

**Student Errors in Translations
of Instrumental Texts
from Russian to English**

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Abstract

Student Errors in Translations of Instrumental Texts from Russian to English

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This thesis presents the first dedicated study of Russian-English translation errors made by trainee translators who are native speakers of English. The study focuses on the translation of workplace and educational texts with a readily discernible implicit translation brief.

The research addresses three key gaps: the paucity of empirical work quantifying translation error distribution, the absence of any Ru-En student translation corpus by English as L1 speakers, and the shortage of annotation tools preserving segment-to-segment relationships between source and target texts.

Two main tools were developed. MANTRA (MANual TRanslation Annotator) is a corpus assembly tool enabling paired annotation of source and target text segments in a CAT tool-like interface. TRISST (TRanslation ISSue Typology) is a new error classification system achieving broad issue coverage and high granularity while emphasizing semantic analysis, with explicit provisions for analysing semantic roles, temporality, modality, commitment, and scalar-structural relationships.

Data were collected from three postgraduate translation students over one academic year. Eight source texts and 22 target texts were fully annotated,

corresponding to 3,374 Russian words and 11,321 English words. 554 issues were identified and rated for seriousness, with 652 issue type tags assigned.

Statistical analysis revealed significant correlations between assessment grades and seriousness-weighted error scores when normalized against assessment means. Two distinct error clusters emerged: referential (various lexical issues, including terminology) and relational (conjunctive, scalar-structural, and temporal-modal issues). Principal component analysis suggests text-type clustering, with workplace texts forming a distinct group separate from educational and encyclopedic materials.

The research confirms conventional pedagogical priorities for instrumental text translation: lexical and terminological precision, syntactic clarity and accuracy, and observance of appropriate norm and usage conventions. It suggests two separable core competencies requiring balanced development: basic lexical competence and conceptual text-world understanding. Strong correlation between error-based scoring and holistic assessment grades indicates these approaches measure fundamentally the same construct.

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List of abbreviations

0.1 General

AdjP — adjective phrase

AdvP — adverb phrase

AI — artificial intelligence

ALA — American Library Association

ATA — American Translators Association

AWEv — Andrea Wurm's Evaluation scheme

BGN — United States Board on Geographic Names

BNC — British National Corpus

CAT — computer-aided translation

CD — communicative dynamism

CDI — calibration of dichotomous items

DNT — Do not translate.

EFL — English as a foreign language

ID — issue density

ITI — Institute of Translators and Interpreters

KMO — Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin

KOPTE — Korpusprojekt zur Translationsevaluation

L1 — first language

L2 — second language

LC — Library of Congress

LIRICS — Linguistic InFRastructure for Interoperable ResourCes and Systems

lit. — literal

LLM — large language model

- LoC — level of confidence
- LTC — learner-translator corpus
- Mag — magnitude (synonymous to weight in the context of issue seriousness)
- MANTRA — MANual TRanslation Annotator
- MeLLANGE — Multilingual e-Learning in Language Engineering
- MQM — Multidimensional Quality Metrics
- MSA — measure of sampling accuracy
- MT — machine translation
- NP — noun phrase
- OED — Oxford English Dictionary
- PCA — principal component analysis
- PCGN — Permanent Committee on Geographical Names (UK)
- PIE — preselected item evaluation
- PP — prepositional phrase
- QA – quality assurance
- RNC — Russian National Corpus
- RusLTC — Russian Learner Translator Corpus
- SAE — society of Automotive Engineers
- SICAL — système canadien d’appréciation de la qualité linguistique
- SL — source language
- ST — source text
- STEM — science, technology, engineering and mathematics
- TA — target audience
- TL — target language
- TQA — translation quality assessment
- TRISST — TRanslation ISSue Typology
- TT — target text
- VP — verb phrase

0.2 Language codes

De – Deutsch

Bg — Bulgarian

En — English

Ru — Russian

0.3 Leipzig gloss tags

ACCUSATIVE — accusative

DATIVE — dative

DOBJ — direct object

FEMININE — feminine

GEN — genitive

EMPH — emphasis

INCP — inceptive

IMPF — imperfective

INST — instrumental

MASC — masculine

NEUT — neutre

NOM — nominative

PF — perfective

PL — plural

POSS — possessive

PREP — prepositional

PRES — present

PST — past

PTCP — participle

SG — singular

1 — first person

2 — second person

3 — third person

0.4 Abbreviations appearing in source texts

АГК — Ачинский глиноземный комбинат

АПВ — автоматическое повторное включение

Б. — Бакунин

БрАЗ — Братский алюминиевый завод

в. — век

вв. — века

Взам. инв.№ — взамен инвентарного номера

ВКС — вакуумная компрессорная станция

в т. ч. — в том числе

г. — год

гг. — годы

гос. — государственный

губ. — губерния

ДККС — дожимная блочно-контейнерная компрессорная станция

№ докум. — документ номер

Зам. — замена

ЗАО — закрытое акционерное общество

ЗИП — запасные части, инструменты и принадлежности

И. — Интернационал

Изм. — изменение

Инв.№ дубл. — инвентарный номер дубликата

Инв.№ подл. — инвентарный номер подлинника

КДВ — камера дугогасительная вакуумная

кон. — конец

КРУ — комплектное распределительное устройство

КСО — камера сборная одностороннего обслуживания

лит. — литературный

ОАО — открытое акционерное общество

ОКСА — Объединенная компания «Сибирский алюминий»

ОПБУ США — общепринятые принципы бухгалтерского учета США

ООО — общество с ограниченной ответственностью

Подп. — подпись

польск. — польский

революц. — революционный

рос. — российский

с. — село

сер. — середина

слав. — славянский

см. — смотрите

СМЗ — Самарский металлургический завод

тс — тонна-сила

у. — уезд

ун-т. — университет

уч-ще. — училище

чл. — член

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This thesis presents what is, to my knowledge, the first dedicated study of Ru-En translation errors made by trainee translators who are speakers of English as L1. A new corpus assembly tool (MANTRA: MANual TRanslation Annotator) and a new error typology (TRISST: TRanslation ISSue Typology) were developed specifically for this project.

TRISST is similar in spirit to the AWEv typology developed by Angela Wurm for annotating the KOPTe corpus (Wurm 2016), in that it attempts to cover a similarly broad gamut of issues with a reasonable degree of granularity, while eschewing the common practice of using the dichotomy between ‘transfer’ (i.e. accuracy of information transfer) and ‘language’ (i.e. observance of TL norm and usage) as the main organising principles (see, for example, MeLLANGE; Secară 2005; Kübler 2008). However, TRISST leans somewhat more heavily towards semantic analysis. There are explicit provisions for the analysis of semantic roles, drawing on the LIRICS scheme (Bunt 2025; Schiffrin and Bunt 2006). The treatment of textuality (cohesion and coherence) is also more directly informed by Halliday and Hasan (1976).

On a theoretical level, this project attempts to bring together several general approaches that are often seen as opposed to each other. There is a strong focus on linguistic detail and equivalence, but the judgements with respect to the adequacy of individual translation decisions are ultimately informed by functionalist concerns. I also integrate what is a broadly Hallidaian and traditionally anti-mentalistic approach to genre and register in my overall

mentalistic, broadly Gricean understanding of how language works.

The study focuses on the translation of instrumental texts, i.e. workplace and educational texts the communicative purpose of which is immediately clear — in other words texts with a clear implicit translation brief (Nord 1997). More creative text types are excluded because of the difficulties attached to defining acceptability parameters.

I present the results of a statistical analysis of the data collated with respect to

- correlation between the marks awarded for assessed translations and error count, error seriousness and error type;
- co-occurrence of different error types;
- clustering in the data (chiefly by text type).

These results have a number of pedagogic implications:

Conventional intuitions with respect to pedagogic priorities when teaching translation of instrumental texts are largely confirmed: lexical and terminological precisions, avoidance of syntactic ambiguity, grammatical accuracy, and observance of collocational patterns pertaining to the use of function words.

There is some indication that there exist two separate core competences which should be worked on in a balanced and targetted way: basic lexical competence and ability to conceptualise the text world.

There is good correlation between seriousness-weighted error scores and grades from holistic assessment, suggesting that the two approaches are, fundamentally, measuring the same variable, and that, for short assessments at least, identification and weighting of errors can be a viable way to reduce the subjectivity and random variation in marking. However, such correlations are assessment-specific. There can be no universal marking scale, because assessments vary in difficulty.

1.1 Motivation

In this thesis I present a new translation error typology for pedagogic use. By this I mean a framework for identifying, cataloguing and discussing what the

teacher deems to be suboptimal translation choices in the work of the students. The motivation for this is twofold: firstly, to inform teaching; secondly, to improve the metalanguage for discussing translation problems in class.

The statement that it is useful for a teacher to know what the students tend to get wrong is so self-evidently true that it feels completely redundant to voice it. And yet, while there is a substantial body of literature on classifying student translation errors (see sections 2.3 and 2.4), published data on their distribution is quite scarce. A corpus of learner translations involving pairings of Romance and Germanic languages (Catalan, German, English, Spanish, French and Italian) was assembled by the MeLLANGE project (Secară 2005; Kübler 2008; Castagnoli et al. 2011). There is also KOPTE, a corpus of Fr-De learner translations assembled by Andrea Wurm (2016). There is CELTraC, a corpus of Czech-English translations (Štěpánková 2014; Fictumova, Obrusnik and Stepankova 2017). There is UPF for English-Catalan (Espunya 2013). And, of course, there is RusLTC, an impressive corpus of both En-Ru and Ru-En learner translations, but with the latter being generated by EFL speakers (Kutuzov and Kunilovskaya 2014). This, to my knowledge, is the first attempt to assemble a corpus of Ru-En learner translations generated by speakers of English as L1.

On a more personal level, I was dissatisfied with my frequent inability to give my students a clear account of why a particular translation error is in fact an error, to explain what it is they should be looking for in future. The translation theory that I had been taught or had read on my own initiative only seemed to go so far. Often, I was unable to answer the basic question ‘Why does this phrase in the TL mean something different to that phrase in the SL? How exactly are they different?’ I could explain why a text is or is not cohesive, and how cohesion is maintained. I could find the markers that place it in a particular sociocultural frame and set it on various Foucauldian scales, but when it came to explaining the differences in seemingly more straightforward propositional meaning, I was often left floundering.¹ This is what ultimately led me to construct a translation error typology that leans towards semantic analysis.

¹A specific classroom incident where my inability to articulate the meaning of a particular expression resulted in the students walking away with the wrong idea is described in section 4.1.6.2.1 (see examples 72a/72b).

1.2 Objectives

This project has two key objectives:

- **Objective 1:** to gather data concerning the distribution of errors in Ru-En translations of instrumental texts carried out by trainee translators who speak English as L1, with a view to understanding what kind of errors have the greatest impact on the overall perception of TT quality and, consequently, the student's mark.
- **Objective 2:** to create a framework for helping students to understand the nature of translation errors with particular focus on the errors of meaning and textuality, the kind of errors that I consider the most important in the light of the limited L2 proficiency of a typical trainee and recent advances in Gen AI (see discussion in sections 1.3 and 1.6 below) and which existing typologies, in my opinion, do not address adequately (see discussion of existing typologies in section 2.4).

1.3 General approach

The general approach adopted during this project can be conceptualised in terms of four steps.

1.3.1 Step 1: collection of student texts

Translations of short instrumental texts carried out by students (homework and assessed) are collected over the course of an academic year.

1.3.2 Step 2: identification of problematic features

Distinct problematic features are identified as exhaustively as possible.

1.3.3 Step 3: *Ad hoc* annotation

Identified features are annotated with a view to creating an *ad hoc* typology on the basis of the five principles outlined below.

1.3.3.1 Principle of isolability

Only an isolable linguistic feature — a grapheme, a morpheme, a word, a phrase, a grammatical structure, or some collection there — can be marked as an error. If we cannot identify some specific linguistic choice(s) that constitute the heart of the problem, then perhaps there is no problem.

1.3.3.2 Principle of useful explicability

It should be possible to explain the nature of the error to a typical language student ideally in under 5 and definitely in not more than 15 minutes. A category is not pedagogically useful if it requires a dedicated lecture to understand.

1.3.3.3 Principle of justifiability

Judgement as to what constitutes an error should not be arbitrary. The assessor should be in a position not only to describe what rule has been broken but to justify why it is deemed to be a rule. The two simplest justifications are established usage and authoritative recommendation. In the case of established usage, the assessor should be in a position to show that certain patterns of usage can be seen in relevant corpus data or, in some cases, in relevant internet search results (especially image searches). In the case of authoritative recommendation, the teacher should be in a position to point to specific passages in specific grammars and style guides that are relevant to the communicative situation at hand. It is also often possible to make arguments from various psycholinguistic and relevance-theoretical considerations (ease of parsing, adequate informativity etc.). Arguments from dictionary definitions are, on the whole, to be avoided. Dictionary definitions are written with brevity and convenience in mind, and give too little information about collocational and contextual restrictions.

On a practical level, it would be impossible for the assessor to conduct a small corpus study for every usage error identified. The question is essentially whether the assessor is or is not confident about his or her intuitions. We can be reasonably confident that an image search for 'dog' would return mostly images of dogs and not cats, and that the string 'this is' would be far more common in the corpora

than the string ‘this are’. These are things we could demonstrate but, as a rule, do not need to. It is in the cases where we not entirely certain about something that our intuitions must be checked.

1.3.3.4 Principle of transparent naming

Names of error categories should be, wherever possible, reasonably intuitive and not require extensive familiarity with specific theoretical frameworks. However, this consideration must be balanced against need for brevity. A short but somewhat obscure domain term is preferable to a bulky descriptive expression.

1.3.3.5 Principle of theoretical agnosticism

Error categories are created *ad hoc*, based solely on what appears to be pedagogically useful and without prior commitment to any overarching theoretical framework. Theory is treated as a toolbox, not a scripture. The basic question remains, how can we quickly and accessibly explain what has gone wrong? The goal is not to construct an internally coherent conceptual framework *a la* Hjelmslev and then project it onto the data set, but to let the conceptual toolkit be shaped by the incoming data and the practical need of having to explain things to students. The basic question is ‘Can construct X be explained quickly and clearly, and if so, does it help me to explain the nature of some specific error quickly and clearly?’.

1.3.3.6 A note concerning assessor subjectivity

Explicability and justifiability should not be equated to eradication of assessor subjectivity. The goal is to provide a structured framework for logging reader responses and to filter out judgements that the assessor him/herself deems too uncertain or lacking a clear justification. However, in the final analysis, all normative judgements are irreducibly subjective. This is true regardless of whether the judgements are overtly normative (based on style guides, textbooks etc.) or ostensibly empirical (based on analysis of usage data). It is self-evident that individual teachers choose to enforce the dictates of specific textbooks and style guides on account of their prestige, institutional status, or the persuasiveness

of their creators' arguments. What is less self-evident but no less true is that recommendation rooted in 'hard' corpus data are, in the final analysis, also subjective. We choose how far to trust a specific corpus to be representative of the language as a whole or some specific sociolect within it. We also choose what questions to ask. For example, should we look for dialectal variation? And if we find it, should we treat it as significant? In the context of professional communication in the UK, should we treat inclusions of American English as unremarkable? What about Indian English?

Ultimately, every language teacher, whether he or she likes it or not, is an active agent trying to shape the language in accordance with own preferences. This is inescapable. Our individual positions might be negotiable, but they can never be simply bracketed out. The best we can hope for is to achieve some approximation of a consensus. There is no hard empirical bedrock for our feet to find, only the ever-shifting sands of opinion.

1.3.4 Step 4: test of analytical usefulness

The analytic usefulness of the resulting typology is tested by using the data collected to evaluate three readily testable hypotheses.²

1.3.4.1 Hypothesis 1: consistency of judgement across assessment methods

Assessor judgement remains broadly consistent across holistic and analytic assessments (for definitions, see section 2.3.2). There is a discernible quantitative relationship between the number and type of issues and the final grade the student is awarded on the basis of holistic assessment.

²The hypothesis that was formulated at the outset of the project — that performance in translation tasks is a good way of gauging SL comprehension — was jettisoned as not testable using the means at hand and, in all probability, false. Krings (Krings 1986) and Wilss (Wilss 1980) observe that bad meaning hypotheses do not always lead to bad translation decisions. SL comprehension clearly remains a foundational skill within translation, and a translator who lacks SL proficiency is bound to fall prey to poor-quality MT or the 'hallucinations' of Gen AI sooner rather than later; however, performance in individual translation tasks is simply too unreliable a measure of comprehension.

1.3.4.2 Hypothesis 2: clustering of errors

Error distribution is non-random. There are discernible relationships of association between different kinds of issues.

1.3.4.3 Hypothesis 3: individuality of students' error profiles

Individual students have distinctive error patterns that are readily discernible in the data.

1.4 Project outputs

The key project outputs are the following:

- a corpus-making tool;
- a mini-corpus;
- an error typology;
- statistical analysis of collected data.

1.4.1 A corpus-making tool (MANTRA)

I have made a tool which allows the user to assemble a corpus of paired and annotated ST and TT snippets. I shall refer to this tool as MANTRA (MANual TRanslation Annotator).

The style of the interface is loosely similar to a CAT tool with ST and TT being presented side by side (see section 3.1 for screenshots).

The tool functions as a free-tagger. It offers auto-complete prompts with tags that are already in the system, but new tags can be added at any point.

The tool also allows for more than one snippet from each text to be attached to any given issue — an element of flexibility that commercial CAT tools lack. I use this in two ways: firstly, where giving adequate context requires citing sentences further back in the text; secondly, as a highlighting device, to pick out specific words and phrases within a ST or TT segment. In principle, this feature also allows

for work with what Nord calls ‘vertical translation units’, i.e. instances where a particular aspect of meaning is spread over multiple textual features, typically calling for a similarly delocalised translation solution (Nord 1997). The complete texts are stored in the database while they are being worked on but can be deleted subsequently.

