Metaphor and translation: some implications of a cognitive approach

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Abstract

Metaphor has been widely discussed within the discipline of Translation Studies, predominantly with respect to translatability and transfer methods. It has been argued that metaphors can become a translation problem, since transferring them from one language and culture to another one may be hampered by linguistic and cultural differences. A number of translation procedures for dealing with this problem have been suggested, e.g., substitution (metaphor into different metaphor), paraphrase (metaphor into sense), or deletion. Such procedures have been commented on both in normative models of translation (how to translate metaphors) and in descriptive models (how metaphors have been dealt with in actual translations).

After a short overview of how metaphor has been dealt with in the discipline of Translation Studies, this paper discusses some implications of a cognitive approach to metaphors for translation theory and practice. Illustrations from authentic source and target texts (English and German, political discourse) show how translators handled metaphorical expressions, and what effects this had for the text itself, for text reception by the addressees, and for subsequent discursive developments. © 2004 Elsevier B.V. All rights reserved.

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1. Introduction

Metaphor, as a typical feature of communication, presents a challenge for translation too, both for the practising translator and for its treatment in the discipline of Translation Studies. In the literature on translation, the two main issues have been, firstly, the translatability of metaphors, and secondly, the elaboration of potential translation
procedures. In most cases, the argumentation is based on a traditional understanding of metaphor as a figure of speech, as a linguistic expression which is substituted for another expression (with a literal meaning), and whose main function is the stylistic embellishment of the text. It is only recently that a cognitive approach to metaphor has been applied to Translation Studies. In this article, I want to illustrate on the basis of some examples from the language pair, English and German, what a cognitive approach could offer to the description of metaphors in translation. The discussion proceeds primarily from the perspective of the discipline of Translation Studies. In taking this approach, it is also possible to explore how the cross-linguistic and cross-cultural perspective of translation can contribute to metaphor theory.

2. The treatment of metaphor as a translation problem

Translation and interpreting as activities have existed for many centuries, and there is a long tradition of thought and an enormous body of opinion about translation (cf. Delisle and Woodsworth, 1995; Robinson, 1997). But it was not until the second half of this century that Translation Studies developed into a discipline in its own right (cf. Holmes, 1988; Snell-Hornby et al., 1992). Although at first conceived as a subdiscipline of applied linguistics, it has taken on concepts and methods of other disciplines, notably text linguistics, communication studies, sociolinguistics, psycholinguistics, pragmatics, comparative literature, and recently, cultural studies. Instead of a unified theory, we have a multiplicity of approaches, each of which focuses on specific aspects of translation, looks at the product or the process of translation from a specific angle, and uses specific terminology and research methods (cf. Chesterman, 2000; Gentzler, 1993; Schäffner, 1997b; Stolze, 1994).

The phenomenon of metaphor has regularly been of concern to translation scholars who have argued about problems of transferring metaphors from one language and culture to another. The arguments brought forward need to be seen within the context of a heterogeneous discipline, i.e., with respect to the specific model of translation within which the scholars approached their topic. I will therefore begin by giving a brief overview of the most prominent approaches to translation and provide a short account of how metaphor has been dealt with in the discipline of Translation Studies.

Linguistics-based approaches define translation as transferring meanings, as substituting source language (SL) signs by equivalent target language (TL) signs (e.g., Catford, 1965). The source text (ST) is to be reproduced in the TL as closely as possible, both in content and in form. Since the aim of a translation theory has often been seen as determining appropriate translation methods, language systems (as langues) have been studied in order to find the smallest equivalent units (at the lexical and grammatical levels) which can be substituted for each other in an actual text (as parole).

Textlinguistic approaches define translation as source text induced target text (TT) production (Neubert, 1985). The text itself is treated as the unit of translation, and it is stressed that a text is always a text in a situation and in a culture. Therefore, consideration needs to be given to situational factors, genre or text-typological conventions, addressees’ knowledge and expectations, and text functions. The central notion of equivalence is now
applied to the textual level, and defined as communicative equivalence, i.e., a relationship between the target text and the source text in which TT and ST are of equal value in the respective communicative situations in their cultures.

Functionalist approaches define translation as a purposeful activity (cf. Nord, 1997), as transcultural interaction (Holz-Mánttäri, 1984), as production of a TT which is appropriate for its specified purpose (its skopos) for target addressees in target circumstances (cf. Vermeer’s ‘skopos theory’, e.g., Vermeer, 1996). The actual form of the TT, its textual–linguistic make-up, is therefore dependent on its intended purpose, and not (exclusively) on the structure of the ST. The yardstick for assessing the quality of the target text is, thus, its appropriateness for its purpose, and not the equivalence to the source text. More modern linguistic approaches acknowledge that translation is not a simple substitution process, but rather the result of a complex text-processing activity. However, they argue that translations need to be set apart from other kinds of derived texts, and that the label ‘translation’ should only be applied to those cases where an equivalence relation obtains between ST and TT (House, 1997; Koller, 1992).

