

THE TERM *TRADUCTOLOGIE*: ORIGINS AND ANALYSIS

Too many controversies over the past quarter century have been caused by a failure to stipulate what researchers meant by a word, and sometimes this was a word that referred to the very object of their research. (Paradis, 2004, p. vii)

1. *Origins*

It may surprise some readers to learn that until the 1970s there was no accepted term in French for what today is called *Traductologie*¹. Nor, for that matter, was there a term in English. The reason, basically, was that the study of translating had not been regarded until then as an autonomous field but merely as an appendage of other fields like literature or applied linguistics or Bible studies.

1972 was the year when *Traductologie* was first used publicly in Canada, by the present author at a conference in Montreal, and it appeared in the title of my paper when the proceedings were published the following year (Harris, 1973)². In the same year 1972 – according to the ‘ébauche’ on *Traductologie* in *Wikipédia Français*³ – the term was introduced in France by Jean-René Ladamiral (cf. Ladamiral, 1995). I think it fair to say that in 1972 his writings were little known in Canada, while in France mine were only known to a few researchers in the arcane field of machine translation. It is tempting to speculate that our inventions coincided because “Great minds think alike.” Furthermore, it is clear from Ladamiral’s latest publication about *Traductologie*, his keynote lecture to the ISTI anniversary symposium in Paris last October (Ladamiral, 2008), that our thinking remains similar. However, a more serious explanation for the double origin of the term lies in the emerging status of the field in both countries. The Dean responsible for School of Translators and Interpreters at the University of Ottawa during most of the 1970s was Marcel Hamelin, later Rector of the university; he told me, the last time we met, that he thought his greatest contribution to the School in those years had been to persuade his Faculty colleagues that Translation was a discipline worthy of its own department (personal communication, 2001)⁴.

I believe Ladamiral, like me, had been impressed by the French linguist Georges Mounin’s book *Les Problèmes Théoriques de la Traduction*, published in 1963. But I was more influenced by Eugene Nida’s magnum opus, *Toward a Science of Translating*, published in 1964. I had come to thinking about translation with a background in linguistics. Linguists talk of ‘phonetics’ and ‘phonology’, not of ‘the science of speech sounds’; of ‘semantics’, not of ‘the analysis of meaning’. So it had struck me that both Mounin and Nida

¹ There was the term ‘théorie de la traduction’ (and in English ‘translation theory’), which still competes with *Traductologie* for frequency though it is less used (Hits: 46,000 for *Traductologie*, 23,600 for ‘théorie de la traduction’ on 4 December 2008). However, as will appear in what follows, *Traductologie* encompasses more than theory.

² There had been other proposals before *Traductologie*, notably ‘traductiologie’ and ‘translatique’ (the latter doubtless formed on the pattern of ‘stylistique’), but they had not caught on. Cf. Harris, 1977, Ladamiral 2008.

³ <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Traductologie>, accessed 26 November 2008.

⁴ The School of Translators and Interpreters (as it was then called) was founded in 1971 on the basis of a BA programme that had started in the Department of Linguistics and Modern Languages in 1968. In 1975, a report on the internal organization of the university recommended that the School be abolished due to the small number of full-time teaching staff (Auger et al., 1975, p. 140, recommendation 75).

lacked a concise learned term for their topic, and I provided one by analogy with the linguistic term ‘phonologie’. Or rather, I provided two, because even before I thought of the French term *Traductologie*, I had thought of an English term, *Translatology*. Indeed it was only by an accident of history that *Traductologie* was published first. In 1972, I happened to be invited to give a paper at a conference at the then very young Université du Québec à Montréal, and the organizers wanted all the papers to be in French. So, for the occasion, I translated my initial invention, ‘Translatology’, as *Traductologie*.

Traductologie caught on – no doubt due more to Ladmiral’s influence than mine; and it spread, with the appropriate modifications, to the other Romance languages: Spanish *traductología*, Italian *traduttologia*, etc.⁵ Whereas *Translatology* was soon eclipsed by a term formed on another pattern that is fashionable in English, and it gave us *Translation Studies*⁶. Peter Newmark once complained to me that *Translatology* sounded too pretentious for what it denotes (personal communication, 1991). Candace Séguinot told me, at the first conference of CATS in 1988, that the founders of the association had considered calling it the Canadian Association of Translatology but had rejected the idea (personal communication). Do not, however, write *Translatology* off entirely. Consider the following figures from Google.