1.4.2 A mini-corpus

I have used MANTRA to assemble an annotated mini-corpus of problematic passages from the work of students translating workplace and educational texts from Russian into English. Because of potential privacy and data ownership concerns, this corpus is currently intended chiefly for internal use by the University of Leeds teaching staff.

To my knowledge, this is the first dedicated learner translation corpus for this language pair in this direction where the contributors are speakers of the TL as L1. There is an existing learner translator corpus for the Ru/En pair, RusLTC (Kunilovskaya 2016.), and it does have a Ru-En component, but the contributors are speakers of English as L2.

The corpus is small and as yet not fully processed. It consists of ten STs ranging between 319 and 572 words or 2477 and 3681 characters in length, a total of 4385 words or 30381 characters in Russian, and 30 TTs, ranging in length between 365 and 692 words or 2190 and 3731 characters in length, a total of 16278 words or 92905 characters in English. Of the 30 TTs, 28 were produced by a cohort of three students studying for a postgraduate translation qualification and taking a Ru-En Specialised Translation Module (for further information about the cohort and the module structure, see section 3.2). The remaining two TTs were produced by popular MT engines.

All the TTs have been combed for problematic textual features, aiming for exhaustive identification. To date, 858 such features have been identified; however, not all have been tagged. Eight STs and 22 TTs have been processed fully. This corresponds to 3374 words or 23376 characters in Russian and 11321 words or 65209 characters in English. In this sub-corpus, 554 issues have been identified and rated for seriousness, and 652 issue type tags have been assigned

(multiple tags are allowed and, in some cases, required).

1.4.3 An error typology (TRISST)

Over the course of the project, I have developed a new error typology, which I shall refer to as TRISST (TRanslation ISSue Typology). It is unusual in that it leans towards granular semantic analysis.

TRISST was developed iteratively, over the course of multiple review and re-tag cycles. It is conceived as open-ended and subject to continuous refinement — as dynamic rather than static. The main *fixed* output of the project is a set of tools, procedures and approaches for managing and further developing TRISST.

TRISST was conceived as a two-pronged typology, with one branch focusing on the communicative effect of the error (functionalist) and another branch focusing on its likely causes (cognitivistic). This approach is similar to that of Kunilovskaya (2016). However, limitations of time only permitted for the functionalist branch to be meaningfully developed. The top-level issue categories are currently as follows:

- reference
- relation | constituency
- relation | role
- relation | conjunction
- relation | temporal-modal
- relation | scalar-structural
- relation | restrictiveness
- textuality
- general readability
- register
- SL features

- terminology
- hygiene

TRISST also provides a scale for marking the seriousness of errors, taking into account accuracy of transfer, aptness, and readability.

1.4.4 Data analysis

The data collected over the course of the project was used to compute various correlation matrices, seeking to identify what parameters correlate meaningfully with assessment grades and what types of error cross-correlate with each other.

1.4.4.1 Parameters that correlate with marks

Raw assessment marks were not found to correlate meaningfully with anything because of the variations in ST size and difficulty; however, when the error data for individual TTs was normalised with respect to the mean for the assessment, pronounced correlation with with seriousness-weighted error scores emerged. A loose but statistically significant correlation was also observed between marks and the normalised seriousness-weighted error scores for several specific error categories: structural combinability, referential distortion, unclear constituency, and non-standard/uncommon terminology.

1.4.4.2 Correlation between different types of errors

Two group of inter-correlating errors were identified.

The first is predominantly referential in character and consists of general reference errors, terminology errors and SL features. The last of the three includes poor handling of proper names and titles, transliteration issues, and unwarranted loans and untranslated material.

The second group is relational in character and consists of conjunctive, scalar-structural and temporal-modal issues.

1.4.4.3 Clustering of texts in error space

The data were also used to perform a principal component analysis (PCA) with a view to gauging the distribution of student submissions in error space.

Workplace texts — administrative and technical documents, and academic publications — were found to cluster together. Texts with a strong narrative component — educational and encyclopaedic — mostly fall outside this cluster. Some tentative speculations can be made about how different kinds of errors contribute to different kinds of separation within the data.

1.5 Two caveats concerning TRISST

The reader should be mindful of the following:

1.5.1 Intended purpose

It should be understood that the intended uses of TRISST are in pedagogy and research. It is not intended for setting up quality assurance procedures in the context of translation as a commercial activity or for quantifying the likeness of machine translation to human.

My primary motivation has been to assemble a metalanguage, a convenient way of talking about translation issues that arise in class. There are also obvious secondary purposes: to gather some quantitative information about what kind of errors student translators make and to look at the possibility of regularising marking. However, I do not believe that the procedural details of marking in educational settings must necessarily mimic QA in commercial settings, even if the results should be broadly similar.

1.5.2 Limits of applicability

The general approach I present in this thesis was developed with instrumental texts in mind. By this I mean texts that come with a clear implicit translation brief (Nord 1997, pp. 30–31), and for which the following assumptions hold:

- on a propositional level, the text says what the author intended it to say;

- form matches content — established conventions with respect to social and interpersonal framing are obeyed, and difficulty reflects informativity.

To date, I have looked at student translations of academic, educational, technical and administrative texts. In Reissian terms, these texts are predominantly informative (Reiss 2014). As communicative acts, they are comparatively uncomplicated: their chief purpose is to convey some propositional information efficiently and without distortion, and it is, usually, comparatively easy to tell when something has gone wrong.

The situation is more complicated with end-case operative texts, like adverts or electoral campaign speeches, because communicative function is pegged to desired reader behaviours rather than propositional content. For texts like this, we can expect translation to pale into ‘transcreation’ (House 2015; Steiner 2004). However, for such texts, the two assumptions above still hold, and, with a bit of imagination, the general approach outlined in this thesis is still usable.

What my approach is, unambiguously, ill-suited for is literary texts. For such texts, my two assumptions do not hold. Literary writing can be exploratory in character, with the author being less than sure about what he is trying to say, and form can be deliberately brought into conflict with content. The communicative purpose of most non-trivial literary texts is, famously, open to interpretation. Looking for an implicit translation brief in a literary text is, if not always then very often, a fool’s errand. Consequently, the general approach adopted in this thesis is, if not wholly unsuitable, then, at the very least, utterly insufficient for making judgements about the quality of literary translations. To parse the social, psychological, philosophical and aesthetic determinants of communicative function in a literary text takes something else: literary theory.

1.6 Positioning within the discipline

My approach to parsing translation errors is, broadly, equivalence-based and, as such, fits into a ‘linguistic’ tradition within translation studies that can be traced back to Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) and Nida (1964; 1969). I would also, perhaps controversially, include Mona Baker in this camp (Baker 2011).

At the same time, I am a product of my functionalist and, in particular, Hallidaian training. While I would hesitate to call my treatment of either cohesion and coherence, or of register Hallidaian, the inspiration behind it was unquestionably Hallidaian: in the case of the former, Halliday and Hasan (1976) and, in the case of the latter, Steiner (2004).

At the same time, I attempt to bring in concepts and practices that are not generally associated with the Hallidaian tradition in translation studies. Most of them were initially drawn from Saeed's classic textbook *Semantics* (2008). These include semantic roles, speaker commitment and attribution, granular parsing of temporality, and a variety of scalar, relational and, in the everyday sense, structural³ variables etc.

I also draw on a body of russophone literature on translation error classification, which, to my knowledge, has not been engaged with by anglophone scholars previously (Garbovskiy 2004; Latyshev 2005; Buzadzhi et al. 2009; Shevnin 2003; Shevnin 2007; Shevnin 2009b; Shevnin 2009a; Shevnin 2010). And, of course, I draw on the work of many anglophone scholars who have looked at ways of classifying translation errors, but especially on the work of Secara (2005), Āubler (2008) and Castagnoli et al. (2011), the makers of MeLLANGE, and the work of Kunilovskaya and her co-workers (Kunilovskaya 2013; Kunilovskaya 2015; Kunilovskaya, Kovyazina and Ilyuschenya 2015; Kunilovskaya 2016; Kunilovskaya, Ilyushchenya et al. 2022). The statistical work in this project was most directly inspired by the work of Waddington (2001).

1.6.1 A linguistic approach

Because of the focus on the parsing of individual textual features, it would be reasonable to say that the work described in this thesis belongs to what Snell-Hornby (1988) dubs 'the linguistic approaches' in translation studies. She launches a withering attack against such approaches, focusing particularly on the work of Catford (1978). While many of Snell-Hornby's criticisms directed specifically at Catford have merit, their generalisability is questionable. Catford's framework was based on an early and as yet not fully mature version of Halliday's systemic

³By this, I mean pertaining to the arrangement components in physical and conceptual systems.

functional grammar. It was never updated to keep pace with the evolution of Hallidaian linguistics. Nor was it especially influential.

I believe, Snell-Hornby's push for a strong disciplinary boundary between translation studies and linguistics was unwise. Translation studies — at least the part of the discipline that is directly concerned with translator training — is a branch of applied linguistics. The vast majority of trainee translators are also still language learners. The reality of the translation classroom, at least for the Russian-English pair, is that students with C2 proficiency in both languages are a rarity. The point of bringing in the conceptual apparatus of semantics is, first and foremost, to make it easier to talk about what the ST actually says.

It is, of course, self-evident that the study of translation, like the study of language pedagogy, has hugely consequential sociological and ethical dimensions, but at the bottom of it all, the *sine qua non* of the discipline, is the study of words and meanings. Translation is an engineering discipline: it exists at the intersection between a body of knowledge pertaining to the handling of a specific material — language — and an understanding of the social reality within which things are built out of it. Losing sight of either is not wise.

1.6.2 Position *vis a vis* functionalism

A turn towards linguistic detail should not be understood as a rejection of functionalism.

It is probably safe to say that, at present, functionalism constitutes the dominant ideology within Anglophone translation studies, or at least the part of the discipline most directly concerned with translator training. This is the ideology that most directly shapes the appraisal of the students' work. The basic thrust of functionalism can be summed up with two questions:

1. Is the TT effective as a target-side speech act? In other words, does it have some desired effect on the target-side audience (H. Vermeer 1990)? Does it cause them to accept certain propositions as true, to laugh, to cry, to vote for a particular party, to buy a particular product, to operate a complex piece of machinery in the correct manner etc.?

2. Is the effect of the TT on the target audience coherent with the effect the ST would have had if they could access it directly (Nord 1997)?

I consider these priorities to be uncontroversially valid, and they are taken as foundational within the context of this thesis. However, the more ideologically rigid variations of functionalism come with two important drawbacks:

Firstly, there is something of a general distaste for dealing with the participants' inner states and thought processes. This can be readily traced back to the work of prominent functionalist linguists and philosophers of language, like M.A.K. Halliday and J.L. Austin, whose work can be viewed as part of a broader post-Wittgensteinian functionalist stream within the study of language. In the specific case of Halliday, whose work has been singularly influential within translation studies, this mindset can be traced further back to his mentor J.R. Firth, whose theories Chesterman (2012) describes as 'anti-mentalist', and thence all the way back to Saussure with his conception of language as a self-contained logical framework akin to classical geometry (Saussure 1916). This general mindset makes mental states simply irrelevant: Wittgenstein's 'beetle' is, famously, factored out of the equation (Wittgenstein 1953, sec. 293). Language is just a behaviourist game, a framework of rules defining permissible moves that elicit predictable reactions.

By modern standards, Saussure's faith in the internal coherence and completeness of language and Wittgenstein's anti-psychologism were rather extreme. Their intellectual inheritors generally hold views that are more moderate, subject to more qualifications and caveats. Nonetheless, it is probably fair to say that the question of the language-user's inner states and, in the specific case of translation studies, of *how* the translator arrived at a particular decision remains for the functionalists at best tangential.

The second drawback, which is largely a consequence of the first, is that, in educational contexts, functionalism falls all too easily into what one might call 'naive vocationalism', the notion that the chief job of any educator is simply to provide the students with a scaled model of the workplace. Consequently, in the case of translation, analysis of student errors should proceed along the same lines as QA in the context of commercial translation. Adherents of this school of

thought point out that it would surely be a problem if error classification in the classroom seriously deviated from error classification in the workplace. This line of argument is not fallacious, but it is short-sighted.

From a teacher's perspective, a conception of error purely as an instance of failure to conform to some gatekeeping parameters is a woefully insufficient one. Consider this analogy from a very different domain: nothing in the rules of competitive fencing says that the fencer's front knee must point forwards; and yet it must, if the he or she is to avoid various undesirable consequences, like loss of balance, poor aim, injury etc. Among the fencing coaches, this is common knowledge, repeated in countless books on the subject by authorities ranging from Aldo Nadi (1994, first published in 1943) to David Tyshler (2010). From the perspective of a coach, a fencer who is not pointing his knee forwards is definitely making a technical error. From the perspective of a referee, however, this is a wholly immaterial detail. Similarly, a translation instructor should be concerned with more than just the communicative outcome or adherence to institutional requirements. He or she should be concerned with the linguistic 'mechanics' of the speech act, the question of what exactly is going wrong and how.

Let me reiterate: I do not, for one second, consider functionalism irrelevant or outdated. As a translation scholar, I was trained in the functionalist tradition and still consider myself to be part of it. Yet, from a pedagogic point of view, strict functionalism is incomplete, especially so in view of recent technological developments. Insofar as language is a self-contained Saussurean equation, it has been 'solved'. Functionally adequate correlational maps of entire languages now exist and are readable by machines — and only machines. LLMs like ChatGPT can breeze through the Turing test. Their output sounds plausibly human and situationally apt. Machines can observe collocational and selectional restrictions. They can readily recognise and mimic registers and genres. The question at this point is not how we can teach human translators to keep sounding human when fatigue and SL interference begin to set in — within a generation, outperforming machines on this front will be a task as impossible as outrunning a car — but how we can capitalise on the fact that human translators have something machines do not: access to complex and highly heterogeneous sensory data and a sophisticated

extralinguistic mental life, both of which guide our linguistic decisions on an altogether more profound level.

1.6.3 A typological approach

I am far from the first person to put together a translation error typology. In Chapter 2.4, I attempt to give a state of the art survey, where I look at a sixteen existing typologies. Six come from anglophone research literature (Bensoussan and Rosenhouse 1990; Williams 2001; Castagnoli et al. 2011; Wurm 2016; Kunilovskaya 2016; Karoubi 2016b,); four come from russophone research literature (Garbovskiy 2004; Latyshev 2005; Buzadzhi et al. 2009; Shevnin 2010); one from a francophone research publication (Gouadec 1981); two more are grading schemes used for marking professional accreditation exams in the UK and the US (ITI and ATA respectively); another three are designed by various government and industry bodies in Europe and North America with industry QA in mind (SICAL, SAE J2450, MQM). I know that my survey is not exhaustive. Because of limitations of time, I failed to give due attention to at least one highly influential error handling framework from the anglophone literature, the one proposed by Sager (1989) and endorsed by Hatim and Mason (2005). The CELTraC annotation scheme came to my attention tragically late (Fictumova, Obrusnik and Stepankova 2017). I am also aware that relevant work by at least one prominent russophone scholar has remained unaddressed (Komissarov 1990).

Three existing typologies were seriously considered as alternatives for this project: the MeLLANGE annotation scheme; the scheme developed by Kunilovskaya (2016) for annotating RusLTC; and the MQM Full (MQM Council 2023b). The first two are annotation schemes designed specifically for annotation learner translator corpora. The third appears to have been designed primarily for industry QA. In the end, I felt that none of these was suitable for detailed semantic analysis of the kind I had in mind.

1.6.4 An attempt at cross-pollination

In recent years, in anglophone translation studies, classification and cataloguing of human translation errors, particularly in the context of language teaching and translator training, has been a very quiet field. Since 2015, there has been a handful of notable publications by scholars like Han (2020), Phelan (2017), Karoubi (2016b; 2016a) and Kunilovskaya (2016), but the peak of activity was probably somewhere between 1985 and 2005.

One thing I am hoping to achieve with this thesis is to breathe some life back into a stagnant field by providing the anglophone research community with a summary of some relevant work by several russophone translation scholars, colleagues belonging to a significantly different tradition where, historically, a considerable amount of attention has been devoted to both translator education and classification of translation errors.

I must point out that I am not positioning myself as a native guide. I have spent the entirety of my adult life in England, and my main working language has always been English. I am, fundamentally, an anglophone researcher who happens to speak good Russian and is in a position to give a summary of some of our russophone colleagues' work. In this particular instance, I am not laying claim to an intellectual heritage. I am acting as a translator, no more.

1.6.5 Gaps in the field addressed by this study

There are three specific gaps in the field that I try to address:

1. The general paucity of empirical work attempting to quantify the nature and distribution of errors in translation has been noted by Han (Han 2020) and Kunilovskaya et al. (2022).
2. To the best of my knowledge, to date, there has been no attempt to assemble a corpus of Ru-En student translations made by speakers of English as L1.
3. There is a general shortage of tagging tools that attempt to preserve segment-segment and feature-feature relationships. Tagging is often done on TT alone. This makes it more difficult to perform comparative analyses of the passages

and features in question and to identify ST passage that are particularly problematic.

1.7 Some notes concerning terminology

Before going any further, I want to address several potential sources of confusion.

1.7.1 Norm and usage

These terms, which are very commonly used by russophone translation researchers, can be traced back to the theoretically dense work of Hjelmslev (1961), who distinguishes between schema, which is language as a pure form, norm, which is language as a material form, and usage, which is the sum of linguistic habits (Widoff 2021).

