

CONCEPTUAL AND TERMINOLOGICAL CONFUSION IN TRANSLATION STUDIES: TOWARDS A TERMINOLOGICALLY CONSISTENT FRAMEWORK

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Abstract

Knowing metalanguage of translation can help translators, especially translator trainees talk about translation and recognise translation operations. It can also help them analyse and discuss processes involved in translation, as well as grasp the principles of translation. The knowledge of translation metalanguage can also help translator trainees improve self-reflection, which can enable them to critique own translations. Indeed, self-reflection is like a meta-competence, because it can boost translation competence by helping translators evaluate and improve their work. Despite the above-stated benefits of knowing metalanguage of translation, the metalanguage of translation can often pose problems in scholarly discourse in Translation Studies (TS) since, in most cases, terms associated with TS resist definitions, because either they are not used in standardised ways or the manner in which they are used is confusing. Adopting a conceptual clarification approach via qualitative review, this study dissects relevant scholarly sources by analysing and presenting reflections of different TS scholars on the metalanguage of TS. It first foreshadows the challenges of the metalanguage of translation, then presents the rationale for investigating terminological complexities. In particular, the study presents the conceptual reflections provided by different translation scholars on confusing terms such as method, procedure, strategy, tactic, technique, shift, solution, problem and difficulty. After a thorough analysis, findings indicate that numerous meanings are sometimes assigned to different terms without any significant change to their basic conceptual content, thereby perpetuating the use of unique concepts bearing different names or similar terms describing different concepts. The study thus provides insights into addressing terminological issues in translation research and pedagogy while also suggesting some recommendations that can help in maintaining terminological consistency in TS.

Keywords: metalanguage of translation, translation operation, translation problems, techniques, strategies.

Introduction¹

The metalanguage of translation is vital for understanding translation principles and practices, but it complicates scholarly discourse in Translation Studies (TS), as noted by Snell-Hornby (2007). The discipline's name itself reflects definitional divergence (Chesterman, 2005; Marco, 2007; Snell-Hornby, 2007). Although Gambier and van Doorslaer (2007) state that several doubts and developments have emerged in the struggle with metalanguage in

disciplines other than TS, Snell-Hornby (2007, p. 314) contrasts the metalanguage of TS with that of natural sciences, which utilises standardised terms for defined phenomena, thus facilitating clear communication. In TS, however, language-related complexities often lead to ambiguous discourse. In some cases, TS terms resist clear definitions due to non-standardised usage or confusing applications (Marco, 2007). It is, therefore, pertinent to foster a terminological consistent framework in TS, hence this study.

¹ This paper is actually the Chapter 2 of my PhD thesis entitled *English – French Translation in Nigeria: A Mixed-methods Evaluation of Bachelor's Students' Translation Problems*,

Strategies and Products. Thesis submitted and published in 2025 for the degree of Doctor of Translation Studies at the University of Antwerp, Belgium. The chapter is slightly adapted here to make it a stand-alone journal article.

Terminological complexities resulting from disagreement among TS experts, differences in traditions and ambiguity of concepts and terms are the three main issues surrounding the metalanguage of translation (Chesterman, 2005; Marco, 2007). Van Vaerenbergh (2007, p. 215) highlights that this terminological diversity reflects the discipline's culture-bound nature and interdisciplinarity. Based on these complexities, Snell-Hornby (2007) argues that it is unrealistic and also undesirable to strive for complete standardisation of terms. While Gambier and van Doorslaer (2007) emphasise the need for compatible and comprehensible discourse, Pokorn (2007), in contrast, advocates for fuzzy definitions, rejecting the notion of fixed meanings. He states that the idea of using words in a univocal sense is an illusion and must be abandoned since it was typical of only some outdated approaches, and no longer compatible with the complexity of the present generation. Van Vaerenbergh (2007, p. 247), however, argues that understanding the terminological diversity in translator training can present opportunities rather than confusion.

No doubt, the transfer process in TS has been described using various terms such as strategies, procedures, and methods, leading to terminological confusion. Different scholars often use different terms for similar concepts, creating a lack of clarity (Chesterman, 2005, p. 18). TS scholars like Delisle et al. (1999) and many others as mentioned above attempt to argue for terminological consistency in TS, but the use of concepts and terms in the field appears to remain chaotic. Therefore, despite previous scholarly efforts to address this issue, Chesterman argues that further clarifications and agreement on specific terms are necessary to resolve the ongoing terminological confusion in describing transfer operations.

In light of the above-stated, this study aims to clarify the confusing terms used in TS, such as methods, procedures, strategies, techniques, and solutions in order to establish a consistent terminological framework. It is structured into eight sections: Section 1 introduces the challenges of translation metalanguage and the necessity of addressing terminological complexities; Sections

2 and 3 briefly describe the objectives of the study and methodology used respectively; Section 4 reflects on scholars' perspectives regarding the confusing terms; Section 5 provides practical insights into resolving terminological issues in research and education; Section 6 critiques the ongoing terminological debate; Section 7 offers recommendations for maintaining consistency; and Section 8 concludes with a summary of key arguments and implications.

Objectives

The aim of this study is two-fold; (1) to clarify key concepts and terms used in Translation Studies (TS) that can be confusing such as methods, procedures, strategies, techniques, and solutions; (2) to help foster a terminologically consistent framework in TS.

Methodology

The study uses a qualitative method. Specifically, it adopts a conceptual clarification approach, focusing on defining terms and clarifying meaning of specific concepts to make sense of terms and concepts in the field of Translation Studies. In other words, the conceptual clarification approach focuses on defining terms, showing how they are used differently in scholarly works in TS, then proposing how such terms should be used to ensure terminological consistency in the field.

Conceptual reflection on method, procedure, strategy, tactic, technique and related terms

This section analyses semantic distinctions among terms like 'method', 'procedure', 'strategy', and 'technique' by comparing views from various TS scholars, especially Molina and Hurtado Albir, Chesterman, Gambier, and Pym. These scholars not only provide a typology of concepts, but offer in-depth reflections on their meanings while also addressing the conceptual confusion in TS. To have a thorough analysis of the terminological complexities and situate each term well within the broader context of TS, one needs to highlight the conceptual reflections of these scholars. The overview is organised chronologically since scholars build on previous work and typically focus on specific terms while comparing them with related ones. For instance, Molina and Hurtado Albir focus on 'technique', then compare it with

'strategy', 'method', and 'procedure'. Detailed discussions are presented in subsequent subsections.

Technique versus strategy, method and procedure: Molina and Hurtado Albir's views on translation process versus product.

