

The Socio-Semiotic Theory of Language and Translation: An overview

Mohammad Issa Mehawesh¹

Abstract

The paper intends to explore and discuss the necessity for a sociosemiotic approach in the translation. The theoretical basis for this approach is Halliday's sociosemiotic theory of language in which he stresses the unity of the text (language), context (linguistic or non-linguistic), social structure, and in which he sees language as a unique system of signs with a social function, capable of expressing the meanings which all other sign systems can make (Halliday, 1978). We will, in short, be attempting to cast some light on the relationship between translation and semiotics. The relevance of the sociosemiotic approach to the translation is that it helps the translator to better understand the meanings (associative and designative²) of words, sentences, and the fact that everything about the message has a meaning.

Keywords: translation, language, social, semiotics, Halliday

Introduction

Words never occur alone. Paralinguistic or extralinguistic features always exist. When people, for example, listen to a speaker delivering a speech, they not only take in the verbal message, but they also make judgments about the speaker on the basis of background information and various extralinguistic codes. These kinds of codes are present in both, written and oral discourse.

¹ Assistant Professor, Zarqa University, Zarqa, Jordan, Department of Translation and English Language, Post address: 132222, Zarqa 13132- Jordan, Postcode: 132222, Zarqa 13132- Jordan.
Tel: 00962 079 7492506, E-mail: mohammedissa33@yahoo.com

² Designative meaning indicates the relationship between verbal signs and their referents, whereas associative meaning indicates the relationship between verbal signs and interpretants.

What is Semiotics?

Semiotics is the study of signs. It is concerned with the ways we represent our world to ourselves and to others. It is a human endeavor. Humans can communicate verbally or non-verbally. They use signs, symbols, sound or paralinguistic means to communicate a message. Semiotics is concerned with the production and interpretation of meaning. Its main principle is that meaning is made by the deployment of acts and objects which function as signs in relation to other signs. The complex meaning relations that can exist between one sign and another constitutes the system of signs. Those relations such as meronyms, co-meronyms, antonyms, and superordination/subordination are deployed in space and time in the process of text production.

The current theories of semiotics may be traced back to two main sources. The first is Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913), a Swiss linguist for whom 'semiology' was the study of the role of signs as part of social life. The second is Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), an American philosopher whose field of study was the 'formal doctrine of signs' (Chandler, 2002).

We will start with Saussure who is considered the founding father of semiotics. He used the term 'semiology' to refer to the science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. Saussure's interest was in language. He defined the linguistic sign as being dyadic. He invented the linguistic term 'sign' that unifies 'signifier' (sound-image or word) and 'signified' (concept). In his work, he focused on the linguistic aspects signs and semiosis.

Ferdinand de Saussure (1983: 15-16) defines semiotics as

[...] a science which studies the role of signs as part of social life. It would form part of social psychology, and hence of general psychology. We shall call it semiology (from the Greek *sēmeion*, 'sign'). It would investigate the nature of signs and the laws governing them. Since it does not yet exist, one cannot say for certain that it will exist. But it has a right to exist, a place ready for it in advance. Linguistics is only one branch of this general science. The laws which semiology will discover will be laws applicable in linguistics, and linguistics will thus be assigned to a clearly defined place in the field of human knowledge.

Saussure considered language as a system of signs which have meaning by virtue of their relationships to each other. Similarly to Peirce (1983: 66), he says that every sign consists of a 'signifier' and the 'signified'. The relationship between them, for him, is called 'signification'.

On his part, Peirce defines signs as follows: Signs in general [are] a class which includes pictures, symptoms, words, sentences, books, libraries, signals, orders of command, microscopes, legislative representatives, musical concertos, performances of these... (cited in Gorlé, 1994: 50).

Peirce extended the scope of semiotics beyond the linguistics signs used in communication between humans. According to Peirce semiotics involved the systematic study of signs, sign systems or structures and sign functions. Peirce proposed a triadic model which consists of:

- The representamen: the form which the sign takes.
- An interpretant: the sense made of the sign.
- An object: to which the sign refers.