Here, unless otherwise stated, I proceed on the basis of Latyshev's more accessible definitions (2005, pp. 63–65), which can be summed up as follows:

Norm: rules and conventions that delineate what the overwhelming majority of speakers are prepared to recognise as a properly formed interpretable expression. These rules and conventions concern things like grammaticality and semantic interpretability. Utterances that breach the norm are seen as 'incorrect', regardless of the communicative situation.

Usage: situation-bound rules and conventions, like various register and genre-bound variables — for example, conventions surrounding forms of politeness or domain-specific terms and constructions. Utterances that breach usage are deemed grammatically and semantically viable but in some way peculiar under the circumstances.

Latyshev's explanation of norm and usage is similar in spirit to the one given by Shevnin (2003, quoted in Yugova 2011).

A slightly different set of definitions is given by Kunilovskaya in the Russian description of the RusLTC error typology (Kunilovskaya 2013). She subdivides pragmatic errors into errors of usage and errors of register. Errors of usage are

defined as ‘signification of referents and description of situations in an uncustomary way, frequently a consequence of literal translation’. Errors of register are defined as ‘lack of correspondence between the register of a word or a structure and the functional style of the text’. Thus, for Kunilovskaya, usage seems to be closer to Latyshev’s norm in that it is a set of *situation-independent* rules about combinability and phrase structure.⁴ However, Kunilovskaya’s conception of usage includes only the ‘softer’ restrictions that delineate what people tend to describe as ‘natural’ expression. Infringements of ‘harder’, i.e. more unambiguously normative, rules about what is ‘correct’ (spelling, grammar, punctuation, as well as semantically ‘proper’ use of lexemes and strong collocational/selectional restrictions) are dealt with separately under language errors.

Further terminological confusion stems from the fact that Coseriu’s norm is roughly equivalent to Hjelmslev’s usage, while Coseriu’s system is roughly equivalent to a combination of Hjelmslev’s norm and schema (Widoff 2021).

It is possible that norm and usage restrictions (in Latyshev’s sense) are differently handled on a cognitive level. This is the fundamental assumption behind Chomskian generative models. Such models tend to give an adequate account of truly normative restrictions — what most native speakers of a given language, regardless of class, age etc. immediately recognise as the bounds of grammaticality⁵ — but struggle to account for the more graded collocational restrictions that seem to determine which of the countless grammatically viable phrases people actually use in practice (Rögnvaldsson 1993; Al-Dobaian 2017).

One fundamental problem with any strong conceptual split between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ linguistic conventions is that it is not immediately clear how to account for linguistic change. In principle, Hjelmslev acknowledges that norm and usage change over-time; however, it is not clear how a speaker community actually navigates a transition from an existing norm to a new one. There must be some spaces where new norms are being negotiated, and where the status of new lexical

⁴Kunilovskaya equates the Russian term *узус* [*uzus*] {*usage*} to Hallidaian field — restrictions applicable to language use within specific domains of human activity (Kunilovskaya 2013; Kunilovskaya 2016). *Стиль* [*stil’*] {*style*}, meanwhile, is equated to tenor — rules pertaining to construction of affective stances and interpersonal dynamics.

⁵Interesting accounts of scrambling and the limits of comprehensibility in Russian and Ukrainian, an aspect of Slavic languages frequently seen as troublesome for Chomskian models, are given by Sekerina (1997; 1999) and Babych (2001; 2002) respectively.

and structural coinages remains uncertain. The idea that a construction becomes normative the second some native speaker somewhere has uttered it, which is what Hjelmslev's framework seems to entail, makes the very concept of norm redundant. These questions are particularly relevant in the case of translation, because

1. historically, a lot of new linguistic material has been generated at the interface between languages, and
2. the current fashion is for foreignising translation, which, by definition, exists in tension with TL norm and usage.

However, serious attempts to resolve such question fall far beyond the scope of this thesis. For now, let us acknowledge that the distinction between that which is effectively disallowed and that which is merely disfavoured is often a useful one when it comes to gauging the proficiency of speakers and the quality of texts, even if there exists a grey area where unambiguous classification is difficult. That said, I chose to abandon this distinction when talking about structural combinability in the context of TRISST, because it was simply too difficult to maintain consistently.

1.7.2 Error vs. issue

These terms are used more or less interchangeably, much as they would be used in everyday discourse. I do not attempt to maintain a systematic separation between them. There are instance where one term or the other better fits the immediate context (see discussion below), but there are also many other cases where either term could be used comfortably.

Like many researchers, I am often made uneasy by the notion of translation *errors*, because the term implies that something is unambiguously wrong and a better solution definitely exists. While unambiguous communicative misfires and instances of clear miscommunication are not that uncommon in student translations, many of the textual features that are highlighted during assessment have a hazier status and fall more in the 'problematic' or 'not ideal' territory (see Pym 1992 for further discussion).

An assessor may also intuit that some expression or construction is communicatively suboptimal but struggle to provide a ‘correct solution’. Indeed, there might not be a ‘correct solution’ that satisfies our communicative objectives in every particular. Different languages have different resources, and different societies have different scripts and frames of reference. Translation is very often a game of unhappy compromises.

On the whole, I prefer the term translation issue — an undesirable textual phenomenon that has to be acknowledged and thought about but that cannot necessarily be ‘fixed’, at least not to perfection. However, the term error is well-established in the literature, and I would, among other things, like my thesis to come up in search results for ‘translation errors’. Also, referring to an outright howler in a student text as an ‘issue’ can come across as comically coy.

While some may see this terminological looseness as unacademic, I believe that it serves an important purpose: it reminds the reader that there are two ways to conceptualise problematic textual features in student texts. We can and sometimes should view ourselves as gatekeepers and approach such features as flaws. We also can and sometimes should view ourselves as ‘physicians’ whose job is to diagnose and help.

1.7.3 Text vs. document

I generally use the term document in the usual sense of a stand-alone text with a beginning, a middle and an end.

I do not maintain a strong separation between document and text. In this thesis, text can mean:

- a specific document (e.g. source and target texts);
- a specific passage within some document;
- bodies of written language in general.

The exception is section 3.1, where I describe the inner workings of my data collection tool. In that section, a rigid separation is maintained: text refers to a data format; document refers to a cohesive body of written language. In that

specific context, source and target texts are referred to as documents rather than texts.

1.7.4 Speaker vs. author, writer vs. reader etc.

In the context of this project, the distinction between written and spoken language is not very important. My ultimate concern is solely with writing. Consequently, for the purposes of this project I maintain an approximation that would be, in many other circumstances, extremely problematic: that writing is just speech written down. Consequently, I use terms like speaker and author or hearer and reader more or less interchangeably.

1.8 :GEN and glosses in general

I gloss all Russian expressions. The in-text glosses follow the format of *original expression* [*transliteration*] {approximate equivalent}. Numbered examples generally use the Leipzig glossing format and look something like this:

(1) a. **ST (Ru — ST name):**

ST passage in Russian
transliteration
literal gloss

suggested translation

b. **TT (En):**

corresponding passage from a student text

All transliterations use the scholarly convention, with diacritics (see GOST7.79—2000). This system uses relatively uncomplicated typography — a standard Latin alphabet with diacritics that are used for everyday writing in other European languages — and, at the same time, maintains unique bidirectional mapping, i.e. back-transliteration reliably restores the original Cyrillic spelling. Thus it is a happy medium between the BGN/PCGN system, which is typographically extremely simple (no diacritics), but where characters like *y*, *e* and *ts* allow for multiple interpretations, and the ALA-LC system, where

bidirectionally unique mapping comes at the price of requiring exotic ligatures that are often difficult to encode and render correctly.

I try to keep the glosses as literal as possible but without overloading them with tags. One tag that appears a lot is :GEN, which stands for genitive. In most cases, this can be read as approximately equivalent to the English possessive *of*. I chose not to substitute it for *of*, because I wanted to preserve the relationships between coordinated nouns and adjectives and between multiple items in a list, all of which would be in genitive. In such cases, we would either have to include just one *of* at the start of the phrase, losing the information about coordination, or include multiple instances of *of*, risking serious confusion resulting from the reader interpreting them as nested rather than coordinated. The reader should, however, be mindful, that not all strings of genitives are parallel (i.e. coordinated). Nested genitives are also notoriously common in Russian.

Finally, a quick note concerning the handling of Russian abbreviations. In the glosses, I generally expand them and, if necessary, mark them with the appropriate case. This departure from the strict like-for-like logic of glossing hopefully makes the glosses a little less opaque.

1.9 A note concerning examples from corpora

Not all but a fairly high proportion of my intuitions with respect to the problematicity of this or that textual feature were checked by using monolingual corpora. The default corpora used for this purpose were *EnTenTen21* and *RuTenTen20*, accessed via *SketchEngine*. The main attraction of these corpora is their size: 52,268,286,493 and 19,125,894,850 tokens respectively. Unless otherwise specified, it should be assumed that the examples are drawn either from *EnTenTen21* or *RuTenTen20*.

More occasionally I used the *British National Corpus* (BNC), accessed via *IntelliText*, and the *National Corpus of the Russian Language* (RNC), accessed via *ruscorpora.ru*. These corpora are smaller than the respective TenTen corpora (96,132,981 and 389,471,513 tokens respectively) but more diverse in content. The TenTen corpora are composed entirely of materials found online. BNC and

RNC are attempts to create a cross-section of the language as a whole.

1.10 Thesis structure

The rest of this thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 presents the conceptual foundations of this study and summarises existing approaches to appraising translation quality and classifying translations errors.

In section 2.1, I set out my general understanding of how communication works. It is, essentially, Gricean. Consequently, I give a summary of some key concepts from Grice (1975). I then look at Gutt's application of relevance theory to translation (2000) and at the concept of cognitive frames, which allows us to link the rather general Gricean logic to the specifics of particular cultures and situations.

In section 2.2, I set out my general understanding of how translation works. I borrow the concept of similarity from Chesterman (Chesterman 1996), which is, essentially, a softer version of equivalence. I then look at the different dimensions of language along which ST-TT similarity can be maintained.

In section 2.3, I summarise the existing approaches to gauging translation quality. I explain the four basic concepts of quality in the context of translation: quality as equivalence, quality as fitness for purpose, quality as conformance to expectation, and quality as similarity to a 'gold standard'. I summarise the three purposes of assessment: diagnostic, formative and summative. I summarise the three general approaches to assessment: analytic, holistic and task-based. I summarise Williams' understanding of assessment validity and reliability (Williams 2009). I look at a variety of quantitative approaches that correspond to the four concepts of quality above. Finally, I look at some influential qualitative approaches to translation quality.

In section 2.4, I examine sixteen existing typologies and attempt to identify some important themes and patterns. I look at the common ways of organising typologies, either as hierarchical trees or as grids with various intersecting dimensions. I look at the main organising principles, such as accuracy of transfer

vs. TL quality, or syntax vs. semantics vs. pragmatics, or process vs. product. Within this context, I present a detailed discussion of Kunilovskaya (Kunilovskaya 2016). I then discuss the work of four other russophone translation scholars who, to my knowledge, have not published in English (Garbovskiy 2004; Latyshev 2005; Shevnin 2009b; Buzadzhi et al. 2009). I revisit the question quantifying the seriousness of issues. Finally, I also revisit inter-assessor agreement.

In Chapter 3 I describe the data collection tool developed for this study (MANTRA), the sources of the data, and data collection protocols.

In section 3.1, I introduce MANTRA. I explain the main motivations for its creation and the key functions of the system. I give a quick summary of the technologies used. I then explain the structure of the database and give a walk-through tour of the interface.

In section 3.2, I discuss the data collection procedures. I explain what STs were used in the study and how the TTs were collected. I also explain the practicalities of how MANTRA was used to work with incoming data and how TRISST was honed over time.

In Chapter 4, I described the error typology developed over the course of this project. I then present the results of a statistical analysis of the data gathered, undertaken with a view to evaluating the three hypotheses in 1.3.4.

In section 4.1, I give a category-by-category description of TRISST, accompanied by many examples from the database.

In section 4.2, I discuss data analysis, with reference to the three testable hypotheses given earlier in this chapter. I find that there are meaningful correlation between marks and assessment-mean-normalised total error weights of individual texts, as well as aggregate error weights for certain error categories. I also find that there are two clusters of cross-correlating errors that can broadly be described as referential and relational. I find no evidence of anything resembling a ‘fingerprint’ error pattern for individual students; I do, however, find some likely clustering and regioning by genre and sub-genre.

Chapter 5 is a conclusion. I give a summary of the thesis, discuss the limitations of the project and the scope for future work.

Appendix A contains short descriptions and summaries of structures of the 16

typologies used to write section 2.4.

Appendix B is a summary of TRISST.

Appendix C contains tabulated issue frequencies and weights.

Appendix D contains tabulated PCA loadings and variances.

Appendix E contains the marking scheme used for the assessed translations in this study.

Appendix F contains the specifications and STs used for the assessed translations in this study.

Appendix G contains the text of the consent form that participating students had to sign.

Chapter 2

Background

In this chapter I present the conceptual background of this thesis.

In section 2.1, I lay out my broadly Gricean understanding of language as a whole. I summarise Gutt's application of relevance theory, an offshoot of Gricean pragmatics, specifically to translation. Finally, I outline the concept of culture-bound frames as a way to connect the relatively general principles of relevance theory to the specifics of particular communicative situations.

In section 2.2, I present a rudimentary theory of translation centred around relevant similarity (a softer version of equivalence) operating at three levels:

- individual linguistic features (including phonemes, graphemes, meanings of morphemes and lexemes, syntactic features, devices of cohesion and register markers);
- encoded meanings (introducing the notions of entailment and truth/success conditions, then focusing on lexical reference and a range of semantic relations);
- actual communicative effect (covering function of individual utterances, language in general, and text, as well as the concepts of register and genre, which can be understood as linguistic and textual frames).

In section 2.3, I look at conceptions of translation quality. I outline four general approaches to translation quality and its quantification:

- analytic (bottom-up from perceived adequacy of features);

- holistic (top-down from perceived adequacy of the text as a whole);
- task-based (performance of the text in real communicative situations);
- ‘gold standard’ (similarity to a pre-defined target)

In section 2.4, I discuss sixteen existing error typologies with a view to identifying some common themes. I look at the following:

- the practice of structuring typologies around broad conceptual divisions, like transfer/language or transfer/norm&usage/style, and conceptual tensions resulting from this practice;
- the separation of process and product-oriented perspectives;
- the tendency to treat natural language as a formal one;
- lack of granularity in parsing semantic relationships;
- scales for rating seriousness of errors;
- extent of agreement between different markers applying the same framework;
- lack of ways to quantify the difficulty of individual translation problems;
- lack of ways to quantify assessor confidence when appraising individual features.

2.1 The problem of other minds

This section presents the philosophical bedrock of this thesis. Here I explain my general understanding of how language works, which can, to a rough approximation, be summed up as mentalistic and broadly Gricean.

I briefly outline the basic premisses posited by Grice himself (1975) and consider the possibility and implications of a Maxim of Politeness. I reframe it more broadly as a Maxim of Appropriateness defined in terms of register and genre expectations.

I then discuss two theoretical frameworks that help us to link Grice’s fairly general observations to the specifics of particular communicative situations:

relevance theory and the body of theory attached to the concept of cognitive and semantic frames.

Relevance theory is an off-shoot of Gricean pragmatic, the key premise of which is that the speaker attempts to constrain the scope of likely utterance interpretations by modelling parts of the hearer's cognitive landscape and constructing the utterance so as to appeal to existing and readily retrievable — i.e. situationally salient — knowledge (Deidre Wilson and Sperber 2007). I give a summary of Gutt's application of relevance theory specifically to translation (Gutt 2000) and discuss some of its implications.

I then discuss the concept of frames with reference to the work of Fillmore (1977) and Minsky (1974). Frames can be described as bundles of established situational expectations with respect to situations and entities that recur within a given culture and for which corresponding bundles of linguistic means exist. Knowledge of frames is what allows us to make informed guesses about our interlocutor's cognitive landscape. I briefly discuss the frame typology of de Vega (Vega 1985) and its adaptation to the case of translation by Rojo López (Rojo López 2004).

Finally, I set two general felicity conditions for translation, which parallel the traditional transfer/language divide: the condition of ST–TT similarity and the condition of TT acceptability.

2.1.1 Gricean pragmatics

2.1.1.1 Cooperative principle

The central assumption, of Gricean pragmatics is that the parties involved in any given talk exchange will, generally, approach it in the spirit of cooperation. In other words, both parties want to understand and be understood. Even if the exchange is confrontational, the speaker will make a reasonable effort to make their *intended* meaning clear, and the hearer will make a reasonable effort to understand it. The possibility of doing so hinges on the assumptions the speaker makes concerning the hearer's expectations at a given point in the conversation and the decision to conform to these expectations or not.

By default, the hearer expects the speaker to conform to the cooperative principle:

Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

(Grice 1975)

2.1.1.2 Conversational maxims

Grice unpacks the cooperative principle as four conversational maxims (ibid.). These can be summed up as follows:

Maxim of Quantity: *Provide the correct amount of information for the circumstances.*

Make your contribution sufficiently informative for it to perform the desired function, but avoid overloading it with information that is unnecessary.

Maxim of Quality: *Try to make your contribution one that is true.* Avoid saying things that you believe to be untrue or for which you lack adequate evidence.

Maxim of Relation: *Be relevant.* The contribution should fit reasonably naturally into the established flow of communication. Its purpose should not be perplexing.

Maxim of Manner: *Be perspicuous.* The contribution should not be unnecessarily hard to understand. The speaker should aim to communicate in an orderly way, avoiding unnecessary obscurity, ambiguity, and verbosity.

