CULTURAL ASPECTS OF THE LANGUAGE USED IN NAVAL ARCHITECTURE

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Abstract:Naval architecture translations covers the translation of many kinds of specialized texts in science and technology (Chesterman, 2002), part of which are naval architecture texts. Comparing naval architecture translation with literary translation, Aixelá (2004:183) sustains the view that scientific prose cannot be perfectly or more easily translated: "The contrary is true: the extremely high requirements set for scientific and naval architecture translation mark it out clearly from other genres, making it into an independent research field in its own right."

Keywords: naval architecture, culture, terminology, translation studies

Most researchers consider language as an expression of culture. Moreover, language affects the way its speakers (native or nonnative) perceive the world. Language and culture are depending on each other. Culture can be defined as the totality of knowledge in the form of language in mind. Cultural preferences are expressed through language. The specificity of every language resides in the ways it chooses to express a concept. Languages share the same structure, but the difference between languages is in their surfaces. Culture can affect translation in terms of lexical content, syntax, various ideologies and attitudes manifested in a given culture (James, 2005).This statement can be applied to naval architecture (naval architecture being a part of it) translation.

"Translation is a kind of activity which inevitably involves at least two languages and two cultural traditions" (Toury, 1978: 200). As this statement implies, translators are permanently faced with the problem of how to treat the cultural aspects implicit in a source text (ST) and of finding the most appropriate technique of successfully conveying these aspects in the target language (TL). These problems may vary in scope depending on the cultural and linguistic gap between the two (or more) languages concerned (see Nida, 1964: 130). Language and culture may, then, be seen as being closely related and both aspects must be considered for translation. Bassenett and Lefevere (1990: 13–14) underlines the importance of this double consideration when translating by stating that language is "the heart within the body of culture" the survival of both aspects being interdependent. Linguistic notions of transferring meaning are seen as being only part of the translation process; "a whole set of extra-linguistic criteria" must also be considered. As Bassenett and Lefevere further point out, "the translator must tackle the SL text in such a way that the TL version will correspond to the SL version …. To attempt to impose the value system of the SL culture into the TL culture is dangerous ground" (Bassenett and Lefevere, 1990: 23).

Denigration of linguistic models has occurred especially since the 1980s, when TS was characterized by the so-called 'cultural turn' (Bassenett and Lefevere, 1990). What happened was a shift from linguistically-oriented approaches to culturally-oriented ones. Influenced by cultural studies, TS has put more emphasis on the cultural aspects of translation and even a linguist like Snell-Hornby has defined translation as a "cross-cultural event (1987:78), Vermeer (1989) has claimed that a translator should be 'pluricultural' (see Snell-Hornby, 1988: 46).

Accordingly, modern translation studies is no longer concerned with examining whether a translation has been "faithful" to a source text. Instead, the focus is on social,

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cultural, and communicative practices, on the cultural and ideological significance of translating and of translations, on the external politics of translation, on the relationship between translation behaviour and socio-cultural factors. In other words, there is a general recognition of the complexity of the phenomenon of translation, an increased concentration on social causation and human agency, and a focus on effects rather than on internal structures. The object of research of translation studies is thus not language(s), as traditionally seen, but human activity in different cultural contexts. The applicability of traditional binary opposites (such as source language/text/culture and target language/text/culture, content vs. form, literal vs. free translation) is called into question, and they are replaced by less stable notions (such as hybrid text. hybrid cultures, space-in-between, intercultural space). It is also widely accepted nowadays that translation studies is not a sub-discipline of applied linguistics (or of comparative literature, cf. Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990: 12) but indeed an independent discipline in its own right (Chesterman and Arrojo, 2000). However, since insights and methods from various other disciplines are of relevance for studying all aspects of translation as product and process, translation studies is often characterised as an interdiscipline (cf. Snell-Hornby et al., 1992).