Equivalence is probably the most controversial notion in Translation Studies. Some translation scholars reject this notion outright, arguing that by retaining ‘equivalence’ in the vocabulary, translation scholars sidestep the issue that “it is difference, not sameness or transparency or equality, which is inscribed in the operations of translation” (Hermans, 1998: 61). This view is also expressed in current approaches that are inspired by postmodern theories and Cultural Studies, which argue that texts do not have any intrinsically stable meaning that could be repeated elsewhere (e.g., Arrojo, 1998; Venuti, 1995). For Venuti, the target text should be “the site where a different culture emerges, where a reader gets a glimpse of a cultural other” (Venuti, 1995: 306).

In the course of its development, the focus of Translation Studies has, thus, shifted markedly from linguistic towards contextual and cultural factors which affect translation. Major inspiration for the development of the discipline has also come from research conducted within the framework of Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS), aiming at the description of translating and translations “as they manifest themselves in the world of our experience” (Holmes, 1988: 71). Research here includes studying the socio-historical conditions in which translations are produced and received, identifying regularities in translators’ behaviour and linking such regularities to translation norms which operate both in the social event and the cognitive act of translation (cf. Toury, 1995). DTS and postmodern theories thus define translation as norm-governed behaviour (Toury, 1995) and/or a cultural political practice (Venuti, 1996: 197).

The contrast between normative models (what a TT should look like) and descriptive models (what TTs actually do look like) is also evident in the discussions about metaphor translation. Metaphor has traditionally been described as an individual linguistic phenomenon (a metaphorical expression) which can become a translation problem. Most scholars use the same terms as those applied in semantic theories (cf. Goatly, 1997), i.e., terms like ‘image’ or ‘vehicle’ for the conventional referent, ‘object’ or ‘topic’ for the actual unconventional referent, and ‘sense’, ‘ground’, or ‘tenor’ for the similarities and/or analogies involved. Newmark (1981) explains these terms on the basis of the example rooting out the faults as follows: the object, that is, the item which is described by the metaphor, is faults. The image, that is, the item in terms of which the object is described,
is rooting up weeds. The metaphor, that is, the word(s) used in the image, is rooting out, and the sense, which shows in what particular aspects the object and the image are similar, is (a) eliminate; and (b) do so with tremendous personal effort. He argues that in translating this metaphor, a verb such as éliminer in French, or entfernen in German, would not do, “unless the phrase was of marginal importance in the text” (Newmark, 1981: 85).

These arguments reflect the two main concerns in Translation Studies, the translatability of metaphors, and procedures to transfer them from a source language into a target language. In equivalence-based approaches, the underlying assumption is that a metaphor, once identified, should ideally be transferred intact from SL to TL. However, cultural differences between SL and TL have often been mentioned as preventing such an intact transfer. For Dagut (1976: 22), a metaphor is an “individual flash of imaginative insight”, a creative product of violating the linguistic system, and as such, highly culture specific. Its main function is to shock its readers by creating an aesthetic impact. In Dagut’s view, the effect of shock is to be retained in a translation, and if linguistic and cultural factors hinder this effect, then he maintains that the metaphor cannot be translated. For illustration, he uses Hebrew metaphors translated into English, and shows, for example, how Hebrew metaphors are closely connected to Biblical stories and thus culture specific (as in the case of the verb form ne’ekad—’bound’, i.e., metaphorically, ‘bound like Isaac for the sacrifice’).

Most authors agree that the image in the ST cannot always be retained in the TT (e.g., because the image that is attached to the metaphor is unknown in the TL, or the associations triggered by the SL metaphor get lost in the TL), and subsequently several translation procedures have been suggested as alternative solutions to the ideal of reproducing the metaphor intact. For example, van den Broeck (1981: 77) lists the following possibilities.

1. Translation ‘sensu stricto’ (i.e., transfer of both SL tenor and SL vehicle into TL).
2. Substitution (i.e., replacement of SL vehicle by a different TL vehicle with more or less the same tenor).
3. Paraphrase (i.e., rendering a SL metaphor by a non-metaphorical expression in the TL).

Van den Broeck provides these modes of metaphor translation as a tentative scheme, i.e., as theoretical possibilities. By linking them to categories of metaphor (lexicalized, conventional, and private metaphors) and to their use and functions in texts, he presents some hypotheses about translatability. In the tradition of DTS, van den Broeck sees the task of a translation theory not in prescribing how metaphors should be translated, but in describing and explaining identified solutions. He therefore argues that detailed descriptive studies of how metaphors are actually translated would be required to test the suggested modes and his hypotheses.

In contrast to van den Broeck’s descriptive framework, Newmark’s translation procedures are presented in a prescriptive way, with the aim of providing principles, restricted rules, and guidelines for translating and translator training. He distinguishes between five types of metaphors: dead, cliché, stock, recent, and original. In his discussion of stock metaphors, he proposes seven translation procedures, which have frequently been taken up in the literature. These procedures are arranged in order of preference (Newmark, 1981:}
Newmark’s focus is on the linguistic systems, and his arguments can be linked to the substitution theory of metaphor (cf. Goatly, 1997: 116f). (All examples given here for illustration are Newmark’s own examples).