2.1.1.3 Observance vs. flouting of conversational maxims

2.1.1.3.1 Observance It is important to stress that, even though Grice phrases his conversational maxims as imperatives, they are not normative in character. They are not instructions about how the speaker *should* speak. They are descriptions of what the hearer *expects* to hear. If the hearer's expectations are satisfied, the contribution is parsed on the level of conventional meanings. For example, consider this exchange:

- (2) A: How old is your cat?
B: About three years old.

If we take this exchange at face value, the following statements are likely to be true:

- B's answer communicates a suitable amount of information: enough to satisfy most people's curiosity and no more.
- B probably believes this information to be correct.
- It is clear how the two utterances form a cohesive and coherent text: B explicitly provides the information that A has asked for.
- B's answer is short and easy to understand.

Nothing about the reply is perplexing. To make sense of it, we only need to know the conventional meanings of the constituent lexemes and the logical relationships coded into the morphosyntax. No additional information is necessary. Insofar as thoughts can be described in words, the meaning of B's answer can be described by straightforward disquotation (Tarski 1944):

- (3) 'About three years old.' = About three years old.

The intended meaning is explicitly encoded in the utterance.

2.1.1.3.2 Flouting However, the speaker can choose to flout Grice's maxims, i.e. to defy the hearer's expectations on purpose. This signals that the explicitly communicated meaning is in some way incomplete, and the hearer must 'fill in the blanks'. Consider the following transcript of a real conversation between my wife and me:

- (4) A: Shut the door.
B: The cat's out.

The reply appears to be a non-sequitur. The intended message only becomes clear when the following aspects of our shared knowledge are taken into account:

- We are talking about the bedroom door (part of our immediate environment at the time of the conversation).

- Our cat is not allowed in the bedroom.
- ‘Out’ means out of the house.

We can now infer that B is giving a reason for an implicit refusal to comply with A’s directive:

- (5) If the cat is out, it is no longer necessary for me to shut the door, assuming there are no other reasons for doing so.

2.1.1.3.3 Non-conventional and conversational implicature This process of communicating an *implied* meaning, which the hearer must reconstruct by inference from the explicit meaning of the utterance and some aspect of shared contextual knowledge, is what Grice refers to as non-conventional implicature (non-conventional, because the intended meaning of the message cannot be reconstructed from the conventional meanings of the words).

Grice is particularly concerned with conversational implicature — the four maxims above are conversational maxims. Here, the adjective ‘conversational’ relates to instances of language use where the primary purpose is ‘maximally effective passage of information’, what Grice understands to be the main purpose of ‘talk’ and ‘talk exchanges’(Grice 1975).

2.1.1.4 Politeness vs. appropriateness

Grice’s singular focus on what Jakobson called the referential function of language — the function of passing propositional information from speaker to hearer — is one of the weaknesses of his theoretical framework. It is a weakness Grice was aware of. He acknowledged that:

the scheme needs to be generalised to allow for such general purposes as influencing or directing the actions of others.

(ibid.)

Grice mentions that the four conversational maxims are not the only maxims that play a part in human communication:

There are, of course, all sorts of other maxims (aesthetic, social, or moral in character). For example, there could be a maxim of politeness: ‘Be polite’.

(ibid.)

The observance of these other maxims is also expected by the hearer, and they too can be flouted to generate non-conventional implicature.

The possibility of there being a distinct Maxim of Politeness or, indeed, multiple maxims of politeness has attracted considerable attention over the years. Some notable developments are discussed by Pfister (2010). Such maxims normally approach politeness as a moral norm which we expect our interlocutors to adhere to. The maxims are usually unpacked in terms of existing politeness theory (face-giving, acknowledgement of personal agency and autonomy etc.), whose broad thrust can be summed up as ‘Be nice’.

The problem is that, regardless of whether there is one Maxim of Politeness or several, any such maxim is bound to lack the universality of the four conversational maxims discussed above. The conversational maxims — the maxims of quantity, quality, relation, and manner — may be flouted at any given point, but it is difficult to think of a situation where they simply do not apply. Most, perhaps even all, communicative situations generate some expectations with respect to adequate informativity, sincerity, clarity, and relevance, but not all situations generate expectations with respect to politeness. There are situations where we expect our interlocutors to be openly rude. In such situations, markers of politeness are likely to be interpreted as insincere.

Yet, even in openly hostile interactions, Grice’s cooperative principle still holds. When the speaker hurls abuse at their spouse during a messy break-up or asks a stranger in a dark alley to hand over their phone and wallet, that person still wants their utterances to be felicitous, i.e. to have some desired perlocutionary effect. For the interaction to be communicatively successful, the hearer must still guess the correct meaning of structurally or lexically ambiguous utterances and supply the ‘missing’ implicit meanings that are not explicitly voiced.¹ And

¹Failure to parse the implicit meaning of obscenities is exploited to comic effect in Stanislaw Lem’s short story *The invasion from Aldebaran* (Lem 1959), where invading aliens with access to advanced machine translation are stumped by the verbal output of a village drunk.

the speaker must still choose their words so as to maximise the chances of this happening. In this rather limited sense, the interaction remains cooperative. The speaker must still make reasonable allowances for the hearer's expectations.

However, when Grice talks about 'the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange', it follows that the participants have certain socially conditioned expectations with respect to scope, structure and participant roles, corresponding to Halliday's three metafunctions of language: ideational, textual and interpersonal (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013). Consequently, rather than thinking in terms of expectations with respect to norms of politeness, we should be thinking more generally in terms of expectations with respect to situation-appropriate register and genre. Practically all human interactions generate some such expectations. And, like other kinds of conversational expectations, these can be flouted in order to generate non-conventional implicature. Of course, as any interaction progresses, terms of engagement are continuously renegotiated and either reaffirmed or altered in some way. However, as a rule, any major change must proceed via a sequence of steps that are individually small enough to be psychologically plausible. Sudden 'handbrake turns' in the way a speaker engages with his or her interlocutors are a commonplace in comedy, precisely because they tend to come across as farcically insincere (Chekhov's *Chameleon* is a classic example).

We can now, in addition to Grice's four maxims, formulate a Maxim of Appropriateness:

Maxim of Appropriateness: Make your contribution fulfil the expectations generated by the applicable cultural norms.

This is similar in spirit to the Maxim of Politeness but without the connotations of moral normativity. We cannot expect people to be nice under all circumstances.

The Maxim of Appropriateness can be unpacked as two sub-maxims:

Sub-maxim of Genre-conformance: Make your contribution fit the conventionally accepted flow of meanings in similar situations.

Sub-maxim of Register-appropriateness: Use words, expressions, and constructions that are generally considered appropriate in similar situations.

It can, of course, be argued that such considerations are already present implicitly within Grice's conversational maxims. After all, there is clear variation in how much information on a given topic in a given setting is likely to be deemed 'the right amount' from one culture to the next. And, by implication, there must also be variation in what the hearer is prepared to accept as relevant. We can argue that even clear devices of politeness, like polite forms of address, are situationally relevant, insofar as they frame the interaction that the speaker and the hearer are presently engaged in. However, I believe, it is useful to maintain some measure of separation between the propositional payload of utterances (what Grice was primarily concerned with) and the effect they have with respect to positioning the speaker and the hearer within a broader sociocultural landscape, shaping the interpersonal dynamic, and maintaining the flow of the communicative interaction. For this reason, I interpret Grice's conversational maxims more narrowly, as pertaining predominantly to explicit and implied propositions, and propose that we add a separate Maxim of Appropriateness that pertains to the observance (and flouting) of the unspoken lingua-cultural norms.

2.1.2 Gutt's relevance theoretical account of translation

Relevance theory is a development of Gricean pragmatics that, in effect, elevates the Maxim of Relation to a position of pre-eminence. Grice's other maxims are subsumed under it, as are considerations related to register and genre.

The basic assumption of relevance theory is that a hearer will interpret incoming utterances in a way that maximises cognitive efficiency. The hearer will hope to obtain high contextual effects — a cascade of inferences that alters or reinforces their picture of the world in some important way — in return for low cognitive effort. Consequently, inferential interpretations are always based on the most easily retrievable assumptions, the ones that are most directly connected to our current concerns and our current understanding of the communicative situation we are in. Such assumptions will include certain expectations with respect to informativity, sincerity, clarity, language variety, and overall format of the interaction.

Gutt uses relevance theory as a framework for constructing an overarching

theory of translation. Detailed consideration of the fundamentals of relevance theory as well as Gutt's specific implementation of it must remain beyond the scope of this thesis; however, below I give a quick introduction to three important concepts taken from Gutt:

- translation as interlingual interpretive use;
- the direct/indirect translation cline;
- the importance of modelling context.

These concepts do not require us to endorse every particular of relevance theory and work equally well within the frame of orthodox Gricean pragmatics.

2.1.2.1 Translation as interlingual interpretive use

Gutt draws a distinction between two different ways of using language that parallel different ways of entertaining a propositional thought: descriptive use pertains to the semantic 'face value' of a proposition; interpretive use pertains to the non-literal associative meanings generated by relationships of interpretive resemblance. Gutt illustrates this distinction with the following two examples:

- (6) a. Bill is a real gangster.
 ENTAILS: Bill is a criminal.
 BECAUSE: Gangsters are criminals.
- b. Bill is a real gangster.
 RESEMBLES: Bill is a real bully.
 BECAUSE: Gangsters bully people.

In (6a), the sentence 'Bill is a real gangster' is a statement of the speaker's commitment to the belief that Bill really is part of a criminal gang. In (6b), the word 'gangster' is used metaphorically. The speaker does not commit themselves to the belief that Bill is an actual gangster but rather suggests that Bill is in some (but not all) ways similar to one. The hearer is left to guess, exactly which qualities the speaker has in mind. Alternative interpretations are possible. For example:

- (7) Bill is a real gangster.
 RESEMBLES: Bill likes chunky jewellery.
 BECAUSE: Gangsters like chunky jewellery.

We can think of some situations where the hearer is more likely to adopt the interpretation in (6a) and other situations where they are more likely to adopt the interpretation in (7). Interpretive resemblance is thus always context-dependent.

It should be made clear that, in relevance theory, the word ‘context’ generally refers to the hearer’s internal context, first and foremost the following: the contents of that person’s encyclopaedic and situational knowledge, incoming sensory data, and current scope of attention. Obviously, the particulars of the situation or environment within which the interaction is taking place is going to affect this internal context in various ways, but it does not determine it completely. Thus, when we say that interpretive resemblance is context dependent, what we mean is that the extent and scope of interpretive resemblance are ultimately determined by the cognitive landscape of a particular hearer, or what relevance theory refers to as their contextual assumptions.

Gutt construes translation as interlingual interpretive use: the translator sets out to produce a TT that interpretively resembles its ST for some particular TA. The exact scope of this resemblance will vary, depending on the translator’s communicative priorities and the TA’s cognitive landscape. The translator may try to reproduce more or less of the ST’s inferential landscape and to prioritise reconveying some aspects of it over others. This way of thinking about translation allows us to account for the immense variety of translation styles and approaches one sees in real life.

2.1.2.2 Applicability to ‘covert’ translation

There is a type of translation that, according to Gutt, does not constitute interlingual interpretive use: what Juliane House calls covert translation. A covert translation is one that aims for ‘the status of an original source text in the target culture’ (House 2015, p.56), which is to say it attempts to hide from the TA the existence of a source text in another language. The usual reason for doing so is that in certain communicative scenarios the status of a translation as a

translation is irrelevant to the functionality of the text, perhaps even actively distracting.

A good example of a covert translation would be an appliance manual. The sole communicative goal of such a text is to give the reader clear instructions on how to operate the appliance. Ideally, the reader's experience of engaging with the text should be perfectly frictionless and indistinguishable from the experience of engaging with an original text written by an articulate native speaker. That there already exists a similar manual addressed to a different speaker community only becomes apparent to the reader if the translation is in some way inadequate.

Gutt believes that such translations are instances of descriptive rather than interpretive use (Gutt 2000, Ch. 3). The reader proceeds on the assumption that the person who produced the text had committed to the truth of the beliefs underpinning it.

Gutt's conclusion is open to question. A typical user might indeed read a well-translated manual as if being spoken to directly by one of the engineers; however, this is only a target-side illusion. This illusion is, in the final analysis, unstable. It quickly crumbles as soon as something goes wrong — for example, if a person who has bought the appliance suffers a serious accident while following the instructions. Any such scenario immediately raises the question of who is legally responsible and in what way. It is unreasonable to hold the translator responsible for a design flaw or a poorly conceived operating procedure, but it is perfectly reasonable to hold them responsible for not recounting with adequate clarity and precision a sound procedure that was described well in the ST. The translator cannot answer for the soundness of what is expressed in the TT, only for its adequate interpretive resemblance to what was expressed in the ST. A covert translation is still an instance of interpretive rather than descriptive use.²

2.1.2.3 Direct and indirect translation

Gutt's conception of translations as instances of interlingual interpretive use is derived from the intuitive notion that translation is a special case of reported

²An interesting — in my opinion, highly artificial and potentially very problematic — attempt to lift translation above such considerations by brute institutional force is the EU's principle of equal authenticity (Mišćenić 2016).

speech. In the context of ordinary reported speech, we can talk about direct and indirect quotations. Gutt points out that what separates one from the other is the extent to which the quotation interpretively resembles the text being quoted. Interpretive resemblance exists on a cline: from zero resemblance, where two thoughts or utterances have no shared associations or implications, to total resemblance, where all associations and implications are shared. Indirect quotations only aim for partial interpretive resemblance. They seek to reproduce only certain aspects of the inferential landscape generated by the original utterance — those aspects which the speaker deems to be of particular importance to the hearer within some specific communicative situation. Direct quotation, on the other hand, results in total interpretive resemblance. The quotation potentially allows the hearer to access the inferential landscape of the original utterance in its entirety — whatever inferences could be drawn from the latter can potentially be drawn from the former.

By parallel, Gutt introduces the concepts of direct and indirect translation. Different translations clearly aim for different degrees of interpretive resemblance. The majority aim to reproduce within the reader's mind some but not all of the inferences that the ST would have produced, with the exact scope of the resemblance being determined by the translator's understanding of the communicative situation and the TA's informational needs. Gutt classes such translations as indirect. Some translations, however, aim for total interpretive resemblance, i.e. to give the reader access to all of the potential inferences that the ST itself might have triggered. Gutt calls this limiting case direct translation.

2.1.2.4 Context-dependency and active reading

Gutt's formal definition of direct translation is as follows:

A receptor language utterance is a direct translation of a source language utterance if and only if it purports to interpretively resemble the original completely *in the context envisaged for the original*.

(*ibid.*, p.171; italics added)

Crucially, the communicative success of a direct translation — its hypothetical

ability to recreate within the reader's mind the same inferential landscape the ST would have created for its intended audience — hinges on the reader's ability to model the contextual assumptions of the ST's intended audience. Again, there is an obvious parallel with direct quotation: it is often impossible to tell exactly what an utterance reproduced verbatim was supposed to communicate, unless we know to whom it was addressed and under what circumstances. Consider this semantically straightforward Russian sentence:

- (8) *Где вы были восемь лет?*
 Gde vy byli vosem' let?
 Where you were eight years?

Where have you been for eight years?

At present, this question comes with a highly situation-bound subtext. The majority of Russian-speakers will immediately recognise it as a shorthand for one of the standard lines of argument in support of the invasion of Ukraine. It simultaneously encapsulates Putin's main justification for the invasion (alleged depredations of the Ukrainian government forces upon the people of Donbass between 2014 and 2022) and accuses those who oppose it of hypocrisy. To a rough approximation, the argument unpacks as follows:

- (9) Violence in Ukraine is nothing new. It started in 2014. Over the past eight years the Ukrainians have committed various atrocities against the population of the breakaway republics. We are intervening to protect these people. You did not speak up against the violence perpetrated by the Ukrainians. Your objections now demonstrate your double standards and political bias.

This much is, under the current circumstances, strongly implied by (8). There could be other weaker implications, e.g.

- (10) You are victims and a disseminators of Western propaganda. People like you ruined the country in the 90s.

and/or

- (11) You are dangerous and naive radicals who want to sink the country into a civil war. You want the chaos that has been happening in Ukraine to happen over here.

etc. etc... Needless to say, these inferred meanings can only be extracted if the hearer is aware of the war, the recent history leading up to it, and the conversations happening around it now among Russians.

One corollary of the inescapable context-dependency of direct translation is that reading such a translation has to be an active process. If the TT seeks to reproduce the inferential landscape of the ST, then a reader who is separated from the circumstances of ST production by a non-trivial culture gap cannot begin to access it without making some effort to narrow that gap, to model the cognitive landscape of the original intended readership — to try and understand what their world looked like, what the common beliefs and concerns were. In short, there is onus on the reader to do some background research.

The necessity for such a mode of interaction addresses one of the criticisms commonly levelled at relevance theory: that it places the responsibility for communicative success entirely on the speaker (Jessica Kessler, personal communications, ca. 2020). The general thrust of the argument is that relevance theory makes the hearer into a passive collection of psychological variables acting as a communicative ‘target’, which the speaker can hit or miss, depending on the adequacy of their communicative skills, much as a basketball player can hit or miss the basket. In Gutt’s framework, this is clearly not the case. For Gutt, the hearer or, to be exact, the reader is an active partner in the cooperative project of building up and expanding islands of cognitive similarity.