Since translation involves texts with a specific communicative function, the limitations of a narrow linguistic approach soon became obvious. Thus, from the 1970s, insights and approaches of text linguistics, pragmatics, discourse analysis, sociolinguistics, communication studies, were adopted to translation studies. Translation was defined as text production, as retextualising an SL-text according to the TL conventions. The text moved into the centre of attention, and notions such as textuality, context, culture, communicative intention, function, text type, genre, and genre conventions have had an impact on reflecting about translation. Texts are produced and received with a specific purpose, or function, in mind. This is the main argument underlying functionalist approaches to translation, initiated by Vermeer (1978) with his Skopos Theory.

As Robinson (1991: 191) points out, it is probably safe to say that there has never been a time when the community of translators was unaware of cultural differences and their significance for translation. Translation theorists have been cognizant of the problems attendant upon cultural knowledge and cultural difference at least since ancient Rome, and translators almost certainly knew all about those problems long before theorists articulated them. The more aware the translator can become of these complexities, including power differentials between cultures and genders, the better a translator/he will be. Cultural knowledge and cultural difference have been a major focus of translator training and translation theory for as long as either has been in existence. The main concern has traditionally been with so-called realia, words and phrases that are so heavily and exclusively grounded in one culture that they are almost impossible to translate into the terms – verbal or otherwise – of another. Long debates have been held over when to paraphrase, when to use the nearest local equivalent, when to coin a new word by translating literally, and when to transcribe.

Nevertheless, Manfredi (2008: 66) argues that taking account of culture does not necessarily mean having to dismiss any kind of linguistic approach to translation. As we have seen, even from a linguistic point of view, language and culture are inextricably connected. Moreover, as House (2002: 92–93) clearly states, if we opt for contextually-oriented linguistic approaches – which see language as a social phenomenon embedded in culture and view the properly understood meaning of any linguistic item as requiring reference to the cultural context, we can tackle translation from both a linguistic and cultural perspective: […] while considering translation to be a particular type of culturally determined practice, [to] also hold that is, at its core, a predominantly linguistic procedure (House, 2002: 93).

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Culturally-oriented and linguistically-oriented approaches to translation "[…] are not, necessarily mutually exclusive alternatives" (Manfredi, 2007). On the contrary, the inextricable link between language and culture can even be highlighted by a linguistic model that views language as a social phenomenon, indisputably embedded in culture. Chesterman (2006:34) does not support the linguistic-cultural studies divide that is typically used to categorize the shift or conflicting focus of research in translation studies. Instead, Chesterman proposes a classification "consisting of four complementary approaches. These are 'the textual, the cognitive, the sociological and the cultural" (2006: 20). 'Textual' covers old (linguistic) chestnuts, such as equivalence, naturalness, fluency and translation universals, and calls for observation of translation products (source text-target text pairs); 'cognitive' covers the study of different forms of decision-making, the way a translator processes a text (studied by think-aloud protocols) eye-tracking, or interviews with translators; the 'sociological' involves the study of the people, not only the identity and history of translators and their profession but also the networks established with publishers, commissioners, reviewers and others; the 'cultural' looks at the role of ideologies, values, power and ethics in translation and sees translation in Bourdieu's terms as 'cultural capital'. Since these different spheres are overlapping, Chesterman attempts to define 'a set of shared assumptions' for investigation in a field that, hermeneutically, draws on literary analysis, cultural studies and postmodernism and, empirically, on methods from human sciences such as sociology and psychology.

Chesterman considers that the growth in translation studies as an interdiscipline has led to fragmentation and that concepts and methodologies are 'borrowed [from other disciplines] at a superficial level' which leads to 'misunderstandings' since those working in translation studies are often lacking expertise in the other field and even borrowing concepts that may be outdated (2006: 19). This is an important criticism; Chesterman's solution is for collaborative work with scholars in other fields. The direction translation studies is taking is firmly towards the idea of the translator and interpreter as active mediating agents in an activity and a product where cultural difference, social roles and linguistic and economic power are most clearly expressed and need to be problematized and theorized through relevant frameworks from sociology, ethnography and related disciplines.