More precisely, Peirce (1985: 5) says that:

[...] a sign or representamen, is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity. It addresses somebody, that is, creates in the mind of that person an equivalent sign, or perhaps a more developed sign. That sign which it creates I call the interpretant of the first sign. The sign stands for something, its object. It stands for that object, not in all respects, but in reference to a sort of idea, which I have sometimes called the ground of the representamen.

From his side, Morris (1946) expanded the theory of signs laid down by Peirce. Peirce conceived of semiotics as a science of man, whereas Morris' theory of signs includes sign processing by animals, or organisms. Morris (1946: 15) refers to semiosis as the sign process in which

[...] every sign-process involves a disposition to respond, the sign itself may be any feature of a stimulus-object which acts... as a preparatory-stimulus; such stimuli are not limited to responses, and only when a response is itself a stimulus of this sort is it a sign.

Moreover, Morris' contribution was to derive the following three dimensions of semiotics:

- Syntactic which studies the relations between a given sign vehicle and other sign vehicles.
- Semantic which studies the relations between sign vehicles and their designate.
- Pragmatic which studies the relation between sign vehicles and their interpreters (cited in Nöth, 1995: 89).

One of the broadest definitions of semiotics is that of Umberto Eco who states “[...] semiotics is concerned with every thing that can be taken as a sign” (Eco, 1976: 7). That is to say that semiotics involves anything which stands for something else. In a semiotic sense, signs can take the form of words, images, sounds, gestures and objects (Chandler, 2002: 2). Contemporary semioticians do not study signs in isolation, they are increasingly interested in studying meaning making and exchange through texts and discourse, rooted in their historical contexts.

Semiotics and Translation

In his famous article of 1959 ‘On linguistic aspects of translation’, Jakobson (1959: 232) distinguishes three ways of interpreting a verbal sign:

- Intralingual translation (a verbal sign may be translated into other signs of the same language which can involve rewording or paraphrase).
- Interlingual translation (the translation of sign into another language).
- Intersemiotic translation (translation between sign systems).

According to Jakobson, translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes (1959: 233).

Thus, the translator has to recode the source text and then s/he has to transmit this message into an equivalent message for the target culture.

One of the scholars who has been inspired by the ideas of Jakobson (1959) is Popovic. He (1975: 16) points out that the literary text is not just a combination of verbal signs, but it is a culturally-loaded linguistic system, and it needs a thorough examination before the process of translation is carried out. Furthermore, he argues that:

[...] the semiotic aspect in translation is concerned with the differences met within the process of translation, which are a consequence of a different temporal and spatial realization of the translated text (Popovic, 1975: 16).

So, semiotic has an important role to play in translation. Translation studies are known for bringing together a wide variety of fields. Indeed, Gorlée (1994: 133) points out that:

[...] translation studies is an interdiscipline or rather transdiscipline combining an approach from (general and applied) linguistics with an approach from (general and comparative) literary studies, in addition to contributions from such disciplines as information theory, logic, and mathematics on the scientific side, and social anthropology, sociology, and theology, on the more humanistic side.

As part of translation studies, translation semiotics has provided a different outlook on the problems of translatability, from linguistic questions to the wider function of the translation text as cultural artifact. Moreover, semiotics analysis gives the translator the necessary means to deal with signs in the translations of any kind of text, including the political speeches. Hence, semiotics analysis is one of the first procedural moves towards understanding a text in its entirety, as a whole. It allows us to describe the intricate process of communication between cultures and the translatability of sign systems. As Gorlée (1997: 82) puts it:

[...] translation is essentially an affair of self-referential iconicity. The universe of discourse (objectual reality) of source text and target text experiments with the space between text-internal and text-external reality, between the creative tension and mutual constraints of the dynamical object with the immediate object.

In its different stages, translation moves from the firstness of mood-scape (image) through the secondness of worldscape (diagram) to the thirdness of mindscape (metaphor). In this process, translation creates for itself more and more referential freedom and space for (creative and/or doctrinaire) maneuvering of meanings.

Elsewhere, Gorfée remarks that translation “can be assimilated to semiosis, or sign activity” (1994: 10) in the sense that semiotics studies the transmission, and the interpretation of the meanings consisting one or more signs, which is rather similar to the issues translation studies addresses.

