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Hermeneutics and Text Linguistics

Text Linguistics and Translation. With Special Consideration of the Performance of Machine Translation Systems in the Field of Text Organisation

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Abstract: Eugenio Coseriu's introductory lecture on text linguistics, edited and revised by the author of these lines, presents two forms of text linguistics: text linguistics in the narrower sense, i.e. "transphrastic grammar" tied to a specific language, and text linguistics in the broader sense, the "linguistics of meaning". This latter form of text linguistics examines how the signs of the text of any language give meaning to the text not only through what they denote but also through what they evoke. This article attempts to bring Coseriu's remarks on text linguistics into a systematic context with the problem of translation. In doing so, it also examines – for the time being only in a rudimentary way – what corpus-based machine translation systems can achieve in this area and where they reach their limits.

Keywords: Eugenio Coseriu; text linguistics; transphrastic grammar; linguistics of meaning; translation

1. Introduction

Translation scholars agree that we do not translate languages. But neither do we translate spontaneous language use, "parole" in Saussure's sense, as is often claimed. We translate "utterances" in the most general understanding of the term, language use which, like language itself, follows certain traditional rules – let's call them "rules of language use" for the time being. These rules are less binding than the rules of the language itself, but they must be recognised and followed by the translator. The translator's handling of the linguistic rules belongs to the field of "translation

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technique", the appropriate handling of the "rules of language use" to that of "translation strategy" (*cf*. Albrecht & Kunert, 2022).

2. Text Linguistics vs. Discourse Traditions

The use of "text" and "discourse" in contemporary linguistics is somewhat confusing. One sometimes has the impression that the traditional term *text linguistics* has now been replaced by the term *discourse tradition*. But a glance at the etymology of both terms shows that there is an essential difference between them: Lat. *textus* 'fabric, weave' is something finished, Lat. *discursus* 'running around' is an activity. Both terms have been already used in antiquity in relation to linguistic matters (*cf*. Albrecht & Kunert, 2022). Of course, the extensive literature on discourse traditions will also be considered in this article; the difference between discourse and text will not play a major role here.

In an earlier article, together with a colleague, I went into detail on various approaches in the field of text linguistics such as speech acts, thematic progression in the Prague School, tense grammar and some more (*cf*. Albrecht & Kunert, 2022). Here, I would like to focus primarily on two types of text linguistics, which, as far as I know, were first clearly distinguished by Eugenio Coseriu: text linguistics in the narrower sense or 'transphrastic grammar' and text linguistics in the broader sense, i.e. the 'linguistics of meaning', for Coseriu, the actual text linguistics (*cf*. Coseriu, 2007). Both forms will also be examined to see to what extent corpus-based machine translation systems can cope with the problems arising in their field. Of course, a thorough investigation of the performance and limitations of machine systems cannot be undertaken within the framework of a short article. The intention is merely to formulate hypotheses in this regard, based on which empirically validated investigations could be carried out later.

3. The two Forms of Text Linguistics according to Eugenio Coseriu

3.1. Transphrastic Grammar

Transphrastic grammar is nothing more than ordinary grammar of an individual language, which formulates valid rules beyond the boundary of the sentence. It deals first with connectors, among which conjunctions occupy a privileged place. They are now part of school grammar. From a contrastive point of view, pro-forms such as articles and pronouns in anaphoric and cataphoric function are of particular interest

as significant differences can be observed between different languages. For example, it is easier to establish an anaphoric reference with a pronoun in German and English than in French:

> Vom Residenzplatz führt die Theaterstraße in nordwestlicher Richtung zum Juliusspital und zum Bahnhof. *Sie* ist eine Schöpfung des 18. Jahrhunderts…

> From Residenzplatz, Theaterstraße leads nothwest to the Juliusspital and the railway station. *It* is … (Würzburg: *City Guide*)

> De la place de la Résidence, la rue du théâtre mène en direction Nord-Ouest à l'hôtel Julius et à la gare. *Cette rue* …. (DeepL translates by *elle* (!)

