

Discourse

Analysis

Translation is a mental activity in which a meaning of given linguistic *discourse* is rendered from one language to another. Translation is an act through which the *content of a text* is transferred from the source language in to the target language (Foster, 1958)

## Definitions

Text is defined as “any passage, spoken or written, of any length that forms a unified form”.

Text can be viewed from the notions of

- Linguistic tradition as “ anything beyond the sentence”
- Sociolinguistics as “ the language use”
- Critical theory as” a broad range of social practices that construct power, ideology, etc.”

(Munday& Zhang, 2017)

Context is defined as “aspects of extra-linguistic reality that are taken to be relevant to the communication”.

Context plays the major role in shaping the text and at the same time is highly affected by the text.

Text and context of situation are indeed separate, but two interact with each other through an inextricable connection between the social environment and the functional organization of language. When we analyze an original text, compare it with its translation and establish the equivalence frame work guiding the translation, both texts must refer to particular situation surrounding” (House, 2009).

## Various definitions of discourse

- a group of statements which provide a language for talking about a topic and a way of producing a particular kind of knowledge about a topic. Thus the term refers both to the production of knowledge through language and representation and the way that knowledge is institutionalized, shaping social practices and setting new practices into play. (du Gay 1996: 43).
- Carter (1982: in Farahani , M. V. (2013) defines discourse as "the organization of connected text beyond the level of the sentence". It is "a unit of linguistic performance which stands complete in itself" (Chapman, 1980 Farahani , M. V. (2013).
- Hoey (1991in Farahani , M. V. (2013) views discourse as "all aspects of language organization (whether structural or not) that operate above the level of grammar".

Then ‘discourse’, in the sense of certain kinds of actual language use, has a variety of meanings (Mills , 1997), not restricted to its relation to formal and informal language use. Thus ‘discourse’ may refer to the spoken word only, or all utterances written and verbal, or a particular way of talking delineating a specific domain with its own particular vocabularies and sets of meaning such as legal discourse, medical discourse, scientific discourse.(ibid)

Discourse Analysis (DA) is a field of study which tries to investigate the relationship between language and the context in which it is used .DA is very connected to such disciplines as semiotics, the study of the signs of a language, psychology, the study of mind, anthropology, the study of human race, its culture and society and sociology, the study of society.

Discourse analysis is the study of the relationship between language and its intertextual, social and intercultural contexts in which it is used; i.e., it is the linguistic study of the interaction between text and discourse (Cook, 1989).

Discourse analysis thus assumes from the outset that language is *invested*, meaning that language is not a neutral tool for transmitting a message but rather, that all ‘communicative events’ (van Dijk, 2001).



The analysis of discourse is, necessarily, the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the description of linguistic forms independent of the purposes or functions which those forms are designed to serve in human affairs.

Hence comes the need to a systemic functional theory that sets theoretical background of the relation between form and function (Systemic Functional Linguistics)

Halliday innovative and prominent contribution of interpreting language as “social semiotic” and the resulting concept or “meaning potential” which implies potential change of the meaning of each point in the text within every aspect of meaning ( lexically, ideologically, interpersonally, textually, etc.).

An applicable framework of investigation is introduced through register analysis which elaborates on the three aspects of meaning. This analysis operates via three layers :

Register variables		Associated discourse semantic function	Typical lexicogrammatical
Field	The information and way of representation	Ideational (action)	Subject-specific terminology and transitivity structures
Tenor	The linguistic relation between the participants	Interpersonal (affiliation)	Modality structures, pronoun choices, evaluative lexis
Mode	The form of communication	Textual (information settings)	Thematic and information structure, patterns of cohesion
Context of culture : the extralinguistic sociocultural environment in which the text is produced and operates		Discourse: enacted by conventionalized genres of which texts are individual examples A text is comprised of a specific register in a context of situation	The three strands of meaning (discourse semantic ) are expressed by specific lexical and grammatical choices

According to Hatim and Mason there are three levels of contexts :  
communicative , pragmatic and semiotic which are illustrated in the  
following table in addition to extralinguistic context of culture and  
specific sub-themes.

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

Categorization  
of research in  
discourse analysis  
and translation

Major contributions to the development of discourse analysis

Discourse analysis seems to be a meeting point between five disciplines: linguistics, sociolinguistics, sociology, and social psychology.

Dell Hymes (1972), Anthropologist, has broken such a basis of studying speech in its social setting to cover the forms of address.

J. L. Austin (1962) and Searle (1969), linguistic philosophers, was influential in the study of language as a social activity.

M.A.K. Halliday (1970) and his systemic linguistics emphasized the social functions of language and the thematic and informational aspects of speech and writing above the utterance/ sentence level.

Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and their model of description of spoken interaction in school classroom is grounded on a revelation of a structural hierarchy

The field of 'conversational analysis' is in line with this development where the emphasis is not on structure but on the behaviour of participants in talks and on patterns recurring within a wide range of natural data as basic units to be studied within the field.

W. Labov's (1970 and 1972) studies are major contributions.

Van Dijk (1972, 1981) sets out an analytic approach to discourse which has its origins in attempts to produce a 'text grammar'. He makes a distinction between 'macrostructures' and 'superstructures' and argues that "the semantic presentation of discourse is its macrostructures"

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