Functionalist Approaches

focus on the functions of texts and translations
(Nord 1997:1)

away from static linguistic typologies

translation = an activity, embedded in a theory of human action
1) Text Typology (Reiss)
2) Integrated Approach (Snell-Hornby)
3) Skopostheorie (Reiss and Vermeer)
4) Text Analysis model (Nord)
5) Translational Action (Holz-Mänttäri)
the TEXT rather than the word or the sentence as the level at which communication is achieved

3 MAIN FUNCTIONS
> LANGUAGE DIMENSIONS
> TEXT TYPES
Text types

Text variety

Text style
1- Informative texts: transmitting information

- **language function**: informative
- **language dimension**: logical
- **text focus**: content-focused
- **TT should**: transmit referential content
- **translation method**: 'plain prose', explicitation as required
2- *Expressive texts: creative composition*

- **Language function**: expressive
- **Language dimension**: aesthetic
- **Text focus**: form-focused
- **TT should**: transmit aesthetic form
- **Translation method**: 'identifying method', it adopts the perspective of the ST
3) Operative texts: inducing behavioral responses

language function: appellative

language dimension: dialogic

text focus: appellative-focused

TT should: elicit desired response

translation method: 'adaptive', equivalent effect
The transmission of the predominant function of the ST is the **determining factor** by which the TT is judged.

Different **translation methods** depend on different text type.

4) **AUDIO-MEDIAL texts** → requires the *supplementary* method, supplementing written words with visual images and music.
Attempt to go beyond the lower linguistic level (words on a page) towards a consideration of the communicative purpose of translation.

A series of intralinguistic and extralinguistic criteria.

Three types of language functions identified: are they enough?

Can text types really be differentiated?
> “plain” referential text can be full of metaphors! Exs:

“In Kabul's 'Car Guantanamo' Autos languish and Trust dies”

“Breaking Through Cancer's Shield”

“New York has Gun Deal, with Focus on Mental Ills”

“In a New Era of Insider Trading, it's Risk vs. Reward Squared”

“Sub-prime wolves feeding on bailout”

“Compromesso stolido”

“Bossi-Fine”

“Il ricatto è servito”
**Assessment of functionalist approaches**

(+) Useful for thinking about translation as a PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY, it puts translators into focus

(-) To what extent does it account for the reality of the translation profession? Idea of empowerment of the translator, who works on an equal footing with others

   Emphasis on skopos and function that it seems to subordinate translation to purely commercial issues

(see House, Gentzler, etc)