Culture is viewed as an undividable part of language, and it cannot be divided from any of its instances of use.[1] Even if in naval architecture texts the referential function of language is predominates; naval architecture texts are totally independent from culture. Kastberg (2009) illustrates this view:

> *"… We have a basis for arguing against what still seems be to a generally accepted idea, namely the culturelessness of naval architecture culture. Or rather, the notion that naval architecture domains are devoid of cultural influences is due to the fact that the laws of the sciences from which naval architecture domains stem, namely the laws of physical sciences, are above the constraints of any one national culture. That, of course, is true. But this doesn't mean that sciences are acultural, they are artifacts of a professional culture "(Kastberg 2009).*

The translator of naval architecture texts, resembling other translators, is proficient in the source language in all linguistic levels: phonetics and phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and pragmatics in written and oral discourses. The study focuses on the translator's mastery of the culture of source and target language. His mastery is so profound that he ends up blending himself with the culture in/from which he translates. His acculturation is the

[1] Naval architecture texts are instance of language use that have a target audience with a specific culture.

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result of the perfect knowledge of the target and focus language and cultures[2].Naval architecture texts are caring information between specialists and general audience-e.g. *Discovery Channel* documentaries about shipbuilding who have the cultural knowledge of this field .The messages have two essential characteristics: offer subject-relevant information and have some implicit references to the cultural background of the person speaking (Stolze, 2009).Naval architecture translator is aware of the discourse, science, genres and writing techniques are formed in a cultural and historical context. The view upon the world, the scientific knowledge is different in different cultures, even if the tendency is to view the language of science as *lingua franca*. Naval architects from different parts of the world and with different cultural background have different points of view that the naval architecture translator has to be perfectly aware of[3]. A relevant example is the use of naval architecture queries via emails in modern shipyards from developed countries versus the *"caiet de intrebari tehnice"* in Romanian shipyards which is written on paper is not meant to be completed by the customer, nor is it seen as a way of permanent questions and answers to check the development of the project.
Stolze (2009) has the following remarks:

> *"one must always ask oneself whether sufficient knowledge is given for understanding, translating and entering into a debate, or whether some learning strategies are still needed […] When we accept that texts function within cultures, there must also be some cultural features discernible in those texts ... That means that understanding can be put down to linguistic structures on the text level that first triggered the respective cognitive reaction. Culture will be present in texts, even in naval architecture ones. And culturally based conventions of text construction may even constitute a major translation problem for scientific communication. Detecting cultural elements in texts therefore is decisive for translation."*

Kastberg (2009) completes the previously proposed competences for a skilled naval architecture translator with a fifth competence: the cultural competence. The five competences required for a naval architecture translator (Kastberg: 2009) can be listed as follows:

1. *General language competence L1 + L2*
2. *LSP competence L1 + L2*
3. *Knowledge of the relevant domain*
4. *LSP translation competence L1*
5. *Cultural competence L1 + L2*

In order to realize why the cultural competence is very important for the naval architecture translator we need to understand what the purpose of translating naval architecture texts is. It is generally acknowledged by many researchers that the purpose of translating a naval architecture text is in the majority of cases to inform a target audience of scientific developments or new ideas(discoveries)occurred in a country which uses a foreign language so that the target audience understands and uses the information. In this respect, the target audience/reader should *understand* in order to use of the material, it is important to consider cultural differences between the source language and the target language. In some cases the translator has to adapt the ways of expression to the norms of the target language.

[2] The naval architecture texts can be considered as cultures in themselves since they have particular rules, terminology, patterns that are well known and perfectly understood only by those who are proficient in this field.
[3] Ideally, after a prolonged exposure to naval architecture texts will become his second nature.

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Despite the importance of culture in naval architecture translation, almost no attention has been paid to culture in naval architecture translation. Examining culture in naval architecture texts gives an insight of cultural differences and its importance.