Nöth (1990: 476) stresses the importance of semiotics to translator by saying that:

[...] semiotics provides the theoretical tools for the analysis of signs and communication process [...] semiotics expands the analytic horizon from the verbal message in the narrower sense to the multiplicity of codes used in persuasive communication.

The focus he gives to persuasive discourse is of particular interest to us, as our own research deals with political persuasion.

Similarly, Gorfée (2004: 129) states that semiotranslation is a complex metadisciplinary concept, which also influences the definition of the translator's competence. Harking back to Jakobson's categories, he defines the requisite knowledge of the translator as follows:

[...] the professional translator must have learned and internalized a vast number of associations and combinations with reference to individual language (intra-lingual translation), language pairs (inter-lingual translation), and the interactions between language and non verbal sign systems (inter-semiotic translation).

Recently, some of Hatim and Mason's works has had to do with semiotics. They (1990: 105) point out that translation can now be considered as the process which transforms one semiotic entity into another, under certain equivalence conditions to do with semiotic codes, pragmatic action and general communicative requirements.

Furthermore, they (1990: 105-106) mention four steps that a translator should undertake in a semiotic translation, mainly, 1) identification, 2) information, 3) explication, and 4) transformation of signs.

On his part, Toury (1986: 1112) considers translation as a cross-systemic transference within the framework of cultural semiotics. Hence, he defines translation as

[...] a series of operations, or procedures, whereby one semiotic entity, which is a (functional) constituent (element) of a certain cultural (sub)-system, is transformed into another semiotic entity, which forms at least a potential element of another cultural (sub)-system, providing that some informational core is retained 'invariant under transformation', and on its basis a relationship known as 'equivalence' is established between the resultant and initial entities.

Social Semiotics

The term 'social semiotics' was introduced by Halliday (1978). Halliday proposes that language cannot be separated from society. He views language as a 'social semiotic' in which language, the means by which people interact, must be considered in a social context. Language and society is a unified concept and need to be investigated as a whole.

Halliday (1978: 14) points out that individual human beings become part of a group through language. Halliday adds that a society does not consist of participants but of relations, and these relations define a social role. The link between social roles and language is explained by Halliday (1978: 15) as one in which

[...] social roles are combinable, and the individual, as a member of a society, occupies not just one role but many at a time, always through the medium of language. Language is again a necessary condition for this final element in the process of the development of the individual, from human being to person to what we may call 'personality', a personality being interpreted as a role complex. Here the individual is seen as the configuration of a number of roles defined by the social relationships in which he enters; from these roles he synthesizes a personality.

Halliday (1978: 23) also states that our environment is shaped by the culture, and the conditions under which we learn language are culturally determined. This point is significant at two interconnected levels:

1. A matter of linguistic environment, which is itself part of the culture, which
2. shapes our behavior patterns and a great deal of our behavior is then mediated through language.

Thus, language is interdependent with cultural context and cannot be represented by a single discreet system. Instead, it has to be investigated within a socio-semiotic framework, or as Halliday (1978: 2) puts it

A social reality (or a ‘culture’) is itself an edifice of meanings – a semiotic construct. In this perspective, language is one of the semiotic systems that constitute a culture; one that is distinctive in that it also serves as encoding system of many (though not all) of the others. This in summary terms is what is intended by the formulation ‘language as social semiotic’. It means interpreting language within a sociocultural context, in which the culture itself is interpreted in semiotic terms – as an information system, if that terminology is preferred.

Hodge and Kress (1988) develop this theory of social semiotic further. They focus on the uses of semiotic systems in social practice, and built a notion of semiosis as a dynamic process, where meaning is not determined by rigid structures, or predefined cultural codes. The major impetus of Hodge and Kress’ work can be summarized as following:

- They consider semiotics as the general study of semiosis. That is to say “[...] the process and effects of the production and reproduction, reception and circulation of meaning in all forms, used by all kinds of agent of communication”.
- They also state that social semiotics is an inherently social phenomenon in its sources, functions, contexts and effects: social meanings constructed through the full range of semiotic forms, semiotic texts and semiotic practices.
- They add that social semiotics studies all kind of human semiotic systems, since they are social in their conditions and content (1988: 261).