GHITS FOR *TRANSLATION STUDIES* AND *TRANSLATOLOGY*

Translation studies	322,000
Translatology, translational	16,290

(Source: Google, accessed 12 November 2008)

Obviously *Translation Studies* dwarfs *Translatology*, yet the figure of over 16 thousand occurrences for the latter (about 5%) proves that it has refused to die. Let us look at two examples:

Perspectives: Studies in Translatology. Editor-in-Chief: Henrik Gottlieb, University of Copenhagen, Denmark
Quarterly.

“Krzysztof Lipiński believes this to be one of the central myths of contemporary translology.”

(<http://transubstantiation.wordpress.com/2008/11/09/myths-of-translation-ii/>)

Notice that the second citation is very recent (2008). Notice too the provenance of the quotations, which appears to be quite typical. It suggests that *Translatology* now belongs to a

⁵ Actually, Spanish *traductología* was first derived from the English *translatology*. In about 1976, the translation teacher Gerardo Vazquez-Ayora visited the School of Translators and Interpreters in Ottawa to give a lecture on ‘How do we define translation?’ His second language was English, not French. He met with the present author and other faculty, and shortly afterwards he published his book *Introducción a la Traductología* (Georgetown University Press, 1977) in which he acknowledges the origin of ‘traductología’ in ‘translatology’. His book, however, was not widely known in Spain, because it was published in the United States; so it is possible that *traductología* also entered Spanish from French. Some other languages have words for the concept which are unconnected etymologically with *Traductologie* and even preceded it: German has *Übersetzungswissenschaft*, Polish has *przekładoznawstwo*, and so on.⁷

⁶ Cf. *gender studies*, *women’s studies*, etc.

variety of English that is typical of non-native writers of the language and is sometimes called ‘International English’, a variety that tends to be looked down on by the native speakers but is becoming more and more important as the proportion of non-native over native speakers of English increases in the world. Therefore *Translatology* will live on.

When I first introduced *Traductologie* at a Faculty meeting at the University of Ottawa, around 1976, a zealous professor from the Department of Classical Studies objected that it was made up from a Latin root with a Greek suffix and was therefore “mongrel terminology.” She had overlooked that the very word ‘terminology’ was made up in precisely the same way.

So much for history, now for analysis.

2. *Definitions*

To start with, we need definitions of two key terms. The first is *Traductologie* itself. I have been criticized, by Michel Ballard among others, for having been inconsistent in my explanations of what I meant by it; so I take this opportunity to set the record straight by making use of the anonymous definition that appears in the Wikipédia ébauche:

La traductologie, en tant que science, étudie le processus cognitif inhérent à toute reproduction orale, écrite ou gestuelle, vers un langage, de l'expression d'une idée provenant d'un autre langage (signes vocaux (parole), graphiques (écriture) ou gestuels)... En un sens élargi, toute pratique réflexive sur la traduction relève de la traductologie.

[*Traductologie*, as a science, studies the cognitive process at the heart of any oral, written or sign-language reproduction in a language, of the expression of an idea in another language (likewise spoken, written or signed)... In a broader sense, any activity of reflection on translation belongs to *traductologie*.]⁷

This is a double definition: first a narrow definition of *Traductologie* as a science, and then a much broader “sens élargi” that is a catchall. The narrow definition expresses well what I had in mind in 1972, as I said in my paper to the first CATS conference in 1988 (Harris, 1988); but once the use of a term becomes widespread, it soon passes out of its coiner’s control, and in the end “the meaning of a word is its use in the language.” In what follows, it is the broad definition that is to be understood, i.e., any activity of reflection on translation.