Recent theories of culture, namely a group's learned set of habits and the values accompanying these habits, provide a solid argument against what is generally accepted- the **culturelessness**of naval architecture culture (Maillot: 1981). In other words, naval architecture domains are devoid of cultural influences since the laws of the naval architecture [4]from which the domain emerges are perceived as above the constraints of any one *national* culture and the language of the field is **lingua franca.** However, the science is not acultural, but mere artifacts of a **professional**culture (Kastberg 2002b) as Albert Einstein explains: *"Science is not just a collection of laws, a catalogue of facts. It is a creation of the human mind, with its freely invented ideas and concepts* "(1938:34).

As architecture of the human mind naval architecture theories cannot be and are not, as it was generally understood, **justified true belief** but **justified belief.** What seemed to be unachievable in naval architecture, was achieved .The result is the change in perception of science as static rules and regulations from God. Humans evolved, defied laws of shipbuilding making important progress and variables emerged even in the naval architecture field [5].

After stating that the laws of naval architecture can be considered as cultural artifacts, we could analyze the universally accepted idea that naval architecture[6] is cultureless. To understand how this idea did emerged, let us consider the following syllogism:

Hydrodynamics, mathematics theories are acultural
Naval architectural disciplines stem from hydrodynamics and mathematics 'theories
Therefore naval architectural disciplines are acultural

Naval architecture disciplines are historic and cultural constructions –they are entities with a life cycle. For example, ships have a life cycle: they are manufactured, used and "die"[7]. In more metaphorical terms, the naval architectural disciplines are born, grow, interconnect with other disciplines, they give birth to other disciplines, and they wither and may subsequently die. (Hosseinimanesh: 2011)

To sustain our argument we should analyze the system of disciplines in the **three scholastic paradigms** of medieval Europe (Hosseinimanesh: 2011):

a. In the first paradigm, **septem artes liberales**, namely arts suitable for young, free men (*grammar, rhetoric, dialectic [the trivium], music, arithmetic, geometry and astronomy [the quadrivium*]). The relation between them seems impossible nowadays: geometry and music.
b. In the second paradigm, which holds a more 'vocational' or practical title, i.e. **septem artes mechanicae**[8] . What we said in the first paradigm is true due to the fact that it is hardly imaginable a connection between court life and navigation. Besides, the 'art' of court life is now virtually non-existent[9]. As a consequence, institutionalized education within court life is not a reality anymore as it is in the case of navigation or shipbulding.

[4]Hydrodynamics, mathematics, shipbuilding, etc.
[5] Better construction materials, amazing shapes, excellent engines –all contributed to shape the field dramatically over the decades.
[6] as a naval architecture discipline
[7] Ships are destroyed after ,generally,25 years old ,since they cannot be considered as safe to sail.
[8] craftsmanship, war, navigation - including geography and trade -, farming and housekeeping, forest and animals, medicine and court life
[9] except some monarchies which keep the etiquette

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c. In the third paradigm, **artes illicitae, artes magicae or artes incertae**, [10]they are vivid examples of disciplines made obsolete by societal progress and deconstructed by scientific developments [11]

Based on these facts we can state that naval architecture disciplines [12]have evolved from the elite categorization, and these disciplines and the paradigms in which they are categorized are themselves artifacts of an elitist, basically religious European culture, which is not actual.

Based on the perspective gained we can oppose another universally accepted idea, i.e. naval architecture texts are cultureless. The logical reasoning behind it could be found in the syllogism:

Naval architecture theories are acultural.
The content of naval architecture texts stem from hydrodynamics, mathematics theories.
Therefore naval architecture texts are acultural.

Logical flaws aside, if naval architecture texts are indeed acultural then the same genre cannot be composed in the same way in, say, England and Romania. Reality shows that naval architecture texts differ from culture to culture. The following examples serve to illustrate our point of view:

Caution: Risk of electrical shock. Do not open!
Caution: To reduce the risk of electric shock, do not remove cover (or back).
No user-serviceable parts inside.
Refer servicing to qualified service personnel.