Hodge and Kress (1988: 4) link the language and communication as semiotic through the concept of a 'logonomic system'³. Each producer of a message relies on its recipients for it to function as intended. This requires recipients to have a knowledge of a set of messages on another level, messages that provide specific information about how to read the message. They go on to state that the recipient of a message may not have such knowledge on that level of message in which case s/he will not be able to derive a context in which to place the message and thereby give it meaning.

In Halliday (1978: 108), there are certain essential concepts inherent to the sociosemiotic theory of language. These are "[...] the text, the situation, the text variety or register, the code (in Bernstein's sense), the linguistic system (including the semantic system), and the social structure". We will now address the concepts of text and that of register, which necessarily comprise a consideration of the semantic and linguistic levels of language.

3.1 Text

Halliday (1978: 139) defines text as a "[...] sociological event, a semiotic encounter through which the meanings that constitute the social system are exchanged". According to Halliday (1978) a text can also be recognized as a semantic unit but at the same time represents a choice, 'what is meant' selected from total set of options that constitute what is meant. In other words, "[...] a text can be defined as actualized meaning potential", and the meaning potential can be represented as the range of options that belong to a specific situation type (Halliday, 1978: 109). Moreover, Halliday adds that the meaning potential represents part of the paradigmatic range of choice to which members of the culture have access in their language. That is to say that meaning is constructed in messages which are represented as clauses in the texts and texts must be taken in context to have meaning.

³ According to Hodge and Kress (1988: 4), "it is a set of rules prescribing the conditions for production and reception of meanings; which specify who can claim to initiate (produce, communicate) or know (receive, understand) meanings about what topics under what circumstances and with what modalities (how, when, why) Logonomic systems prescribe social semiotic behaviors at points of production and reception, so that we can distinguish between production regimes (rules constraining production) and reception regimes (rules constraining reception)."

Pointing to the functions of context, Hodge and Kress (1988: 40) mention the following functions:

(1) The context of semiosis is itself organized as a series of texts, with meanings assigned to categories of participants and relationship. (2) The behavior of the participants is constrained by logonomic systems which operate through messages about their identity and relationships, signifying status, power and solidarity. (3) Participants in semiosis typically transmit a great profusion of messages in a number of codes about the status of the exchange and their own and other roles. (4) Where a semiotic exchange does not involve direct contact by all participants, producers are likely to include instructions specifying producers, receivers and contexts into the form of their text. (5) The set of messages which organizes a particular semiotic exchange will imply a generalized version of social relations. That is, every semiotic act has an ideological content.

From the Hallidayan social semiotic point of view, a semiotic system is structured around three kinds of meaning, also referred to as three semantic metafunctions: ideation, interpersonal and textual (Halliday, 1978: 112).

Ideational meaning represents the speaker's meaning potential as an observer. It is divided into 'experiential meaning' and 'logical meaning'. It is the content function of language through which language encodes the cultural experience, and the individual's experience as a member of the culture (Halliday, 1978: 112).

Interpersonal meaning categorizes the various acts by which the participants relate to each other and the various appraisals which participants make relating to an act or a whole work. In other words, "[...] this is the component through which the speaker intrudes himself into the context of situation, both expressing his own attitudes and judgments and seeking to influence the attitudes and behavior of others" (Halliday, 1978: 112).

Textual meaning is about what resources semiotic modes have for producing a cohesive semantic edifice instead of a random collection of acts. In the words of Halliday (1978: 112), it represents the "[...] speaker's text-forming potential; it is that which makes language relevant. This component provides the texture.

It expresses the relationship between the language and its environment including both the verbal environment and the non-verbal".

Without the textual function, the former two would not be, as there would be not text. Hence it also called the 'enabling' function.

3.2 Register

A register is a language variety which is based on the use. Register analysis is derived from Halliday's systemic functional grammar (SFL) which is "[...] geared to the study of language as communication, seeing meaning in the writer's linguistic choice and systematically relating these choices to a wider sociocultural framework" (Munday, 2001: 90). Hence, one of the most important claims in SFL is that using language is a social semiotic. That is to say that language is a meaning-making system, or as Thompson (1990: 285) states:

[...] semiotic is a very general term. It is fundamentally concerned with sign, or more properly, with systems of signs and can be understood as the study of the relations between the elements which compose a symbolic form or sign, and of the relations between these elements and those of a broader system of which this symbolic form may be a part.