Next, since *Traductologie* is “reflection on translation,” we also need a definition of ‘translation’. That is more difficult, because there are many and diverse definitions of translation, some broader, some narrower. The oft-quoted reference for a broad definition is Roman Jakobson’s classic chapter ‘On Linguistic Aspects of Translation’ (Jakobson, 1959). In it, he ranges from translation within the same language (‘intra-linguistic translation’) to translation between different sign systems (‘inter-semiotic translation’), as well as translation between two languages (‘inter-linguistic translation’). However, it is only the last kind that most people think of as ‘translation’, because they distinguish intra-linguistic translation by using another term, ‘paraphrase’; while for ‘intersemiotic translation’ they have yet other terms like ‘adaptation’ or ‘versioning’, as in ‘the screen adaptation or version of a novel’.

⁷ English translation by the present author.

To avoid a long discussion of what is and what is not ‘translation’, therefore, I propose to take a definition that is ready made and ‘robust’. Furthermore, in order to keep this paper within manageable bounds, it is a narrow definition, the one commonly understood by most people. It comes from Chaim Rabin, with slight modification as indicated:

[Translation is:] A process by which a spoken or written [or signed] utterance takes place in one [natural] language which is intended and presumed to convey the same meaning as a previously existing utterance in another [such] language. (Rabin, 1958)

‘Signed’ means ‘in sign language’, because sign languages are now widely recognized as being true natural languages in their own right and not merely re-codings of English, French, etc.⁸

The definition excludes ‘translation’ as the term is often used in computing, because computer programming languages are not natural languages; and it also excludes ‘translation’ as it is used in genetics,⁹ religion,¹⁰ etc., where it is a technical term with quite other meanings. It excludes expressions like ‘his thoughts translated into actions’, whether or not they are extended meanings or metaphors, because neither thoughts nor actions are inputs that are utterances. Vice versa, it would also exclude a view like this one from George Steiner:

A human being performs an act of translation, in the full sense of the word, when receiving a speech-message from any other human being. (Steiner, 1975, p. 47)

because it does not presume an output utterance.

One other kind of definition must be dealt with, namely those that express the notion that translation is essentially an operation between cultures. There was a noticeable cultural turn in translation studies in the 1990s. An example might be the work on gendered translation. Juliane House suggests that the focus on cultures represents a general trend in the humanities, and she quotes statements like, “One does not translate languages but cultures,” and “In translation we transfer cultures not languages” (House 2002). There is no question but that cultural considerations are very important both in translating and in translation studies. Nevertheless, statements like the ones just cited are exaggerations. It is possible to have cultural transfer between texts without a change of language, for example when adult books like *The Arabian Nights* are retold for children, or when e-learning courses are ‘internationalized’ (Blanchard et al., 2005), or when scientific discourse is simplified for newspaper readers. Conversely, it is possible to have a transfer of languages without a significant cultural transfer: I would submit that the nightly translations of Hansard (the proceedings of the Parliament of Canada) are of this latter kind. But there is no translation without a transfer between languages. Therefore, cultural transfer is an important accidental, but not an essential, for defining translation.

Finally, note that our minimalist definition is non-judgmental. It says nothing about ‘good translation’ or ‘bad translation’, a topic that will, however, recur below.

3. *The Two Levels of Analysis*

⁸ Since the mid-20th-century research of William Stokoe on American Sign Language.

⁹ For example, Jesper Hoffmeyer (Institute of Molecular Biology, University of Copenhagen), *Origin of Species by Natural Translation*, hoffmeyer@mermaid.molbio.ku.dk.

¹⁰ “Translation is the technical term when a Bishop is transferred from one diocese to another” (Wikipedia).

Etymologically, *Traductologie* is a derived word formed from a stem to which has been added a frequently used suffix, *-ologie*. Conceptually, however – which is what concerns us here – the term *Traductologie* is a ‘metaterm’, in the sense that it names a complex in which one concept is *superimposed* upon another. The concept corresponding to the stem ‘traduct’ is of course ‘traduction’ (translations and translating); to *-ologie* corresponds the concept ‘des études méthodiques’ (methodical studies) (Le Nouveau Petit Robert, 1993). The hierarchy between the concepts is established by the fact that a study requires necessarily an object of study, whereas an object can exist, an activity can be conducted, without it necessarily being accompanied by a study of it. Hence ‘translation’ is the base concept and ‘study of translation’ is the superimposed one.

