

S. Kim\*

*Kazakh Ablai Khan University of International Relations and World Languages, Almaty, Kazakhstan  
(E-mail: ms.wha@mail.ru)*

## Discursive Practice as the Basis for the Modern Theory of Literary Translation

The purpose of this article is to consider the issues of literary translation as a practice that is not only linguistic or intercultural, but has a discursive ontology. Currently, translation theory is moving away from the analysis of translation only in the dimension of working with text, moving towards analysis in the volumetric dimension of the contextual content of the meaning transferred to a different language and culture. Translation, as a practice, can itself become the starting point that generates discourse, while involving many linguistic and extralinguistic factors. In the process of this study, methods such as bibliographic analysis were used to determine the degree of study of the topic, as well as an analysis of discursive translation practice. It is the approach to translation from the point of view of discourse that allows us to move away from the rigid dilemma associated with translatability or untranslatability. In result, it's possible to conclude, that discursive practice allows us to look at translation as a dynamic process in which the narrative unfolds on several levels at once, which means that there is no longer a critical need to determine the quality of translation only by questions of achieving equivalence.

*Keywords:* translation theory, linguistic theory, discourse, literary translation, discursive practice, translation approaches, discourse analysis.

### Introduction

Since literary translation is a complex process of extracting and transferring context and meanings, in which not only linguistic, but also extralinguistic factors sometimes play a decisive role, it is necessary to turn to the discursive component of translation practice for an even deeper analysis of the stages of the translation process. We are interested in the concept of discourse, which exists in linguistic science, but is not limited only to this area. We would also like to find out how exactly the consideration of a literary text from a discursive perspective can enrich and expand the translator's tools and help him achieve the maximum disclosure of the meaning of the original text, which can then be transferred to a foreign language and cultural reality without critical losses.

Attention to such aspects of translation that analyze the very activity of the translator, in particular, referring to the mechanisms of interpretation, meaning explication, evaluative perception and decision-making in the interaction between the linguistic personality of the translator and the meaning of the literary text, is intensified in modern linguistics. After all, it ultimately depends on the translator how transparent and unchanged will stay the meaning at the moment it reaches the main addressee.

We should remember that translation, as the operation of sign systems, in itself has a semiotic essence. At the same time, in the institutes of the CIS and in Western scientific institutions we can observe significant differences in the approaches of translation theory researchers to translation problems from the point of view of semiotics. Researchers in the post-Soviet space tend to rely on the provisions of classical semiotics, starting with the provisions of structuralism, while Western theorists demonstrate commitment to new paradigms and rely on the principles of discursive semiotics.

Here it seems appropriate to mention the statement of Yu. Lotman in relation to a work of art, in which the scientist, characterizing art as a whole, notes its two main aspects:

- the fact that art “knows life, using the means of its display”, indicates, in turn, that
  - “knowledge in art is always associated with communication and with the transfer of information”,
- which means that the author, when creating a work, “always has in mind some kind of audience” [1, 29].

This view once again confirms that the process of creating and transferring meanings cannot be considered only in one dimension, but the presence, position and communicative situation of all participants should be taken into account, including the addressee of the message of the text, and the text itself as a full-fledged participant.

---

\* Corresponding author's e-mail: *ms.wha@mail.ru*

*Research materials and methods*

E. Benveniste, initiating the development of a linguistic understanding of discourse, referred to the fact that linguistics as a science is distinguished by the presence of meaning, which is an “elusive” element, and it’s “subjective, not amenable to classification” [2, 41]. Without giving a complete interpretation at that time, E. Benveniste, however, introduces the influence of the human factor into linguistics, suggesting that discourse should be understood as an “empirical object”, living and voluminous, that is, something more than a simple “sum of phrases” [3, 124]. Continuing this thought, Benveniste gives to the language the place of an instrument of mediation, with the help of which linguistics, as a link, organizes cooperation between many other humanities. To do this, linguistics must “clarify the method used to study and emotional content”, while it is the language that serves as “a mean of expressing the emotional content” [2, 45]. Moreover, Benveniste not only tries to define and give the concept of discourse, but also reflects on the method associated with its application, indicating that it should use data from other sciences, such as psychology, that is, include observation and analysis.

