



## Epistemological Aspects of Interaction between Languages and Cultures through the Prism of Translation

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### Abstract

*The cognitive and discursive paradigm that has acquired significant importance in linguistic science in recent decades, provides for efficacious instruments for the building up of a theoretical frame for translation researches concerning human cognition and linguistic processing of information.*

*This article offers fundamental comparative-situational models of dynamic interaction of conceptual systems of the author, translator and the addressee within mediated cross-cultural cross-linguistic communication that ascertain the interrelationship of linguistic, cognitive, and cultural factors relevant to scientific communication with due regard for circumstances and situational conditions of a given act of communication. The aim of this article is to examine and describe ranking features of the general structure of the models referred to above through establishing variations and differentiations that reflect varying parameters of circumstances, situations, and presuppositions within the given context of scientific communication arranged for comparison of two or more national cultures of different languages especially regarding influences of one upon the other. The methods of translation and comparative analysis are used in the research, along with the native speakers questionnaire method. Ph.D. students of People's Friendship University of Russia (156) from different countries with different mother-tongue backgrounds learning academic writing and translation in different areas of scientific research where the English, the Spanish, and the Russian languages are used as a second foreign language are involved in this study.*

*We conclude that epistemological grounds of information processing within mediated scientific communication especially in what regards inquiry into the multifaceted nature of translators' activity, along with limits, and validity of strategy of translation become relevant to the reconstruction of communication presuppositions and the referential situation in target language via modelling cognitive space in order to neutralize communications gap along with the differential in knowledge, viewpoints and extralinguistic experience ensuring succession and continuity in the process of cognition.*

*The practical value of the article can be of significant relevance for language teaching, language acquisition, and translation as intercultural and interlinguistic communication research.*

*Keywords: translation, cognition, conceptual systems, cross-cultural communication*

The growing field of cognitive linguistics has traced new tendencies within development of scientific thought in linguistic science, as well as in the realm of translation theory, orienting the latter towards interdisciplinarity and cognitive-functional paradigm.

Central to the issue are different aspects and characteristic features of mediated cross-cultural cross-linguistic scientific communication especially regarding human cognition where perception and exploration of conceptual resources and conceptual diversity are conditioned by the nature of scientific activity. Transferred or conveyed by linguistic forms, scientific knowledge is represented in scientific communication acts in a particular way (especially when dealing with scientific conceptual categories and verbalization thereof in different languages).

Problems of equivalence and adequacy in translation referred to as ones of epistemological character are related, among others, to the specificities concerning cognitive dynamics of sense generation and verbalization processes, linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge of the sender and the addressee, functional generalization, and presenting of scientific structures of knowledge by means of categorization and conceptualization in source language (SL) and target language (TL) with due regard taken of presuppositions of a given act of communication.

Thus, it is in the context of mediated cross-cultural and cross-linguistic communication where the target text tends to function independently throughout the act and process of translation what results in certain peculiarities crucial for semiotic and functional potential of scientific communication subjected

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to this study. On the one hand, the target text (TT) fails to preserve its uniqueness and it is only in one social, lingual, and cultural, society where it remains in the original condition or state. On the other, the fact of its processing within mental grasp through translation into another language reveals what is common and relevant for corresponding cognitive information or what can be used fittingly in what concerns understanding or solving a scientific problem.

«The communication process itself can be considered as an interaction of conceptual systems of the sender and the addressee. Achieving the level on which conceptual systems of the sender and addressee coincide is crucial to the multidimensional phenomenon of translation within cognitive dynamics of sense generation and perception processes» [1:155].

Fundamental comparative-situational models of dynamic interaction and interchange of conceptual systems of the author (i.e. the primary sender (PS)), the translator (i.e. the primary addressee (PA) or recipient, and the secondary sender (SS)), and the addressee within mediated communication are considered in this article to ascertain the interrelationship of linguistic, cognitive and cultural factors relevant for scientific communication by making a deliberate effort to facilitate adequate effect, succession and continuity in the process of cognition, as well as to accomplish effectiveness in communication.

Methods of translation and comparative analysis are applied in the study, as well as the native speakers' questionnaire method, when describing models referred to above. Comparison of general structure, parameters, and ranking features of the models subject to the research involved Ph.D. students of People's Friendship University of Russia (RUDN-UNIVERSITY), Albania, Armenia, Colombia, Ecuador, Kirgizstan, Kenya, Netherland, Pakistan, South Africa, Viet Nam (156) with different mother-tongue backgrounds learning academic writing and translation in different areas of scientific research such as Medicine, Stomatology, Pharmacology, Veterinary Medicine, etc. where the English, the Spanish and the Russian languages are used as a second foreign language.

When modelling mechanisms of discourse perception and production in translation while processing conceptual information explicitly or implicitly encoded within the given context, along with the situational determinants, the factors preconditioning translators' activity and translation strategy embrace dialectically interrelated spheres that are the cognitive, the cultural, and the linguistic ones that can be profiled in the light of interaction between conceptual systems of the author, translator, and addressee.