Presenting a classification of translation techniques, which has been tested in a study of the translation of cultural elements in English–Arabic translation and used as an instrument of analysing translations, Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) argue that classifying what goes on during translation is not the same as the result of the translation. Therefore, they redefine translation technique and demonstrate how different it is from translation strategy, method and procedure. They consider translation technique an instrument of textual analysis that allows translators to investigate how translation equivalence works vis-à-vis the original text. To them, 'translation technique' can be viewed as the specific application, which can be observed in the product and can affect only small units of the text. For instance, a translator may, at times, resort to adapting a cultural referent in the translation of a cartoon, but this may not necessarily be the reason to mark the translation as free or adapted. Molina and Hurtado Albir's (2002) reflections are dealt with in details in the following paragraphs.

Translation technique vs translation strategy:

For Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002), translation technique describes the translation result, which can be used in classifying different translation solutions. Conversely, translation strategy involves certain mechanisms, which translators use throughout the translation process to solve translation problems, depending on specific needs. However, it is curious to learn from Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) that certain transfer mechanisms, like paraphrasing, may be considered both strategies and techniques. They argue that when paraphrasing is applied as a means of reformulation, it is a 'strategy', but when applied as an amplification, it is a 'technique'. Therefore, translation techniques are "procedures to analyse and classify how translation equivalence works" (Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002, p. 509). For them, techniques have five essential characteristics: (1)

they affect the outcome of the translation, (2) they are classified in comparison with the original, (3) they affect textual micro-units, (4) they are discursive and contextual by nature and (5) they are functional (p. 508).

Stressing the difference between translation technique and translation strategy, Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) argue that translation strategy is of an individual and procedural nature, and that strategies are cognitive, while techniques are not. Strategies involve "the procedures (conscious or unconscious, verbal or nonverbal) used by the translator to solve translation problems that emerge when carrying out the translation process" (p. 508). Molina and Hurtado Albir highlight that strategies enable translators to find suitable solutions for a unit of translation and these solutions are materialised "by using a particular technique" (p. 508). What this assertion means is that, although the various transfer operations can sometimes be interwoven, technique essentially has to do with the translation result, while strategy has to do with the translation process.

Translation technique vs translation method:

Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) also demonstrate how translation technique is different from translation method. In their view, translation methods are ways in which translators carry out a translation process depending on the objectives of the translation. For instance, when the aim is simply to translate the sense of the source text (ST), translators follow the interpretive or communicative method; if the translation objective is linguistic transcoding, translators use the literal method; if the aim is modification of semiotic and communicative categories, translators use the free method; if the objective is to produce a foreignised version of the ST, the borrowing technique may be used frequently, etc. They continue that a translation method has to do with "a global option that affects the whole text" (p. 507) and that any translation solution chosen by a translator in the process of translating a given text depends on the aim of the translation and such solution certainly "responds to the global option that affects the whole text" (p. 508). It, therefore, means what distinguishes method from technique is simply the fact that a translation method affects

the whole text while a translation technique affects micro-units of a text. In other words, translation method is part of the process that affects the whole translation, while “translation techniques describe the result and affect smaller sections of the translation” (Molina and Hurtado Albir, p. 506). By this explanation, the distinction between the two concepts can be said to be the one of scope – methods have a broader scope than techniques.

Translation technique vs translation procedure: Stressing the distinction between ‘translation technique’ and ‘translation procedure’, Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) highlight that translation procedure has to do with the distinction between declarative knowledge (knowing *what*) and procedural or operative knowledge (knowing *how*). Translation procedure, being an important part of procedural knowledge, is related to knowing how to do something and having the ability to organise actions to achieve a specific goal. Molina and Hurtado Albir conclude that procedures can also involve the ability to use simple techniques and skills, as well as

professional use of strategies. This description of ‘procedure’ goes beyond the prescriptive models, but it involves a conscious interplay of knowing what to do and how to it.

Indeed, Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) argue that the confusion between translation technique, strategy, method and procedure arises from the confusion created by Vinay and Darbelnet’s (1958) typology, which classifies translation procedure as a description of the various ways open to translators during the process of translation. For Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002), Vinay and Darbelnet’s pioneering proposal does not refer to the process that the translator follows during translation, but to the result of the translation. Therefore, they conclude that Vinay and Darbelnet worked with isolated units and chose not to differentiate between categories that affect the whole text and the ones that affect only a small unit of the text. Table 2.1 presents a summary of Molina and Hurtado Albir’s (2002) conceptual reflection about translation technique, strategy, method and procedure.

Table 2.1

Summary, Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) translation technique, strategy, method and procedure.

| Techniques | Strategies | Methods | Procedures |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>-Specific application that can be observed in the product & that can only affect small units of the text</p> <p>-procedures to analyse and classify how translation equivalence works. This means: (1) they affect the outcome of the translation; (2) they are classified in comparison with the original; (3) they affect text micro-units; (4) they are discursive and contextual by nature, and (5) they are functional</p> | <p>- consist of mechanisms used by translators throughout the whole translation process to solve certain problems</p> <p>- translation strategies are cognitive</p> <p>- are central part of the subcompetences that make up translation competence, because they play an essential role in problem solving.</p> | <p>-the way a particular translation process is carried out in terms of the translator’s objective i.e., a global option that affects the whole text</p> <p>- affect the way micro-units of a text are translated</p> <p>-translation method & the function of the translation operate harmoniously in the text</p> | <p>- involve the ability to use simple techniques and skills, as well as professional use of strategies</p> <p>- involve a conscious interplay of knowing what to do and how to do it i.e., the ability to organise actions in order to achieve a specific goal</p> |

Looking at Table 2.1, one can state that for Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002), the fundamental distinction between technique and strategy is that ‘technique’ describes the translation results, hence it is related to the translation product, while ‘strategy’ involves all mechanisms activated by the translator to solve translation problems throughout the translation process, hence a process-orientated action. Additionally, ‘method’ is the translator’s ways of carrying out a translation process depending on the objectives of the translation and can

be related to the whole text, while 'procedure' involves the ability to use simple techniques, skills and strategy in professional ways.

In summary, Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) assert that translation equivalence is inherently dynamic, and this is a fact often overlooked in studies on translation techniques. Bearing in mind the dynamic dimension of translation, they stress the importance of differentiating between translation technique and its contextual evaluation. Indeed, a translator's choices should be considered techniques, valid only when assessed within specific contexts, such as text genres (letter of complaint, contract, etc.), translation types (literary, technical, etc.), modes (written translation, consecutive interpreting, etc.), objectives and audience expectations, and methods (interpretative-communicative, etc.) (Molina & Hurtado Albir, 2002, p. 509). Ultimately, Molina and Hurtado Albir argue that translation techniques should be justified or deemed erroneous based on their functional and dynamic nature in context.