In Van Dyck's definition, discourse is a “complex communicative event”, while its complexity is ensured by the inclusion, in addition to the text, of extralinguistic factors that are extremely important and “necessary for understanding the text” [4, 7]. Thus, discourse is “a speech flow, a language in its constant movement”, and in this flow, which incorporates many factors (historical background, social norms, public and private attitudes, personal position of communicants), “the mentality and culture are reflected, both national and universal, and individual, private” [5, 47].

We can also recall the definition of Yu.S. Stepanov, who calls discourse “a language in a language”, and thus gives it the place of a “special world”, a specific social phenomenon that is distinguished by its own rules [6, 45].

With all the variety of definitions that discourse, as an interdisciplinary phenomenon, is assigned in various scientific fields, it still seems possible to single out an invariant meaning. Many definitions of discourse come together at the point where discourse is understood as “speech in action”: that is, it takes into account the fact that human speech and the texts created with its help cannot be perceived in isolation from the universal human factors that accompany the process of generating these texts. Moreover, the main purpose of discourse is not only to convey meanings at all levels. High priority is given to the main goal, namely the achievement of understanding in the process of dialogues or polylogues between all communicants. It is understanding that creates a holistic communicative case from a single text. Moreover, it is precisely the focus on achieving mutual understanding that makes discourse the central crossroads at which the interests of many sciences meet, including linguistic ones. [7, 10].

Here it should be noted that in this study we set the task not only to consider discourse as a phenomenon, but also to apply a discursive prism in relation to translation. Studying and analyzing the research literature and various comments and statements of researchers regarding discourse as an ontological and practical basis for the theory and practice of literary translation, we set ourselves the task of tracing the trend of forming a new approach to translation studies based on a lively and changeable dialogue between participants in the translation process.

*Results and their discussion*

Consideration of linguistic processes through the concept and process of formation and development of various types of discourses is no longer a new phenomenon. On the other hand, given the interdisciplinary and multi-vector nature of the concept of discourse, researchers discover new facets of its application as a base and as a method for various types of practices, including translation.

Taking into account the fact that translation acts as a process of intercultural and interlingual communication, the discursive factor implies that the communicants will initially have some points of contact in the most background areas, in particular, common cultural values, which will ensure their common interest in the topic under consideration and will allow them to come to a conclusion, understanding of meaning even in the absence of exact equivalents. The translator must certainly take into account the discursive component of translation in the decision-making process.

N.S. Avtonomova, in the course of working on translations of French-language texts, offers a number of internal observations expressed in the form of translational reflections, and comes to the conclusion that all cultural factors in translation, the so-called “atoms of culture”, are in fact not “indivisible” and in fact “fit into the context of speech or discursive practices”. Thus, when translating Foucault's texts, the translator

came to the conclusion that discourse in the understanding of the philosopher does not directly belong to the sphere of the logical or proper linguistic, but represents a kind of common field for the interaction of language and cognition. Discursive practices not only do not exclude the inclusion of other types of social practice, but, on the contrary, rely on such inclusion, referring to the study of relationships with them [8, 26].

Analyzing the translation discourse, L. Kushnina and E. Alikina fill it with a different meaning, arguing that “translation discourse can take on different forms” and that “one of the forms of its manifestation is the translation space, which includes six fields: three fields of subjects of translation communication (author, translator, recipient) and three text fields (meaningful, energetic, phatic)” [9, 47]. Such a model of the translation space is proposed, in each field of which “its own meanings are formed (factual, modal, reflective, emotive-empathic, cultural, individually-figurative)” [ibid.].