The German pronominal adverbs of the type *darin*, *hierauf*, *wofür*, *damit* etc. can be used to replace adverbial phrases in a concise anaphoric form: *in den Büchern* → *darin*; *auf diese Sätze folgte* → *darauf*; *mit diesen Instrumenten* → *damit* etc... With the French adverbs "pronominaux" *y* and *en*, the same effect can be achieved, but the range of application is smaller:

> Tatort Badewanne. Wie Männer und Frauen *darin* Geschichte machten.

> Scène de crime baignoire. Comment les hommes et les femmes *y* sont entrés dans l'histoire.

> Bath-tub crime scene. How men and women made history *in it*.

A particular translation problem is posed by dialogical sentence linkages, i.e. "idiomatic" expressions in the narrower sense, with which a speaker can react to the utterances of his interlocutor:

> Hast du die Butter in den Kühlschrank gelegt? *Hab' ich*.

> Did you put the butter in the fridge? *Yes, I did*.

> Hast du dich darüber gefreut? *Und ob!*

> Were you happy about that? *You bet!*

> Tübingen hat mir nicht gefallen. Aber Heidelberg *schon?*

> I didn't like Tübingen. But Heidelberg *you liked*?

It can be said that the available machine translation systems generally perform quite satisfactorily in the field of transphrastic grammar. Errors in this area are immediately noticeable and can be corrected during post-editing. However, one can observe clear differences in quality in the various language pairs.

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In the following section, I will try to outline text linguistics in the broader sense, the "linguistics of meaning", and show what can be expected from machine translation systems in this field by means of several selected problems.

3.2. Text Linguistics in the Broader Sense: An Introduction to the Hermeneutics of Meaning

Text linguistics in the broader sense investigates the genesis of the global meaning of complex texts as a product of a combination of all sign relations. More on this later. The aim is to show – somewhat casually formulated – how the signs present in the text evoke other signs that do not occur there and, in addition, allude to objects and circumstances that are not explicitly mentioned in the text itself, but which contribute to the understanding of the text. Some of Coseriu's students have seen in this form of text linguistics an introduction to the hermeneutics of meaning.

In passing, it will be examined – albeit not thoroughly – to what extent machine translation systems can cope with the demands of decoding global meaning.

3.2.1. The Uniformity of the Used Vocabulary

At the outset, reference should be made to a problem which does not play a special role in Coseriu's work, but certainly has something to do with text linguistics in the broader sense: the uniformity of the vocabulary appearing in a text. Here we must distinguish between different cases:

a) In a text, certain lexemes appear significantly more often than in extensive corpora of comparable texts, a certain fact is preferably denoted with a certain lexeme. This phenomenon belongs to the realm of an author's personal style.

b) In a text, technical lexemes and/or syntagms appear recurrently, i.e. objects and facts to be described or explained are named consistently throughout the text. If, for example, the mental content, the meaning inherent in a text, is designated by the word *sense*, this designation must be retained throughout the text.

c) In a (preferably literary) text, certain common language words appear regularly throughout the text to express one and the same area of meaning or experience. For example, in Racine's most famous drama, *Phèdre*, the word *noir*, in his figurative meaning 'ominous, gloomy', appears at regular intervals. The French linguist Algirdas J. Greimas has described the recurrence of semantic features in a text as "isotopy" (*cf*. Greimas, 1966, pp. 69-101). The regular occurrence of one and the same lexeme in a longer text is referred to by text linguists as an "isotopic chain".

When it comes to translating longer texts, the cases listed here are of varying importance. Aquila, the Bible translator feared for his "literalism", held the view that every lexeme of the Hebrew source text must be rendered by one and the same Greek lexeme in the translation. He proceeded according to this system in the translation of the Septuagint (*cf.* Ballard, 1995, pp. 50-51) Every translator knows that such a demand cannot be met:

Der *Himmel* war tiefblau	The *sky* was deep blue
Wir werden uns im *Himmel* wieder treffen	We will meet again in *heaven*
Das kam aus heiterem *Himmel*	That came out of the *blue*
Ich habe *versprochen* zu kommen	I *promised* I would come
Ich habe mir viel davon *versprochen*	I *expected* a lot of this
Ich habe mich nur *versprochen*	It was only a *slip of the tongue*

But in the cases listed above, an effort should be made to recur to the vocabulary used, at least within the bounds of what is linguistically possible.

