlying the text. Or, as House goes on to say, "[t]he text is, as it were, the linguistic trace in the speech or writing of a person's intended discourse". In their comprehensive *Discourse Reader*, Jaworski and Coupland (1999/2006) discuss ten definitions of 'discourse', summarized by Schiffrin et al. (2003, 1) as: (1) 'anything beyond the sentence' (from a linguistics tradition); (2) 'language use' (from sociolinguistics); and (3) a broad range of social practices that construct power, ideology, etc. (from critical theory). Discourse is all these and more besides. More recently, Paltridge (2012, 1) provides a definition for 'discourse analysis' that emphasizes the object of study as the link between the language in which a particular discourse is expressed, the contexts in which it takes place and the functions it performs:

Discourse analysis examines patterns of language across texts and considers the relationship between language and the social and cultural context in which it is used. Discourse analysis also considers the ways that the use of language presents different views of the world and different understandings. It examines how the use of language is influenced by relationships between participants as well as the effects the use of language has upon social identities and relations. It also considers how views of the world, and identities, are constructed through the use of discourse.

Here we see that discourse analysis is not restricted to ‘what is above the sentence’ or even to an individual text (as text analysis would be), but it is an inherent and dynamic feature of the roles played by the participants and of the worldviews (in the vocabulary of some, ‘ideologies’) and identities that underpin or are constructed by them.

While the interdisciplinary broadening of discourse analysis into areas such as social constructivist theory is well established (see Jørgensen and Phillips 2002), Van Dijk (2007) emphasizes that “the ‘core’ [of discourse analysis] remains the systematic and explicit analysis of the various structures and strategies of different levels of text and talk”. In order to be systematic, the analysis of the relation between form and function is crucial and must be theoretically grounded (Renkema 2004, 1). The most prominent linguistic theoretical foundation has been provided by systemic functional linguistics (SFL) (Halliday 1985/1994; Halliday and Matthiessen 2004; 2014), which has heavily influenced critical discourse analysis (CDA) (Fairclough 1989/2001; 2003) and, as we shall see in this collection, has been dominant also within applied translation studies. One of the reasons for this is the applicability of the Hallidayan understanding of language as ‘social semiotic’ that has ‘meaning potential’ (Halliday 1978): at each point in the text there is a meaningful systemic choice, whether it be the selection between near-synonymous lexical items, between

ideologically charged naming practices, between different configurations of transitivity, modality or thematic structure, and so on. SFL provides a readily applicable and well known linguistic toolkit for its investigation in the form of register analysis based on three variables associated with simultaneous strands of meaning (Table 1):

<b>Register variable</b>	<b>Associated discourse semantic function</b>	<b>Typical lexicogrammatical realizations</b>
Field (what the text is about and how the experience is represented)	Ideational, enacts action	Subject-specific terminology and transitivity structures
Tenor (the relationship between participants and the expression of evaluation)	Interpersonal, enacts affiliation	Modality structures, pronoun choices, evaluative lexis
Mode (the form of communication: written or spoken, formal or informal)	Textual, distributes information	Thematic (word order) and information structures, patterns of cohesion

**Table 1.** Register variables and their realizations.

Importantly, register analysis fits within a systematic and stratified model of language as communication in its sociocultural context (see Paltridge above). The Hallidayan model uses the term ‘context of culture’ for the extralinguistic sociocultural environment in which the text is produced and where it operates. The next level down is discourse, which is enacted by conventionalized genres of which texts are individual examples (‘instantiations’). A text is comprised of a specific register in a ‘context of situation’ in which meaning is exchanged between participants. The three strands of meaning (‘discourse semantics’) are expressed by specific lexical and grammatical choices, examples of which are given in the right-hand

column of Table 1. In spoken language, below the lexicogrammatical level is the phonetic level.