On the same electrical household appliances in Romanian the equivalent is:

Atentie: pentru a reduce riscul de soc electric, nu indepartati carcasa aparatului.
Nu exista componente care pot fi reparate de utilizator.
*Pentru eventuale reparatii adresati-va unui service autorizat. (*Our translation)

The Romanian version of the same warning adds quite a few of the cultural implicatures of the English version:

a. the explicit reference to what it is you should not open(***carcasa aparatului / cover)***,
b. the explicit assurance that there are no user-serviceable parts inside, but the Romanian equivalent shows that users would try to repair the device,
c. the suggestion that, in no uncertain terms that you should leave servicing in the hands of competent personnel. The Romanian equivalent is ***eventualele/eventual*** *repairs* which imply faults of the product.

Similarities and differences between the culture of Romanian and English users are rooted in their history as both nations are skilled and try to fix things on their own. At the same time, we can conclude that English users are convinced there might be some faults so they provide the necessary guidance for service, whereas Romanian users have some degree of confidence that devices are not likely to require any service. It is a question of liability issues.

In the globalized world we live in, the above example shows that the naval architecture translator should take into account the cultural competence when he translates a text. Thus his practice and training become complete and complex, challenging and rewarding, and lead to

[10] witchcraft and/or magic, in other words
[11] If in old times ships were helped by a favorable windblown by a skilled which, nowadays ships sails the seas through any wind with any speed.
[12] as any science or "art"

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his acculturation since he is totally emerged in two cultures and should prove the same mastery in both.

After having established the cultural insight in naval architecture texts, let us clarify the concepts of cultural elements and their visibility in texts. We should begin with what cultural elements are not. They are not strange objects that would be unknown elsewhere. They are a background of knowledge which is extremely relevant for proper communication within a society:

> *"Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end product of learning: knowledge, in a most general, if relative, sense of the term. By this definition, we should note that culture is not a material phenomenon; it does not consist of things, people, behaviour, or emotions. It is rather an organization of these things. It is the forms of things that people have in mind, their models for perceiving, relating, and otherwise interpreting them" (Goodenough 1964: 36).*

How people speak, write, and perceive each other is determined by culture. As a result, cultural elements should be found present implicitly in texts. In reality, they are implicit. Due to the implicitness of utterances, the translator from a different culture (and not totally acculturalized) [13]may not be able to adequately interpret the implicit cultural traces, or even misinterprets them. There is an obvious tendency to "modulate" or "adapt "the source text to the target language which result in "cultural shifts". When foreign elements are not adapted they appear as an "overt translation" (House 1997: 29) "which allows the translation receptor a view of the original through a foreign language while clearly operating in a different discourse world".

The main purpose of naval architecture translation is to assure an adequate communication across language borders and to unite scientists' view on the objects (Kalverkämper 1998: 31). Formulating communicatively adequate texts requires clarity, precision and linguistic economy (the key function of LSP-language for specific purposes is specific, condensed and autonomous of the propositions according to Gläser (1998: 206).
Taking Stolze (2009:76) as our reference we can find instances of such cultural elements between English (the lingua franca of science today) and Romanian, and observe cultural elements in naval architecture texts from the word level and syntactic structures to the style at the text level and its pragmatic social function.
Stolze (2009) sustains that:

> *"Culture determines how people speak and write and perceive each other. Consequently, cultural elements, therefore, must be present implicitly in texts, but as a background feature they are implicit. This becomes crucial in translation, when a translator from a different culture may not be able to adequately interpret the implicit cultural traces, or even misinterprets them." (Stolze, 2009)*

Cultural traces in texts certainly have a specific linguistic form. Hence it is useful to present an overview of various linguistic manifestations of culture in texts. This ranges from the word level and syntactic structures to the style on the text level, and its pragmatic social function.
The first level to be analyzed is the word level.[14]

[13] as any science or "art"
[14] terms, terminology

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