Register is a "semantic concept" (Halliday, 1985: 38). According to Halliday and Hasan (1985: 41), register is "[...] a variety according to use". Register can also be defined as "[...] the configuration of semantic resources that the member of a culture typically associates with a situation type. It is the meaning potential that is accessible in a given social context (Halliday, 1978: 111). That is to say that register is a language variety functionally associated with particular contextual or situational parameters of variation and defined by the typical linguistic characteristics dependent on these variables.

According to Halliday, there is a strong interrelation between the "[...] surface-level realizations of the linguistic functions and the sociocultural framework" (Munday (2001: 90). Munday also offers the following diagram regarding the relationship between the register variables and the sociocultural environment.

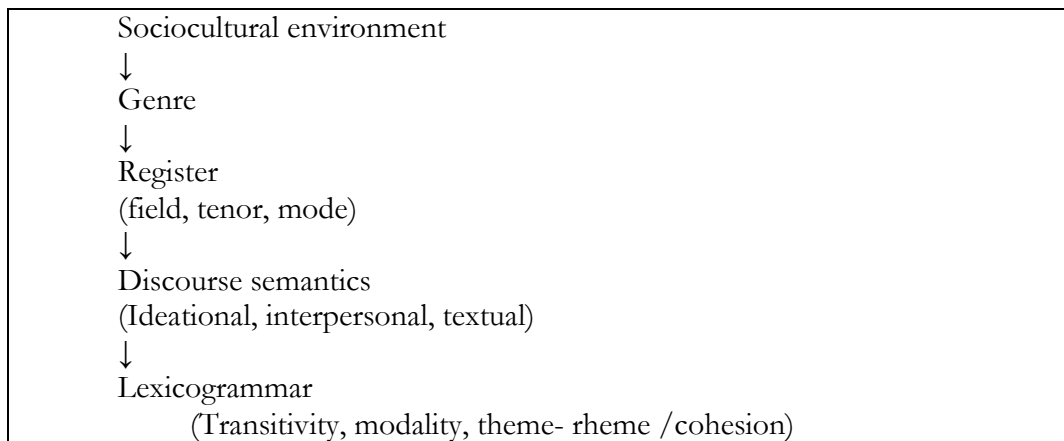


Fig.1. The Relationship between Sociocultural Environment and Register

3.3 Text Context of Situation

This term was firstly put by Malinoeski in 1923. He coined this term to refer to the environment of the text. He needed a term to refer to the whole environment of text included the situation in which the text was produced.

Translators should consult the context of situation in which an utterance is used. This is an important step in analyzing the meaning of any utterance and helps in translating it properly. Pointing out to the importance of the context of situation, Firth (1968: 87) states “[...] translation problems can be solved in the mutual assimilation of the languages in similar contexts of situation and in common human experience”. In this regard, Brassac and Trognon (1995: 555) say:

[...] analyzing the meaning of an utterance should follow two steps. The first step aims at analyzing the linguistic meaning of this utterance and the second one its meaning in context.

Julian House (1981/1997) has provided A Model for Translation Quality Assessment, which “[...] provides for the analysis of the linguistic-situational peculiarities of a given source text and its target text” (1981: Abstract). House uses a sociosemiotic approach for translation quality assessment by categorizing the product of translation into two kinds: overt and covert. His assessment is based on the similarity between the source text and the target text in terms of register variables, the genre, and the ideational and interpersonal meanings.

House's approach looks to equate source and target context of situation via the following 'dimensions': geographical origin, social class, time, medium, participation, social role relationship, social attitude, and province. The basic of this model is to match function with function. Translators (like speakers) select from a paradigmatic network, their selections are restricted by a variety of factors, and most of them can be traced back to House's dimensions. In case of not selecting wisely, there will be mismatches between source and target text.

When we talk about the context of situation, we also refer to extra-linguistics factors. Regarding this, Butt et al (2000: 3) say:

[...] within the context of culture, speakers and writers use language in many specific contexts or situations. Each of those is an inner context, which functional linguists call the context of situation.