It is quite understandable that the practice of translating literary texts with an emphasis on the discursive factor has historically become more widespread at a time when exclusively linguistic methods have already shown themselves to be insufficiently valid for translation that requires taking into account extralinguistic factors. There was a need to understand the background environment that accompanies the process of creating and perceiving texts and their meanings, the need for translators to apply not only knowledge of the language, but also translation empathy, to develop a sense of the situation and the ability to interpret and represent possible reactions of communicants, whose values and norms based on specific cultural codes. Moreover, working with literary texts set the translators the task of conveying not only the ethnic-cultural, historical or geographical value of the translated works, but also transferring the linguistic elements that formed the aesthetics of the text as unharmed as possible.

The use of discourse analysis in the process of translating a literary text allows the translator not only to accurately convey the linguistic content, but also to “revive” the text by understanding and transferring the specific levels of behavior and experiences of the characters in the story. Due to the fact that the translator manages to preserve the background atmosphere, the addressee gets access to deeper meanings, and in this case we can talk about the transfer of all levels of content, which contributes to the achievement of the main goal of the discourse — to ensure understanding between the participants in communication.

If we consider the discursive approach to translation as a multi-stage practice, it is necessary to single out a sequence of a number of steps in it. First of all, the translator works with general information that is supplied in the source text, which means that at this stage the translator himself acts as a reader and addressee. This stage is often undeservedly deprived of the attention of researchers in the field of translation didactics, although, in fact, it is the key one. Achieving an understanding between the author and the translator is paramount in order to ensure that an understanding is reached between the author and the final recipient of the text. Thus, here we are dealing with the type of information that can be called the “discourse-forming reality of the author” [10, 26].

The next task for the translator will be to search for invariant concepts and fragments of the text, which initially helped him to get an idea of the main ideas and images of the text, and select the most important among them — that is, those that will help the reader of the translation to immerse himself in the content. Such “nodal” components of the text will allow in the future not only to understand the text, but also to reason about it.

The final step, as a rule, is the technical work to find equivalents and the subsequent selection of strategies for working with specific non-equivalent vocabulary, the proper design of creative and aesthetic means, and the transfer of the author's style.

Based on the semantic openness of the basic concept, we believe it is possible to offer the following interpretation of the “translation discourse”, the content of which can be represented as a combination of the following six components:

- (1) translation paradigms in their current and retrospective state;
- (2) interlingual translation technique: models, principles, means and methods;
- (3) corpora of translation texts, as well as formed corpora of parallel texts of originals and translations in different combinations of language pairs, regardless of the time of creation of translations;
- (4) translation practices, including the legal status of translators involved in different industry practices, code(s) and principles of ethics, translator forums;
- (5) diversified educational infrastructure
- (6) socio-cultural context of interaction between translators, editors, employers and recipients of the translation product [11, 137].

As K. Littau notes, in the age of postmodernity we can no longer perceive translation as a thoughtless copying or reproduction of the original, but on the contrary, translation turns into a process of transformation of conceptual content, moreover, the translator often recreates the original in all of its “plural” understandings and interpretations. That means translator works with the original meaning as with multilayered and continuously developing phenomenon [12, 435].

Such an approach helps to look at translation as a kind of conditional crossroad, where the paths of multiple meanings diverge. This perception implies that the original text itself is no longer inviolable and the translator's intervention in it is legalized.

Earlier researchers have already spoken about such intervention of the translator. For example, representatives of the Skopos theory spoke about the overthrow of the original from the throne (“dethroning”), relying on the emphasis on the pragmatics of the text (meaning, that the aim justifies the means)

Here we must understand that a discursive approach to the text does not mean the legalization of an absolutely free translation, depending on the personal preferences of the translator. On the contrary, the discourse asks questions: “Why is it written this way and not otherwise?” or “Why were these words chosen in this order?” That is, the discursive approach involves a holistic and comprehensive analysis of both the structure of the original text and the way it is presented, the communicative task, style, rhetorical constructions used, etc.

