Investigating English–German translation of ideational grammatical metaphor in business articles

Metaphors in/and/of Translation RaAM specialised seminar

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Department of Translation & Language Sciences

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What we consider ‘translated language’...
...and who we forget:
### Stages of the translation process

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<thead>
<tr>
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- studies of self-revision (Brunette et al. 2005; Parra Galiano 2005; Künzli 2005)
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Empirical strength of product-oriented research

‘authentic data attested in texts’ (Kenny 2009)

→ published sources

⇝ neglects linguistic changes made during editing
Ideational grammatical metaphor in translation

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Corpus details & study objectives

Grammatical metaphor

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Nominalisation in translation

Methodology

Preliminary findings

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Main argument

Editors exert influence on translated language → manuscripts should be incorporated into corpus-based language study
Corpus architecture

Sources: Harvard Business Review, Harvard Business Manager
Corpus architecture

- **Sources:** *Harvard Business Review, Harvard Business Manager*
- **Genre:** Business, Economics

Studying the document production process

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Tripartite corpus (315,955 words)

Source texts (English) – 104,678 words

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Result of conflict: hybridisation
Hybridisation (Hansen-Schirra 2011:136)

Two conflicting phenomena of translation into German

The notion of ‘translated language’
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Two conflicting phenomena of translation into German

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# The notion of ‘translated language’

## Hybridisation (Hansen-Schirra 2011:136)

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## ‘Translated language’

- normalisation
- shining-through
- explicitation
- hybridisation

↓

attributed to translator
Research questions

In German translations of English business articles,

- is there a tendency towards metaphorisation of nominal or verbal forms?
- do translators and editors act differently in this regard?
Definition by Halliday & Matthiessen (2004:637)

Instances ‘where processes and qualities are construed as if they were entities’
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Nominalisation of processes (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004:656)

- normal (‘congruent’) realisation → verb (Process in clause)
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Ideational grammatical metaphor

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It is expensive to maintain a house. congruent
The maintenance of a house is expensive. metaphorical
Maintaining a house is expensive. congruent
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Translation as de-metaphorisation (Steiner 2001)

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→ 'here the process of re-metaphorisation is cut short below
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⇒ lower frequency of metaphorisation in translations (2001:11)

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Metaphorical realisation (as a nominal group) allows
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Metaphorical realisation (as a nominal group) allows

- drawing on ‘Given/New’ organisation of the information unit
- treating a proposition textually as a discourse referent.
(1) If the organization obliges, the units that don’t receive such treatment may become *resentful*. (HBR 9/09,90)


b. *Gibt aber das Unternehmen den Wünschen einer Einheit statt, so reagieren die anderen Einheiten, die leer ausgehen, verärgert.* (HBM 12/09,78)
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[‘Staff often want to *preserve* existing values or *secure* their power.’]
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**VgNV,** **NNV,** **VNN**
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- Search: deverbial nominalisations (-ung, -ieren), denominal verbalisations (-ieren)
Method of investigation

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- Process types of metaphorised forms noted
  → allows qualitative analysis later on
Preliminary findings

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- **Manuscript stage:** 505 N 17 V – 66% of nominal forms metaphorised
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<td>verbalisation</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVV</td>
<td>nominal</td>
<td>verbalisation</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Publication stage: 286 N 236 V – 33% assumed literal
- Manuscript stage: 505 N 17 V – 66% of nominal forms metaphorised

⇒ Translators nominalise – editors verbalise
Possible Hypotheses

Reassessment of features of ‘translated language’

- translators follow German tendency to nominalise
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⇒ Explicitation in translation or ‘literal translation’ misleading
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Translating vs editing

Translation and editing have been called ‘mediated language’ that should have ‘mediation universals’ (Ulrych & Murphy 2008)

↩ different metaphorisation patterns argue against this
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Translating vs editing
Translation and editing have been called ‘mediated language’ that should have ‘mediation universals’ (Ulrych & Murphy 2008)
→ different metaphorisation patterns argue against this

Style vs correctness
Importance placed on style, not on correctness or faithfulness of translation?
Obstacles & drawbacks

- Are particular verbs more likely to be changed?
Obstacles & drawbacks

- Are particular verbs more likely to be changed?
  → analysis of process types might shed light on this
Ideational grammatical metaphor in translation

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Editing and translation
Manuscripts in corpus research
Corpus details & study objectives

Grammatical metaphor
Introduction
Nominalisation in translation
Methodology
Preliminary findings

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