1. Reproducing the same image in the TL, e.g., golden hair—goldenes Haar.
2. Replacing the image in the SL with a standard TL image which does not clash with the TL culture, e.g., other fish to fry—d’autres chats à fouetter.
3. Translating metaphor by simile, retaining the image, e.g., Ces zones cryptuaire où s’élaboré la beauté.—The crypt-like areas where beauty is manufactured. According to Newmark, this procedure can modify the shock of the metaphor.
4. Translating metaphor (or simile) by simile plus sense (or occasionally a metaphor plus sense), e.g., tout un vocabulaire moliéresque—a whole repertoire of medical quackery such as Molière might have used. Newmark suggests the use of this compromise solution in order to avoid comprehension problems; however, it results in a loss of the intended effect.
5. Converting metaphor to sense, e.g., sein Brot verdienen—to earn one’s living. This procedure is recommended when the TL image is too broad in sense or not appropriate to the register. However, emotive aspects may get lost.
6. Deletion, if the metaphor is redundant.
7. Using the same metaphor combined with sense, in order to enforce the image.

Toury (1995: 81ff) points out that these translation procedures start from the metaphor as identified in the ST, and that the identified metaphor (the metaphorical expression) is treated as a unit of translation. He argues that from the perspective of the TT, two additional cases can be identified: the use of a metaphor in the TT for a non-metaphorical expression in the ST (non-metaphor into metaphor), and the addition of a metaphor in the TT without any linguistic motivation in the ST (zero into metaphor). This view deals with metaphor not as a translation problem (of the ST), but as a translation solution. In his descriptive study of the translation of verb metaphors (for the language pair Swedish and German), Kjärr (1988) included such an inverse analysis as well, but did not go much beyond a presentation of statistical findings. Kurth’s (1995) findings, too, are derived from a descriptive analysis of actual translations. Based on the interaction theory of metaphor (cf. Goatly, 1997: 117ff) and on scenes and frames semantics as applied to translation (Vannerem and Snell-Hornby, 1986), he illustrates how several metaphors interact in the construction of a macro-scene. In German translations of works by Charles Dickens, he shows which TL frames have been chosen for a SL scene (e.g., ‘humanizing’ objects by anthropomorphical metaphors) and what the consequences are for the effect of the text (e.g., weakening of an image).

3. Metaphors from the cognitive linguistics perspective: consequences for Translation Studies

The cognitive approach to metaphor, largely initiated by Lakoff and Johnson’s Metaphors We Live By (1980), can contribute new insights into translation as well. This approach, however, is only gradually taking root within Translation Studies (e.g., Al-Harrasi, 2000; Cristofoli et al., 1998; Schäffner, 1997a, 1998; Stienstra, 1993). The main
argument of the cognitive approach is that metaphors are not just decorative elements, but rather, basic resources for thought processes in human society. Metaphors are a means of understanding one domain of experience (a target domain) in terms of another (a source domain). The source domain is mapped onto the target domain, whereby the structural components of the base schema are transferred to the target domain (ontological correspondences), thus also allowing for knowledge-based inferences and entailments (epistemic correspondences). Such models are largely encoded and understood in linguistic terms. In cognitive linguistics, the term ‘metaphor’ is used to refer to this conceptual mapping (e.g., ANGER IS THE HEAT OF A FLUID IN A CONTAINER), and the term ‘metaphorical expression’ is used to refer to an individual linguistic expression that is based on a conceptualization and thus sanctioned by a mapping (e.g., ‘I gave vent to my anger’).

Establishing the conceptualization on which a particular metaphorical expression is based is relevant to translation, too. Such a perspective provides a different answer to the question of the translatability of metaphors. Translatability is no longer a question of the individual metaphorical expression, as identified in the ST, but it becomes linked to the level of conceptual systems in source and target culture. In what follows, some implications of such a cognitive approach to metaphors for translation theory and practice are illustrated. On the basis of authentic source and target texts, I describe how translators have handled metaphorical expressions. This description is linked to a consideration of the effects of such translation solutions on the text and its reception by the addressees. The examples come from political texts, and the languages involved are primarily English and German. The focus of this paper is the description and explanation of identified translation solutions. It is thus related to DTS, but, in contrast to van den Broeck, for example, I do not pretend to test pre-established translation schemes or hypotheses. My starting point is authentic TT structures for metaphorical expressions in STs. That is, the description is predominantly product-oriented, with the explanation being linked to text, discourse, and culture. In my conclusion, I point out some ways in which the discipline of Translation Studies can contribute to metaphor theory.

4. Metaphor and text

In the following two examples, we have an identical metaphorical expression in the German ST, Brücke (bridge), but it has been handled differently in the TTs (both extracts come from speeches by the former German Chancellor Helmut Kohl):

1 In this metaphor, ontological correspondences are, for instance, ‘the container is the body’, ‘the heat of fluid is the anger’; epistemic correspondences are then, for instance, ‘when the fluid is heated past a certain limit, pressure increases to the point at which the container explodes’ (source) and ‘when anger increases past a certain limit, pressure increases to the point at which the person loses control’ (cf. Kövecses, 1986: 17f).