2.1.2.5 Communicative clues

Assuming the reader has adequately modelled the source-side contextual assumptions, the translator should be able to compose a text that allows this reader to recreate the source-side web of inferences. Such a text must re-convey the basic semantic content of the ST and also reproduce what Gutt calls the communicative clues present in the ST. These are, in essence, aspects of register and genre: identifiable contributions to associative meaning stemming from specific linguistic features that fall under the umbrella of ‘style’. Gutt identifies at least six different categories of communicative clues (Gutt 2000, Ch. 6, p.171):

- Communicative clues arising from semantic representation;

- communicative clues arising from syntactic properties;
- communicative clues arising from phonetic properties;
- communicative clues arising from semantic constraints on relevance;
- communicative clues arising from formulaic expressions;
- communicative clues arising from sound-based poetic properties.

Further details of this classification are not directly relevant to this project. Mostly, I handle matters of ‘style’ within the Hallidayan register and genre framework discussed in 2.2.2.3.4. Limitations of space and time do not allow me to present a proper critique of Gutt’s communicative clues, but, very broadly speaking, my reason for abandoning this aspect of his theoretical framework in favour of the Hallidayan approaches is that the latter framework is much more conceptually mature — more complete, more clearly organised, more granular.

2.1.2.6 The direct translation as an ideal

Gutt’s contention is that if a linguistic feature does indeed make a tangible contribution to meaning (as opposed to the ‘raw’ aesthetic impact of sight and sound), then, for an adequately engaged and diligent reader, it should generally be possible to re-express this aspect of meaning in another language, possibly using a very different set of linguistic structures.

We can, of course, ask: how many identifiable aspects of meaning can a translator preserve at the same time without making the text cumbersome or awkward to the point of being unreadable? And, even if this is hypothetically possible from the point of view of available linguistic resources, we must still ask ourselves, how common are the readers whose contextual assumptions are sufficiently close to those of the source-side reader for total interpretive resemblance to be possible? In fact, do they exist at all? Gutt does attempt to answer these questions. At this stage, I cannot in good faith say that I understand his answers well enough to unequivocally declare them convincing or unconvincing. Honestly, I would expect the answer to all of these questions to be ‘no’. However, even if that is the case, the concept of a direct translation remains

useful in the same way the ideal gas and the frictionless surface are useful to physicists. They are idealised end-case scenarios that are never observed in reality but are, nonetheless, convenient anchor points for thinking about certain things.

A direct translation is an ‘ideal’ translation — a case of highest theoretically possible transfer of meaning. As was mentioned earlier, interpretive resemblance exists on a cline. If we think of translation conceived as interlingual interpretive use, direct translation lies at one end of the interpretive resemblance scale. It is the point of total interpretive resemblance. At the other end of this scale lies zero interpretive resemblance — a text entirely unrelated to the ST, i.e. not a translation.

To understand the intended meaning of a perfectly direct translation, the reader must do nothing short of rebuilding a source-side inner world in their head. In essence, they must realign the lexical and syntactic resources of the TL with the conceptual divisions and associations of the SL.

2.1.2.7 Directness and domestication

The fact that covert translations exist and are found useful by a large readership (e.g. translations of appliance manuals) clearly shows that many functionally viable translations do not require the reader to adopt any radically new contextual assumptions. If partial interpretive resemblance is good enough, the reader may well have no problem proceeding on the basis of existing contextual assumptions carried over from their target-side life. However, in such a situation — a situation where the target-side reader makes no attempt to model the source-side reader’s cognitive landscape — there will always be some limits on how much of the source-side information a translation can re-convey.

The directness cline is, in effect, a version of the foreignisation-domestication scale. And, like Schleiermacher, we must conclude that the translator must either drag the reader towards the text or the text towards the reader (2012, translated by Bernofsky, first published in German in 1813). However, Gutt’s notion of directness is about foreignisation of content rather than form. As mentioned earlier, the translator is free to reproduce communicative clues using entirely

different lexicogrammatical means. In the case of a translations that lie towards the direct end of the scale, the reader's discomfort and disorientation come not from the unusualness of the language but from the unusualness of the concepts and situations being spoken about.

On a conceptual level at least, we can attempt to draw a difference between content foreignisation and linguistic foreignisation. The latter can be thought of as a mode of *Verfremdung* — unusual language lifts the reader out of their experiential comfort zone. The goal of traditional Brechtian *Verfremdung* is to do the opposite of transporting the reader into the text world: it is to put critical distance between the reader and the text, to make us adopt the stance of an outside observer rather than a participant (Barnett 2023). Foreignising translations, as conceived of by scholars like Venuti (Venuti 2003), do something similar: they remind us of the ST's Otherness, of the fact that it came from the mind of somebody separated from us by a non-trivial culture gap, of a person whose lived reality and cognitive landscape are not necessarily immediately relatable for us (ibid.). It is, in effect, a recurring prompt to keep double-checking whether our usual contextual assumptions are likely to hold for this specific text.

Of course, the problem with this conception of linguistic foreignisation as *Verfremdung* is that the effect is, in the long run, unstable and self-undermining. The production of a text that somehow defies the existing expectations of its audience with respect to linguistic norms is always, be it intentionally or otherwise, itself an attempted norm-setting act. Repeated exposure makes the unusual usual. Linguistic features that make a text sound odd now, if they acquire enough currency within the culture, become tomorrow's standard usage. A good example of that are biblical idioms like *salt of the earth*, which entered many modern European languages via vernacular translations of the Bible, as calques from Greek and Hebrew.

As Pym (2014, Introduction) points out, even recognising translation as a distinct activity, separate from other modes of text production, constructs various hierarchical relationships of power and prestige. The very fact that a text comes to us advertising its relationship to one definitive source, the content of which it aims to preserve and disseminate, suggests that something about that other text must

be important, and some of that aura of power and prestige has been transferred onto the text we are now looking at. Foreignisation, often if not always, amounts to underlining this hierarchical dynamic. Form-focused foreignising translations, at least in Western anglophone cultures, tend to be translations of texts that are assumed to carry something important. This can be institutional power (laws, treaties, contracts...), important new expertise (technical texts written for fellow experts), aesthetic merit and insight into the human condition ('serious' literary works and religious scriptures), or important information about how other societies are or were organised (various texts that historians and sociologists are likely to approach as primary sources). Openly foreignising 'non-fluent' translations of low-status texts, like household appliances manuals and formulaic genre fiction, are more likely to be judged harshly — as a failure of translator's skill rather than a deliberate communicative choice. Foreignisation signals that the text *should* be paid attention to and referred back to when dealing with various important problems — that it *should* have non-trivial currency within the target culture.

2.1.3 Frames

The Gricean tradition leaves us with a convenient and intuitive conceptual anchor point: in order for reasonably reliable communication to take place, the speaker must have some conception of the hearer's cognitive landscape and vice versa. Relevance theory stresses the similarly intuitive point that we parse incoming messages with reference to an ever shifting mosaic of currently salient contextual assumptions. However, these are fundamental principles that deal with the generalities of communication. The concept of frames allows us to make the transition from the generalities to the specifics. It allows us to make some relatively detailed guesses about what may be cognitively salient for a particular person involved in a particular interaction.

2.1.3.1 Basic concepts

2.1.3.1.1 Frames and scenes (Fillmore 1976) Charles J. Fillmore (1976) developed the basic concepts of frame semantics after coming into contact with the work of Eleanor Rosch on prototypes (Rosch 1975). The latter are generalised

notions of ‘what things are’, shared by members of a certain culture and shaped by their recurring experiences and communicative needs.

A stock example of a prototype is the notion of a ‘standard’ bird. People from European cultures recognise that penguins and ostriches are birds, but we see them as rather atypical representatives of the category. Something like a robin is a much better fit for our mental template of what a bird should look like.

Fillmore focuses on prototypical conceptions of relatively complex situations and activities as sources of linguistic meaning. In his earlier publications on frame semantics, he refers to them as scenes. The linguistic complement of a scene is a semantic frame. The two can be viewed as a Saussurean couple: a scene is a bundle of thematically and situationally inter-related conceptual knowledge (a complex signified); a frame is a bundle of attached linguistic resources (a framework of signifiers). In Fillmore’s own words:

[...] people, in learning a language, come to associate certain scenes with certain linguistic frames. I intend to use the word *scene* [...] in a maximally general sense, to include not only visual scenes but familiar kinds of interpersonal transactions, standard scenarios, familiar layouts, institutional structures, enactive experiences, body image; and, in general, any kind of coherent segment, large or small, of human beliefs, actions, experiences, or imaginings. I intend to use the word *frame* for referring to any system of linguistic choices — the easiest cases being collections of words, but also including choices of grammatical rules or grammatical categories — that can get associated with prototypical instances of scenes.

(Fillmore 1977, p. 63)

Vandepitte (2013, p. 62) points out the concept of scenes is ‘closely related’ to cognitive assumptions in relevance theory (Sperber and Deirdre Wilson 2010).

2.1.3.1.2 Jettisoning scenes In his later work, Fillmore seems to abandon the scene/frame dichotomy. In a 2010 state of the art discussion between Fillmore and Andor, the latter observed that the relationship between frames and scenes

still had ‘not been clarified with adequate precision’, prompting Fillmore to say that he ‘quickly repented having introduced this terminological confusion’ (Andor 2010, pp. 161-162). Fillmore then recommends that we jettison ‘scenes’ as a term of art and use the word in the informal everyday sense of ‘situations or states of affairs’

2.1.3.1.3 Relationship to frames in Minsky (1974) In collapsing the original Saussurean couple down to a single layer, Fillmore brings his concept of frames much closer to Minsky’s. Minsky, an early AI researcher, conceptualised frames as generalised knowledge structures — in essence, bundles of expectations with respect to categories of events and states of affairs:

A frame is a data structure for representing a stereotyped situation, like being in a kind of living room, or going to a child’s birthday party. Attached to each frame are several kinds of information. Some of this information is about how to use the frame. Some is about what one can expect to happen next. Some is about what to do if these expectations are not confirmed.

(Minsky 1974)

Minsky’s frames are recursively structured: they can contain smaller subframes or be assembled into larger frame-systems. The linguistic apparatus associated with some prototypical situation itself constitutes a frame. We have expectations about what words go together, and where they can appear in a sentence, but also what situations they are likely to surface in, in reference to what, what perlocutionary effect they are likely to precipitate etc. In terms of data structures, there is no clear line between the linguistic and non-linguistic information, between the signifier and the signified. Information about the language used to talk about some situation is just part of a bigger bundle of heterogeneous expectations with respect to that situation.

This more conceptually and terminologically parsimonious description of frames has worked better in the context of this project. Attempts to use Fillmore’s original two-layer system were abandoned, partly because there was no tangible

benefit to having the extra layer, partly because, as Andor points out, the boundary between the two layers is poorly defined, and partly because a good deal of confusion resulted from constantly having to use the words ‘frame’ and ‘scene’ in a way that deviates significantly from everyday usage. Minsky’s one-layer system allows us to talk about frames as bundles of culture-bound knowledge, both linguistic and non-linguistic, which structure and, up to a point, construct our experience. The notion is quite intuitive, and the word is frequently used in this sense in everyday conversations. This is the sense in which frame will be used throughout the rest of this thesis, unless otherwise specified.

2.1.3.1.4 Relationship between frames and register Language as a conceptually separate layer does not disappear from the scene entirely. Register can be thought of as the linguistic component of a frame. Here the Hallidaian frameworks for parsing register (see section 2.2.2.3.4) provide us with a superb way of connecting language to situation and subject matter.

That said, it is important to understand the difference between register and Fillmore’s semantic frames. A register is simply a collection of linguistic means that happens to be used within some specific context. A semantic frame is an attempt to construct a generalised description of the context itself.

Perhaps the most famous implementation of frame semantics is the FrameNet project. FrameNet is an attempt to create what amounts to a dictionary of semantic frames in English. Each entry contains a short definition and an inventory of core (required) and non-core (optional) frame elements. These elements can be construed as the arguments of the semantic equation that describes a particular frame. As an example, here is the slightly truncated version of the entry for the *Commerce_scenario*:

Definition:

Commerce is a situation in which a Buyer and a Seller have agreed upon an exchange of Money and Goods (possibly after a negotiation), and then perform the exchange, optionally carrying it out with various kinds of direct payment or financing or the giving of change. The Seller indicates their willingness to give the Goods in their possession

to a Buyer who would give them some amount of Money. The Seller may have already decided on the amount of money that they would require, in which case it is called the Asking price. The Buyer also indicates their willingness to give an amount of money called an Offer to a Seller who would give them the Goods. Normally the process is begun by the Seller. The means by which the Seller indicates their wish to engage in an exchange are various, ranging from putting a price tag on an item on a store shelf, to advertizing, to communicating directly and specifically with a possible Buyer. In some cases, however, the process may be initiated by the Buyer indicating to a possible Seller that they would like to make an exchange.

Core:

Buyer, Goods, Money, Seller

Non-core:

Manner, Means, Purpose, Rate, Unit

(FrameNet 2001)

Clearly, this does not constitute a description of a ‘commercial’ register. No register markers are listed.

2.1.3.2 The frame typologies of de Vega (1985) and Rojo López (2004)

A useful frame typology has been put forward by Ana Maria Rojo López (2004), based on one originally described by Manuel De Vega (1985). De Vega’s original typology looks as follows:

Visual frames: frames pertaining to the prototypical arrangement and appearance of parts and contents of some physical environment.

Situational frames of ‘scripts’: frames pertaining to conventionalised situations.

Domain frames: frames pertaining to expectations with respect to discourse structure.

Social frames: frames pertaining to ideas and expectations related to how people position themselves in society and conduct their interpersonal relationships, which includes:

Generic frames: frames pertaining to what we may describe as a folk typology of personality types (macho man, shy guy, etc.)

Themes: frames pertaining to our understanding of other people's goal-driven behaviour. This covers:

Role themes: frames pertaining to relatively well-defined social roles (writer, poet, psychologist...)

Interpersonal themes: frames pertaining to relationships in the more personal sphere (friends, lovers, parent-child...)

Life themes: frames pertaining to life goals and perceived purpose in the world (to live luxuriously, to fight for peace and justice...)

Ideologies and systems of belief: frames pertaining to various relatively complex philosophical systems

Self-concept: frames pertaining to the 'articulated knowledge that each person has of himself/herself'.

Rojo López adapts this typology specifically for use in translation studies. She introduces several changes:

1. She substitutes domain frames for text types, reflecting the relatively narrow concerns of the translator — we are predominantly concerned with the relatively linear discourse structure of texts.
2. She abandons De Vega's original subdivision of Social frames and replaces it with:

Geographic frames: frames pertaining to regional stereotypes — accent, accidental puns resulting from accent, etc.

Social status frames: frames pertaining to social class — class accents, white working-class racism, etc.

Interpersonal frames: frames pertaining to social distance and level of formality — *tu/vous* choices, colloquialisms, idioms and proverbs, taboo language

Institutional frames: frames pertaining to operating in institutional contexts — food eaten on short breaks, institutional food, pay scales...

These four subcategories were the ones Rojo López identified as giving rise to identifiable translation problems in the corpus she used to develop her model — *Small World* by David Lodge (1985), a satirical campus novel and its translations into Spanish by Esteban Riambau Saurí (1989).

3. She elevates generic frames from a subcategory of *social frames* to a separate category in its own right and fuses it with self-concept frames. This is understandable, given the text Rojo López was working with. *Small World* is a satirical novel populated by what she calls ‘social stereotypes aimed at making readers laugh’. In comedy and especially in satire, conformance of characters to stereotypes is crucial to the genre. Furthermore, the character’s self-perception is part of the stereotype: we expect the tireless careerist and the timid old fuddy-duddy to think of themselves in certain ways.

2.1.3.3 Desired degree of similarity in translation

Rojo López understands the translator’s role as finding TL linguistic material that evokes maximally similar frames to the ones evoked by the SL linguistic material present in the ST — to ‘activate a knowledge which should be, as much as possible, semantically, pragmatically and stylistically equivalent to that activated by the ST elements’ (Rojo López 2004, p. 315). Like Gutt, she sees the ultimate goal of translation as recreating ‘correct contextual inferences’. However, unlike Gutt, she seems to put the onus for doing so squarely on the translator, with the reader being a passive party. The implication is that, for Rojo López, the ideal translation is a domesticating translation that works with the reader’s existing frames. Gutt, as we saw earlier, expects the reader to do their own background research if they are to be able to extract something approaching the full meaning of a ‘direct’ translation.

My own sympathies are, in this case, with Gutt. Ironically, the criticism that we can, in this case, level at Rojo López is the one that is often levelled at relevance theorists: she views the hearer as too much of a passive receptacle. Frames are, ultimately, dynamic entities that can (and should) be updated and refined. The reader has a choice as to whether to put more or less effort into interpretive work. We can choose not to trust our most intuitive interpretations unquestioningly, especially when we know that the message originated in the mind of a person whose cognitive landscape could be in important ways different to ours.

2.1.4 Basic felicity conditions for translation

In this section, I have attempted to lay out the theoretical foundations of a mentalistic perspective on translation. Translation, in this picture, is a retelling of the contents of the ST for the members of another speaker community, whose knowledge structures differ significantly from those of the SL speaker community but, nonetheless, have some islands of similarity that can be expanded. However, there is a limit to how much is achievable if the reader's engagement with the text is fundamentally passive. More can be communicated if the reader remains mindful of the fact that the text originated in another speaker community with its own somewhat different shared knowledge structures, and puts a certain amount of work not just into parsing the text but also into building up a model of those knowledge structures.

This understanding of translation explains why covert translations are usually translations of relatively simple texts — appliance manuals, tourist brochures etc. In the case of more implicature-rich texts, such as legal and literary texts, which are often peppered with culture-bound intertextual references that the SL target audience is expected to recognise, the TL reader must be aware that they are reading a translated text in order to avoid regular bafflement. And even in the case of appliance manuals, covertness becomes more an aspiration than a reality when the technology in question is new to the target culture and a new terminology must be invented for talking about it.³

³I was genuinely baffled on first encountering the Russian word *приложение* [*priloženie*] used as an equivalent of the English *app*. The word itself is unremarkable, but I had not been aware that, by analogy with the English *application*, its range of meaning had been extended from the

We can talk about translation being subject to two sets of felicity conditions:

ST-TT similarity condition: the TT must bear sufficient and relevant similarity (interpretive resemblance) to the ST.