These choices are of course also meaningful in the process of translation; they need to be identified, interpreted and translated in an appropriate way with due consideration given to language-specific differences and genre conventions. As a method of analysis in translation, discourse analysis is holistic, dealing with entire constituents of an act of communication. It is a method that studies a discourse in both its context of situation and its structure and individual constituents. It provides a model for uncovering patterns of choice and relating them to specific concerns and contexts in which the translator works. In preparation for this special issue, Zhang et al. (2015) at the University of Macau investigated publishing trends in discourse and translation during the period from the publication of *Discourse and the Translator* (1990) to the end of 2013. Articles were studied from eight prominent and internationally recognized journals of translation studies: *Across Languages and Cultures*, *Babel*, *The Interpreter and Translator Trainer*, *Meta*, *Perspectives*, *Target*, *The Translator*, and *TTR*. In addition, corresponding to the editorial focus of this special issue, articles were also examined from ten influential Chinese journals that publish in the field of translation studies and translation pedagogy: 《*外国语*》 (*Journal of Foreign Languages*), 《*外语教学*》 (*Foreign Language Education*), 《*外语教学与研究*》 (*Foreign Language Teaching and Research*), 《*外语界*》 (*Foreign Language World*), 《*外语学刊*》 (*Foreign Languages Research*), 《*外语与外语教学*》 (*Foreign Languages and Their Teaching*), 《*现代外语*》 (*Modern Foreign Languages*), 《*中国翻译*》 (*Chinese Translators' Journal*), 《*中国外语*》 (*Foreign Languages in China*), and 《*上海翻译*》 (*Shanghai Journal of Translators*). Altogether 126 international articles and 102 Chinese articles were identified relevant to the theme of discourse and translation. There has generally been a steady increase

in numbers of such articles published, most notably in the decade 2000-2010, reflecting also a growth in translation studies publications in general.

Within the overarching classification of discourse and translation, a wide range of themes and subthemes are covered in this published research. Adapting Hatim and Mason's (1990: 58) three levels of context (communicative, pragmatic and semiotic), and expanding it to include the extralinguistic context of culture and specific sub-themes, Zhang et al. suggest the following categorization (see Table 2):

1 <sup>st</sup> Level Category	2 <sup>nd</sup> Level Category	3 <sup>rd</sup> Level Category
<b>Extralinguistic factors</b>	Culture	<b>context of culture and translation</b>
	Ideology	<b>power, ideology and translation</b> (including a second level subtheme of CDA)
<b>Linguistic factors</b>	Communicative dimension	<b>user: idiolect, dialect, etc.</b> (including translation shifts caused by user difference; crosslinguistic difference)
		<b>use: genre and register analysis</b> (including field, tenor and mode and context of situation)
	Pragmatic dimension	<b>speech act and translation</b>
		<b>implicatures</b> (the cooperative principle and Gricean Maxims)
		<b>coherence in translation</b>
		<b>narrative analysis and translation</b>
	Semiotic/Textual dimension	<b>texture and textuality in translation</b>
		<b>textual scale</b> (word, clause, sentence,

	<b>text) and translation units</b>
	<b>cohesion in translation</b>
	<b>thematic and information structure in translation</b>
	<b>transitivity in translation</b>
	<b>modality in translation</b>
	<b>semiotics and multimodality</b>
	<b>intertextuality</b>
	<b>appraisal and translator attitude</b>
	<b>paratexts in translation</b>

**Table 2.** Categorization of research in discourse analysis and translation.

Although sometimes overlapping, and despite publications being categorized according to their main focus only, such divisions into levels and subthemes provide a useful taxonomy for locating and comparing research in this field. There are some evident differences in trends between the international and Chinese publications. Thus, very prominent in the international journals are extralinguistic themes of power and ideology and the analysis of the context of translation, as well as genre and register analysis; in the Chinese journals it is the linguistic (pragmatic, textual) levels of cohesion and coherence that receive most attention. In general, of the three discourse semantic metafunctions that comprise register analysis, it seems to be the textual metafunction (realized through thematic structure and cohesion patterns) that has been the subject of most research in both sources, particularly the Chinese journals with their interest in the texture of translated texts. Also worthy of note are new themes that have begun to be treated in the international journals: semiotics, the discourse role of paratexts in

translation, and, reflecting the growth of digital media, multimodality. Interestingly, the most frequently analysed text types over the course of this period are still literary texts, although there is a growing prominence towards the analysis of audiovisual translation, news translation and political translation in the international journals and news translation, advertisement translation and public notice translation in the Chinese journals. These differences may be indicative of a particular preoccupation with genre and text type and they correspond to some degree to the prominent themes noted above.