2 A process-oriented analysis, i.e., an analysis of the actual cognitive processes in the translator’s mind during the translation act, would add valuable insights as well. Moreover, such a perspective would also test the validity of Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) theory. For example, one could test whether translators, as text receivers and interpreters, actually do access conceptual metaphors when constructing interpretations of metaphorical expressions (cf. Glucksberg, 2001), and how this might influence the decision-making for the TT structure. Research into translation processes (e.g., most recently Danks et al., 1997; Kussmaul, 2000; Tirkkonen-Condit and Jääskeläinen, 2000) has not yet been conducted primarily with metaphors in mind.
Wir wollen die Brücke über den Atlantik auf allen Gebieten—Politik und Wirtschaft, Wissenschaft und Kultur—festigen und ausbauen.

We aim to strengthen and widen the transatlantic bridge in all spheres, in politics and commerce, science and culture.³

So sind die amerikanischen Soldaten ein wichtiger Teil der Freundschaftsbrücke über den Atlantik geworden. (literally: . . . an important component of the transatlantic bridge).

The American forces in Germany are thus an important component of transatlantic friendship. (emphasis are mine)

How (if at all) can traditional translation procedures account for these different solutions? Applying Newmark’s translation procedures, we could say that in the first case, the procedure is metaphor for metaphor (i.e., reproduction of the image), whereas in the second case the metaphor has been deleted. These texts would be examples of what Newmark calls ‘authoritative texts’, and in his guidelines to translators he states that in such texts, metaphors should be preserved. As a second criterion to guide the translator’s decision, Newmark suggests the importance of the metaphor in the text. The first extract comes from Kohl’s speech on receiving the Honorary Freedom of the City of London (18 February 1998), the second one from his speech at the ceremony at Tempelhof Airport to commemorate the Berlin Airlift on the occasion of the visit of President Clinton (14 May 1998). The Berlin Airlift is known in German as Luftbrücke (literally: ‘bridge in the air’). In the London speech, the 50th anniversary of the Airlift is shortly mentioned, but it is not the actual topic of the speech. In the Tempelhof speech, however, the Luftbrücke is the actual topic, and it is used frequently in the short text, thus contributing to the structure of the text. Based on these considerations, Newmark’s recommendation presumably would be: metaphor into same metaphor in the first case, but metaphor into sense in the second case. If we describe this authentic example on the basis of a cognitive approach, metaphorical expressions such as Brücke are considered ‘...in the light of the metaphorical concept of which they are manifestations, and not as individual idioms to be fitted into the target text as well as they can’ (Stienstra, 1993: 217). In this case, one and the same historical event was conceptualized in different ways by different cultures, using different metaphors. The source domain of the English ‘airlift’ is a TRANSPORT domain, focusing on the medium (air), the action, and involving a direction (from–to). In the German Luftbrücke, the source domain is an ARCHITECTURAL STRUCTURE, focusing on the medium and the structural object. As said above, the anniversary of the Luftbrücke is the actual topic of Kohl’s Tempelhof speech; but is the bridge indeed the dominant metaphor in the text as a whole? In other words: what is the underlying conceptual metaphor by which the metaphorical expression Freundschaftsbrücke is sanctioned?

A closer analysis of the text above shows that the argumentation is structured around the central idea of American–German friendship. In the first five paragraphs, Kohl gives an account of the historical event itself and of its political significance. Luftbrücke occurs six

³ Translators are normally not identified by name in the case of translations being produced for the German government.
times in these first paragraphs, each time translated as Airlift, since each time it is used as a proper name. Kohl then links the historical aspect to the development of American–German friendship over the last 50 years, both at a personal level and at the governmental level. And it is here that he speaks of the Freundschaftsbrücke (exploiting the bridge image as a rhetorical means for the argumentative function of a political speech):

[...][37] in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten haben rund 7 Millionen amerikanische Soldaten bei uns in Deutschland Dienst getan. Gemeinsam mit ihren Familien waren es etwa 15 Millionen Amerikaner, die fernab ihrer Heimat, ihren Beitrag zur Erhaltung von Frieden und Freiheit leisteten [...]. Im täglichen Kontakt mit ihren deutschen Nachbarn haben sie viele persönliche Beziehungen geknüpft. Diese wurden [...] eines der Fundamente der engen Freundschaft zwischen unseren Völkern. Es sind ja nicht zuletzt die alltäglichen Erfahrungen und Eindrücke, die persönlichen und menschlichen Begegnungen, die in diesen Jahrzehnten die deutsch-amerikanischen Beziehungen mit Leben erfüllt haben. So sind die amerikanischen Soldaten ein wichtiger Teil der Freundschaftsbrücke über den Atlantik geworden.4

What we can see from such an analysis is that Kohl’s speech is structured around a metaphorical understanding of friendship: Germany and the USA are friends. Seeing the state metaphorically as a person seeking friendship involves a metaphorical conception of closeness. Thus, all references in Kohl’s speech to Kontakte, Beziehungen, Begegnungen (contacts, a dense network of personal ties, personal encounters) can be described as metaphorical expressions that are sanctioned by the conceptual metaphors A STATE IS A PERSON and INTIMACY IS CLOSENESS (see also Gibbs’ comments on primary metaphors (Gibbs et al., this issue)). One of the means which allows friends who live far apart to experience close personal contact, is a bridge. A bridge links two endpoints, here the USA and Germany (ontological correspondence), thus providing an opportunity for mutual contact (epistemic correspondence).