Semantic distinctions emerging from the analyses of Chesterman and Gambier

Drawing on the insights from Zabalbeascoa (2000) and Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002), Chesterman (2005) discusses how the term 'translation strategy' is used by translation scholars to describe textual procedures used during translation task. He highlights how a strategy is associated with specific behavioural models aimed at problem-solving. For example, Zabalbeascoa (2000, p. 120) posits that strategies are conscious actions that facilitate translation, whereas 'translation technique' relates to the translator's decision-making and skills. This distinction reveals that understanding the translation process differs from analysing the translation product. Hence, Chesterman agrees on the necessity of recognising multiple semantic distinctions from prior analyses but advocates focusing on 'translation strategy' over numerous complex terms. For him, the semantic distinctions can be viewed as follows:

(1) *Result versus process*: For Chesterman (2005), the notion of 'strategy' is used in a process sense, in the research using think-aloud protocols (TAPs) to refer to cognitive and problem-solving operations in translation. He remarks that text-orientated research does not clearly distinguish between translation processes and their outcomes. Critiquing Vinay and Darbelnet's (1958) typology like Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002), Chesterman argues the typology only contributes to terminological confusion in TS, since it merely

describes differences between ST and TT rather than the actual translation procedures. This is why scholars like Catford (1965) and Popovič (1970) use 'shift' to refer to these textual differences.

According to Chesterman (2005), while Catford (1965) views 'shift' as a departure from formal correspondence, Popovič (1970) considers it anything that appears as new or where it is not expected in the TT with respect to the ST. Translation scholars like Zabalbeascoa (2000) rather prefer to call it 'solution-types'. Zabalbeascoa (2000) views 'shift' as that which denotes change, but a 'solution-type' as that which emphasises some types of equivalence, although Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) attribute this sense to the term 'technique', which they refer to as a description of the translation result that can be used to classify various translation solution types.² Chesterman (2005), however, argues that the description of 'technique' by Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) seems to trigger some confusion between 'procedure' and 'results of procedures', since they assert that some mechanisms such as 'paraphrasing' can function as both translation strategies and translation techniques when used as 'reformulation' and 'amplification' respectively. For Chesterman (2005), the use of 'technique' (techniques of adjustment) by Nida (1964) to refer to what others call 'shifts' or 'solution-types' too seems to highlight 'procedures' (i.e., omission, addition, alteration). He concludes that this terminological confusion may not be unconnected to the fact that many terms used to describe the

² See Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002, p.507) and Chesterman (2005, p.20) for detail analysis

various types of textual procedures are nominalisation of English verbs, which are sometimes vague.

(2) *Linguistic versus cognitive*: Klaudy (2003) refers to 'transfer operations' as a manifestation of mental transformations that are complex. Drawing on this insight, Chesterman (2005) argues that, because the transfer operations are the product of deliberate decision-making activities, they are said to be both linguistic and cognitive. Besides, since it is difficult to observe mental operations directly, one is required to resort to ST–TT comparison or to look at the text-linguistic results of the mental transformations that must have occurred. In Chesterman's (2005) opinion, if a verb in the TT conveys the same meaning as the noun in the ST, one can consider such situation at the linguistic level a good example of transposition.

(3) *Global versus local*: Chesterman (2005) argues that global strategies affect the translator's decisions about translating the whole text. Such strategies also have to do with style, initial norms, etc., while local strategies are concerned with particular units in the text. Although different translation scholars use the term 'translation strategy' to describe different types of textual procedures that the translator uses, Chesterman (2005) states that there are numerous other terms proposed for related purposes. One such term is 'translation techniques', which Chesterman considers routine, micro-level, textual procedures (e.g., changing a noun to a verb or vice versa (transposition) or explicitation (i.e., adding more explicit cohesion to a text)). However, Chesterman (2005) argues that some behaviour models that are referred to as techniques by some scholars may be considered translation errors by others. For instance, Chesterman (2005) states that while Nida (1964) considers 'techniques of adjustment' that which denotes 'procedures' (i.e., addition, omission, alteration), Delisle et al (1999) classify the same 'omission' and 'addition' as kinds of translation errors. This means, Delisle et al (1999) do not see 'omission' and 'addition' as standard translation procedures or techniques, but as translation errors. Therefore, Chesterman (2005) concludes that techniques are linguistic procedures, which are simply used as "ways of

manipulating textual phenomena" (p.26).

(4) *Problem-solving versus routine*: Although Chesterman (2005) affirms that some translation scholars choose to use the term 'strategy' for cases where there is a problem to solve, while 'solutions' are looked at as routine, he argues that translation strategy covers a wider area than simply problem-solving, which has to do with text-linguistic phenomena. This is because strategies "have to do with problem-solving more generally, and include analytical strategies, search strategies, reformulation strategies, and so on" (Chesterman, 2005, p. 21). If strategy can be viewed by scholars such as Lörcher (1991) and Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) as a procedure used by translators to solve problems during translation, Chesterman (2005) argues that translation strategies can also be regarded as procedures. They can also be seen statically "as plans of action that are only potentially dynamic, stored in the translator's memory or toolbox of competences" (Chesterman, 2005, p. 21).

When one looks at translation strategies from the problem-solving perspective, it is also pertinent to explain what translation problem is (Chesterman, 2005). For Chesterman (2005), what constitutes a problem for one translator may not necessarily pose a problem for another translator even if both translators are working on the same text. However, they "may all arrive at the same solution" (p. 21). Therefore, Chesterman proposes that the term *strategy* be restricted "to its basic problem-solving sense, as a plan that is implemented in a given context" (Chesterman, 2005, p. 26), noting that although the plan itself, as a cognitive schema, is not procedural, the implementation is. Consequently, Chesterman (2005, p. 26) concludes that as plans that are simply implemented in a given context, strategies are not linguistic, but cognitive, arguing that translators formulate and implement strategies for different problems and at different phases in the transfer process, but such strategies "are not relevant to routine, problem-free, automatised processing" (Chesterman, 2005, p. 26). In Chesterman's opinion, the initial choice of source or target orientation, search strategies, revision strategies and decisions about foreignisation or

domestication might all be included in the examples of translation strategies.

Drawing from the reflection of Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) who focus on technique as compared to strategy, method and procedure as transfer operations involved in translation process and product, and the reflection of Chesterman (2005) who views the concept of translation strategy from four semantic distinctions that emerge via different analyses, Gambier (2007) argues that the concept of strategy can be viewed from three semantic distinctions, namely; (1) *result versus process*: here, while strategy in a process sense has to do with the cognitive and problem-solving procedure, result has to do with the solution types; (2) *global versus local*: global strategies are said to operate at the macro level such as the cultural and sociological levels, while local strategies operate at the micro level such as the textual or cognitive levels. Gambier (2007) also refers to the local strategies as “tactics or micro-strategy” (p.6); (3) *problem-solving versus routine*: at this level, Gambier (2007) views the term ‘strategy’ in relation to cases where there is a problem to solve. Following this analysis, it is understood that Gambier considers translation strategy a plan of actions intended to accomplish a given translation task.

