Differentiating the translation process:
A corpus analysis of editorial influence on English-to-German business article translations

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30 January 2015
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2. Grammatical metaphor
3. Corpus & method
4. Preliminary findings
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6. References
## Research tenets

### Conflicting tendencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>German – high information density ¹</th>
<th>Translation into German turns nominal constructions into verbal ones – explicitation (Konšalová 2007) / literal translation of verbal structures (Hansen-Schirra 2011:147)</th>
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The notion of ‘translated language’

Hybridisation

Hybridisation ← two conflicting phenomena of translation
(Hansen-Schirra 2011:136)

1 shining-through (Teich 2003) of English structural conventions
2 translation adapted to meet norms of TL: ‘normalisation’
(Baker 1996) /‘covert translation’ (House 1997)
The notion of ‘translated language’

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1. shining-through (Teich 2003) of English structural conventions
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   (Baker 1996) /‘covert translation’ (House 1997)

‘Translated language’

normalisation, shining-through, explicitation, hybridisation, …

↓

attributed to translator

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Editing in the translation process

Editing translations

- editing/revision by others is part of the daily life of translators (Künzli 2005; Mossop 2007b; Ko 2011)
Editing in the translation process

Editing translations

- editing/revision by others is part of the daily life of translators (Künzli 2005; Mossop 2007b; Ko 2011)
- large amount of literature on editing translations (Mossop 2007a; Mossop 2007b; Robert & Waes 2014)
Editing translations

- editing/revision by others is part of the daily life of translators (Künzli 2005; Mossop 2007b; Ko 2011)

- large amount of literature on editing translations (Mossop 2007a; Mossop 2007b; Robert & Waes 2014)

→ largely ignored by translation and contrastive studies (but see Utka 2004; Munday 2012:110ff; Bisiada 2014)
Aims of the research

Research question

Do German translations of English business articles exhibit a tendency towards (de-)metaphorisation of nominal or verbal forms and do translators and editors act differently in this regard?
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Do German translations of English business articles exhibit a tendency towards (de-)metaphorisation of nominal or verbal forms and do translators and editors act differently in this regard?

Contributions of the project

- study of the influence of editors on the translation product
- systematic study of (de-)metaphorisation and grammatical metaphor
Ideational grammatical metaphor

Definition by Halliday & Matthiessen (2004:637)

Instances ‘where processes and qualities are construed as if they were entities’.
Ideational grammatical metaphor

Definition by Halliday & Matthiessen (2004:637)
Instances ‘where processes and qualities are construed as if they were entities’.

Nominalisation (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004:656)
Nominalisation: processes, which are congruently expressed as verbs, are expressed metaphorically as nouns and function as Thing in the nominal group rather than functioning as Process in the clause.
Quality → Entity → Process

(1) If the organization obliges, the units that don’t receive such treatment may become resentful. (HBR 9/09,90)

a. Wenn das Unternehmen den Wünschen der Einheit
   If the company the wishes of-the unit
   stattgibt, macht sich bei den anderen Einheiten
   permits spreads REFL among the other units
   Verärgerung breit. (draft16)
   resentment wide

b. Gibt aber das Unternehmen den Wünschen einer
   Gives however the company to-the wishes of-a
   Einheit statt, so reagieren die anderen Einheiten, die
   unit in then react the other units that
   leer ausgehen, verärgert. (HBM 12/09,78)
   left-without are resentfully

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Effects of grammatical metaphor

The textual metafunction (Halliday & Matthiessen 2004:642ff)

Metaphorical realisation (as a nominal group) allows

- drawing on ‘Given/New’ organisation of the information unit
Effects of grammatical metaphor

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- drawing on ‘Given/New’ organisation of the information unit
- treating a proposition textually as a discourse referent.
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The interpersonal metafunction (2004:645)

Metaphorical realisation (as a nominal group)
- does not receive the interpersonal status of proposition or proposal → utterance made ‘inarguable’ or presented as established.
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- drawing on ‘Given/New’ organisation of the information unit
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The interpersonal metafunction (2004:645)