From such a conceptual perspective, we can say that rendering Freundschaftsbrücke as transatlantic friendship does not really constitute a case of metaphor deletion. The conceptual metaphors A STATE IS A PERSON and INTIMACY IS CLOSENESS are present in both ST and TT. It is these conceptual metaphors that are relevant for the structure of the text and its overall function as a political speech. At the macro-level, the conceptual metaphors are identical in ST and TT, although at the micro-level a specific metaphorical expression in the ST (Freundschaftsbrücke) has not been rendered in exactly the same way in the TT. However, transatlantic friendship in the TT can equally be characterized as a metaphorical expression which is justified by the same conceptual metaphors.

4 The authentic English translation of this passage reads as follows: Over the past decades some seven million American servicemen have been stationed in Germany. Together with their families, that makes about 15 million Americans who, in this country far from home, have helped, [...] to safeguard peace and liberty. In their day-to-day contacts with Germans the American community here has built up a dense network of personal ties central to the close friendship between our two nations. It is not least this wealth of personal encounters, these everyday impressions and experiences which make German–American relations a meaningful part of daily life. The American forces in Germany are thus an important component of transatlantic friendship.
If we take a cognitive approach, a first aspect of metaphors in translation can therefore be described as follows: not all individual manifestations of a conceptual metaphor in a source text are accounted for in the target text by using the same metaphorical expression. This argument is in line with one of Stienstra’s (1993) findings. On the basis of several Bible translations into English and Dutch, she illustrates that the conceptual metaphor YHWH IS THE HUSBAND OF HIS PEOPLE, which is a central metaphor of the Old Testament, was preserved at the macro-level, even if specific textual manifestations were changed or not accounted for in each individual case.

There is another example in Kohl’s Tempelhof speech which provides insights into strategic uses of metaphors and their treatment in translation. In elaborating on German–American partnership in the world of today and tomorrow, Kohl says:

*Unser Ziel, Herr Präsident, ist es, den Bau des Hauses Europa zu vollenden. Dabei wollen wir, daß unsere amerikanischen Freunde in diesem Haus auf Dauer ihre feste Wohnung haben.* (literally: [...] We want our American friends to have a permanent apartment in this house.

Our goal is to complete the construction of the European house—with a permanent right of residence for our American friends—and enable the family of European nations to live together side by side in lasting peace. (italics are mine)

From a cognitive perspective, we can say that the metaphorical expressions *Haus Europa, Haus,* and *feste Wohnung* are all sanctioned by the underlying conceptual metaphor EUROPE IS A HOUSE, which is an example of an ontological metaphor (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980). Whereas in the ST, the structural elements have been lexicalized, the TT has made the entailments of the source domain explicit; that is, an apartment ensures a right of residence, and these are epistemic correspondences. Both ST and TT remain within the conceptual metaphor of a house, while the additional information in the TT (“and enable the family of European nations to live together side by side in lasting peace”) can be seen as elaborating on this metaphor, thus also providing a conceptual link to the metaphor INTIMACY IS CLOSENESS which structures Kohl’s speech.

Identifying metaphors and describing target text profiles is a legitimate research aim for a translation scholar. An additional question concerns the causes and effects of particular translations (cf. Chesterman, 1998). I will illustrate this first, by reference to the *Haus Europa* again, and then by commenting on the effects of a specific translation solution (*fester Kern—hard core*). Such an analysis needs to put the text into its historical context, accounting for its function, its addressees, etc. Metaphor is, thus, no longer a translation phenomenon of one particular text, but becomes an intertextual phenomenon.

5. Metaphor as an intertextual phenomenon

The metaphorical expression *Haus Europa* figured prominently in the discourse of Helmut Kohl in the 1990s, specifically with reference to issues of European integration. Actually, the metaphor of the *common European house* was introduced into political discourse in the mid-1980s by the then leader of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev. As a
reflection of the ‘new political thinking’ in the Communist Party under Gorbachev, the conceptual metaphor EUROPE IS A HOUSE was to represent the idea of all European states, East and West of the ‘Iron Curtain’, living and working together in peaceful coexistence. The base schema for Gorbachev’s metaphor was a multi-story apartment block with several entrances, in which several families live, each in their own flats (i.e., the prototypical house in bigger Russian towns). In his own discourse, Gorbachev hardly elaborated on the structural elements of a house, but most frequently stressed the rules and norms for living together in this common house. The rules of the house have to guarantee that every family can live their own lives, without interference from their neighbours, so that the common house is protected and kept in order (cf. Chilton, 1996; Schäffner, 1996).