In fact translations *did* exist and translating *was* conducted for thousands of years with only occasional, spasmodic studies of it. To be sure, there are famous examples, from Cicero or earlier onwards, of pre-modern thoughts and advice about translating. Together they form a substantial volume of writings and may be considered *Traductologie* before the term existed. One of the best reviews of them is still Louis Kelly’s 1979 book *The True Interpreter*. However, they had neither the continuity nor the universality of the practice of translation, such as we see it so magnificently illustrated, for example, on Jean Delisle’s CD *Histoire de la Traduction* (Delisle, 2001).

The point here is that study and object of study constitute two different conceptual levels and each of them can be looked at separately for purposes of analysis and mapped into its own taxonomy. They will be called, in what follows, the **metalevel** and the **object level**.

4. *Metalevel*

This level can usefully be mapped first into broad overall approaches capable of accommodating a number of related theories and methodologies. Let us call these approaches ‘paradigms’. There is a tendency for one or a few paradigms to be prominent or even dominant at a particular period.

Take, as an initial example of a paradigm, the approach Machine Translation (MT for short, i.e., translation by computer). Not only is it relatively very young, having first been conceived around 1947,¹¹ it is – as Alexander Ljudskanov pointed out as early as the 1960s (Ljudskanov, 1969) – the only one which admits of a non-human translator. It also has some less obvious distinctive features. For instance, in the present state of the art the translating it does is either of a kind called *transcodage* (transcoding), which proceeds by language transformations into which meaning and understanding do not enter; or else it is by statistically selected copying from previous translations. Consequently, normal standards of acceptability applied to human translations, which *do* use meaning and understanding, have to be bent to its limitations. This last is a very important consideration, because judgements of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ translation, and counsels for achieving the good kind, have always played a prominent role in discourse about translation and hence in *Traductologie*.

The MT paradigm has included purely lexical methods in the early days of computers, a number of grammatical transformation models (both surface and deep structure) since the 1960s, unsuccessful attempts to assimilate it to research on artificial intelligence in the 1980s,

¹¹ By the American mathematician Warren Weaver and the British engineer Andrew Booth. The idea was spread by the influential ‘Weaver Memorandum’, a note that Weaver sent to 200 colleagues in 1949.

more successful statistical methods since the late 1980s, and – at least experimentally – connectionist or ‘neural network’ models and methods since the 1990s; and in general the paradigm, as a research paradigm, had its heyday between the 1960s and the 1990s (Hutchins, 1986; McHaffie, 1997). Nowadays it has become commercialized and even Microsoft is heavily involved in it¹².

At the object level (apart from the most obvious feature, already mentioned, that the translator is a computer) MT is characterized by the genre of the texts translated – informational, non-literary, the most famous Canadian example being weather forecasts – and by its readership or clientele: people who are in a hurry, or who do not want to spend what it would cost for a human translation, who are generally content with knowing the gist of the information in the source text and who for all these reasons are prepared to contribute a good deal of what might be called ‘reader tolerance’.

Other paradigms are the historical, the literary, the linguistic, the semiotic, the philosophical, the empirical-experimental, the text and corpus oriented, the process oriented, the social, the prescriptive and pedagogical, the lexico-terminological, and so on. From the 1950s to the 1980s the linguistic, educational and terminological paradigms were paramount for written translation, while for oral translation it was the empirical-experimental. In the 1990s, as mentioned above, there was a noticeable cultural turn in translation studies.

It would be impossible to provide a description of all these paradigms within the confines of an article. Here follow just a few salient features of some of them.

The Historical Paradigm. Every discipline has its historical paradigm, which deals with the history of the field. In the case of *Traductologie*, this paradigm has been dedicated almost entirely to the actual history of translators and their productions, and there been few attempts to abstract from it an explicative model of the history of translation comparable with what Ljudskanov did – but only very summarily – in his model based on text types (Ljudskanov, 1969).