According to Halliday and Hasan (1985: 12), texts cannot be approached without reference to the situation as the context "[...] in which texts unfold and in which they are to be interpreted".

Thus, the sociosemiotic approach to register analysis can be used to trace the realization of meanings (discussed above) which have been activated by the three contextual variables: field, tenor, and mode.

Field of discourse refers to "[...] what is happening, to the nature of the social action that is taking place: what is it the participants are engaged in, in which the language figures as some essential component?" (Halliday and Hasan, 1985: 112).

Field of discourse plays a vital role in the context of text. It is one of the three basic elements in the textual internal world and external world. Fields of discourse can be non-technical, as is the case with the general topics that we deal with in the course of our daily life. Or they can be technical or specialist as in linguistics, politics, law, computer science and many other fields.

According to Halliday and Hasan, tenor refers

[...] who is taking part, to the nature of the participants, their statuses and roles: what kinds of role relationship obtain among the participants, including permanent and temporary relationships of one kind or another, both the types of speech role that they are taking on in the dialogue and the whole cluster of socially significant relationships in which they are involved?" (Halliday and Hasan, 1985: 12).

Tenor of discourse indicates the relationship between discourse participants (e.g. speaker/writer and hearer/reader) as manifested in language use.

As far as addresser and addressee are different in terms of categories, one would always expect the language used between them to vary from one set or group to another. Language which is used between husband and wife is usually expected to be informal, even intimate, whatever the subject matter, whereas the language which is employed by a politician making a speech in a conference is more to the formal end of the continuum, though not only. After all, to construct solidarity and alignment between speaker and the hearer is a vitally important task in this register. Mode of discourse is a term that to

[...] what part the language is playing, what it is that the participants are expecting the language to do for them in that situation: the symbolic organization of the text, the status that it has, and its function in the context, including the channel (is it spoken or written or some combination of the two?) and also the rhetorical mode, what is being achieved by the text in terms of such categories as persuasive, expository, didactic, and the like" (Halliday and Hasan, 1985: 12).

Mode includes phonic vs. graphic channel, spoken vs. written mediums, the extent to which text creation is shared or not, etc. Speaking can be non-spontaneous, as in acting or reciting, or spontaneous, as in conversing. Miller (2005: 28) offers the following diagram of the Hallidayan model which is valuable as a vision of the global text creation process.

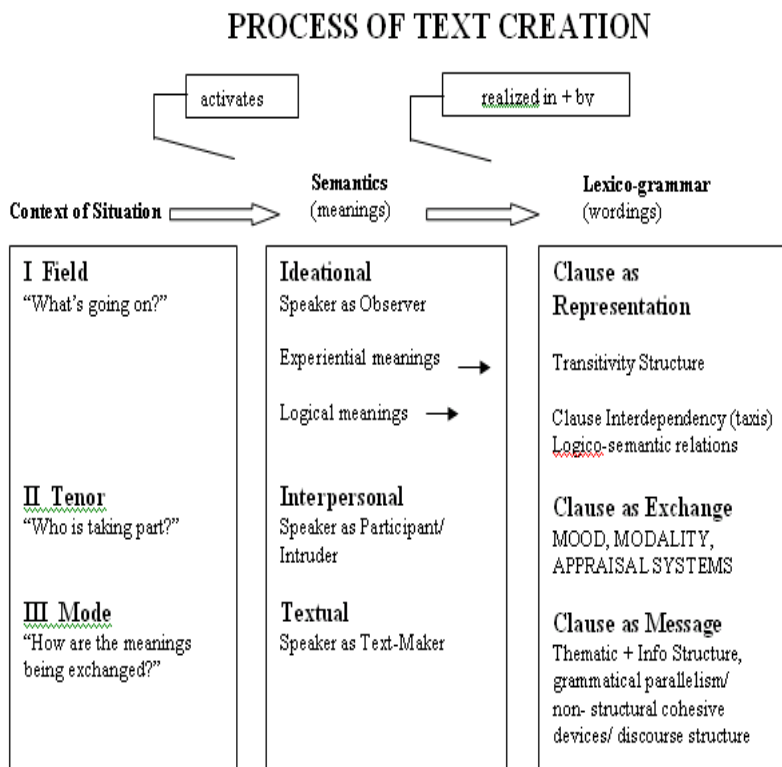


Fig 2 – The Process of Text Creation – based on D.R. Miller, ‘English Linguistics’ lecture notes: AA 2000-01