The Russian metaphorical expression dom was rendered as house in English\(^5\) and as Haus in German political discourse in reporting on Gorbachev’s new political ideas and aims, which were not readily welcomed in Western European countries. But more often than being rejected outright, the metaphor EUROPE IS A HOUSE was taken up and conceptually challenged. In British political discourse (especially in the second half of the 1980s), the structural aspects dominated in the argumentation, determined by features of the prototypical English house. That is, there are references to detached and semi-detached houses, to fences, and to questions such as who is to live in which room or on which floor.

With the end of the Cold War, the conceptual metaphor EUROPE IS A HOUSE has lost much of its power, but especially in German political discourse during the era of Helmut Kohl, it was still frequently used with reference to European integration. The type of house underlying Kohl’s argumentation in the Tempelhof speech is the multi-story apartment block, evident in the reference to feste Wohnung. The solution chosen for the TT (i.e., the use of an expression which is an entailment of the conceptual metaphor plus additional information as elaboration) may well reflect the translator’s awareness that this metaphor was not too familiar to the American audience (the main addressees of the TT), and that the prototypical house in the USA is a one-family house.

With reference to a cognitive approach, we can say that this example illustrates the following case: structural components of the base conceptual schema in the ST (here: feste Wohnung) are replaced in the TT by expressions that make knowledge-based inferences and entailments explicit (here: right of residence, family, live together).

The pragmatic success or failure of a particular translation solution becomes obvious in international political discourse. A translation-specific view can provide a valuable contribution in this respect when we are able to show how metaphors are elaborated in the course of intercultural communication as a consequence of translation. From the point of view of Critical Discourse Analysis, Chilton and Ilyin (1993) studied the fate of the metaphor of the common European house when it travels between different linguistic and political cultures, and showed how houses are conceptualized prototypically in different ways from culture to culture.

Another case in point is the history of the metaphor of the core Europe, which I will comment on from a Translation Studies perspective. This metaphor was central in the highly controversial political debates in the autumn of 1994, initiated by a German

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\(^5\) Initially, home was used as well, but house eventually became the dominant expression.
This document was translated into English by in-house translators in Germany as follows:

Further strengthening the EU’s hard core

. . . that existing hard core of countries oriented to greater integration and closer cooperation must be further strengthened. At present, the core comprises five or six countries. This core must not be closed to other member states; . . .

The task of the hard core is, by giving the Union a strong centre, to counteract the centrifugal forces . . .

(CDU/CSU Fraktion des deutschen Bundestages, Reflections on European Policy, 1 September 1994, p. 7; emphases are mine)

Fester Kern is (to be) interpreted in a positive way in the German original text, suggesting solidity, sincerity, and wholesomeness. This German proposal, however, was received in a negative light by the British government and the media. This reaction was caused by the—unfortunate—choice of hard core for fester Kern in the English translation. The choice of hard core significantly shifted the tone of the document, and allowed for a subtle recasting of this concept as reported in British newspapers in the autumn of 1994. Hard core is associated with people and things that are tough, immoral and incorrigible, and in English texts, the core was described as an exclusive group with firm, even stubborn, ideas about what the future European Union was to look like. The underlying conceptual metaphor of these reports is a container, i.e., the group of countries that (are to) form the core are conceptualized as a container. The argumentation typically centred around inclusion and exclusion, being inside or outside the core, or in the centre versus the periphery, all of which indicate an orientational metaphor HAVING CONTROL IS BEING AT THE CENTRE.
Partly as a reaction to these critical comments from abroad, in German political discourse, the metaphor of the core as the innermost part of some object was extended by specifying this object. Kern was put in contexts which introduced new conceptualizations, new conceptual metaphors (cf. Schäffner, 1997a). For example, critics argued that speaking of core countries would lead to a Kernspaltung of the EU, i.e., nuclear fission. When challenged that his idea of a Kerneuropa would mean that a few take the initiative in decision-making processes, thus leaving others outside, Schäuble linked it to another metaphor, the magnet, cf.:

Wir haben immer das Bild des Magnetfelds gebraucht: Der Kern zieht an und stößt nicht ab. (Der Spiegel, 12 February 1996)

[We have always used the image of the magnetic field: the magnetic core attracts, it does not repel.]

This argumentation, however, cannot be justified by reference to the Schäuble paper itself, which does not have any reference to magnets, either explicitly or implicitly. The paper mentions as a task of the “hard core […] to counteract the centrifugal forces”, but what happens in a centrifuge cannot really be compared to a magnetic field. The translator only accounted for the metaphorical expression (metaphorical expression into same metaphorical expression). Since the Schäuble paper itself did not make the underlying conceptual metaphor absolutely clear, the consequence was a politically motivated, heated debate in Great Britain and in Germany, which ultimately resulted in a shift from an orientational metaphor (HAVING CONTROL IS BEING AT THE CENTRE) to a structural metaphor (THE EU IS A MAGNET).