A thorough review of the performance and limitations of machine translation systems in this field cannot be undertaken in the context of a short article. As far as case a) is concerned, a large novel would first have to be examined to see whether certain lexemes appear with significant frequency. Then the entire text would have to be translated into another language (possibly into several other languages) with the help of a machine system. One may assume that the recurrence of certain lexemes is only reproduced if the text in question and its translations are in the corpora accessed by the system used.

Terminological consistency in a longer technical text is an absolute must. Unfortunately, so far, I have only had the opportunity to translate individual text segments with the help of machine systems. It turned out that terminological recurrence was not always guaranteed. However, this error cannot be blamed on the machine system if the entire text is not subjected to a uniform translation process.

In the case of the so-called "isotopic chains", a distinction must first be made as to whether the source and the target languages are closely related, less closely related, or not related at all. In Giuseppe Ungaretti's translation of Racine's *Phèdre*, the

significant occurrences of *noir* in the figurative sense (*cf. supra*) are consistently rendered as *nero*. In various German translations of this play quite different words appear depending on the context. Should it ever come to the point that literary works are also translated with the help of machine systems, the isotopic chains will fall into the realm of careful post-editing.

3.2.2. The signs that make up the text and their relations with other factors outside the text.

The "meaning" of a text – whatever one may understand by it – is not only conveyed directly by the sign-like elements of the text, but also indirectly through various relations that the text signs enter with other factors. Coseriu distinguishes five categories, some of which are further broken down into sub-categories. Only a brief overview can be given here (*cf.* Coseriu, 2007, pp. 92-138).

3.2.2.1. In the first place, there are relations a) with individual signs and b) with groups and categories of signs in the same text. The first mentioned are well known, at least in purely material terms: rhyme, alliteration (staff rhyme), assonance etc. There are finer distinctions to be made here: A rhyme like *love – glove* is certainly less expressive than *Liebe* (love) – *Triebe* ('impulses'). In terms of content, it is mainly a matter of the etymological references within a vocabulary. Words like Germ. *erscheinen* or *entstehen* trigger quite different associations than Engl. *appear* or *arise/emerge*, which can be seen as text-equivalent in many contexts. They are equivalent as designators in the text, but not as triggers of associations.

As far as the "groups and categories of signs" are concerned, this is a question of general principles of structuring the grammar and vocabulary of a language. The simplest example of this is the gender. It plays a much greater role in Romance languages than in English or German. An Italian man is sometimes *stanco*, a woman *stanca*. In English and German, both genders are *tired* and *müde*, respectively. German and English, unlike the Romance languages, know three genders, but these appear much less in English than in German: Why **der** *Schuh* (the shoe), **die Hose** (the trousers), **das Hemd** (the shirt)?

This may all sound rather banal. However, these simple linguistic facts become relevant for the genesis of meaning when an author organises a text in such a way that the pure linguistic functions in the text develop evocative effectiveness.

Finally, the linguistic signs of the text can also refer to "foreign" signs, to signs of another language or another linguistic variety than the one in which the text is written. A German who, after a long car journey through Italy, ends his conversation

with "Müdo, Dursto", wants to show that one can also "speak Italian with German words". A Bavarian manufacturer of potato dumplings calls a much smaller and calorie-reduced version of its products *Knödelinos*, hoping that this diminutive, which is not commonly used in German, will evoke associations with Mediterranean cuisine among buyers. A French woman who writes "*la* Marie m'a dit" instead of "Marie m'a dit" in a standard-language text wants to transport the reader for a moment to southern French regions.

Such playful references to other languages or dialects usually do not contribute significantly to the genesis of the global sense of the text – they are "splashes of colour" that give texts of this kind a cheerful touch. In rare cases, however, allusions of this kind can provide important clues for the interpretation of the text in which they occur.