Metaphorical realisation (as a nominal group)
- does not receive the interpersonal status of proposition or proposal → utterance made ‘inarguable’ or presented as established.
- cannot be modalised, doubted or argued
(2) People may even shun the development of new resources in order to *preserve* existing values and *retain* power. (HBR 7/10,102)

a. *Bisweilen sind die Motive gegen die Entwicklung neuer Ressourcen auch in der Bewahrung vorhandener Werte oder in der Wahrung von Macht zu suchen.* (dr22)

b. *Häufig wollen Mitarbeiter vorhandene Werte bewahren oder ihre Macht sichern.* (HBM 2/11,84)
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Translation as de-metaphorisation (Steiner 2001)

Translators understand and recreate the understood meaning. That process of understanding necessarily involves de-metaphorisation.
Grammatical metaphor and translation

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To what extent do translators metaphorise their texts?—‘here the process of re-metaphorisation is cut short below the degree to which it might otherwise go’ (2001:15)
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This claim may be challenged if translated texts can be shown to exhibit a high frequency of grammatical metaphor (nominalisations)
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HBR 1/10,94</td>
<td>Increasing brand equity is best seen as a means to an end, one way to build customer equity.</td>
</tr>
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<td>draft18</td>
<td>Die Steigerung des Werts einer Marke wird bestenfalls als eine Methode zur Erreichung des wichtigeren Ziels, der Steigerung des Werts der Kunden, betrachtet.</td>
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VgNV,
Types of metaphorisation in the corpus

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VgNV, NNV,
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VgNV, NNV, VNN
## Size of the corpus in words

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<tr>
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<th>2006–11</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English source texts</strong></td>
<td>104,678</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Draft German translations</strong></td>
<td>106,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Published German translations</strong></td>
<td>104,448</td>
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<td><strong>Total size</strong></td>
<td>315,955</td>
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Method of investigation

Quantitative analysis

- SMOR to detect deverbal nominalisations, e.g., in ‘-ung’
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- Grammatical (=translational) units (Steiner 2001; Teich 2003)
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- Grammatical (=translational) units (Steiner 2001; Teich 2003)
  → observe relationships between originals and translation
- Process types of metaphorised forms noted
## Method of investigation

### Quantitative analysis

- SMOR to detect deverbal nominalisations, e.g. in ‘-ung’
- Grammatical (=translational) units (Steiner 2001; Teich 2003)
  - observe relationships between originals and translation
- Process types of metaphorised forms noted
  - allows qualitative analysis later on
## Preliminary findings

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Total 268
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### Direction of metaphorisation

- **Final product**: equal – 136 N 132 V (84 V assumed literal)
### Preliminary findings

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**Direction of metaphorisation**

- **Final product:** equal – 136 N 132 V (84 V assumed literal)
- **Pre-editing stage:** nominal – N V (220 N metaphorised)
## Preliminary findings

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### Direction of metaphorisation

- **Final product:** equal – 136 N 132 V (84 V assumed literal)
- **Pre-editing stage:** nominal – N V (220 N metaphorised)
  - Translators nominalise – editors verbalise

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Differentiating the translation process
Possible hypotheses & obstacles

- Translators follow German tendency to nominalise, but editors change structures to make the text more readable? → appearance of explicitation in translation or ‘literal translation’ misleading
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- Editors are conscious of the reputation of German as preferring the nominal style and its ‘clunkyness’
Possible hypotheses & obstacles

- Translators follow German tendency to nominalise, but editors change structures to make the text more readable? → appearance of explicitation in translation or ‘literal translation’ misleading
- Editors are conscious of the reputation of German as preferring the nominal style and its ‘clunkyness’
- Importance placed on style, not on correctness or faithfulness of translation (NNV examples, also -NV examples, and), but there are also cases where the editor may have consulted it (VNV)
Research outlook

Obstacles & drawbacks

- Do editors consult STs? (VNV suggests so, translation workflow and modalisation example above suggest otherwise)
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  → analysis of process types might shed light on this
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- Do editors consult STs? (VNV suggests so, translation workflow and modalisation example above suggest otherwise)
  → analysis of process types might shed light on this
- Only metaphorised forms surface – corpus annotation to count unmetaphorised forms?
Thank you for your attention

Contact
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