Situations where the primary sender of information or the author, and the primary addressee or recipient thereof (i.e. translator as the primary addressee, and the secondary sender of the information) belong to the **same social, cultural, and language community** correspond to the *Comparative-situational model A*.

Viewed through the prism of comparison between the participant's conceptual systems and cognitive specificities of interchange of the participant's conceptual systems, special relevance for the process of communication *per se* and its efficacy is acquired by such determinant or factor as their attribution to the *common conceptual picture of the world*.

Under given circumstances, it is the *common* conceptual system that predetermines the process of sending and receiving information within the limits of mediated communication, i.e. both the author or PS, and the translator belong to one particular social, cultural, and language community while the addressee belongs to another. Such pragmatic configuration of characteristic features mentioned above preconditions particular difficulties inevitably faced by the translator in what regards the necessity to adapt the conceptual scientific system of SL to the one of the *addressee in TL* when modelling the transfer of the received information through conceptualization process and corresponding *concepts of the addressee in TL*.

*Comparative-situational model B* provides that the primary sender of information or the author, and the primary addressee or recipient thereof (i.e. translator as the PA, and the secondary sender of the information) belong to **different social, cultural, and language communities**, so that the mediated communication is realized within the cognitive space and the limits that encode different conceptual pictures of the world both of the PS and the PA of the information, reflecting and illuminating juxtaposition thereof.

Such type of pragmatic collision gives rise to difficulties in decision-making and problem solving in translation concerning the indispensable need for the conceptual system of the translator to be adapted to the one of the PS, followed by consequent verbalization process of the information profiled through the concepts and ranging features thereof within the translator's and addressee's *common conceptual picture of the world*.

As contrasted to the situation where efficacious solution to the issue referred to above is lacking what may result in eventual failure of mediated communication act, propitious conditions are



established for adequacy in translation within the A and B comparative-situational models with due account taken of national and territorial variability along with cross-lingual and cultural specificities intrinsic to a particular language combination involved in a given act of mediated communication.

Scientific text's content as well as adequacy of comprehension and interpretation thereof in the context of both and cross-lingual communication comes mainly predetermined by the ability of the communication participants to recover or extract from it information what implies usage of linguistic and extra-linguistic cognitive knowledge taking account of communicative act's particular presuppositions where shared or common special background knowledge represents relevant and indispensable precondition for communicative efficacy.

Moreover, "conceptual information persists in human mind in verbal, and nonverbal forms. However, concepts do always have a language expression; hence analysis of language phenomena helps to gain an insight into the conceptual system that forms the logic structure of the text" [2: 25].

Turning to such relevant ranging feature or parameter as *background* or extra-linguistic *knowledge* (that are used as synonymous in this article) of the translator, especially in the given subject area, and the lack thereof, special attention should be paid to *comparative-situational model C* that comprises communicative acts where the primary addressee and secondary sender of scientific information is *translator-philologist*.

It should be noted that conceptual system of the translator-philologist (TPh) and the one of the translator-expert in given subject area considerably differ in coincidence thereof with the conceptual system of the sender (the author). Moreover, the selectivity of scientific traditions regarding the structuring of cognitive space while identifying the character of the context which reflects a respective area of interest, can lead to significant or even crucial mismatches when different social, lingual, and cultural communities interact.

As the result, eventual cognitive discordancy or lack of cognitive consonance between cognitive world picture of the sender (i.e. scientist) and the one of the translator-philologist may have negative impact on mediated communication efficiency reflecting differential in knowledge and grade of involvement of extra-linguistic knowledge of the TPh while transferring information without situating the whole translation process beyond the limits of relations between the languages.

Situations within the *comparative-situational model D* where translator- *specialist in given subject area* acts as the primary addressee and the secondary sender of scientific information imply that he has abilities to arrange and rearrange the transfer of the ST content in a creative, and proper way due to the high degree of coincidence between his scientific conceptual system and the one of the author/scientist as the PS of information in a given area of scientific interest. Hence, in contrast to the TPh the mediator-specialist faces, as usual, the problem of adequacy in linguistic processing, transfer, and representation of scientific knowledge that is to be profiled through the prism of communicative and pragmatic norm in SL and TL within the processes of scientific discourse production which is highly influenced by relevant specificities attributed to the variable types of professional discourse arranging in each area of knowledge.

In conclusion, we can state that epistemological grounds of information processing within mediated scientific communication acquire special relevance for interchange and change of participants' conceptual scientific systems, and modelling of a new cognitive space in TL that aims translator's strategy and activity at neutralizing communications gap along with discordancy or differential in knowledge, cognitive and linguistic experience relevant to adequate reconstruction of scientific communication presuppositions, and the referential situation in TL within the limits of intertextuality and communicative equivalence.

## References

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