Geographical areas of high research activity can also be tentatively identified by examining the location of the authors of these publications. Considering the international journals alone, the countries which have published the most on discourse and translation are China (24), United Kingdom (18) and Spain (15). Together, these three comprise 45% of the corpus of articles on discourse analysis in the international journals surveyed. Of China's total of 24, thirteen are authored by academics based in Hong Kong, seven from the mainland and four in Macao; when we consider articles published in the Chinese journals, Sun Yat-Sen University in Guangzhou heads the list with ten publications (nearly ten percent of the total).

A study of monographs and edited volumes published in English and Chinese over the same period reveals a slightly different picture: 39 books published in English by 18 international publishers were identified, numbers which since 2000 have remained relatively steady over each five-year period of the survey. 29 books have been published in China in that time, where the development of the field started about five years later than in the West. The period from 2000 to 2010 witnessed a sharp increase in the number of relevant volumes published in China, which suggests sharpened interest in the discourse approach to translation studies from Chinese scholars.

By their nature, monographs are able to deal with a wide range of text types and themes; our analysis shows that the most common themes in both English-language international and Chinese publications relate to general context and to genre and register analysis. Some trends



noted in the published articles are reinforced: namely, that the issues of power and ideology in translation, popular in international English-language monographs, are almost completely absent from Chinese publications, which again show a more neutral preference for the study of cohesion, coherence and textuality. In the case of geographical location, the international monographs in English are headed by the UK and Germany, which together account for 29 of the 39 titles, while the Chinese publications are more widely distributed, the most from one province being six from Guangdong. However, the study's international concentration on English-language monographs is admittedly limited and inevitably hides and understates work going on in other languages and geographical locations.

Investigation of international conferences organized by major associations during this period, such as the FIT World Congress, the FIT Asian Translators' Forum (ATF), the EST Congress and the IATIS conferences, show patchy interest in discourse and translation. Notable exceptions were the special panel session "Discourse, Ideology & Translation" at the 4<sup>th</sup> EST Congress in 2004 and the "In the Footsteps of Ian Mason" panel at the 3<sup>rd</sup> IATIS conference in 2009. However, indicative of the growth in the popularity of discourse analytic approaches to translation have been the dedicated conferences and roundtable seminars on the subject. These have been particularly noticeable in China: the International Conference on Discourse and Translation, organized by Sun Yat-sen University, Guangzhou, in 2002, the 1st PolySystemic Symposium on Translation, Interpreting and Text Analysis organized by Hong Kong Polytechnic University in 2012 and the 1<sup>st</sup> International Round Table Seminar on Discourse and Translation held at the University of Macau, Macao, in 2012, which brought together the contributors to this volume.

### **This special issue**

In some respects the contents of this special issue support the general findings of investigation noted above. Thus, the institutional affiliations of the authors are from

Germany, Hong Kong/Macao, Spain and the United Kingdom, plus Australia (renowned for its rich research in SFL) and the Republic of Korea; there is the dual focus on Asian and European languages as well as new perspectives on textuality (House, Kim & Matthiessen, Steiner) and on manifestations of power and ideology (Munday, Zhang & Pan, and Schäffner). And there are new directions in the process of news manufacture (Valdeón) and in the construction of online reader identity (Kang).

The first article, by **Mira Kim and Christian Matthiessen**, reviews studies of thematic and information structure in translation, focusing very much on a Hallidayan model and its potential to assist in descriptive translation studies. The critical perspective given by Kim and Matthiessen, who combine their specialisms in TS and SFL, covers a diversity of languages and provides an excellent route map for future research into textual meaning across languages. In concluding, they make the important point that the potential of the textual model “would be more powerful when such studies use corpora consisting of authentic texts, comparable and/or parallel”.

**Erich Steiner**'s article precisely illustrates this. Steiner contextualizes the work of his team within the extensive tradition of corpus-based linguistic work in English<>German contrastive studies and translation studies. He specifically describes the methodology of his work on two large-scale corpora developed at the University of Saarland: (1) the Cro-Cro corpus of multilingually comparable texts (English and German originals), monolingually comparable texts (English originals and English translations, German originals and German translations) and parallel texts (German<>English translations); and (2) The GECCo-corpus, which consists of register-comparable spoken language originals in German and English and register-comparable written-language originals and their translations. These corpora are designed for the investigation of specific linguistic features, notably cohesion. Steiner's article describes the investigation of assumptions about

different degrees of local ambiguity in original texts in the two languages, register distinctions between written and spoken language, and differences in explicitness and information density.