TT acceptability condition: the TT must conform to the target readers' expectations with respect to general TL norm and usage, and with respect to situation-bound register and genre constraints, sufficiently to remain a viable TL speech act.

Because of the cultural specificity of many cognitive frames, the similarity and acceptability condition frequently exist in tension with each other. Once again, we are reminded of Schleiermacher's observation that 'we must move either the reader towards the text or the text towards the reader' (Schleiermacher translated by Bernofsky 2012, first published in German in 1813).

Of the two conditions above, only the first, the condition of similarity, is unique to translation. The condition of acceptability is a more general condition of communicative viability. It applies to all speech acts. The notion is borrowed from Beaugrande and Dressler's seven conditions of textuality (De Beaugrande and Dressler 1992).

2.2 What is translation?

In the last section I outlined the philosophical foundations of this project with respect to the nature of human communication in general. In this section, I will attempt to address the nature specifically of translation.

As I mentioned near the end of the last section, translation, in addition to being subject to the condition of acceptability to which all speech acts are subject, is also subject to a condition of similarity. Two texts must be meaningfully similar for us to view them as a possible ST-TT pair. Or, in relevance theoretical terms, the TT must be connected to the ST by a relationship of interpretive resemblance.

general {*process or product of putting skill, knowledge, theory etc. to practical use*} to the more specific {*user-facing computer programme*}. Some translator's decision to calque over a convenient shorthand from another language temporarily resulted in a loss of translator invisibility and a certain measure of discomfort for the reader.

Another way of conceptualising translation is in terms of Chesterman's relevant similarity between the ST and the TT (1996). This is the notion from which I proceed in this chapter. Here I attempt to answer the question of in what ways the TT can be similar to the ST.

The general approach I adopt belongs to the tradition of 'linguistic approaches' within translation studies (Pym 2014, pp. 6–42; Malmkjær 2005). I seek to identify, classify and analyse distinct problematic features within the TT using the conceptual apparatus of linguistics and adjacent disciplines like psychology and philosophy of language.

Below I sketch out a simple theory of translation. I briefly outline the basic notion of similarity and its difference from equivalence. I then go on to define three possible levels of similarity: similarity of linguistic features, similarity of compositional meaning, and similarity of communicative function.

A disclaimer is warranted: I do not aim to give a true and complete account of *all* that translation is. My goal is merely to set the terms of the conversation for the present thesis. The reader should bear in mind that I only seek to deal with overtly instrumental varieties of translation. The more creative and experimental types of translation are bracketed out. The various meta-level debates regarding the overall sociological nature and function of translation are not bracketed out entirely — this would be impossible — however, they are only mentioned in passing.

2.2.1 Translation as similarity

Traditionally, linguistic approaches to translation frame the various linguistic and communicative parameters as dimensions of equivalence (see, for example, Vinay and Darbelnet 1958, Catford 1978 or Nida 1964). Here I prefer to invoke Chesterman's more guarded notion of relevant similarity (Chesterman 1996). Translation is viewed as a process that results in the creation of a TT that is relevantly similar to the ST, with the relevance parameters being defined by the communicative demands of the situation.

Substantial similarity on a granular level is generally a necessary condition for two texts to be considered a ST/TT pair connected by a relationship of *translation*

rather than some looser type of derivation or adaptation. For example, the film *O Brother, Where Art Thou* (released in 2000), where the central character is an escaped convict in the 1930s USA, is known to be based on Homer's *Odyssey*. There are clear structural and thematic similarities between the two. Yet we generally regard the former an adaptation rather than a translation of the latter.⁴

The difference between equivalence and relevant similarity is a relatively subtle one. Equivalence implies sameness in all important respects. When two things are deemed in some way equivalent, the implication is that the differences between them can, for our current purposes, be ignored. Similarity, by contrast, underlines the incomplete nature of the sameness and the continued existence of meaningful differences.

2.2.2 Dimensions of similarity

Very generally, we can look for similarity on three levels:

- individual linguistic features
- compositional meaning
- communicative effect

This approach can be viewed as a slight elaboration of Nida's (1964; 1969). We can say that his formal equivalence amounts to a combination of similarity of linguistic features and similarity of compositional meaning, and his dynamic equivalence is essentially the same as similarity of communicative effect.

We can also think of the three levels of similarity above as corresponding to readily recognisable approaches to translation:

- calque/gloss (Newmark 1988) or phonetic/graphic translation (Pilshchikov 2016; Feshchenko 2019)
- semantic translation (Newmark 1977)
- communicative translation (ibid.)

Let us now consider each of the three levels of similarity in more detail.

⁴For further discussion of what differentiates a translation from an adaptation, see House (2015).

2.2.2.1 Individual linguistic features

This pertains to complete or partial correspondence on the level of identifiable linguistic features. Similarity of this type can occur at various levels.

2.2.2.1.1 Sound The translator can attempt to preserve aspects of how the ST sounds (phonetic translation; Pilshchikov 2016). These could include particular phonemes or combinations of them, intonation and prosody.

2.2.2.1.2 Appearance The translator can attempt to preserve aspects of ST appearance (graphic translation; Feshchenko 2019). This mostly comes down to the length, formatting and layout of textual units.

2.2.2.1.3 Lexical meanings The translator can attempt to preserve the conventional meaning of words and lexicalised expressions (their ‘dictionary meaning’).

2.2.2.1.4 Morpheme semantics The translator can attempt to preserve the components of meaning associated with specific morphemes. These could be semantic affixes, such as the English *un-*, *-er*, *-able* etc., or roots, such as *read* in *reader* and *unreadable*.

2.2.2.1.5 Syntactic features The translator can, so far as the TL allows it, attempt to preserve aspects of syntax: parts of speech, word order, and relationships of dependence and coordination.

2.2.2.1.6 Devices of cohesion The translator can attempt to reproduce the cohesive devices connecting different parts of the text: information structure, deixis, figures of repetition and parallelism, grammatical signals of co-reference (marking for definiteness, coordination of number and gender, coordination of tenses etc.). With the exception of information structure, my interpretation of the concepts just listed is based on Halliday and Hasan’s classic *Cohesion in English*; 1976.

2.2.2.1.7 Information structure This aspect of cohesion is worth considering separately, because it is more theoretically elaborate than the other concepts mentioned.

My understanding of information structure is most directly based on LaPolla (2019), who maintains the Hallidaian separation between theme–rheme, topic–focus and given–new but goes some way towards reconciling the Hallidaian tradition with the functional sentence perspective (FSP; Firbas 1992; Chernyakhovskaya 1976) in treating these variables as, at least in some cases, scalar rather than binary and equating the FSP concept of communicative dynamism to the Hallidaian given–new axis. Below I attempt to sum up LaPolla’s conception of the three Hallidaian axes of information structure.

2.2.2.1.7.1 theme–rheme The theme is the actual beginning of the sentence. It is the cognitive hook that anchors the sentence in the ongoing discourse and serves as a basis for hearer/reader projections of how the remainder of the sentence is likely to unfold. The unfolding sentence itself, the information that ‘hangs’ on the thematic hook, is the rheme.

To a first approximation, we can say that the theme is simply the first word or expression in the sentence to have some sort of independent meaning, e.g. *To a first approximation* at the start of this sentence. However, it may be more useful to think of the theme–rheme boundary as fuzzy, with the theme ‘trailing off’ rather than ending abruptly. We can think of decreasing thematicity as decreasing breadth of projective scope: as the sentence unfolds, the range of plausible continuations narrows.

2.2.2.1.7.2 topic–comment The topic is what the sentence is about. The comment is the information about the topic that the sentence aims to convey. In Indo-European languages, the theme is often the topic, but not always. For example:

(12) Secondly, she liked apples.

Here, the theme *Secondly* anchors the sentence in some preceding discourse and provides some basis for very general projections — what comes next is quite likely

to be the subject of a sentence, and this sentence will be pragmatically similar to one that came earlier. However, *Secondly* gives no information concerning what the sentence will be about. In this case, if we assume unmarked intonation (a downward inflection on *apples*), the topic is the sentence subject *she*, and the comment is the predicate *liked apples*. The latter is the information that the sentence aims to convey about the former.

Within the comment, we can isolate the focus, the information that the speaker really wants to get across, the communicative *raison d'être* of the sentence. In (12), it is the word *apples*. What the speaker really wants us to know is that the person being spoken about liked specifically apples — as opposed to various other options, like oranges, bananas, sudoku, walks in the countryside etc.

Both English and Russian mark the focus of a declarative sentence by downward tonal inflection and, by default, put it on the last major constituent.⁵ The speaker can shift the downward inflection onto some earlier constituent, resulting in a corresponding shift in focus; however, this early downward inflection is generally considered marked. For example:

(13) *Secondly, she liked apples.*

Here the focus is on the person's attitude towards apples. Or:

(14) *Secondly, she liked apples.*

Here the focus is on the specifying who exactly likes apples. In writing, marked intonation can be signalled typographically, as above, but in some cases it can be inferred from context with no explicit marking, e.g.

(15) *Firstly, she knew that apples kept doctors away. Secondly, she liked apples.*

Here, the most intuitive reading would be with a downward inflection on *liked* in the second sentence, same as in (13).

Movement of the focus away from the end of the sentence, in addition to being marked tonally, can also be signalled by special focus-marking words and constructions, e.g. the it-cleft construction in English:

⁵Here I am limiting the discussion to sentences that constitute a single propositional unit. I am excluding various 'afterthought' scenarios, such as end-of-sentence parentheticals or paratactic chains where coordinating conjunctions mark continued flow of thought rather than belonging to the same propositional unit.

(16) Secondly, it was she that liked apples.

This sentence would normally be read with a downward inflection on *she*.

Similarly in Russian:

(17) a. *Во-вторых, она любила яблоки.*
 Vo-vtoryx, ona ljubila jabloki.
 Secondly, she liked apples.

Secondly, she liked apples.

b. *Во-вторых, она любила яблоки.*
 Vo-vtoryx, ona ljubila jabloki.
 Secondly, she liked apples.

Secondly, she liked apples.

c. *Во-вторых, это она любила яблоки.*
 Vo-vtoryx, èto ona ljubila jabloki.
 Secondly, this.is she liked apples.

Secondly, it was she that liked apples.

In (17a), the downward inflection would fall on *яблоки* [*jabloki*] {*apples*}. In (17b) and (17c), it would fall on *она* [*ona*] {*she*}. The focus would shift accordingly.

2.2.2.1.7.3 given–new Given information is information that is inferable from preceding discourse. New information is information that is not inferable in this way. LaPolla equates newness to communicative dynamism (CD) in FSP, which is a combination of non-inferability and specificity (Firbas 1992; Chernyakhovskaya 1976).

Typically, we expect the opening parts of the sentence to contain readily inferable information and the subsequent parts, new non-inferable information. For example, under most communicative scenarios, we would be expected to know who the *she* in (12) refers to — but not the fact that this person likes apples. In Slavic languages, sentence constituents tend to be arranged in order of increasing CD (i.e. increasing informativity), with the communicative kernel of the sentence, the key information we wish to communicate, in the final position (Firbas 1992). The same is often the case in English. Thus, in (12), the most specific and the least inferable component of the sentence is *apples*. Chernyakhovskaya

(1976) believes that this tendency to structure sentences by rising CD is universal; however, LaPolla suggests that this is not so, that languages like Tagalog are consistently focus-initial, and the default progression in them is not known–new but new–known.

2.2.2.1.8 Register markers The translator may attempt to carry over certain identifiable register markers: domain terms, legal and administrative clichés, archaisms, forms of politeness, words with evaluative shading, register-specific discourse markers etc. When source and target-side cultures are broadly similar, and especially when there is significant history of calquing in high-prestige documents (legal, scholarly, religious etc.), either directly between SL and TL (e.g. from business English into business Russian) or from some common source (e.g. from biblical Greek and Hebrew into both everyday English and everyday Russian), a significant proportion of register markers are likely to have close equivalents.

2.2.2.1.9 A note concerning transposition and vertical translation units

It is worth noting that some linguistic features can migrate from one location in the ST to a significantly different location in the TT. This technique, where the translator cannot or does not want to reproduce some ST feature in the exact corresponding location in the TT but chooses to project it onto some other part of the TT, is often referred to as transposition or compensation. For example, the function of the Russian polite plural *you* (*вы* [vy]), which is unavailable in English, could be performed by the English polite subjunctive, which is not quite as common in Russian. For example:

(18) a. **ST (Ru — *Master and Margarita*, Bulgakov):**

- [...] он уже с лишком сто лет пребывает в
 - [...] on uže s liškom sto let prebyvaet v
 - [...] he already with excess hundred years is in
- местах значительно более отдаленных, чем Соловки, и*
mestax značitel'no bolee otdalennyx, čem Solovki, i
 places considerably more distant, than Solovki, and

извлечь его оттуда никоим образом нельзя,
 izvleč' ego ottuda nikoim obrazom nel'zja,
 to.extract him from-there none.such:INST means:INST is.possible,

уверяю вас!
 uverjaju vas!
 assure you!

— А жаль! — отозвался задир-поэт.
 — A žal'! — otozvalsja zadira-poët.
 — And is.pitied! — replied fight.picker-poet.

— И мне жаль!
 — I mne žal'!
 — And me:DAT is.pitied!

— [...] he has for the past hundred years been in places much further removed than Solovki [a famous prison], and to extract him from there is quite impossible, I assure you.
 — Shame! — replied the poet, still spoiling for a fight.
 — I agree, a shame!

b. TT (En — *Master and Margarita*, transl. Burgin and O'Connor):

"[...] for more than a hundred years now he's been somewhere far more remote than Solovki, and there's no way of getting him out of there, I assure you!"
"Shame!" responded the poet-bully.
"I couldn't agree more!"

We can still approach this as similarity on the level of distinct linguistic features, insofar as there are specific textual features that one can point to as performing a specific function that one can describe in a few words.

Let us now briefly address the matter of what Nord (1997) calls vertical translation units. These are bundles of identifiable features threaded through the text that can be said to perform one function. For example, the markers of politeness in the TT can be radically different in form, referential content and location to the ones that appear in the ST, and yet both can perform more or less the same function. A similar argument can often be made when it comes to figures of repetition in poetry. For example, a translator may choose to 'sprinkle' internal rhymes and elements of assonance/consonance throughout the TT without exactly matching their placing and content, simply to signal that similar figures

are generally present in the ST. Again, it is often convenient to think of such translation approaches in terms of the translator looking for bundles of similar features.

2.2.2.2 Encoded meaning

This pertains to similarity on the level of overtly encoded or *compositional* meanings, i.e. the phrase and sentence meanings that are derivable from the meaning of their constituent lexemes and grammatical structures connecting them. I am using the term compositional, rather than propositional or referential, to underline the fact that this kind of meaning is assembled from the meanings of constituents, i.e. obeys the principle of compositionality (Szabó 2004).

Very loosely, we can think of this type of similarity as aiming to explain in relatively natural TL ‘what the ST says’ in the SL. This is the level of translation at which Lederer’s notions of de-verbalisation and re-expression begin to enter the frame: the translator attempts to build up a coherent mental picture of what is being talked about and to describe the relevant aspects of this picture in another language (Lederer 1994).

Below I begin by looking at two ways to conceptualise compositional meaning: in terms of entailments and in terms of truth and success conditions. I then discuss four components of compositional meaning: reference, semantic role, scalar-structural and temporal-modal qualification, and conjunction. I finish with a quick cautionary note concerning the asymmetry of resources across different languages.

2.2.2.2.1 Entailments More formally, we can think of compositional similarity in terms of preserving entailments, i.e. the necessary presuppositions and consequences stemming from a ‘face value’ reading of a particular phrase or sentence. For example:

(19)

John switched on the lights in the room.

ENTAILS:

There is some agent called John.

There is a room.

There are lights in the room.

The lights were off before John switched them on.
The room is now not completely dark.

A TT that is compositionally similar to the ST will generate a similar network of entailments without necessarily maintaining a very high level of similarity on the level of linguistic features.

2.2.2.2.2 Truth and success conditions In the case of simple assertions, the ultimate point of reference for similarity is extralinguistic truth conditions (Davidson 1967). If it is the case that, in some real or an imaginary world, somebody called John has switched on the lights in some room, then this situation and its various entailments can be described in any language that has adequate resources for doing so. The situation is similar for expressions of inner states: if it is the case that somebody feels distress, surprise, delight, curiosity etc., this state can be described in any language that has the requisite resources.

Things get a little more complicated for utterances with more of a performative dimension. Here, I use the word performative in the sense in which it is used by speech act theorists: a performative utterance is one that performs an action out in the world (Austin 1962). Most if not all utterances fall into this category to some extent, but here we are concerned with those utterances where the instrumentality is unambiguously coded in on the level of semantic content (requests, commands, declarations, promises...). For such utterances, it might be more apt to talk about success conditions, the specific state of affairs or course of events that the utterance should bring into being if interpreted more or less literally. A request to be told the time is successful if the person is then told the time. A promise to pay ten pounds to John is successful if somebody now expects the speaker to pay ten pounds to John. A declaration of marriage is successful if society at large now acknowledges that the couple are married. Another way to interpret success conditions is as counterfactual truth conditions: there are hypothetical worlds where the person asking for the time has just been told the time, where John has just received ten pounds from the person who promised him this sum, and where Jack and Jill are exercising the various rights afforded to married people. We can thus view the utterances in question as descriptions of *intended* states of affairs.