Gambier (2007, 2009) argues that ‘translation strategies’ can be viewed from the perspective of the armed forces operation (i.e., the military context). For him, while in the military context, a strategy refers to a plan, which is more or less accurate and without necessarily including all the details, it also involves a command with coordinated actions, which one adopts to achieve a specific objective. Relating this analogy to TS, Gambier (2007) states that translation strategies can, therefore, be said to involve plans and actions, which translators exploit to achieve their translation objectives. He further argues that strategies involve a systematic attempt by translators to anticipate the various factors which may have some impact on their translation task.

Attempting to establish a relationship between strategies and tactics, Gambier (2009) lists another analogy by using the example of an election. He states that in an election, the objective of the contestants is to win. Therefore, they have to understand what the electorate wants (strategy), after which they develop concrete plans on how to win the election (tactics). Thus, in Gambier’s opinion, there are no strategies without tactics and vice versa. Indeed, both strategies and tactics are exploited to achieve a particular objective. Although Gambier’s description shows that ‘strategies’ and ‘tactics’ are closely intertwined and cannot be easily separated from each other, there is a distinction that can be drawn from his analogies. That is, ‘tactics’ are manoeuvres or actions calculated at the micro-level by translators to achieve a translation task, while ‘strategies’ are the global plan of actions adopted by the translator throughout the translation process to solve translation problems.

Although Gambier (2007, p. 1) states that many terms are available in English to describe the ‘transfer’ process³, he often uses ‘strategies’ and ‘tactics’, looking at ‘strategy’ as a global process and ‘tactics’ as local strategies. On the whole, he considers both ‘strategy’ and ‘tactics’ a set of ‘translation procedures’, which the translator activates “to manage an assignment and to solve problems or prevent them from arising while translating” (p. 8). Impliedly, Gambier (2007) considers ‘strategy’ and ‘tactics’ a set of actions activated by the translator before, during and after a translation task to achieve success in a given translation task. For Gambier (2007, p. 2), there are often five to six main strategies, but authors do not always ascribe the same labels to them. Thus, he points out six of such problem-solving strategies to include: (1) direct translation (importation) or literal translation (calque and loan), which implies the exact reproduction of the equivalence between the two languages, (2) translating metaphoric items with different forms but the same meaning (adaptation), (3) translating

³ Some of these terms include strategies, procedures, techniques, operations, changes, shifts, methods, replacements, trajections, adjustment techniques.

non-metaphoric items or structures with the same meaning (replacement/substitution/paraphrase), (4) translating using a metaphor with different meaning (modification), (5) omission of the metaphor (lost), and (6) addition of elements (explaining/explicitation). Indeed, all these actions are simply activated by the translator to solve a translation problem or prevent it from arising during the process of translation.

Like Chesterman (2005), Gambier (2007) also tries to analyse the concept of strategy by clarifying the terms 'translation problem' and 'translation difficulty'. While looking at strategy from the problem-solving perspective, both Chesterman (2005) and Gambier (2007) choose to establish a distinction between translation problem and translation difficulty, since, according to them, the two concepts are not the same. However, they both use Nord's (1991/2005) typology, stating that translation difficulties are subjective, meaning they are challenges faced by an individual translator during the translation task, whereas translation problems are objective, meaning they are translation challenges all translators encounter irrespective of their level of competence and the technical conditions of their work. In summary, a translation problem is "something which presents a *difficulty* for *somebody* in a given *situation* and calls for particular *ways* to find *solutions* to the problem" (Gambier, 2007, p. 7).

Nord (1991/2005) differentiates between 'translation problems' and 'translation difficulties', highlighting that translation problems are objective challenges that all translators face, which include language issues (terminological, lexical, semantic, and stylistic), cultural differences, textual ambiguities, and pragmatic mismatches. In contrast, translation difficulties are subjective and pertain to individual translators and their specific contexts, influenced by factors such as text comprehensibility, translator competence, task nature, and technical challenges. While translation problems are universally applicable, translation difficulties vary depending on the translator's unique situation.

Semantic distinctions emerging from the analyses of Jääskeläinen and Bardaji regarding translation strategy, technique and procedure

Jääskeläinen (2005) considers translation strategy sets of principles, which translators use during and after a given task to achieve a translation goal. Taking into account the process and product of translation, Jääskeläinen (2005) argues that translation strategies that relate to the product require the translator to develop a method for translating a particular ST after carefully choosing it. For translation strategies that relate to the process, she states that they involve a series of loosely formulated principles used by the translator to achieve a particular goal, which is determined by the situation of the translation. Besides, strategies could be either global or local – global strategies being "general principles and mode of action", while local strategies "specific activities in relation to the translator's problem-solving and decision-making" (Jääskeläinen, 2005, p. 16).

For Jääskeläinen (2010), translation strategies are considered the overall series of competences, steps or procedures that enable translators to acquire, store and/or utilise information. She further argues that translation strategies are heuristic in nature and flexible too. This means they involve concrete plans for solving problems often more quickly, implying that adoption of concrete strategies enables translators to take decisions even if it means amending their objectives. Looking at the insights above, one can conclude that the various scholars consider strategies problem-solving mechanisms that are activated during translation to ensure adequate transfer of the ST message into the TT either at the level of the whole texts or just a segment of it.

Drawing on the works of Chesterman (1997), Zabalbeascoa (2000), Hurtado Albir (1996, 2001) and many others, Bardaji (2009) also affirms that in TS, there are many terms that can be confusing to readers when used differently to refer to well-known linguistic processes. While analysing and classifying the various operations, which translators perform to solve problems when translating, Bardaji (2009) affirms that different studies have assigned different labels to the

translation operations, such as methods, techniques, strategies, procedures, processes, etc. having “been researched from a wide range of perspectives” (p. 161). She considers all these labels ‘translation process operators’. For Bardaji (2009), the term ‘operator’ is used partly “because it allows one to approach a series of concepts from a global perspective” (p. 161). Therefore, she claims that all the concepts mentioned above could be analysed either in isolation or in contrast to others. Bardaji begins her analysis by demonstrating the differences between what she refers to as translation procedure, technique procedure or translation method, translation processes and strategic processes, translation strategies and techniques, which she claims are the most commonly used notions among the numerous concepts and terms.