In a chapter dedicated to the city of Heidelberg in Victor Hugo's travelogue *Le voyage du Rhin*, we find the following passage:

> Et le soir, rentré dans ma chambre d'auberge, comme votre ami Benvenuto Cellini, j'écris sur des feuilles, qui s'en iront je ne sais où, mes aventures de la journée.
>
> *Questa mia vita travagliata io scrivo.*
>
> Seulement les *travaux* de Benvenuto, c'étaient des coups d'épée ou de stylet, des évasions du château Saint-Angelo. (Hugo, 2002, p. 70)
>
> And in the evening, back in my room at the inn, like your friend Benvenuto Cellini, I write on sheets of paper, which will go I know not where, my adventures of the day.
>
> *Questa mia vita travagliata io scrivo.*
>
> Only Benvenuto's works were blows with a sword or a stylus, escapes from the Castle of Saint Angelo... (English translation with the help of DeepL)

The machine system cannot adequately capture the subtle linguistic hint given by the Italian quotation. With *vita travagliata*, reference is made to it. *travaglio* 'toil, torment'. This meaning is still present in modern French, albeit marginally:

> Les travaux du Christ 'the suffering of Christ'; une femme en travail 'woman in labour'; la salle de travail 'delivery room'.

So, it is not "Cellini's works" but "Cellini's sufferings" that are mentioned. The word goes back to the Middle Latin *trepalium* 'instrument of torture'. English *travel* has remained closer to the older meaning than *travail* 'labour, work' in modern French.

3.2.2.2. As a second category of meaning-giving relations, Coseriu names the "relations with signs of other texts". Here, too, two subcategories are distinguished: a) "repeated discourse" and b) "winged words" (ἔπεα πτερόεντα).

The first subcategory is not about the simple use of idiomatic expressions, but allusions to an already existing fixed expression, such as "Yes, the early bird catches the worm, but sometimes the hawk gets the bird". The resulting meaning would be something like: 'Being ready for something early is not always an advantage'. Or, suppose someone says in a company that has been waiting for an unpleasant guest for a long time: 'Better never than late'. In this case, one understands 'We like to wait in the hope that he will never come'.

When translating such text fragments, the first thing is to recognise the fixed phrase as such, for instance "Better late than never". Then the procedure could possibly be imitated with target language means: In the case of the early bird with a corresponding German idiom: „Ja, Morgenstund hat Gold im Mund, aber manchmal speit sie auch Pech und Schwefel." ('Yes, the morning has gold in its mouth, but sometimes it spits pitch and brimstone.').

Sometimes fixed turns of phrase also give a clear indication of the genre in which they occur. If a story begins with *once upon a time/ es war einmal/ il était une fois/ c'era una volta/ érase una vez*, then we know: Now a fairy tale is being told.

The contribution of "winged words" to the meaning of a text is essentially to what Julia Kristeva called "intertextuality". Later she distanced herself from this concept. The term was used by other scholars with the most diverse shades of meaning and reinterpreted several times (*cf.* Holthuis, 1993). The term was coined in 1967. It can be assumed that Coseriu was aware of it, but deliberately did not use it.[1]

"Winged words" can be very short and still have their effect. When a novel by the French writer Michel Tournier bears the title *Le roi des aulnes*, the politically informed reader immediately suspects that it will talk about the dark side of Germany. The title refers to a poem by Goethe known in English as *The Erlking*, although the *Erle* to which it refers is called *alder* in English. It should be noted in passing that the gloomy connotation attached to the title today is due to a translation

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[1] *Cf.* my footnote in the fourth edition of *Textlinguistik* (Coseriu, 2007, p. 110, fn. 25).

error by Johann Gottfried Herder. He had misunderstood the Danish *ellerkonge* which means 'elf king'.

Biblical quotations are particularly instructive for dealing with winged words in translation. When translating from English into German, it should be easier to recreate the effect of the original biblical quotation in the translation, because both language areas have canonical translations that are familiar to many readers: The *King James Version* and Luther's translation.

In France, there is a plethora of competing versions. This becomes evident in the translations of Melville's novel *Moby Dick or the Wale*, a text that is virtually peppered with biblical quotations.

I must content myself to one example here: In chapter 86 of the novel *Moby Dick*, Ishmael endeavours to describe the mighty tail of a sperm whale. How is he supposed to recognise the head of the whale if he cannot even do so with the tail?