2.2.2.2.3 Components of compositional meaning Let us now consider the components of compositional meaning.

2.2.2.2.3.1 Reference As the name suggests, compositional meaning is ‘assembled’ from semantic components. The most basic of these is the referential meaning of the words and expressions contained within the utterance, i.e. what entities, concepts, actions, events and states are being ‘pointed to’ by the various lexemes.

It should be noted that in this thesis the majority of adjectives and other types of attributive or associative constituents are treated as fundamentally referential. Thus *red* refers to the qualium of redness, *angry* refers to anger as both a set of internal sensations and an associated set of observable behaviours, *automotive* refers to cars and the industry that makes them, *mathematical* refers to mathematics as an activity and a body of knowledge, *inviolable* refers to the concept of inviolability etc.

It should, however, be noted that errors of qualification involving common scales like big–small, strong–weak, easy–hard, good–bad, important–unimportant are treated separately under scalar-structural variables (see section 2.2.2.2.3.3 below).

2.2.2.2.3.2 Semantic role Semantic roles are the generalised functions that identifiable entities can perform within possible pictures of the world. Clearly, the following sentences describe different situations:

(20)

- a. John passed the ball to Jane.
- b. John passed the ball over Jane.
- c. John passed the ball via Jane.
- d. John was passed the ball by Jane.

In (20a), Jane is the recipient of something. In (20b), she is an obstacle. In (20c), she is a helper. In (20d), she is herself is the principal agent performing the action. Such abstracted roles go by various names (see Saeed 2008, p. 148), but here we shall refer to them as semantic roles.

Most scholars in the field would probably agree that in (20a)–(20c) *John* is an AGENT (the participant construed as the main doer of the action), and *the ball* is a THEME (the participant acted on). Most would also agree that in (20a) *Jane* is a GOAL (the participant that constitutes the end point of the action), while in (20d) the roles are reversed: *Jane* is the AGENT and *John* is the GOAL. There is, however, no universal agreement as to what constitutes the set of all possible semantic roles. In this thesis, I use the LIRICS nomenclature. It defines a total of 29 roles, which is a good compromise between granularity and manageability, and was chosen for its richness, comparative conceptual simplicity and ready accessibility.

Below are the LIRICS role definitions copied from Harry Bunt’s website (Bunt 2025). They differ somewhat from the ones given on the LIRICS project website (Schiffrin and Bunt 2006) but are the same as those appearing in the British Standards Institute (BSI) documentation for the Semantic Annotation Framework (British Standards Institute 2014).

AGENT: Participant in an event who initiates and carries out the event intentionally or consciously, and who exists independently of the event.

PARTNER: Participant in an event who is intentionally or consciously involved in carrying out the event, but who is not the principal agent of the event, and who exists independently of the event.

CAUSE: Participant in an event (that may be animate or inanimate) that initiates the event, but that does not act with any intentionality or consciousness; it exists independently of the event.

INSTRUMENT: Participant in an event that is manipulated by an agent, and with which an intentional act is performed; it exists independently of the event.

PATIENT: Participant in an event that undergoes a change of state, location or condition, that is causally involved or directly affected by other participants, and exists independently of the event.

PIVOT: Participant in a state that is characterised as being in a certain position or condition throughout the state, and that has a major or central role or effect in that state. A pivot exists independently of the eventuality in which it

participates. A pivot is more central to the state than a participant in theme role.

THEME: Participant in a state or event that in the case of an event is essential to the event taking place but does not have control over the way the event occurs and is not structurally changed by the event; and in the case of a state is characterised as being in a certain position or condition throughout the state is essential to the state being in effect; but not as central to the state as a participant in pivot role. The existence of a theme is independent of the eventuality in which it participates.

BENEFICIARY: Participant in a state or an event that is advantaged or disadvantaged by the event or state. A beneficiary exists independently of the event.

SOURCE: Non-locative, non-temporal starting point of an action. The source exists independently of the event.

GOAL: Participant in an event that is the (non-locative, non-temporal) end point of an action. The goal exists independently of the event.

RESULT: Participant in an event that comes into existence through the event. It indicates a terminal point for the event: when it is reached, then the event does not continue.

REASON: Set of facts or circumstances explaining why a state exists or an event occurs.

PURPOSE: Set of facts or circumstances that an agent wishes or intends to realise by performing some intentional action.

TIME: Instant or interval of time during which a state exists or an event takes place.

INITIAL_TIME: Indication of a point in time when an event begins or a state becomes true.

FINAL_TIME: Indication of a point in time when an event ends or a state becomes false.

MANNER: Way or style of performing an action, or the degree/strength of a cognitive or emotional state.

MEDIUM: Physical setting, entity or channel used by an agent in an event.

MEANS: Procedure for performing the action in terms of component steps, or a method by which an intentional act is performed by an agent. A means does not necessarily exist independently of the event.

SETTING: Set of facts describing the (non-local, non-temporal) circumstances of the occurrence of an event or a state.

LOCATION: Place where an event occurs, or a state is true.

INITIAL_LOCATION: Place where an event begins or a state becomes true.

FINAL_LOCATION: Place where an event ends or a state becomes false.

PATH: Intermediate place or state or trajectory between two locations, or in a designated space, where an event occurs.

DISTANCE: Length or extent of space involved in an eventuality.

DURATION: Length or extent of time during which an event occurs or a state is true.

AMOUNT: Quantity of something that is the value of a theme, participating in the same eventuality.

ATTRIBUTE: Property that an event or state associates with a participant in the eventuality.

FREQUENCY: Number of occurrences of an event within a given time span.

For further explanations and examples, see Bunt's website (Bunt 2025).

Three other frameworks were considered:

- the much more basic nomenclature given by Saeed (Saeed 2008, Ch. 6), which quickly proved inadequate;
- Jackendoff's system (Jackendoff 2007), which proved overly complicated;
- the VerbNet nomenclature (Bonial et al. 2011), which is very similar to LIRICS but, arguably, more clearly structured. This nomenclature came to my attention late in the day, and the possible benefits of converting existing data to this format seemed too small to justify the substantial extra work.

For a discussion and comparison of these and several other prominent semantic role frameworks, see the aforementioned BSI documentation (British Standards Institute 2014).

Typically, semantic roles are parsed relative to the main predicative structure in the clause, usually a phrase with a finite verb as head. In other words, they are normally defined in relation to states and events that are set on a timeline. I have chosen not to observe this convention of always relating roles to states and events that are explicitly anchored in time. Consider the following example from this study:

(21) **ST (Ru):**

рисунок 2, включает в себя опору 1
risunok 2, vključaet v sebja oporu 1
figure 2, includes in itself support 1

figure 2 shows chassis 1

Here, we can parse *onopa* [*opora*] {lit. *base*} as ATTRIBUTE by analogy with the example given on Bunt's website:

(22) John has **blue eyes** like my mother.

Bunt classes *blue eyes* as an ATTRIBUTE of John — something that is an integral part of John. Similarly, in (21) *chassis 1* is an integral part of *figure 2*. In both cases, there is a finite verb, not only connecting *chassis 1* to *figure 2* and *blue eyes* to *John* but placing the state being described in the present. However, this temporal specification is optional. The meaning of phrases like *figure 2*, *support 1* or *John's blue eyes* is still clear. They are not complete proposition that can be evaluated

in terms of some truth conditions, but they are clearly interpretable. They bring to mind a concrete relationship between two entities involved in a hypothetical state, even if they do not specify whether or when these relationships obtain.

2.2.2.2.3.3 Scalar-structural qualification This category pertains to spatial, mereological and scalar relationships. I identify four groups of common physical variables:

space / parthood: All spatial and mereological relationships.

quantity / degree: Any static attribute that can be construed in terms of *more / less*: or *bigger / smaller* (amount, intensity, extent, degree of completion etc.).

rate / frequency: Any rate of change or progress that can be construed in terms of *faster / slower*.

orderedness: Any measure of how ordered or chaotic an arrangement of things or a collection of events is.

2.2.2.2.3.4 Temporal-modal qualification This category pertains to the dimensions of meaning commonly associated with the tense-aspect-mood system of verbs. I parse them as follows:

temporality:

position on a timeline: now, before, or after relative to some vantage point;

extension on a timeline: potentially endless, finite, instantaneous completed, ongoing...;

frequency: one-off, repeated, or habitual;

sequential order: before, after or during some other event or state of affairs (as opposed to an arbitrary vantage point).

modality / evidentiality:

realis / irrealis: actual states of affairs (current or past) vs. imagined (including strongly anticipated);

commitment and attribution: to whom the information is being attributed and to what extent the speaker (actual or cited) commits to it being true;

deonticity: strength of imperative (should, shouldn't, must, mustn't...);

volitionality: extent to which an action is the product of a decision.

It should be pointed out that, although these variables are primarily associated with the tense-aspect-mood system of verbs, they can be encoded using other linguistic means.

2.2.2.2.3.5 Conjunctions Here, I follow Halliday and Hasan (1976 ch. 5) in defining conjunctions as a broad range of linguistic devices that create relational connections that are coordinative rather than constituent in nature. Halliday and Hasan identify five categories of conjunctions: additive, adversative, causal, temporal and continuative.

additive: This pertains to the devices that create sets of entities that are in some way functionally similar. This can take the shape of simple collections (classical conjunction); however, there are also other semantically subtler possibilities, like comitative and associative uses (Malchukov 2004), where the join is somewhat asymmetrical, and the things being joined are divided into principal and in some way 'additional' (accompanying or linked by association).

There is a slight problem with Halliday and Hasan's use of the term 'additive'. In this technical context, it is often understood to have a narrower meaning, specifically referring to devices for creating collections where the members have equal status. Here, by default, I use additive to refer Halliday & Hasan's umbrella category. Where necessary, I will specify that the term is being used in Malchukov's narrower sense.

adversative: This pertains to the devices that create some form of opposition between the things being joined. Again, Haliday and Hasan's use of

adversative creates a measure of terminological confusion, because this term is commonly used in a narrower sense, referring to devices that mark defiance of expectation, as opposed to, for example, marking unlikeness (contrastive) or concession (concessive), or correction (corrective) (ibid.). Again, by default, I use adversative in the broader Hallidaian sense and, where necessary, specify that the term is being used in the narrower sense. Classical disjunction, i.e. situations of choice between mutually exclusive alternatives, is also frequently understood as a falling into the same broad category of oppositional conjunctive relationships. However, Malchukov (ibid.) makes a compelling case for disjunctions being more closely related to additives than to contrastives, adversatives or concessives. Here I follow Malchukov in classing disjunctive relationships as additive rather than adversative.

causal: This label, as the name suggests, pertains to the devices that assert cause-and-effect relationships between the various things being talked about, e.g.

(23) The match was cancelled because of the rain.

temporal: This pertains to the devices used for placing two or more states or events on a shared timeline, e.g.

(24) They stood up and left.

The actions described are clearly not concurrent: the people in question first stood up, then left.

continuative: In Halliday & Hasan's framework, this is a predominantly phatic category. The main purpose of continuative conjunction is to signal that the discourse is set to continue. When viewed exclusively in this light, continuatives are transparent from the point of view of compositional meaning. However, as a rule, they do have secondary functions that are more semantically palpable. They act as discursive 'turning signals': in addition to signalling continuation of discourse, they usually give a certain

amount of information about what direction it is likely to take next — that the topic is about to change, that the information about to follow should be treated as an elaboration of what came before, that what follows constitutes an aside, that the coming information is likely to be expected or unexpected to the interlocutor, etc. These secondary functions can often be construed as modes of adding or opposing.

2.2.2.2.4 A note concerning the asymmetry of resources There is, in practice, substantial variation in available resources across different languages. Meanings that can be expressed succinctly in one language may require a more cumbersome construction in another, or may even require the invention or importing of new resources. For example, consider the approximately equivalent focus-marking constructions in (16) and (17c) above, where the English *it*-cleft adds three words, but the Russian *это* [èto] {*this.is*} construction adds just one.

On a lexical level, the need for borrowing or calque is often very obvious when dealing with new technical terms or names of culture-specific items, for which a convenient shorthand already exist in one culture but not in others. For example, traditional Ukrainian women's dress includes an item called *плаття* [plaxta]. This can, to a first approximation, be described as a {*decorative woollen wrap-around over-skirt or apron*}; although, in truth, a *plaxta* is neither a skirt nor an apron but something in between.

Even more problematically, the TL may force us into choices where the SL can maintain vagueness. For example, Hardman (1986) talks about obligatory marking for evidentiality in Jaqi languages: the speaker is obliged to attribute what they are saying to a source. This may be own experience, inference from physical evidence, testimony of another person etc. It would be extremely difficult to translate an isolated unattributed utterance in English, like for example (20a), into one of these languages without adding something significantly new to its propositional content. Indeed, according to Hardman, communication in English with Aymara-speaking students in the USA requires a measure of adjustment. Meanwhile, in some varieties of Andean Spanish, physical proximity to Jaqi has resulted in the adaptation of standard Spanish tenses to mark evidentiality, which

is ‘startling for Spanish speakers of other areas’.

2.2.2.3 Communicative effect

This pertains to similarity on the level of communicative function, i.e. the overall effect of the utterance on the addressee. In addition to the explicit compositional meaning of the utterance, this will rely on a combination of inferences and interlocutor dispositions. By inferences, I mean a framework of logical conclusions that extend beyond firm entailments and are constructed using a combination of the compositional meaning, the reader’s encyclopaedic and situational knowledge, and various indirect associative cues embedded in the text. By interlocutor dispositions, I mean a variety of personal and interpersonal factors, such as to what extent the hearer finds various beliefs and courses of action appealing, to what extent they like and trust the hearer, and what social roles the two parties are assigned within a given interaction. Below I summarise some of the theoretical frameworks that can be recruited for setting up axes of functional similarity.

2.2.2.3.1 Functions of utterances (Searle 1975) Searle (1975) identifies five types of illocutionary act, i.e five types of general function that the speaker can intend the utterance to have:

assertive: utterances where the speaker asserts commitment to some belief about a real or a hypothetical world, e.g. *Paris is in France.* or *Desdemona was faithful.*

directive: utterances where the speaker wants to prompt the listener to do something, e.g. *Do you know what the time is?* or *Give me that!*

commissive: utterances where the speaker commits to some future course of action, e.g. *See you at five.* or *I promise to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth.*

expressive: utterances intended to signal the speaker’s inner state, e.g. *I feel rotten., I love you., Ouch!, Lol!* etc.

declarations: utterances that form part of some ritual intended to establish a new socially recognised state of affairs, e.g. *You are sentenced to 12 months imprisonment.*

2.2.2.3.2 Functions of language in general (Jakobson 1959) Jakobson (2012) identifies six basic functions of language:

referential: describing things in the environment;

expressive: articulating inner states;

conative: prompting the hearer to act in some specific way;

poetic: evoking an aesthetic response;

phatic: maintaining an open channel of communication, signalling that you are willing to continue the interaction;

metalingual: using words to explain the meaning of other words.

Jakobson believed that all six functions are, to some extent, present in all utterances; however, a particular function may be dominant in some specific utterance.

A special note should be made about the poetic function. Jakobson conceptualised it as pertaining to the aesthetic effect of sound; however, we can think of it more broadly, as to do with the aesthetic effect of language as form in general, not solely its ‘musicality’ but also the effect of various rhetorical devices, puns, interactions between different aspects of form (e.g. repetition of sounds alongside repetitions of syntactic patterns) or between form and meaning (e.g. onomatopoeic elements) etc.

2.2.2.3.3 Functions of texts (Reiss 1986) In the context of whole texts rather than isolated utterances, it can also be convenient to invoke tripartite Reissian classification of text functions (Reiss 1986; Reiss 2014):

informative: conveying and analysing factual information;

expressive: evoking an affective response;

operative: prompting the reader to act in specific ways.

A standard way of conceptualising Reiss's framework is as forming a triangular space with the three functions at the apices, where various texts might appear as closer or further away from the apices, depending on whether they have one unambiguously dominant function, or whether their function is more ambiguous (see the diagram in Munday 2012, p. 74). Thus a typical weather forecast is primarily informative, a typical poem is primarily expressive, a typical advertisement is primarily operative, and a typical editorial is a little bit of all three.⁶

2.2.2.3.4 Register (Steiner 2004) Register and genre pertain to the social framing of the interaction, its embeddedness within existing social structures and activities.

Throughout this thesis, the term register refers to a 'kind' of language. A passage written or spoken in a specific register is distinguished by the presence of characteristic lexicogrammatical features known as register markers. These features signal the speaker's intended terms of engagement with respect to the text scope and the structure of the interaction, the roles adopted by the various participants, and any constraints resulting from the physical nature and setting of the communicative activity.

Register communicates aspects of meaning that go beyond being directly referential but can, nonetheless, be judged to be conventional insofar as a native speaker will perceive them as 'embedded' in the register markers. Deviations from the register that is expected at any given point must either generate non-conventional implicature or risk derailing the interaction. For example, we would not generally expect a mugger to make a sudden switch from being overtly threatening to being effusively polite. Such a course of events is not beyond the realms of possibility, but making sense of it as a communicative event would probably require some highly situation-bound explanations. Perhaps the mugger

⁶The obvious similarity of Reiss's text functions to the first three of Jakobson's functions of language above is not accidental. Both Jakobson and Reiss were basing their work on Karl Bühler's tripartite Organon model of language function (Bühler 2011). Jakobson added three more functions, while Reiss applied Bühler's original framework to classifying texts rather than utterances.

has just realised that the victim is a mafia boss.

Aside from generality, i.e. being applicable to *all* human interactions involving language, the concept of register has the advantage of being linked to a body of well-developed and highly granular discourse-analytical theory that has come out of the Hallidaian tradition (House 2015; Steiner 2004; Martin and White 2005).