The above figure represents language as

[...] multiple coding system in which the variables of the context of situation are seen as activating/ determining select meanings (semantic meta-functions) which are then systematically realized / made accessible to us in the wordings (lexico-grammar) of the text itself, with reference to the various functions of the clause (Miller, 2005: 25).

The three metafunctions (ideational, interpersonal, and textual) in systemic functional linguistic are the interface between language and what is outside language (that is field, tenor, mode in the context of situation). The ideational metafunction realizes field at the semantic level. At the lexicogrammatical level, it is realized in the transitivity structure, clause interdependency, and logical semantic relations.

The interpersonal metafunction realizes tenor at the semantic level and it is realized at the lexicogrammatical level in the mood, modality, and appraisal systems. The textual metafunction realizes mode at the semantic level and at the lexicogrammatical level is realized at the thematic + info structure, grammatical parallelism, non-structural cohesive devices, and discourse structure.

3.4 Text Context of Culture

Like context of situation, context of culture is an important element through which one can comprehend texts. The term context of culture was firstly put by the anthropologist Malinowski (1923). He saw that it is necessary to give information not only about what is happening but also about the whole cultural environment and the whole cultural history that is behind the participants and behind the social practices in which they take part, determining in this way their meaning inside that culture. Context of culture is very important also because it is not the immediate sights that is important but also the whole cultural history behind the text and determining the significance for the culture. Knowing where, when the text is set will help to understand the text more.

Halliday and Hasan (1985: 46) point out that:

[...] the context of situation, however, is only the immediate environment. There is also a broader background against which the text has to be interpreted: its **CONTEXT OF CULTURE**. Any actual context of situation, the particular configuration of field, tenor, and mode that has brought a text into being, is not just a random jumble of features but a totality- a package, so to speak, of things that typically go together in the culture. People do these things on these occasions and attach these meanings and values to them; this is what a culture is.

The culture in which a certain political speech is created forms part of the context. Schiffrin (1987: 4) confirms this view by stating that: “[...] language always occur(s) in a context, but its patterns – of form and function and at surface and underlying levels – are sensitive to features of that context.” So, when a translator deals with political speeches, he/she has to be sensitive to this because “[...] language is potentially sensitive to all of the contexts in which it occurs, and, even more strongly, language reflects those contexts because it helps to constitute them” (Schiffrin, 1987: 5).

3.5 Sociosemiotics and Translation

The sociosemiotic approach was first developed, as said, by Halliday. Halliday puts forward the idea that language is a unique system of signs with some social functions which are able to express meanings made in other systems signs. The orientation of the sociosemiotic approach is on function and thus on the meaning of language in use.

The sociosemiotic approach has been considered recently as a solution to the problem of untranslatability. It views language as a social process, and all texts are dependent on their contexts. Thus, in order to understand a text, the context of the text must be able to be reconstructed, if only intuitively.

Sociosemiotic approach considers translation as a social cultural phenomenon in the sense that social and cultural information is expressed in different systems of signs (languages). Thus, sociosemiotics studies the meaning of language signs through the process of communication. Regarding the nature of the sociosemiotic approach, Nida argues that:

[...] one may study the nature of translating from four different and valid orientations: philological, linguistic, communicative, and sociosemiotic.... These four approaches are essentially complementary one to the other, but as will be readily seen, there are certain implications for the sociosemiotic approach, primarily because of its greater inclusiveness (Nida, 1982:13).

Thus, in his opinion, a translation theory grounded on sociosemiotics would be more valuable and helpful. Elsewhere, Nida (1993: 164) points out that:

[...] perhaps the most pervasive and crucial contribution to understanding translation process is to be found in sociosemiotics, the discipline that treats all systems of signs used by human societies. The great advantage of sociosemiotics over other interlingual communication is that it deals with all type of signs and codes, especially with language as the most comprehensive and complex of all systems of signs employed by humans. No holistic approach to translating can exclude semiotics as a fundamental discipline in encoding and decoding sign.