The Literary Paradigm. This is certainly one of the oldest: see the earlier reference to Cicero. It has long produced notable works from time to time, for example Tytler’s *Essay on the Principles of Translation* in the 18th century (Tytler, 1791), Schleiermacher’s *Ueber die verschiedenen Methoden des Uebersetzens* in the early 19th century (Schleiermacher, 1813) and Matthew Arnold’s *On Translating Homer* in the later 19th century (Arnold, 1861). Indeed, throughout those three centuries and well into the 20th century, translation theory was generally regarded as an appendage of literary theory. Nowadays, literary translation studies have their own research centres (e.g. the British Centre for Literary Translation at the University of East Anglia), their own graduate programmes (e.g. at the University of Alberta), their own journals (there is one called *Translation & Literature* from the University of Glasgow). At the object level, there is of course an enormous, diverse and universal wealth of translated texts and languages.

The Religious Paradigm. This too is very old, and it even has a patron saint, St Jerome. St Jerome was of course an important religious translator himself; at the metalevel, however, it is not his work of translation, his *Vulgate*, that is relevant, but the polemic *about* translation that is the theme of his *Letter to Pammachius* (Jerome, 395). Nida’s *Toward a Science of*

¹² <http://research.microsoft.com/nlp/projects/mtproj.aspx>, accessed 26 November 2008. This is not the place to discuss the quality of MT output; our definition of Translation is non-judgmental.

Translating is a modern classic that combines this paradigm with the linguistic one, and indeed all Nida's career is symptomatic of the enormous amount of religious translation that is still going on in the world. It is not taught in our university translation schools, but the evangelical wing of it has its own 'university' in the worldwide Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL)¹³. The work of the late Henri Meschonnic crosses this paradigm with the literary paradigm both at the metalevel and at the object level. Two things that distinguish the paradigm are (a) that it requires some knowledge of theology and of the history of religions; (b) that it takes account of the impact of texts as religious propaganda.

The Text-Based Paradigm vs. the Process-Oriented Paradigm. Until recent times, translation studies and translation criticism was mostly based on comparisons between source texts and target texts, and text-based studies still predominate. Indeed, this kind of study has recently been given a fillip by the development of large computerized bilingual text banks like the Translational English Corpus at Manchester, which are at the object level of what is now called 'Corpus-based Translation Studies' (Olohan, 2004). A notable exception has been the sector where the object of study is oral translation (interpreting); and it is striking that much of the early research in that sector came not from translators but from psychologists, following publication of Oléron and Nanpon's pioneer article 'Recherches sur la traduction simultanée' in 1968. Nevertheless, since the 1980s there has been a succession of process-oriented writings and research about written translation too; that is to say, studies of the translator's thinking processes and ways of working and surroundings rather than on what they ultimately write or utter. The latter type of research is often based on empirical experimentation, and a work that illustrates it by its very title is Hans Krings' *Was in den Köpfen von Übersetzern vorgeht* (What goes on inside the translator's head) (Krings, 1986).¹⁴

These last two paradigms are in a sense 'horizontal paradigms', in that they cut across and sub-categorize other paradigms. For example, the paradigm 'study of scientific and technical translation' may be either text based or process oriented.¹⁵

The Philosophical Paradigm. This one had particular relevance for the CATS conference, but it was to be expected that enough would be said about it by other speakers. I only want to make one comment, and it concerns the object level. Typically, it takes as its object very short texts, as short as single sentences or propositions, even single words – as in the famous example of Quine's *gavagai* (Quine, 1960), and this sets it apart from all the other paradigms except the Lexico-Terminological Paradigm.

The Educational Paradigm affects most of the members of CATS, because they teach translation. It is marked, necessarily, by being strongly prescriptive, because one cannot teach a skill without being prescriptive; and at the object level it is marked by imperfect but aspiringly professional products, translators and ways of working. When I came into translation studies in the 1970s, the paradigm was dominated in Canada by Vinay and Darbelnet's *Stylistique Comparée* (Vinay, 1958), which is also a classic of the Linguistic Paradigm.

Lack of space prevents further exploration and exposition of the metalevel here.

¹³ <http://www.sil.org/sil/>.