Bardaji (2009) states that ‘translation procedure’ refers to “all those processes that come into play when shifting between two languages” (p. 162). Viewing what translation procedure entails to Vinay and Darbelnet, Bardaji (2009) argues that the comparatists simply tried to formulate a general translation theory by comparing English and French on the basis of the equivalences obtained from the two languages. However, describing translation procedures transcends the mere level of comparing or contrasting two languages. Rather, it involves a mental process; the way the translator’s mind works consciously or subconsciously leading to decision-making during translation process (Bardaji, 2009, p. 163). She refers to ‘procedure’ as a method, which one adopts in achieving a result or ways the translator follows to complete a translation task. Bardaji seems to use the term ‘method’ to describe ‘procedure’ contrary to Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) who look at procedures as the ability to organise actions in order to achieve a specific goal and method as a global option that affects the whole text. Besides, Bardaji (2009) uses the term ‘translation processes’ to also refer to the same conceptual content as ‘procedures’, noting that ‘translation processes’ too involve the skills, knowledge etc. or the whole mental operations performed when translating.

Describing ‘translation strategy’, Bardaji (2009) states that it has become the most widely and frequently used term to describe the mental operations performed by the translator. For Bardaji (2009), the numerous meanings assigned to the term ‘strategy’ without any significant change to its basic conceptual content is because, the term appears to have suffered the fate on the basis of the widespread criticisms of Vinay and Darbelnet’s (1958) theory of translation process, necessitating translation scholars to use one name in place of the other with the same function. Although Bardaji (2009) claims that the concept is not completely detached from what many scholars refer to as ‘translation procedures’, this assertion does not vitiate the fact that some scholars assign different meanings with a different conceptual framework to the term.

Analysing different scholars’ reflections concerning the term ‘translation strategy’, Bardaji (2009) tries to highlight the view of De Beaugrande (1978), arguing that despite the lack of extensive typology of the term, De Beaugrande delimits those areas, which ‘strategies’ must be effective such as “the reading process, interpreting the source text, expressing in the target text, compensation for possible loss, etc” (Bardaji, 2009, p. 166). Based on the above-stated, it is evident that De Beaugrande’s conception of the term ‘strategy’ represents a more significant shift in perspective than what Vinay and Darbelnet’s (1958) theory represents. This is because, in Beaugrande’s (1978) view, ‘translation strategies’ are used as tools to overcome possible translation problems that are not explicitly defined, while in Vinay and Darbelnet’s view, ‘translation strategies’ embody elements that form “the basis for a general translation theory on translation” (Bardaji, 2009, p. 166). Like Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002), Chesterman (2005) and Gambier (2007), Bardaji (2009) concludes that translation strategies do not just involve the process that occur during a given translation task, but what plays out when translators have a translation problem to solve. This means strategy is a task-related process aimed at solving a translation problem.

Translation solutions as problem-solving activities

Although the TS scholars in the preceding sections consider some transfer operations either as techniques, strategies, procedures, methods, tactics etc., ascribing various meanings to them, Pym (2016, 2018) has a different reflection on the various concepts. While mapping proposals for translation solutions for different languages, Pym (2016) draws a comparison between previous categories of translation operations in combination with classroom testing and attempts to fit them into what he refers to as “tentative typology of translation solutions” (p. 219). Pym (2016, 2018) argues that the reason he opts for the general term ‘translation solutions’ is that all other transfer processes are simply based on text comparisons on the basis of “the solutions adopted, rather than on analysis of the cognitive processes involved” (2018, p. 42).

Pym’s position seems to be a move towards reducing the multiplication of different labels used by translation scholars to describe the same concept. He affirms that given the terminological confusion created by different scholars in TS, whereby everyone wants to clarify the previous theories, thereby further exacerbating the already confusing terminological situation in TS, it is crucial to adopt a different, more simplistic, explicit and straightforward approach by giving the problem-solving transfer processes a general term. To Pym, the general term ‘translation solutions’ encompasses every other transfer process that is designed to work out translation difficulties at both macro-level or micro-level of a given text or translation situation.

Pym (2016) maps “a new seven-term typology” (p. 219), grouped into three broad

categories: (1) copying (i.e., copying words, copying structure), (2) expression change (i.e., perspective change, density change, compensation, cultural correspondence) and (3) content change (i.e., text tailoring). In Pym’s view, the seven central categories mentioned here do not represent what actually goes on in the head of a translator during a translation task, but it is “a map of translation solutions” (Pym, 2016, p. 220). Indeed, Pym affirms that there is actually no need for any special help from a typology “when the translator is moving through the text applying their standard mapping operations” (p. 220). He refers to this as the ‘cruise mode’, during which the translator simply applies accurate, meaningful and appropriate use of language skills, reference resources, parallel texts and intuition, since, at this point, each problem usually has one clear solution. He concludes that the translation solution types above are useful to translators only when faced with challenges when translating and the translator has to make a choice to solve such challenge, that is, “the bump mode” (Pym, 2016, p. 220). Table 2.2 presents an overview of the various conceptual reflections by scholars under review.

Although the scholars cited in Table 2.2 highlight that there is terminological confusion, they all seem to concentrate on one term and relate it to the others. Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) concentrate on ‘techniques’, while Chesterman (2005) focuses on ‘strategies’, and so does Gambier (2007, 2009, 2010), though Gambier also discusses ‘tactics’ in conjunction with ‘strategies’. On his part, Pym (2016, 2018) focuses on ‘solutions’. What is important to note is that in all the reflections of these scholars, what they try to do is to identify why there is confusion and overlap of the various terms.

Table 2.2: Overview of conceptual reflections by Molina & Hurtado Albir, Chesterman, Gambier and Pym

| Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) | Chesterman (2005) | Gambier (2007, 2009, 2010) | Pym (2016, 2018) |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>Emphasis: (1) They emphasise on translation process/product and language pair/text pair, but they focus mainly on the result (translation product)</p> <p>Conceptual clarification:</p> <p>i. <i>Technique</i>: the specific application that can be observed in the <i>product</i> & can only affect small units of the text. Also, procedures to analyse & classify how translation equivalence works</p> <p>ii. <i>Method</i>: the way a particular translation process is carried out in terms of the translator's obj.</p> <p>iii. <i>Strategy</i>: consists of mechanisms used by translators throughout the whole translation process to solve certain problems</p> <p>iv. <i>Procedures</i>: the ability to organise actions in order to achieve a specific goal</p> <p>Proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the result of the translator's choice is what should be referred to as translation technique. - in order not to deny the functional & dynamic nature of translation, <i>technique</i> ought not to be evaluated out of context as justified/unjustified or erroneous. One can only judge technique meaningfully when evaluated within a given context. - techniques include: | <p>Emphasis: (1) He focuses on 'translation strategy', stating that the semantic distinctions that come forth from the various proposed analyses can be viewed under: <i>result vs process (+/-)</i> as in Molina & Hurtado Albir), <i>linguistic vs cognitive, problem-solving vs routine & global vs local strategies</i></p> <p>Conceptual clarification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Strategy</i>: covers a wider area than just problem-solving that has to do with text-linguistic phenomena. Strategy involves problem-solving more generally & include analytical strategies (i.e., comprehension of the ST), search strategies (i.e., terminological search, information retrieval etc.), reformulation strategies etc. - <i>method</i>: general way of translating. - <i>Techniques</i>: linguistic procedures or ways of manipulating textual phenomena. - <i>Shifts</i>: observable as kinds of differences between TT & ST, including equivalence for similarities. <p>Proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chesterman proposes the following solutions to the terminological confusion: (1) making explicit links between different parts of TS. (2) reducing the number of terms used to describe the transfer process (3) reserving '<i>method</i>' as a general term that designate the overall tr. process; suggesting '<i>method</i>' should be correlated with the notion of a tr. type i.e., a given tr. method should lead to a tr. type e.g., free, literal, semantic, communicative, gist, philosophical. (4) <i>strategy</i> be restricted "to its basic problem-solving sense, as a plan that is implemented in a given context" (5) '<i>technique</i>' be restricted to routine, micro-level, textual procedures e.g., changing a noun to a verb or vice versa (transposition) or adding more explicit cohesion (+/- as in Molina, 2002) (6) <i>shift</i> be regarded as result of a procedure | <p>Emphasis: (1) He focuses on 'strategy' and 'tactics' referring to them as a set of actions activated by the translation before, during & after a translation task to achieve success when translating</p> <p>(2) views the concept of strategy from 3 semantic distinctions viz: <i>result vs process, global vs local & problem-solving vs routine (+/-)</i> as in Chesterman (2005) Though Chesterman (2005) views translation strategy from 4 semantic distinctions that emerge via different analyses.</p> <p>Conceptual clarification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>strategies</i>: involve plans & actions, which translators exploit to achieve their translation objective - <i>tactics</i>: involve a translator's conscious procedure to solve a problem when translating a given text segment. - <i>translation problem</i>: That which presents a <i>difficulty</i> for translators in a given <i>situation</i> & calls for particular <i>ways</i> to find <i>solutions</i> to the problem. (+/- as in Nord, 1991) <p>Proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Strategy</i> (global/ macro-strategy) - <i>Tactics</i> (local/micro-strategy) conscious - <i>Tactics</i> (local/micro-strategy): automatized (routine) - <i>Solution-types</i> (for differences & similarities between ST & TT | <p>Emphasis: (1) He draws a comparison between previous categories of transfer operations in combination with classroom testing & attempts to fit them into what he considers 'translation solutions'. These can be divided into many sub-categories to suit pedagogical or analytical purposes</p> <p>Conceptual clarification:</p> <p>For Pym, solutions are +/- suggestions for students when they bump into a problem when translating. 'translation solutions' encompass every transfer process that is designed to work out translation difficulties at both macro-level or micro-level of a text or translation; implying that translation solutions are only related to problem-solving activities.</p> <p>Proposal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Since multiple terms seem to bring terminological confusion in TS, he proposes + simplistic, explicit & straightforward approach by giving the problem-solving transfer processes a general term "translation solutions" - 7 translation solutions ÷ into 3 groups: (1) <i>copying</i>: (a) words – sounds, morphology & script (b) structure – prosodic features, fixed phrases, text structure. (2) <i>expression change</i>: (a) perspective change – changing focus of sentence, semantic focus, voice (b) density change - generalisation/specification, explicitation/implicitation, resegmentation, multiple translation, (c) compensation – new level expression, new place in the text (note, paratexts (d) cultural correspondence – corresponding idioms, culture-specific items... & (3) <i>content change</i> e.g., text tailoring – correction/censorship/updating, omission /addition of content... |
| <p>1. Adaptation 2. Amplification 3. Borrowing 4. Calque 5. Compensation 6. Description 7. Discursive creation 8. Established equivalent 9. Generalisation 10. Ling. amplification</p> | <p>11. Ling. 12. Compression 13. Lit. translation 14. Modulation 15. Particularisation 16. Reduction 17. Substitution 18. Variation</p> | | |

As it can be seen in Table 2.2, given the terminological confusion, Chesterman (2005) proposes some solutions as follows: (1) making explicit links between different parts of TS, (2) reducing the number of terms used to describe the transfer process and (3) reserving the term ‘method’ as a general term that designates the overall translation process. However, he suggests that ‘method’ should be correlated with the notion of translation type, whereby a particular translation method would lead to a certain kind of translation, such as literal, gist, free, philosophical, communicative, exegetic translations. However, it appears this proposal has yet to be implemented since there are still conceptual and terminological problems in TS. Since there is diversity of thoughts about different terminologies used in TS, it is crucial to show how these concepts/terms should be looked at in order to foster a more consistent terminological framework in TS. The following section is, therefore, devoted to conceptual grounding of key terminologies and how they should be used in TS research.

Conceptual grounding of translation strategy, technique, procedure, and related terms

As earlier announced, this section is a practical section that provides insights into addressing terminological issues in research and pedagogy. Considering the conceptual reflections of different translation scholars in Section 4 about overlapping concepts and terms in TS, this section emphasises that the concepts and terms such as translation strategy, tactic, technique, method, procedure, solutions, problem and difficulty must be used carefully in translation pedagogy in particular, and in TS research in general in order not to create further confusion. Although the objective in this section is to propose how concepts/terms bordering observable transfer operations should be looked at or defined, without being tied to a specific study or context, there is need to summarise the meaning of the various concepts and terms discussed in the preceding sections. Thus, Table 2.3 presents a summary of the proposals of relevant sources discussed earlier.

Table 2.3

Specific proposals of Molina & Hurtado Albir, Jääskeläinen, Chesterman, Gambier, Bardají, Pym

| Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) | Chesterman (2005) | Gambier (2007) | Bardají (2009) | Pym (2016, 2018) | My proposal (2022) |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Propose 18 translation techniques</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Adaptation *Amplification *Borrowing *Calque *Compensation *Description *Discursive creation *Established equivalent *Generalisation *Linguistic amplification *Linguistic compression *Literal translation *Modulation *Particularisation *Reduction *Substitution *Transposition *Variation | <p>Translation methods correlated with the notion of translation type</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Free translation *Literal translation *Semantic translation *Communicative translation *Gist translation *Philosophical translation <p>Translation Strategy restricted to basic problem-solving sense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Initial choice of ST/ST orientation *Decisions about foreignising or domesticating *Search strategy *Revision strategy <p>Translation technique restricted to routine, micro-level, textual procedures as in Molina (2002)</p> <p>e.g., Changing a noun to verb (transposition) or adding more explicit cohesion</p> | <p>Translation Strategy restricted to basic problem-solving sense</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Strategy (global/ macro-Strategy) *Tactics (local/ micro-Strategy): conscious *Tactics (local/ micro-Strategy): automatised (routine) *Solution-types (for differences & similarities between ST & TT) | <p>Translation Process operators</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *According to her, 'operator' is used partly because it allows one to approach a series of concepts from a global perspective *Translation Procedure = all the processes that come into play when shifting between two languages. It involves a mental process; the way the translator's mind works consciously or subconsciously leading to decision-taking when translating. *Translation strategy = describes the mental operations performed by the translator e.g. the reading process, interpreting the ST, expressing in the TT, compensation for possible loss, ... *Translation techniques = acquired skills as a whole i.e., calques, modulation, transposition... (+/- as in Molina, 2002) | <p>All transfer operations are 'translation solutions'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *7 translation solutions ÷ into 3 groups: *Copying: (a) words – sounds, morphology & script (b) structure – prosodic features, fixed phrases, text structure. *Expression change: (a) perspective change – changing focus of sentence, semantic focus, voice (b) density change – generalisation/specification, explicitation/implicitation, resegmentation, multiple translation, (c) compensation – new level expression, new place in the text (note, paratexts (d) cultural correspondence – corresponding idioms, culture-specific items... & *Content change e.g., text tailoring – correction/censorship/ updating, omission /addition of content... | <p>Translation techniques = the specific transfer operations, which can be observed in the product of the translation e.g.,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Adaptation *Amplification *Borrowing *Calque *Compensation *Description *Established equivalent *Generalisation *Linguistic amplification *Linguistic compression *Literal translation *Modulation *Particularisation *Reduction *Substitution *Transposition *Variation <p>Translation strategy = the translators' attempt to anticipate the factors that may have some impact on their translation & developing a plan or step in translating the ST more successfully.</p> <p>e.g., reading & interpreting the ST, identifying the possible gaps, consulting reference materials, expressing the ST into TT, revising the translated text to identify possible errors etc 'translation error' here refers to any transfer that fails to render the ST adequately into the TT e.g., 'omission', 'content addition', 'literal translation'... that distort the sense of the ST message is an error.</p> |
| <p>Jääskeläinen (2005, 2010)</p> <p>Translation strategies are either global or local.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Global strategy = general principles & mode of action. *Local strategy = specific activities in relation to translator's problem-solving & decision-making <p>*Translation strategies are also the series of competences, steps or procedures that enable the translator to acquire, store &/or utilise information</p> | <p>Translation shifts (+/- as in Molina, 2002) refer to the result of a procedure in relation to the ST.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Syntactic shifts = transposition/unit shift (e.g., clause > phrase) *Semantic Shifts = modulation/generalisation *Stylistic shifts = variation (e.g., dialect) foreignisation *Pragmatic shifts = addition, omission, explicitation, reduction | | | | |

This summary is necessary, because it can help translators decide about the terms to be used during research, just as Gambier (2007) does when he compares his proposal to that of Chesterman (2005) and decides to define concepts in a particular way. The summary is also to establish a clear foundation for concepts and terms used in TS research, which is like the base for a building – to ensure the definitions and frameworks are solid and clear enough to make sense to every reader of this paper. Therefore, for purposes of clarity, the following are the proposed conceptual groundings: **Translation procedure:** Following the views of different translation scholars about the term ‘translation procedure’, including Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) who view it as an activity that involves the ability to use simple techniques and skills, as well as professional use of strategies to achieve something, ‘translation procedure’ should be looked at in TS research as series of steps taken to perform or accomplish a translation task. This means that a translation procedure involves the ability to know what to do and how to do it or a professional use of skills to organise actions in order to translate adequately from the ST into the TT.

Translation method: Translation scholars such as Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) consider ‘translation method’ the way a particular translation process is carried out in terms of the translator’s objective or the objectives of the translation, while Chesterman (2005) views it as the general way of translating. This study proposes that ‘translation method’ should be looked at as the global way by which the translator’s task is completed to achieve a given purpose. For example, in a situation where a particular translation involves rendering an English version of a ‘press release’ into French, this will ordinarily fall under journalistic translation. Therefore, this will involve translating sense for the purpose of communication. If the objective of the translation is to render the sense of the ST into the TT, the translator should adopt a communicative or interpretative method in translating the whole text. Therefore, ‘translation method’ will be considered a global option that affects the whole text.

Translation strategy and tactic: Looking at the

term ‘translation strategy’ vis-à-vis ‘translation tactic’ in terms of Gambier’s (2007) analysis, ‘translation strategy’ should be considered the translators’ attempt to anticipate the factors that may have some impact on their translation and developing a plan or step in translating the ST more successfully. It should be considered a heuristic option or flexible plan, which the translator implements in a given context during translation to get rid of a given translation problem more quickly. It is, therefore, a process-orientated approach to problem-solving in translation, which involves practical steps aimed at producing solutions to translation problems at the macro-level of the text. Indeed, Hurtado Albir and Rodríguez-Inés (2023) present translation strategies in a very interesting way. Therefore, their reflection can be adopted in TS research such that strategy will be considered both internal and external support mechanisms – internal being the translator’s cognitive activities and external being the application of appropriate, reliable, general and specialised documentation and technological resources during translation. Conversely, ‘translation tactic’ should be considered an action that is calculated at the micro-level by translators to achieve a translation task. The difference between ‘strategy’ and ‘tactic’ is that while ‘strategy’ involves the global plan of actions adopted by the translator throughout the translation process to solve translation problems, ‘tactic’ involves a translator’s deliberate step to solve a problem when translating a given text segment. Therefore, ‘tactic’ denotes local strategy adopted at the micro-level of a text.

Translation technique: Although Chesterman (2005) restricts the term ‘technique’ to the routine micro-level, textual or linguistic procedures such as changing a verb to a noun or vice versa (i.e., transposition) and Molina and Hurtado Albir (2002) to the result or product, ‘translation technique’ should be considered in TS research those specific transfer operations, which one can only observe in the *product* of a given translation and that can only affect small or micro-units of the text. This means that ‘translation technique’ is the result of the translator’s choice.

Translation problem and difficulty: Going by

Nord's (2005) problem typology and her distinctive definitions of 'translation problem' and 'translation difficulty', these concepts should be summarised as follows: (1) 'problems' are the overall points that constitute a challenge to all translators working in a particular language combination, meaning problems are general challenges and every translator working in any language combination has the tendency of encountering them. (2) 'difficulties' are challenges that are specific to individual translators as a result of their inability to comprehend the ST or to properly reformulate the message into the TT due to either lack of translation skills, differences in the cultural setting of the SL and the TL or inadequate personal experience. Despite these definitions, looking at the Granger and Lefer's (2021) error typology and Hurtado Albir and Rodríguez-Inés's (2023) problem typology, which all consider both translation problem and difficulties the same, TS researchers should view (without distinction) all challenges encountered by translators as problems.