According to Nida, a sociosemiotic model of translation “seems to be more advantageous” (1993: 164), and he believes that semiotics is the most comprehensive system with which to approach the analysis of the significance of signs.

Conclusion

As this paper has shown, the sociosemiotic approach is widely considered to be one of the most useful approaches to studying translation, and in particular to assessing their quality. As Nida notes, it is inclusive, as it takes into consideration different aspects of the linguistic, communicative, and various other approaches of translation. It also extends the base for recognizing the meaningfulness of lexical content, rhetorical form and socio-cultural value. In addition, it is clear that a social semiotic perspective can be crucial to the process of translating as well as to the production of quality translation.

References

- Brassac, C. and Trognon, A. (1995) Formalizing the Theory of Intentionality. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 23, 555-562.
- Butt, D et al. (2000) *Using Functional Grammar. An Explorer's Guide*. Sydney: NCELTR.
- Chandler, D. (2002) *Semiotics: The Basics*. London: Routledge.
- Eco, U. (1976) *A Theory of Semiotics*. Bloomington, In: Indiana University Press/ London: Macmillan.
- Firth, J. R. (1968) *Linguistic Analysis and Translation*. In: Palmer 1986.
- Gorlée, D. (1994) *Semiotics and the Problem of Translation*. Amsterdam-Atlanta: Rodopi.
- _____. (1997) “Translation: Between Imaging, Modeling, and Manipulation”. *Semiosis*, 1-4, pp. 85-90.
- _____. (2004) *On Translating Signs. Exploring Text and Semio-Translation*. Amsterdam/ New York: Rodopi.
- Halliday, M. A. K. (1978) *Language as Social Semiotic: the social interpretation of language and meaning*. London: Arnold.
- Halliday, M.A.K. & Hasan, R. (1985) *Language, context, and text: aspects of language in a social-semiotic perspective*, Australia: Deakin University Press.
- Hatim, B. & Mason, I (1990) *Discourse and the Translator*. London & New York: Longman.
- Hodge, R. & Kress, G. (1988) *Social Semiotics*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- House, J (1981) *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr Verlag.
- _____. (1997) “A Model for Assessing Translation Quality”, *Meta* 22: 103-9.
- Jakobson, R. (1959) “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation”, in R. A. Brower (ed.). *On Translation*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 232-239.
- Miller, D. R., with the collaboration of Maiorani, A. & Turci, M. (2005) *Language as Purposeful: Functional Varieties of Texts, Quaderni del CeSlic: Functional Grammar Studies for Non-Native Speakers of English*, Series Editor, Donna R. Miller, AlmaDL, Bologna: Asterisco.
- Morris, C. (1946) *Signs, Language and Behavior*. New York: George Braziller inc.

- Munday, J. (2001) *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and Application*. London: Routledge.
- Nida, E. A. (1993) *Language, Culture, and Translating*. Shanghai: Shanghai Education Press.
- Nida, E. A. et al (1986) *From One Language to Another: Functional Equivalence in Bible Translating*. Nelson: Nashville.
- Nöth, W. (1990) *Handbook of Semiotics*. Bloomington & Indiana Polis: Indiana University Press.
- _____. (1995) *Handbook on Semiotics: Advances on Semiotics*. Bloomington: Bloomington University Press.
- Peirce, C. S. (1985) *Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs*, In: R. E. Innis (ed.) *Semiotics: An Introductory Anthology*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, pp.4-23.
- Popovic, A. (1975) *Dictionary for the Analysis of Literary Translation*. Edmonton, Alta: University of Alberta Press.
- Saussure, F. (1916[1985]) *Course in General Linguistics*. (trans. Roy Harris). London: Duckworth.
- Schiffrin, D. (1987) *Discourse markers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Thompson, J.B. (1990) *Ideology and Modern Culture: Critical Social Theory in the Era of Mass Communication*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Toury, G. (1986) "Translation: A cultural-Semiotic Perspective" in Sebeok (ed.) 1986: 2: 1111-1124.