¹⁴ Regrettably, it has not been translated into French or English.

¹⁵ An early instance of the process-oriented paradigm was Bathgate, 1980, and its object was technical translation.

5. Object Level

The object level includes not only translations, that is to say translated texts and utterances, but also *translating*, i.e. the act and mental process of translation, as well as the people who do it, the *translators*. To these, furthermore, attach many auxiliary objects such as bilingual dictionaries, terminologists, the clientele of the translators, and so on. It even includes MT software and its output – but not the programming of MT systems, which belongs to the metalevel. All are proper objects of study for *Traductologie* in its broad sense.

We have already had to make several references to the object level because the metalevel constantly reflects its particularities. However, it is amenable to a more systematic description. For the most part, the mapping proposed here follows traditional divisions.

There are certain grand divisions that categorize not only the texts but also the translators:

Translation in the narrow sense of ‘written translation’, the sense that first comes to mind.

Interpretation is clearly distinguished by professionals and by teachers from written translation, though not by the general public, who are not the least troubled by seeing ‘Voice of Translator’ flash on their TV screens. Its defining feature is of course its oral medium, at least traditionally; however, it is customary nowadays in professional and linguistic circles to add sign-language interpretation to it. A less appreciated feature, but one that is almost as important as the oral medium, is speed: the translation in interpreting is commonly done at speeds of over 100 words a minute. In the historical paradigm, its history cannot be studied in the same way as that of written translation because only rarely or very recently have the actual interpretations been recorded; it therefore lacks the equivalent of ‘text-based translation studies’.

Interpretation has both traditional and recent subcategories of *modus operandi* (‘simultaneous’, ‘consecutive’, ‘whispering’, ‘remote’ or ‘telephone’, etc.) and of function (conference, liaison, diplomatic, court, community, etc.) (Harris, 1995).

Written translation is often categorized according to the types of text that are translated and the communication strategies associated with them. The classic exposition of this approach (‘text typology’) is Katharina Reiss’s *Texttyp und Übersetzungsmethode* (Text types and ways of translating) (Reiss, 1976)¹⁶. In professional and teaching circles, the types recognized are the familiar ones of ‘general’, ‘technical’, ‘scientific’, ‘medical’, ‘legal’, ‘legislative’, ‘financial’, ‘literary’, etc. that give rise to specialized translation courses.

Another categorization concerns much more the translators than the texts. This is the trichotomy ‘trained’ – ‘native’ – ‘natural’ translators. ‘Trained’ means having taken translation courses and/or worked under the supervision of a professional mentor. To the trained category can be assimilated translation school students; though still only semi-trained, they are often used as subjects in empirical studies of translating because they are relatively easy to collect together in significant numbers. ‘Native translator’ is Gideon Toury’s term for

¹⁶ There is no French or English translation, but an English summary can be found at <http://www.geocities.com/~tolk/lic/LIC990329p4.htm> (accessed 8 December 2008).

a translator who has no formal training but who has nevertheless been sufficiently exposed to translations and translating to pick up its techniques and become socialized to its norms, much as ‘native speakers’ pick up their language without consciously working at it (Toury, 1986). ‘Natural translator’ is Harris’s term for bilinguals who translate without any training at all and who have not been through the socialization process that moulds the native translators. Typically, though not necessarily, natural translators are children, and there is now a recognized subcategory of them who perform ‘language brokering’, that is to say who mediate linguistically and culturally between their families and the outside world in immigrant communities (Harris, 2008). In this categorization, ‘trained’ should not be equated with ‘professional’, since a great many professional translators are in fact native translators who have not taken any courses. Considering that they provide at least as much translating in the world as the trained and the professional translators, neither the non-professional native translators nor the natural translators have received as much attention in translation studies as they deserve.

6. Conclusions

Both the objects and the paradigms of *Traductologie* are numerous and variegated. Furthermore there are hybrids (like the Linguistic Paradigm and the Educational Paradigm in many translator training courses, or Technical Translating and its invaluable auxiliary Lexico-Terminology), and on top of that there are combinatorial possibilities between the levels (like religious translating from the viewpoint of either the Religious Propaganda or the Literary Paradigm or from both).