### *Conclusion*

The very nature of the linguistic sign in the function, that the literary text implements, implies the passage of meaning through the process of interpretation. No translation is completely identical to the original, since it goes through understanding and interpretation, carried out in accordance with the conscious or unconscious intention of the translator and his understanding of the original text. The translator voluntarily or involuntarily becomes one of the communicants in the polylogue between the author of the original text, its interpreter and the addressee. At the same time, different shades of meaning will be dictated by the author's intention, deep meanings, perception, cultural background, personal experience and memory of generations for each of the participants. At the same time, the activity of a literary translator has a specific nature, since the translator acts not just as a mediator in the process of implementing intercultural contact, but creates a new piece, that can be considered valuable by the standards of the receiving culture, so translator acts as a co-author when creating a new fact of literary reality.

At that point it's crucial to understand, that practice of literary translation is predominantly built on a discursive basis, because it is precisely when working with literary texts that it is important to achieve such a result in which the reader, when reading or otherwise perceiving the translation, has the feeling of a personal meeting with both the narrator and the characters of the work, and in his perception and consciousness, scenes are recreated, the atmosphere, symbolism and content of which are closest to the atmosphere, symbolism and content of the scenes described in the original language. Thus, the translator is responsible in some sense to incarnate, merge with the author or temporarily become his full-fledged representative.

A significant difference in the discursive activity of a translator of fiction lies precisely in the process of co-authorship with the original author, while maintaining the goal of achieving a “meeting” of the author with his reader. At the same time, the work created by the translator can be independent in the understanding of the perceiving culture. To solve problems related to the discursive nature of literary translation, the translator performs a number of operations based on selected strategies, the choice of which, on the one hand, may seem arbitrary, and, on the other hand, is determined both by the norms and specifics of the host culture and by the individual priorities of the translator.

The equivalence of a translation in its standard sense is perceived as a criterion for the compliance of the translation text with the author's intention. But from the standpoint of semiotics, such equivalence is difficult to achieve due to the fact that we must recognize the subjectivism and relativity of the translational projection of the original. The translated text exists only as long as it is placed in a specific translation situation and connected to the understanding and perception of the reader or listener, that is, at the moment of dialogue with the recipient. The concept of adequacy is also based on the assumption that there is content in the text, the message of which can be successfully and smoothly combined with the author's intention, but we understand that this condition is extremely difficult to meet.

Thus, the relative possibility of achieving a hypothetical level of equivalence and adequacy in the process of translation is directly related to the level of compatibility of the discursive environments of the author, translator and reader. In this case, the consideration of translation practice from the point of view of

discourse allows us to move away from the plane of context into a living and dynamic dimension of meaning, its development and transfer.

### References

- 1 Лотман Ю.М. и тартуско-московская семиотическая школа / изд. А. Кошелев. — М.: Гнозис, 1994. — 560 с.
- 2 Бенвенист Э. Общая лингвистика / Э. Бенвенист. — М.: Прогресс, 1974. — 448 с.
- 3 Гийому Ж. О новых приёмах интерпретации, или Проблема смысла с точки зрения анализа дискурса / Ж. Гийому, Д. Мальдиё // Квадратура смысла. — М.: Прогресс, 1999. — С. 124–136.
- 4 Ван Дейк Т.А. Язык. Познание. Коммуникация / Т.В. Ван Дейк. — М.: Прогресс, 1989. — 310 с.
- 5 Ван Дейк Т.А. К определению дискурса / Т.В. Ван Дейк. — Л.: Сэйдж пабликэйшенс, 1998. — 384 с.
- 6 Степанов Ю.С. Альтернативный мир. Дискурс, факт и принцип причинности // Язык и наука конца XX века: сб. ст. / под ред. Ю.С. Степанова. — М.: Изд-во РГГУ, 1995. — 432 с.
- 7 Гураль С.К. Художественный текст как объект перевода с использованием дискурсивного анализа [Электронный ресурс] / С.К. Гураль, Г.И. Петрова, И.И. Травина, О.С. Головки // Вестн. ПНИПУ. Проблемы языкознания и педагогики. — 2019. — № 1. — С. 10–24. — Режим доступа: <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/hudozhestvennyy-tekst-kak-obekt-perevoda-s-ispolzovaniem-diskursivnogo-analiza/viewer>
- 8 Автономова Н.С. Мишель Фуко и его книга «Слова и вещи» / Н.С. Автономова // Фуко М. Слова и вещи. Археология гуманитарных наук. — СПб., 1994. — С. 5–23.
- 9 Кушнина Л.В. Система оценки качества устного последовательного перевода в свете теории гармонизации / Л.В. Кушнина, Е.В. Аликина // Вестн. Перм. ун-та, 2010. — Вып. 4(10). — С. 46–51.
- 10 Голованева М.А. Когнитивно-дискурсивный метод анализа художественного драматургического текста / М.А. Голованева // Междунар. науч.-исслед. журн. — 2016. — № 5(47). — Ч. 2. — С. 26–28.
- 11 Власенко С.В. Переводческий дискурс: дилеммы унификации и определения понятия / С.В. Власенко // Вестн. Моск. ун-та. Сер. 22. Теория перевода. — 2015 — № 2. — С. 124–144.
- 12 Littau K. Translation in the Age of Postmodern Production: From Text to Intertext to Hypertext. — Baker M. (Ed.). *Critical Readings in Translation Studies*. — Routledge, New York, 2010. — P. 435-448