> But if I know not even the tail of this whale, how understand his head? Much more, how comprehend his face, when face he has none? Thou shalt see may my back parts, my tail he seems to say, but my face shall not be seen.

Melville alludes here to a passage in the second book of Moses (Exodus) in which God tells Moses that no man, not even he, Moses, will ever see God face to face. This establishes an analogy between the inaccessibility of the whale and the incomprehensibility of God. In the *Authorised Version*, the passage reads:

> And I will take away mine hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen (Ex. 33, 23)

Fragments of Luther's text appear in the German translations of the novel, but these are likely to be familiar only to very Bible-literate readers. The French translations draw on different French versions of the Bible.[1]

3.2.2.3. Another type of relation that can become important for the construction of meaning in the text is what Coseriu calls "relations between signs and things". In the broadest sense, this is about the iconomatic function of signs, which was already of interest for the theorists of antiquity. Here, we can only deal with various types of relations between the phonic form of signs and the designated objects and facts, i.e. forms of *onomatopoeia*. Imitation through the graphic form of the sign, *ideography*,

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[1] The examples are taken from Waltraud Krist's dissertation in progress on the use of biblical quotations in French literature and translations of various works.

plays only a minor role in European culture – in contrast to Asian culture. Coseriu went into greater detail than in his lecture on text linguistics in his treatise "Forma y sustancia en los sonidos del lenguaje" (Coseriu, 1967a, pp. 115-234).

With this kind of sign function, it is essential to distinguish between the potential-virtual status of the sign as a unit of language and its potential-actual function as a component of the text. In the context of this essay, it is primarily the latter that is of interest.

Incidentally, the difference between acoustic and articulatory onomatopoeia is also important. The German word *Blitz* 'lightning' evokes the meant phenomenon through its light vowel and monosyllabicity with a compact consonantal structure. A word like *baby* evokes what is meant more through the simplicity of its articulation, especially when it is actualised in the text: *the baby babbled in his cradle*.

Translators pay sometimes more, sometimes less attention to the phenomenon of onomatopoeia in the broadest sense. Some seem to believe no special attention needs to be paid to the phonic form of the signs, even if they recognizably contribute to the meaning of the text. Thus, the English translator (unknown to me) of the Grimm fairy tale *Aschenputtel* (Cinderella). The false bride has cut off part of her heel to be able to put on the shoe that is much too small for her and intended for the real bride. As the king's son rides along with her, two doves call from a neighbouring tree:

Rucke di guck, rucke di guck,	There they go, there they go!
Blut ist im Schuck.	There is blood on her shoe.
Der Schuck ist zu klein,	The shoe is too small,
Die rechte Braut sitzt noch daheim.	Not the right bride at all!

The French translator Marthe Robert takes a completely different approach. For her, the onomatopoeic effect is so important that the French word *pantoufle* is deformed in the translation so that it can serve the intended purpose:

Rucke di guck, rucke di guck,	Tour nou touk, tour nou touk!
Blut ist im Schuck.	Sang dans la pantouk.
Der Schuck ist zu klein,	Le soulier est trop petit,
Die rechte Braut sitzt noch daheim.	La vraie fiancée est encore au logis.

The word *Schuck* in the original version of the fairy tale is probably, like its French counterpart, an artificial word. In the very personal opinion of the author of these lines, the standard language version of these verses is even more haunting:

Rucke di guh, rucke di guh, Blut ist im Schuh…

3.2.2.4. With his "relations between signs and knowledge of things" (Coseriu, 2007, pp. 119-124), Coseriu moves one step further away from the text in the narrower sense towards the real world that surrounds the text and whose knowledge is necessary if it is to be fully understood. It is about what the objects and facts named in the text can evoke in the reader. In terms of translation, differences in individual languages are important: a cow evokes 'stupidity' in German, 'underhandedness' in French. Thus, in many cases, "Pierre est une vache" could be translated as "Peter ist ein gemeiner Hund" ('Peter is a mean dog').