The most interesting point for Translation Studies in this respect is that the whole debate and the conceptual shift were initiated by a specific translation solution. We can speak of intercultural intertextuality in such cases, where a metaphor is further elaborated as a result of intercultural communication and/or of translation. By studying actual translations and their effects, Translation Studies can thus also contribute to the study of cultural aspects of conceptual metaphors. That is, the analysis of texts for metaphors and metaphorical reasoning processes in different languages may reveal possible cultural differences in the conceptual structures.

6. Metaphor and culture

Cultural differences between the SL and the TL, and between the source culture and the target culture, have often been mentioned as problems for the translation of metaphors. For example, it has been argued that if a metaphor activates different associations in the two cultures, one should avoid a literal translation and opt either for a corresponding TL-metaphor or for a paraphrase. If, however, the culture-specificity of the ST is to be stressed, then it would be better to reproduce the SL-metaphor and add an explanation, either in a footnote or by means of annotations.

With regard to culture specificity, the cognitive view of metaphor can also provide new perspectives for Translation Studies. Stienstra (1993) differentiates between universal, culture-overlapping, and culture-specific metaphors. She argues that a large amount of
human experience is universal, or at least shared by several cultures; thus it is not the conceptual metaphor that is culture-dependent, but its linguistic realization.\textsuperscript{6}

In discussing Luftbrücke and airlift, I have already indicated that one and the same historical event can be conceptualized in different ways by different cultures.\textsuperscript{7} In the case of the European house we have seen different, culturally specific interpretations at the level of the prototypical concept; and, at a more abstract level, we will probably have a universal metaphor THE HOUSE IS A CONTAINER. In the case of core Europe, the polysemy of the German Kern was exploited to shift the conceptual metaphor.

In order to find out more about universal, culture-overlapping, and culture-specific metaphors, the analysis of translations can also be of use. A potentially good source for empirical analyses are multilingual documents that have come into being in a text production process, involving a combination of multilingual negotiations (texts in several languages are produced in parallel) and translation. Since such texts are considered and approved as equally authentic, their analysis can shed some light on similarities and differences in conceptual metaphors and/or their linguistic realizations.

I have analyzed a few political documents that were produced in this way by combining parallel production and translation, in particular the Manifestos for the Elections to the European Parliament of 1994 and of 1999, adopted by the Party of European Socialists (PES) and the European Peoples Party (EPP), and the joint document by Tony Blair and Gerhard Schroeder ‘Europe: The Third Way/Die Neue Mitte’ from June 1999. I will list a few initial findings that are relevant to metaphor studies (emphases are mine in all examples):

1. One conceptual metaphor commonly used both in English and German political texts is a movement metaphor (POLITICS IS MOVEMENT ALONG A PATH TOWARDS A DESTINATION). In the linguistic realization, the path metaphor in English texts is usually more elaborate and combined with a verb, whereas in German this is not necessarily so, e.g.:

   There is still a long way to go to achieve this.—Bis dahin ist es noch ein weiter Weg.
   (1994 PES Manifesto; literally: It is still a long way towards there.)

2. Conceptual metaphors may be culture-specific at a more specific level, but culture-overlapping (or maybe universal) at a more abstract level, e.g.:

   unter dem Dach eines Europäischen Beschäftigungspaktes—under the umbrella of a European employment pact (Blair/Schröder paper)

   Both Dach (‘roof’) and umbrella can be seen as metaphorical expressions of a more general conceptual metaphor BEING PROTECTED IS BEING UNDER A COVER.

   In the following example, all three texts have a reference to a movement metaphor (Schritt nach vorn getan, taken a step forward, faire un pas). However, the beginning of a new project is conceptualized as the start of a construction process in the English

\textsuperscript{6} This argument is also supported by Yu (1998) on the basis of a comparison between Chinese and English metaphors.

\textsuperscript{7} ‘Culture’ here is used in the sense of ‘paraculture’, referring to the more global level of nations (cf. Vermeer, 1996: 3).
text (foundation stone), whereas the French text continues the movement metaphor (une étape sur la voie ‘a stage on the way’), whereas the German text uses a more general expression (Beginn ‘beginning’). All these different expressions can be seen as realizations of a more abstract conceptual metaphor PROGRESS IS GROWTH.

Mit der Einführung des EURO haben wir einen großen Schritt nach vorn getan [. . .] Die EVP sieht darin den Beginn eines neuen Projektes, [. . .]—We have already taken a great step forward towards European integration by introducing the Single Currency. But the euro is [. . .] the foundation stone of what we intend to be a new era, [. . .]—Nous venons de faire un grand pas vers l’intégration européenne avec l’instauration de la monnaie unique. Mais l’euro [. . .] est une étape sur la voie d’une union politique, [. . .] (1999 EPP Manifesto)

3. Different perspectives and/or aspects of a common conceptual metaphor are made explicit in the texts, e.g.:

Europa muß mit einer Stimme in der Welt sprechen.—We must act as one on the international scene.—Nous devons parler d’une seule voix sur la scène internationale. (1999 EPP Manifesto)

The common conceptual metaphor is EUROPE IS A PERSON. The German text has made the voice explicit (a part–whole metonymic relation as a conceptual entailment), the English text introduces a theater scene, i.e., the person as an actor, and the French text has both these aspects combined.