С.К. Ким

### Көркем аударманың қазіргі теориясының негізі ретіндегі дискурсивтік тәжірибе

Мақаланың мақсаты — көркем аударма мәселелерін тек лингвистикалық немесе мәдениетаралық ғана емес, дискурсивті онтологиясы бар тәжірибе ретінде қарастыру. Қазіргі уақытта аударма теориясы аударманы тек мәтінмен жұмыс істеу өлшемінен қарастыратын талдаудан алшақтап, басқа тіл мен мәдениетке ауысқан мағынаның контекстік мазмұнын көлемдік өлшемде талдауға бет бұрды. Аударма тәжірибе ретінде көптеген лингвистикалық және экстралингвистикалық факторларды қамтитын дискурсты тудыратын бастапқы нүкте бола алады. Зерттеу барысында тақырыптың зерттелуін анықтау үшін библиографиялық талдау, сонымен қатар дискурсивті аударма тәжірибесін талдау сияқты әдістер қолданылды. Бұл дискурс тұрғысынан аудармаға деген көзқарас аудару мүмкіндігі немесе мүмкін еместігіне байланысты қатаң дилеммадан арылуға мүмкіндік береді. Нәтижесінде дискурсивті тәжірибе аударманы баяндау бірден бірнеше деңгейде өтетін динамикалық процесс ретінде қарастыруға мүмкіндік берді, бұл енді тек эквиваленттілікке қол жеткізу сұрақтары арқылы аударма сапасын анықтаудың сыни қажеттілігінің жоқтығын білдіреді деп қорытынды жасауға болады.

*Кілт сөздер:* аударма теориясы, лингвистикалық теория, дискурс, көркем аударма, дискурсивтік тәжірибе, аударма тәсілдері, дискурсивтік талдау.

С. Ким

### Дискурсивная практика как основание современной теории художественного перевода

Целью настоящей статьи является рассмотрение вопросов художественного перевода как практики, которая является не только лингвистической или межкультурной, но и имеет дискурсивную онтоло-

гию. В настоящее время переводческая теория отходит от анализа перевода только в измерении работы с текстом, перемещаясь к анализу в объемном измерении контекстного содержания смысла, переносимого в иной язык и культуру. Перевод, как практика, способен и сам становится отправной точкой, порождающей дискурс, при этом вовлекая множество лингвистических и экстралингвистических факторов. В процессе данного исследования применялись такие методы, как библиографический разбор с целью определения изученности темы, а также анализ дискурсивной переводческой практики. Именно подход к переводу с точки зрения дискурса позволяет отойти от ригидной дилеммы, связанной с переводимостью или непереводимостью. В результате можно сделать вывод о том, что дискурсивная практика позволяет взглянуть на перевод как на динамичный процесс, в котором нарратив разворачивается сразу на нескольких уровнях, а значит, уже нет критической необходимости определять качество перевода только вопросами достижения эквивалентности.