Critical observations

The classification and application of the translation operations highlighted in this study seem to pose some challenges, especially to translator trainees. Overall, the conceptual and terminological confusion in TS that necessitates other translation scholars such as Muñoz Martín (2000) and Marco (2007) to refer to translation metalanguage as 'chaotic' has been confirmed due to the obvious disharmony in the use of terms. Indeed, terms that appear to be synonymous in a general context are used differently by different scholars to refer sometimes to different or similar transfer operations. For instance, some scholars refer to 'translation procedures' in the same way as 'translation techniques. Besides, while translation scholars label certain transfer operations such as 'compensation', 'omission' and 'addition' as 'translation strategies', others view them as not strategies per se, but possible motivation for a strategy or outright translation errors. For example, Chesterman (2005, p.23) argues that while Klauudy views 'compensation' as a strategy, he (Chesterman) considers it a possible motivation for strategy; not a strategy itself. Besides, although steps such as omission, addition,

alteration, etc. are all viewed as translation techniques or procedures by certain scholars, Delisle et al. (1999) consider these translation errors; not necessarily standard translation procedures or techniques.

Based on the above-stated, there is an obvious dilemma, which a translator trainee and a professional alike are likely to face as far as translation concepts and terminologies are concerned. The question that comes to mind in such conceptual and terminological confusion is: how exactly could one recognise the above-mentioned interwoven transfer operations, which, despite their different descriptions (which trigger confusion), still remain quite useful conceptual tools in TS?

Chesterman (2005) tries to respond to the question above by stating that the concepts ought to be made simple and explicit; sorting out "the conceptual mess into usable structure" (p. 25) such that they can be effectively taught. It is observed in the course of this discussion that some scholars have already responded to this by coining their own systems. In the words of Chesterman (2005), Malone (1988), for example, coined a series of such new terms such as "zigzagging, recrescence, repackaging" (Chesterman, 2005, p. 19), but most of these terms are not in use in today's mainstream TS. Some scholars appear to simply adapt existing conceptual and terminological taxonomy, while others slightly adjust the description of the existing classifications. However, one observes, like Chesterman (2005), that such new creations have rather led "to even more confusion, as identical terms become used by different scholars in very different senses" (Chesterman, 2005, p. 25). Based on the observations above, it becomes imperative to give a clear conceptualisation of the confusing concepts and terms so that translation researchers, especially students would have a clear idea of how each terminology is used in TS research moving forward. Following the proposals in Section 5 above, it is crucial to further suggest how terminological consistency can be maintained in TS.

Possible ways of maintaining terminological consistency in TS

As found in this study, lack of homogeneity in the

use of key concepts and terms can pose many challenges in both translation teaching and practice. Therefore, to reasonably minimise the terminological inconsistencies, the following are recommended:

- i. **Glossaries or annotations or termbase:** The use of glossaries or explanatory annotations of key terms in all written works in TS is encouraged. This may possibly help users of such translation literature to have a clear understanding of all words or specialised terms used in it. Besides, a glossary or termbase that is well-maintained has the potential to save users' time and reduce the tendency of critical discrepancies especially when working within a limited time frame.
- ii. **Translation-operation-related terminological database⁴:** Another strategy for maintaining terminological consistency in TS is to exploit a translation-operation-related terminological database. This database would function like a translation memory (TM) system, which stores previously translated text segments and suggests them to translators for enhancing consistency. By storing concepts and terms related to translation operations, such as 'technique', 'strategy', 'tactics', and 'method', in a memory database, users can easily reference terminologies in glossaries or annotations. This approach can simplify the work for translator researchers/trainees and promote consistent use of recurring terminologies across various settings.
- iii. **Peer review system:** There is also the need to emphasise the incorporation of peer review system into, not just the translation process but all written works in TS. Having other translation specialists or researchers to review one's work can help in spotting inconsistent use of terms. By extension, this can improve

terminological consistency since peer reviews generally provide an extra layer of quality control.

- iv. **Update on changes in terminological use:** It is also important to keep oneself updated on changes in the use of language and terminologies that are industry-specific as well as other best practices in translation, since having more knowledge about translation and its emerging trends can possibly equip one to not just be consistent with terms, but produce a good quality of both research and translation across different settings.

Conclusion

In this study, a qualitative research approach is employed to analyse and reflect on the metalanguage used by various TS scholars. The study evaluates key concepts and terminology associated with different translation operations, focusing on terms like translation technique, strategy, method, procedure, tactic, solution, problem, and difficulty. It reveals that many terms are often attributed multiple meanings without altering their core conceptual significance. Scholars such as Chesterman (2005), Gambier (2007), and Gambier and Doorslaer (2007) have identified a multitude of English terms to describe the transfer process, including strategies, procedures, techniques, and operations, which leads to the proliferation of distinct concepts labelled with varying terminology. To mitigate confusion, Bardaji (2009) and Pym (2018) utilise broader terms like "translation process operators" and "translation solutions" to encapsulate these processes more clearly.

Indeed, this study found that there is a notable absence of homogeneity in the use of terminology in TS. This lack of consensus leads to situations where scholars may apply the same terms with different meanings or different terms to denote the same meanings, thereby exacerbating terminological confusion within the field of TS. Molina and Hurtado Abir (2002) suggest that the varied origins of terms – ranging from Bible

⁴ This concept is coined to refer to something similar to translation memory (TM) database.

translation to pedagogical applications and comparative stylistics – may contribute to this terminology variation. Conversely, Chesterman (2005) posits that the terminological issues indicate that TS is still an evolving discipline. Although TS scholars expressed different opinions about the metalanguage of translation, what stood out was that the confusion in the description of translation operations poses serious impediment in the path of true professionalisation. This is why Gambier and Doorslaer (2007) underscore the necessity for TS scholars to aim for a discourse that is compatible, clear, and reader-orientated, stressing the importance of incorporating a multilingual metalanguage to avoid complications associated with a singular dominant language for metadiscourse.

Drawing from insights of various TS scholars, the study emphasises the need to clarify and operationalise confusing concepts and

terminologies commonly used in translation processes. The objective is to promote a better understanding of key terms in both translation pedagogy and research. Given the persistent terminological challenges in TS, the study not only defines these terms but also proposes practical measures for ensuring consistency in their application. Recommendations include: (1) utilising glossaries or explanatory annotations in all written materials, (2) creating a terminological database specific to translation operations, (3) integrating a peer review system across all TS writings to facilitate the identification of inconsistent terminology, and (4) continuously updating knowledge on emerging trends within TS. The study underscores the importance of addressing the confusing nature of TS concepts, and advocates for a proactive approach to future scholarly work focused on these conceptual and terminological issues.

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