Indeed, both levels are so variegated that a statement in one Paradigm or referring to one Object, even if true, may be worse than disputable in another – it may be meaningless. Space allows of only a few examples.

The first comes from the call for papers for the present conference:

...we need to examine the relationship between translation and the logic of propositions...

It was written in the context of a conference or session about translation and philosophy, which is one of the paradigms, and there it is understandable. I submit that it has no meaning at all once we shift to any of the other paradigms, say the literary one. It was also pointed out above that the object of the Philosophical Paradigm is atypical, at least if the philosophy is analytical philosophy: translators in other areas do not translate propositions, they translate texts, or complex and very contextualized utterances.

The second example may seem to come from the opposite extreme, but striking examples are needed in order to make the point quickly:

In 1530,... German presses invested Luther with the same halo of inspiration that surrounded the Septuagint translators ... Luther the translator was robed in the garb of divinity and his work assured of its direct and transparent access to God himself. (Shehan, 2005, ch. 1)

Nobody would mention divine inspiration in the context of technical translation, conference interpreting, or even literary translation, even in the Historical Paradigm. It is irrelevant to

those contexts; that is to say, the statement would be meaningless there. Yet that is not so in the paradigm that has as its object religious translation, which is one of the most prolific and influential of all translation fields.

The final example is one whose consequences I have experienced personally. Whenever I address professional translators or translation teachers about Natural Translators, I have to preface it by explaining that what *I* mean by ‘translator’ is not what *they* understand by ‘translator’; it is because I am speaking in a different paradigm and describing a different object from the ones they are used to. If they do not accept the paradigm shift, they will not accept that what I am talking about is translation, nor even be interested in it.

We may conclude from the foregoing that for statements and questions in *Traductologie* to be meaningful, and therefore to be understood and meaningfully discussed, one must be cognizant of both the area at the object level to which they refer and the paradigm at the metalevel in which they are framed. The scope of translation studies has become too wide, and the approaches to them too diverse, for us all to view them on the same wavelength.

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ABSTRACT: The Term *Traductologie*: Origins and Analysis —

Traductologie is a term with two conceptual levels: the metalevel of study and analysis and the object level of what is thus examined, namely translations and translating. Both levels are variegated. The metalevel can usefully be mapped into broad ‘paradigms’ or disciplinary approaches: literary, linguistic, semiotic, philosophical, historical, lexico-terminological, automated (MT), prescriptive and pedagogical, scientific-experimental, text and corpus oriented, process oriented, social etc. The object level is traditionally divided between written translation and oral translation (*interpretation*), and the former is often categorized by ‘text types’.

Permutations of the meta and object categories characterize different varieties of *traductologie*. When discoursing about it, one should be aware that a statement that is meaningful in one variety may be meaningless in another.

Keywords: conceptual analysis, traductologie, translation studies, translatology

RÉSUMÉ : The Term *Traductologie*: Origins and Analysis —

Notre analyse conceptuelle de la « traductologie » se déroule sur deux plans : le niveau méta, soit de l’examen et de l’analyse de l’objet à l’étude, et le niveau de l’objet même, soit les traductions et l’activité traduisante. Les deux niveaux regroupent une variété de composantes. Pour cette raison, il convient de découper le méta-niveau selon l’approche disciplinaire ou « paradigme » adopté, notamment littéraire, sémiotique, philosophique, historique, sociologique, lexico-terminologique, empirique et expérimental, axé sur les textes et les corpus ou sur les processus mentaux, automatisé, et autres. Quant au niveau objet, il existe traditionnellement une nette distinction entre la traduction écrite et la traduction orale (ou « interprétation »), et la catégorisation de la première se fait le plus souvent en fonction du genre du texte traduit.

La permutation combinatoire des catégories méta et objet permet de caractériser les divers types de traductologie. Or, à cause des différences de paradigme ou d’objet, un énoncé valable pour le discours sur un certain type de traductologie peut s’avérer entièrement dénué de sens dans le cadre d’un autre.

Mots-clés : Analyse conceptuelle, terminologie, traductologie, translatology, études de traduction