*Ключевые слова:* теория перевода, лингвистическая теория, дискурс, художественный перевод, дискурсивная практика, переводческие подходы, дискурсивный анализ.

## References

- 1 Koshelev, A. (Ed.). (1994). Lotman Yu.M. i tartusko-moskovskaia semioticheskaia shkola [Lotman Yu.M. and Tartu-Moscow semiotic school]. Moscow: Gnozis [in Russian].
- 2 Benvenist, E. (1974). Obshchaia lingvistika [General linguistics]. Moscow: Progress [in Russian].
- 3 Giïomu, Zh., & Maldide, D. (1999). O novykh priemakh interpretatsii, ili Problema smysla s tochki zreniia analiza diskursa [On new methods of interpretation, or the problem of meaning from the point of view of discourse analysis]. Moscow: Progress [in Russian].
- 4 Van Deïk, T.A. (1989). Yazyk. Poznanie. Kommunikatsiia [Language, Cognition. Communication]. Moscow: Progress [in Russian].
- 5 Van Deïk, T.A. (1998). K opredeleniiu diskursa [To the definition of discourse]. London: Sage publications.
- 6 Stepanov, Yu.S. (Ed.). (1995). Alternativnyi mir. Diskurs, fakt i printsip prichinnosti [Alternative world. Discourse, fact and principle of causality]. *Yazyk i nauka kontsa XX veka — Language and science of the end of the twentieth century*. Moscow: RGGU [in Russian].
- 7 Gural, S.K., Petrova, G.I., Travina, I.I., & Golovko, O.S. (2019). Khudozhestvennyi tekst kak obekt perevoda s ispolzovaniem diskursivnogo analiza [Literary text as an object of translation using discursive analysis]. *Vestnik Permskogo Natsionalnogo Issledovatel'skogo Politekhmicheskogo Universiteta. Problemy yazykoznaviia i pedagogiki — Bulletin of the Perm National Research Polytechnic University. Problems of linguistics and pedagogy*, 1, 10–24. Retrieved from <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/hudozhestvennyy-tekst-kak-obekt-perevoda-s-ispolzovaniem-diskursivnogo-analiza/viewer> [in Russian].
- 8 Avtonomova, N.S. (1994). Mishel Fuko i ego kniga “Slova i veshchi” [Michel Foucault and his book “Words and things”]. *Fuko M. Slova i veshchi. Arkheologiiia gumanitarnykh nauk — Foucault M. Words and things. Archeology of the Humanities*, 5–23. Saint Petersburg [in Russian].
- 9 Kushnina, L.V., & Alikina, E.V. (2010). Sistema otsenki kachestva ustnogo posledovatel'nogo perevoda v svete teorii garmoznizatsii [The system for assessing the quality of consecutive interpretation in the light of the theory of harmonization]. *Vestnik Permskogo universiteta — Bulletin of the Perm University*, 4(10), 46–51 [in Russian].
- 10 Golovaneva, M.A. (2016). Kognitivno-diskursivnyi metod analiza khudozhestvennogo dramaturgicheskogo teksta [Cognitive-discursive method of analysis of artistic dramatic text]. *Mezhdunarodnyi nauchno-issledovatel'skii zhurnal — International Research Journal*, 5(47), 2, 26–28 [in Russian].
- 11 Vlasenov, S.V. (2015). Perevodcheskii diskurs: dilemmy unifikatsii i opredeleniia poniatiia [Translation discourse: dilemmas of unification and definitions of the concept]. *Vestnik Moskovskogo universiteta. Serii 22. Teoriia perevoda — Bulletin of Moscow University, Ser. 22. Translation theory*, 2, 124–144 [in Russian].
- 12 Littau, K. (2010). Translation in the Age of Postmodern Production: From Text to Intertext to Hypertext. In: Baker, M., Ed., *Critical Readings in Translation Studies*, Routledge, New York, 435–448.