4. Different linguistic manifestations point to different conceptualizations, e.g.:

Wir haben Werte, die den Bürgern wichtig sind [. . .] zu häufig zurückgestellt hinter universelles Sicherungsstreben. (literally: ‘put behind’ [. . .])—Values that are important to citizens [. . .] were too often subordinated to universal social safeguards. (Blair/Schröder paper)

This example points to the fact that importance seems to be conceptualized by different orientational metaphors, IMPORTANCE IS BEING IN THE FOREFRONT in German, and IMPORTANCE IS UP in English. But more text analyses are necessary before a conclusion can be drawn. In the following example, the different linguistic manifestations reflect politically and ideologically determined differences:

Der Staat muß die Beschäftigung aktiv fördern und nicht nur passiver Versorger der Opfer wirtschaftlichen Versagens sein.—The state must become an active agent for employment, not merely the passive recipient of the casualties of economic failure. (Blair/Schröder paper)

The German text points to a conceptual metaphor THE STATE IS A FATHER (Versorger—provider), whereas the English text reflects the conceptual metaphor THE

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8 The specification of the PERSON as an actor can be described as an implicature and linked to the specification of the world as a theater (WORLD POLITICS IS A THEATER). A more detailed analysis of this example from the point of view of Translation Studies, which is outside the scope of this paper, would also need to link this specification to the shift from ‘Europe’ to ‘we’.
STATE IS A SAFETY NET (recipient). This explanation is based on consideration of traditional policies and the intertextual discourse of the two political parties concerned. The intended functions of the texts for their respective addressees need to be taken into account as well (for a more detailed discussion, see Schäffner, 2002). Further analyses of such texts will certainly shed more light on the cultural aspects of metaphors.

7. Conclusion

The few examples discussed in the preceding analysis have made it obvious that the source culture and the target culture sometimes employ identical, sometimes different conceptual metaphors. Shifts, specifications, or differences identified in a TT, when compared retrospectively to its ST, can only rarely, if at all, be characterized as translation errors. Of much more interest is the fact that translations can make differences in conceptual metaphors, and/or metaphorical expressions explicit, and that they may indeed trigger controversial debates in intercultural communication (as in the case of a core Europe). Once a metaphor has been brought into international (political) discussion, it can undergo changes when transferred from one language and culture into another. The analysis of texts with respect to metaphors and metaphorical reasoning processes in different languages can, thus, reveal possible cultural differences in conceptual structures.

A cognitive view of metaphor can provide new insights for Translation Studies. One of the consequences of such a view is that the translation procedures that are traditionally suggested in the literature would need to be reconsidered as regards their validity for dealing with conceptual metaphors. Based on the examples above, the following cases have been identified.

1. A conceptual metaphor is identical in ST and TT at the macro-level without each individual manifestation having been accounted for at the micro-level (the bridge example).
2. Structural components of the base conceptual schema in the ST are replaced in the TT by expressions that make entailments explicit (the apartment example).
3. A metaphor is more elaborate in the TT (the movement example).
4. ST and TT employ different metaphorical expressions which can be combined under a more abstract conceptual metaphor (the roof–umbrella example).
5. The expression in the TT reflects a different aspect of the conceptual metaphor (the person as an actor example).

These five cases are not meant to be turned into translation procedures to be offered to translators as ready-made solutions, telling them how to translate a specific, in this case conceptual, metaphor in a text. They are observational data, resulting from a comparative analysis of STs and TTs and from subsequent developments in intercultural political discourse. They might be candidates for potential translation strategies, but it will take more in-depth analyses based on a larger corpus before any proper hypotheses can be formulated. Such in-depth analyses will also allow us to test how well Lakoff and Johnson’s
cognitive view of metaphor can account for observations on translation, 9 or if other theoretical perspectives could be equally suited, or could even give better accounts.

Modern Translation Studies sees itself increasingly as an empirical discipline, aiming to describe translations (both as products and processes), to explain why translators act in certain ways and produce target texts of a specific profile, 10 and to assess effects of translations. By describing the strategies chosen by translators in dealing with metaphors, and explaining the effects a specific solution has had on readers and cultures (or predicting its potential effects), the discipline of Translation Studies can provide a valuable contribution to the study of metaphors.

References


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9 For example, cases such as the following, quoted from a speech by the current German chancellor Gerhard Schröder (9 November 1999), can contribute to testing the Invariance Hypothesis (Lakoff, 1990) from a translation perspective: ‘[...] haben jene Entwicklung ermöglicht.—[...] made possible the course of events.’ Here, the conceptual metaphor is DEVELOPMENT IS MOVEMENT ALONG A PATH; the target domain is explicit in the ST, whereas the source domain is explicit in the TT.

10 In this respect, there is room for cooperation between process-oriented Translation Studies and experimental psycholinguistics in the study of how translators deal with metaphors, i.e., to see how sensitive they actually are to deeper conceptual metaphors that underlie linguistic expressions (see also footnote 3).


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