Coseriu consistently used the term *evocation* in this context, not *connotation*, as some other linguists do. By "connotation" one understands (in the sense of the Copenhagen School) the reference of a sign or an object to the environment to which it normally belongs. What is connotative about a roll of toilet paper on a laid table? In its nature, it is hardly different from a paper napkin, but it connotes an environment that is undesirable at the table. Evocations are something different. They can be so individual that they can hardly be systematised for text linguistics. The word *mother* evokes something completely different in a young man suffering from an Oedipus complex than in a woman who was given to an orphanage by her mother as a small child.

Regarding the text-linguistics, the evocations that are significant are those that have some degree of collective validity as in the following case. In a French crime novel partly set in Germany, the word *Pirsch* 'stalk' is constantly used. It appears there in technical contexts and thereby acquires a technical touch. In German, this word, which was originally borrowed from Old French, has become a common lexeme of colloquial language. This is evident alone from the fact that a verb was derived from it: *sich anpirschen* 'to creep up cautiously'. When translating the novel into German,

one would have to come up with some ideas to do justice to the terminological evocation of the word in the original.

3.2.2.5 As the last of the relations that the linguistic signs of the text can enter with factors outside the text and thus contribute to the construction of the overall meaning, Coseriu names the "Umfelder". This term comes from Karl Bühler's *Sprachtheorie* (Bühler, 1984, pp. 154-178). In his treatise "Determinación y entorno", Coseriu uses the Spanish equivalent *entorno*. In the English translation, *environment* is used. In his *Textlinguistik*, Coseriu does not adhere exactly to Bühler's terminology but uses some traditional terms. The distinctions he makes are extraordinarily differentiated (*cf.* the diagram in Coseriu, 2007, p. 127). Here I will only deal with the cases that are of relevance regarding the problem of translation.

First, however, a simple example should make it clear what is at stake: If someone says to an interlocutor "I would like to have 10 to 85", the latter will stare at him uncomprehendingly. But if the same sentence is uttered at a German post office counter in 2022, there is not the slightest difficulty in understanding. The speaker wants stamps for standard letters. If such a sentence uttered in this speech situation is written down, one might have to add the word for *Briefmarken* in a translation, i.e. *stamps* in English.

In this short essay, only three types of environments will be briefly discussed:

a) the linguistic context in the narrower sense, i.e. in relation to a particular passage of the text, what has already been said before and what will be said later.

b) the speech situation, i.e. the external circumstances in which an utterance is made. In written texts, which is what we are primarily concerned with here, these situations ("suppletive environments") must first be established by the author (*cf.* Aschenberg, 1999).

c) the universe of discourse, i.e. "the universal system of meanings to which a text belongs and through which it derives its validity and meaning" (Coseriu, 2007, p. 132), e.g. Greek mythology or the Bible.

Ad a) Especially in longer written texts, the understanding of a certain passage depends on what has already been said before. Just one example from a French novel: Two young girls fight for the favour of a young man. Both have "speaking names". Marie Dormeur decides to take the initiative before her rival Rose Sépulcre beats her to it.

> Si je ne me jette pas à sa tête, c'est cette salope de Rose Sépulcre qui va l'avoir. […] Celle là, avec son nom à donner froid dans le dos. (Magnan, 1984, p. 60)

> (If I don't throw myself at him, that bitch Rose Sepulchre will get him. [...] That one, with her spine-chilling name.)

The educated French reader may understand this passage spontaneously because he knows the meaning of *sépulcre*. This would also be true for the English reader if the novel had ever been translated into English. The German reader of my own translation would not spontaneously understand this passage:

> Wenn ich mich dem nicht an den Hals werfe, wird diese Rose Sépulcre ihn sich schnappen, diese Schlampe. Die ist zu allem fähig, mit ihrem Namen, bei dem es einem kalt den Rücken herunterläuft. (Magnan, 1999, p. 60)

The German reader cannot make anything of the word *sépulcre*, but a few pages earlier it is mentioned that Rose's father, Didon Sépulcre, was proud to bear the field name of his mill: Saint Sépulcre, 'holy grave'. So the reader understands the passage if he remembers the previous text.

The same applies to the follow-up context. The title of a textbook is often only understood after reading many pages. This sometimes also applies to fine literature. In 1913 and 1914, the serial novel *Der Golem* by the Austrian writer Gustav Meyrink was published. You only really understand what the golem is when you have read it all.