**Juliane House** investigates similar questions in a forceful justification of the discourse analytic approach. She looks at linking constructions (such as after all and in addition) using contrastive discourse analysis of English and German popular science texts, part of the ‘Covert Translation’ project conducted over twelve years at the German Science Foundation’s Research Centre on Multilingualism in Hamburg. Like Steiner, House analyses contrastive and parallel corpora to determine differences in English and German originals and to compare the findings with German translations from English. One of the most interesting features of House’s study is the diachronic comparison using corpora from two different time periods. This makes it possible for her to make statements about the evolution of linking constructions in the different types of text and to interpret these within conventionalized discourse orientations in the two languages (English tending to be more interpersonally oriented, German more content oriented), part of an overall project that studies how far such conventional English patterns may be transferred through translated texts.

Three articles link linguistic choices to specific questions of extralinguistic power enactment and translator/interpreter positioning. **Zhang Meifang** and **Hanting Pan** together examine institutional power in and behind the discourse of multilingual public notices in Macao. They use a CDA model enhanced by a toolkit from SFL to reveal the different roles construed by different public institutions. These are enacted by different interpersonal patterns in terms of speech function, modality type and modality orientation. Interpersonal meanings are also central to **Jeremy Munday**’s contribution. He draws further on Martin and White’s (2005) appraisal theory, an extension of Halliday’s work on the interpersonal metafunction. Munday casts doubt on the wholesale importation of an SFL framework into translation, arguing instead for the selective use of linguistic tools, honed by their prior testing on existing source text target text pairs. Specifically, he looks at resources of ‘engagement’ and

‘graduation’ as indicative markers of translator/interpreter positioning and ‘investment’ in the discourse of the target text.

**Christina Schäffner** uses a framework that takes CDA and socio-pragmatics as a point of departure and draws particularly on the work of Elda Weizman (2008) on monolingual media dialogue. Schäffner’s corpus is of high-level interpreted press conferences involving visiting heads of state. Positioning clues between the heads of state include naming choices, formal or informal pronoun selections and turn-taking mechanisms, which are all prone to shifting in the interpreting event and to editing revisions in the published transcripts. Schäffner concludes by noting “the need to combine a discourse analysis with a sociological one, exploring agency and decision-making processes” that lie behind them.

The final two articles pursue this, combining the more linguistically oriented discourse analysis with a more marked, extralinguistic and sociological perspective. **Roberto Valdeón** interrogates María José Hernández Guerrero’s (2009) concept of stable and unstable texts in journalistic translation, suggesting that the difference is much more subtle than a simple binary distinction. In his analysis of the translation of specific translated opinion columns in the Spanish newspaper *El País*, Valdeón draws on theory from communication studies and sociology, notably Erving Goffman’s formulation of ‘frame’, itself open to definitional debate. The incorporation of sociological approaches is also a feature of **Ji-Hae Kang**’s contribution. Rather than comparing a source text and target text, she uses Goffman’s concept of role in her examination of online readers’ evaluation of the translation into Korean of the biography of Steve Jobs. Here, following Sarangi (2010), discourse is one of three types of ‘role’ (the others being ‘social’ and ‘activity’); Kang studies this discourse as individuals variously perform the activity role as ‘expert-judge’, ‘activist’, or supposedly objective ‘assessment evaluator’ in their response to the translated text. Kang concludes by stressing how the discourse-based approach permits study of, in this case, translation assessment in cyberspace, “as a socially situated act that involves an intricate negotiation of meaning,

complex workings of power, and a reconstitution of local social positioning within global cultural flows”.

Discourse, and the potential performance of various discourses through different interventions and meaning-making selections, is central to purposeful communication, the exercise of power and the construction of identity. We hope that this special issue will indicate how discourse analysis in its various forms is a powerful tool for uncovering the processes and for explaining the motivation behind the author’s and the translator’s choices. Translation is a complex, motivated component of multilingual communication in which the translator’s various linguistic and social interventions can be systematically uncovered and explained only with the help of comprehensive discourse analysis built on solid interdisciplinary foundations.

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