Ad b) The speech situation only concerns spoken language. In colloquial language, one usually also speaks of "context" in this case, as in the case of the already discussed context in the narrower sense. To distinguish the linguistic context from the situation context, the English translation theorist John C. Catford uses the terms *co-text* and *context* (Catford, 1965, p. 31). In written language, there is no 'primary' speech situation; it must first be created.

This happens most often in fictional narrative texts where some text passages do not contribute to the actual narrative, but merely serve the linguistic construction of speech situations. In this respect, classical authors are more 'polite' to their readers than modern ones. In the great novels of the 19th century, long passages serve to create suppletive speech situations; the narrative situation appears in the form of "narrated situation". For the translator, this traditional procedure generally poses no difficulty. All he or she has to do is distinguish between narrative and descriptive passages and re-create both using the means of the target language.

It becomes more difficult when only indirect references to the utterance situation are given in the text, as is often the case with modern authors. Many examples can be found in Heidi Aschenberg's habilitation thesis mentioned above (Aschenberg, 1999). Here, recourse to an example already cited must suffice:

To make the sentence "I would like to have 10 at 85" understandable without using the word *stamps*, a narrator could describe the post office where this sentence is uttered and possibly also make it clear that we are in the year 2022, when postage has been increased from 80 to 85 cents. However, the same purpose could also be achieved by less obvious means: The author could, for example, have the speaker rant about the constant postage increases. This would be followed by mentioning the lady at the counter to whom the speaker addresses himself. That would suffice as a suppletive environment.

The less explicitly such a suppletive environment is built upon, the more the translator is challenged in finding an adequate solution. It would be worthwhile to investigate how corpus-based machine translation systems cope with suppletive environments in longer complex texts. Unfortunately, such an investigation can only be suggested here but not carried out.

Ad c) Finally, the term "universe of discourse", which was coined in the 19th century by the English logician Augustus De Morgan, should be briefly discussed here. The term is used in several areas. In the context of the topic dealt with here, Coseriu's explanation given above is relevant: "the universal system of meanings to which a text belongs and through which it derives its validity and meaning" (*cf. supra*). Whether the sentence "Abel slew his cousin Cain" is true or false can only be decided within the universe of discourse "biblical history". Only in relation to this is it meaningful to answer: "That is not true. First, the two were brothers, not cousins, and second, it was the other way around; Cain slew his brother Abel". For the complex of "text linguistics and translation", the term "universe of discourse" is of little importance. Texts that move within a certain universe of discourse explain themselves. It only becomes difficult when such a universe of discourse is alluded to "from outside". For example, someone might say to a young man who has killed his father in excessive anger: "If you go on like this, you'll end up like Oedipus". If such a sentence is part of a fictional narrative, it would allude to a universe of discourse outside the text. In terms of translation, this would be a form of intertextuality (*cf. supra*). Readers and translators of the text must have the education they need to understand such a reference.

4. Conclusion

In the present article, the focus was almost exclusively on forms of text linguistics developed by Eugenio Coseriu. Many older and more recent approaches were only touched upon thematic progression, speech act theory, tense grammars, discourse traditions, and many others more. If this short essay can claim some originality, it is by linking text-linguistic issues with problems of translation technique and translation strategy (*cf. supra*, introduction). The focus of interest was on longer, complex texts, not only in the field of fine literature, but also in that of specialised texts and science. In university training centres for translators and interpreters – the author of these lines belongs to one of them – translation is usually taught in practical lessons using texts that are only a few pages long. However, a "linguistics of meaning" in the sense of Coseriu only unfolds its full potential when it is used in the analysis of much longer, complex texts. The author's practical experience has shown that certain problems of semantic cohesion and pragmatic coherence (*cf.* Schreiber, 1999, pp. 16-22) do not appear at all in shorter texts.

An important research desideratum could only be pointed out here in the form of brief suggestions: to examine the performance and limitations of corpus-based machine translation systems in coping with long and complex texts. The point is not to gloatingly criticise failures of these systems; the point is to prepare future translators for conscientious post-editing.

5. References

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