Any text can be analysed with respect to Halliday's three meta-functions of language:

ideational: pertaining to aboutness;

interpersonal: pertaining to the relationship between participants;

textual: pertaining to text structure.

These correspond to the three dimensions of register: field, tenor and mode, an excellent framework for unpacking which has been developed by Steiner (2004). I summarise it below:

field:

social activity: the type of event that frames the communication (e.g. scientific conference or football match)

experiential domain: subject matter or topic (e.g. quantum physics or interpretation of football rules)

oriental goal: rhetorical purposes (e.g. description, argumentation, instruction, persuasion...)

tenor:

social roles: the relationships that can be interpreted as simple *more than* / *less than* / *same as* power relationships (e.g. institutional authority, expertise, level of education...)

social distance: how well the participants are acquainted (low = well-acquainted; high = poorly acquainted)

affect: how the participants feel about whatever they happen to be talking about

mode:

language role: whether the framing event is predominantly linguistic in nature (language is constitutive; for example a lecture or a conversation) or not (language is ancillary; for example a football match);

medium: whether the language is written or spoken.

The above summary is slightly incomplete. Steiner also includes power hierarchies under tenor and sensory means of reception (hearing/sight) under mode. I jettison these two variables, because I see them as already encapsulated in social roles and medium respectively.

One of the key advantages of Hallidaian register analysis is that it allows us to link human attitudes and sentiments with concrete linguistic features in concrete situations. By contrast, politeness (discussed in section 2.1.1.4 above) is a fairly general psychological construct, interpretations of which are notoriously culture and situation-dependent. In one set of circumstances, formal language might be interpreted as polite (an acknowledgement of the hearer's high status); in another, it might be interpreted as impolite (a distancing gesture). Politeness is normally unpacked in terms of finer grained concepts, such as face, imposition and self-worth. This conceptual apparatus is extremely useful for assessing the motivations of various parties in a given communicative interaction, but by itself it makes for a poor text analysis tool.

Before proceeding onto the next topic, let us briefly consider affect. The original handling of affect in Halliday's framework is rather basic. Halliday and Matthiessen (2013, p. 33) sum it up as 'either neutral or charged, positively or negatively'. This mirrors the basic valence/arousal model in psychology. A more elaborate theory of affect was developed on Hallidaian foundations by Martin and White (2005) but was not used for this study. For the most part, the discussions of affect within this thesis use everyday emotion labels like *sad*, *happy*, *calm*, *excited*, *angry*, *fearful*, etc.

2.2.2.3.5 Genre (House 2015) If register refers to a 'kind' of language, the term genre refers to a 'kind' of text. Texts belonging to a particular genre are

characterised by a combination of register, textual organisation, and recurring situation-bound purposes and uses.⁷

The set of parameters that constitutes the constraints of a given genre can be quite loose. For example, most novels share the following general characteristics:

- a long piece of narrative fiction;
- written (but may later be performed as a reading or adapted for the stage/screen);
- usually broken up into chapters;
- contains multiple narrative lines that are in some way interconnected;
- contains some narration (cannot be all dialogue);
- proceeds by describing identifiable plot events;
- usually has identifiable elements of dramatic structure, such as periods of rising and falling action, points of inception and resolution;
- often spans a variety of registers, but long passages of dry institutional language are rare;
- usually written to be read in the reader's spare time for entertainment and edification.

Other genres are subject to much tighter constraints that can be said to constitute a script or a template. A stock example of a scripted communicative event is a typical visit to a restaurant (Schank 1977), where the waiter and the party of diners act out a standardised sequence of situation and culture-bound communicative steps with quite narrowly delineated linguistic content:

1. the waiter greets the diners and asks how many people are in the party;
2. the waiter shows the party to their table;

⁷Orthodox Hallidaian theory (Halliday and Matthiessen 2013) treats matters pertaining to text organisation under the general heading of register. However, here I follow the example of House (2015) who finds it convenient to separate register and genre.

3. the waiter brings the menu;
4. the waiter comes back and asks if the party is ready to order;
5. the waiter brings the food and makes sure that each customer gets what they ordered;
6. the waiter comes back and asks if the food is okay;
7. the party asks for the bill;
8. the waiter takes the payment.

As before, defying the hearer's expectations generates non-conventional implicatures. For example, if, at some point, a diner asks how the chef is doing, the question will be perplexing, unless, the waiter recalls or infers that this particular diner knows the chef personally. Such a conversational move would signal a desire to deviate from the 'accepted purpose or direction' of the standard restaurant script — perhaps an attempt to be friendly (i.e. to shorten social distance), or a hint that the waiter should be on his/her best behaviour, because the diner knows somebody further up in their workplace hierarchy.

2.2.3 Description vs. norm

In this section, I have tried to define translation in terms of ST-TT similarity. I have identified three broad classes of similarity: similarity of isolated linguistic features, similarity of compositional meaning, and similarity of communicative function. It is important to stress that, while a significant level of ST-TT similarity must exist for one text to count as a translation of another, absolute sameness is neither desirable nor achievable.

The axes of similarity outlined above are ultimately intended to be descriptive rather than normative. They should be approached as an incomplete list of things that *can* be similar. They are a tool for analysing what *might* constitute the desirable kinds and degrees of similarity in a specific communicative situation. What they are not is a set of normative scales, hitting 'ten out of ten' on all of which implies having achieved a perfect translation. Indeed, such a thing would

be impossible. Translation automatically implies change. The only thing that can be perfectly similar — i.e. identical — to the ST in every respect is the ST itself.

My only normative claim is that the TT has to be *in some way* granularly similar to the ST in order to count as a translation rather than simply a derivative text. This conceptual anchor tethers us to most ordinary people's understanding of what translation is.

In what exact way(s) the TT should be similar to the ST, remains an open question. Here, I take my cues from functionalist scholars like Reiss (2014) and Nord (1997) and descriptivists like Toury (2012): the parameters defining what constitutes good or even acceptable translation are situation and culture-bound. Some measure of domestication or situational adaptation — and, by implication, significant dissimilarity on a granular level — is often not just desirable but absolutely necessary in order for the TT to remain communicatively viable as a TL text.

2.3 Approaches to quantifying translation quality

The last two sections laid the theoretical groundwork of the project. We now turn our attention to more practical matters. In this section, I look at broad conceptions of what constitutes translation quality and approaches to appraising it.

2.3.1 Defining translation quality

We can identify four broad approaches to translation quality: quality as equivalence, quality as fitness for purpose, quality as conformance to reader expectation, and quality as similarity to a 'gold standard' translation.

The first three approaches correspond to three prominent currents within anglophone translation studies: equivalence-centred or 'linguistic' approaches, functionalism, and descriptive translation studies. An accessible introduction to all three can be found in Pym (2014, Ch. 2–5). While these three approaches are sometimes presented as competing, I believe that they are complementary. A reasonably complete conception of translation quality only becomes possible when all three vantage points are taken into account.

The ‘gold standard’ approach is more directly rooted in the language-teaching tradition, more specifically in the exercises known as grammar translation, where the learner is asked to construct L2 utterances from L1 translation prompts or vice versa. The goal, set either explicitly or implicitly, is to reproduce a specific ‘correct answer’.⁸ Exercises of this kind have been in widespread use for many centuries, even though their usefulness has been hotly contested at least since the time of Roger Ascham (Ascham 1570).

In its classical form, the very idea of a ‘gold standard’ translation is antithetical to the mindset underpinning much of modern translator training (at least in the anglophone world), which has been conveniently encapsulated in Chesterman’s TIANA principle (‘there is always another way’; Chesterman 1997, p.191). That said, the gold standard approach has been used for assessing the performance of machine translation (MT) engines, where the goal is to gauge how well the machine is replicating human performance (Babych and Hartley 2004). In the context of human translator education, an interesting modern version of the ‘gold standard’ has been developed by Eyckmans’ et al. (2009) and Kockaert et al (2017) based on the concept of ‘items’, specific ST features that commonly cause problems for the students.

2.3.1.1 Quality as equivalence

The concept of equivalence refers to the existence of distinct pairwise relationships of similarity between identifiable ST and TT features and functions. It is in virtue of these relationships that we can say that one text is a translation of another. The implication is that there exists some threshold of sufficient and relevant similarity between the ST and the TT beyond which satisfactory equivalence can be said to have been established, and the translation can be said to be adequate.

The mindset of equivalence (or similarity) is, fundamentally, a bottom-up one: the relationship between ST and TT is a sum of equivalence relationships between identifiable features. Practically any linguistic dimension — phonology, morphosyntax, information structure, referential meaning, register, the role played

⁸There is some variation in the exact definitions of grammar translation. For good discussions of the history of the term and an explanation of at least some of the definitions, see Howatt with Widdowson (2004, Ch. 12), and Kirk (2018).

by the referent within a specific conceptual frame etc. — can be taken as an axis of comparison.

A simple and convenient framework for conceptualising equivalence was proposed by Nida's (1964; 1969). Formal equivalence pertains to similarity at the level of logical forms and conventional meanings, and dynamic equivalence pertains to similarity at the level of pragmatics, the level of intended effect on a reader inhabiting some particular communicative situation. More elaborate theoretical frameworks for parsing equivalence can be found in the work of Vinay and Darbelnet (1958) and Catford (1978).

Overall translation quality then becomes a matter of preserving necessary equivalence relationships while maintaining some required level of conformance to TL norms and genre conventions. (In the 1950s and 60s, when equivalence-centred views of translation were most fashionable in anglophone translation studies, ideas of 'good' translation tended towards domestication, as evidenced by Nida's privileging of dynamic equivalence over formal.)

The main criticism levelled at equivalence-centred approaches is that they were too piecemeal. A translator who focuses on pairwise 'matching' of elements on a microtextual level (i.e. at or below sentence level) might fail to pay adequate attention to macrotextual variables like coherence and cohesion, as well as to the overall functionality of the text as a speech act and its embeddedness in the culture-bound frames of a specific speaker community (see, for example, Snell-Hornby's 1988 critique of Catford).

To address the pitfalls of 'mechanistic' translation, House (2015) has developed an elaborate quality assessment framework centred on the concept of functional equivalence. In this framework, emphasis shifts away from equivalence between lexemes and morphosyntactic structures, and towards equivalence between text-level discursal variables, such as dimensions of register and rhetorical structures (for a good summary, see Karoubi 2016a).

We can also talk about equivalence on the level of Nord's vertical translation units — sets of identifiable linguistic features spread throughout the text that combine to have a particular effect. Such features do not necessarily have to be matched one-to-one in the TT. Indeed, this is often undesirable or altogether

impossible because of the differences between available SL and TL resources, individual communicative situations, and culture-bound scripts. A translator seeking to preserve the effect of some bundle of SL features will look for the TL resources likely to reproduce a similar effect in the context of the target-side culture and communicative situation. For example, we may try to re-convey the formality-lowering effect of recurring second person singular forms in Russian — a grammatical device with no direct equivalent in English — by increasing the frequency of colloquialisms, contractions and ellipses.

A high-quality translation is thus one where the translator has managed to maintain satisfactory source-target similarity for a high proportion of textual features and aspects of meaning (both local and ‘vertical’), and, in those cases where the linguistic, cultural and situational constraints make this difficult or undesirable, has correctly prioritised the different elements, retaining the most and jettisoning the least important of them, with reference to the communicative goals and constraints of the specific situation.

In contemporary translation studies literature, the equivalence-centred approaches are often referred to as ‘linguistic’. I believe that this is a serious misnomer, because it implies a contrast with some other ‘non-linguistic’ approaches. Indeed, Snell-Hornby (1988) who was, if not the originator, then definitely one of the chief popularisers of this term was trying to try to establish a strong disciplinary boundary between translation studies and linguistics. I find the arguments for such a separation unconvincing. In the final analysis, to be of any practical use, translation studies must explain or at least examine what happens on the level of particular linguistic choices. While translation studies have obvious areas of overlap with psychology, sociology, literary scholarship etc., the primary subject of study for the discipline remains linguistic matter. The questions that translation scholars ultimately set out to answer are classically Saussurean ones: 1) why specific words appear on the page, 2) why they appear in a specific order, and 3) what the effect changing either of these variables would have on the meanings being communicated (Saussure 1916). Even delocalised notions like House’s text functions or Nord’s vertical translation units must ultimately be ‘embodied’ using some concrete morphemes

and lexemes subject to some concrete restrictions of norm and usage. The idea of alinguistic translation studies simply does not make any sense. For this reason, I use the somewhat more cumbersome label of ‘equivalence-centred’ or ‘equivalence-based’ to refer to this family of approaches, as opposed to ‘linguistic’.

2.3.1.2 Quality as fitness for purpose

Today, in anglophone translation studies, ‘quality’ is most commonly understood to mean fitness for some intended communicative purpose. In essence, the question is, does the translation do what the main stakeholder wants it to do? As a rule, the main stakeholder is the client, i.e. the person or organisation that has commissioned the translation.

Functionalism thus represents a top-down mindset: we begin by looking at translation on the level of a speech act. Priority is shifted maximally away from preservation of source-side meanings and towards fulfilment of target-side communicative demands. Those demands determine our choice of particular words and phrases when it comes to handling specific translation problems.

While various translation-theoretical approaches can be considered functionalist in their general thrust, the most obvious manifestation of this sensibility is to be found in Skopos theory. It can be summed up by the first and most important of Reiss and Vermeer’s six rules of Skopos theory: ‘A translatum [the exact shape of the final product, the TT] is determined by its Skopos [target-side purpose]’ (Reiß and H. J. Vermeer 1984).

Ultimately, functionalism is underpinned by the same basic sentiment as Wilson and Sperber’s relevance theory. Every communicative act must target some particular audience and attempt to present information in a way that this audience finds relevant and accessible. These considerations guide what we actually choose to say. Translation is no exception. Functionalism warns us not to lose sight of the wood behind the trees, to approach translation as a complete communicative act with a distinct target audience and distinct communicative purposes rather than a mechanical match-finding exercise.

There are two simple criticisms that can be levelled at functionalism in its purest form. Firstly, it is not always clear what the purpose of the TT is. The

purpose of an unambiguously operative text, like a manual or a legal letter, might be immediately obvious and easily describable in a concise translation brief. In such cases, it is often possible to assess fitness for purpose in a relatively straightforward way by using a task-based approach (see below). The purpose of a literary or religious text could be far more obscure, and it is not clear how one would go about setting up a simple task-based quality test.

Secondly, the conclusions drawn from functionalist theories are difficult to generalise at the nuts-and-bolts level of word choice. Functionalist frameworks focus on classifying communicative situations and strategies. These global variables can be expressed in any number of ways at the level of word choice, and it can be genuinely difficult to isolate meaningful patterns on a more granular level. As Williams (2001; 2009) points out, Skopos theory presents us with a discussion framework rather than any concrete way to classify or quantify the issues.

It is unfortunate that functionalism and equivalence-based approaches are sometimes presented as competing paradigms (for example, see Snell-Hornby 1988, pp. 13–22). They are, clearly, at their most powerful when used in tandem. Functionalism imposes sensible limits and reality checks on equivalence-based approaches, and the latter provide a strong apparatus for dealing with microtextual detail.

2.3.1.3 Quality as conformance to expectation

We can approach quality as a question of acceptability or conformance to reader expectations. As descriptivist translation scholars like Toury (2012) point out, the ideas of what constitutes acceptable translation are culture-bound. For example, as mentioned earlier, since the 1960s the English speaking world has seen a shift in literary translation fashions: away from domestication and towards foreignisation. It is unlikely that the work of distinctly foreignising translators like Pevear and Volokhonsky, whose translations of the Russian classics are highly rated at the moment, would have been as popular half a century ago. One corollary of this is that quality becomes a matter of conformance to current norms, regardless of whether the translator considers these norms functionally, ethically or otherwise

optimal. A translation that fails to meet the current standards of acceptability will simply go unread.

The notion of acceptability is one of Beaugrande and Dressler's (De Beaugrande and Dressler 1992) seven standards of textuality, which constitute a convenient starting point for parsing the cultural norms with regard to what constitutes an acceptable translation. They are as follows:

cohesion: there is a relationship between different parts of the text;

coherence: the text relates to a possible world;

intentionality: the text has an implied author possessed of some communicative intent;

acceptability: the form and content of the text comply with the norms of some existing genre enough to secure the reader's cooperation in the communicative exchange;

informativity: the text provides an adequate amount of useful information in return for the level of time and cognitive effort the reader has to invest;

situationality: certain inferences can be drawn from the specific communicative situation in which the text is embedded;

intertextuality: certain inferences can be drawn from the linguistic content of the culture in which the text is embedded.

A typical adult TL reader will approach every new text in the TL, regardless of whether it is translated or not, with some expectations with respect to all of the above dimensions. These expectations will, obviously, vary from culture to culture and from genre to genre. Clearly, a contract, a novel, an appliance manual and a grocery shopping list will be subject to different expectations with regard to coherence, informativity and intertextuality.

A special set of expectations may apply to translated texts. For example, in cultures that value markedly foreignising translations, the acceptability constraints, especially those pertaining to norm and usage, are likely to be substantially looser for translated texts than for similar texts authored in the TL. At the same time,

there could be higher expectations regarding informativity; the reader could be approaching the text in a more exploratory spirit than normal. We can thus think of ‘translatedness’ as a genre variable in its own right, one of the things that determines our expectations as readers.

In the case of overt translations, there also exist some unusual expectations with respect to intertextuality. On the one hand, there is an implied close relationship to another text. On the other hand, most target-side readers cannot access this text directly. Even though an overt translation can be viewed as one long reference to another text, it does not evoke an existing shared schema the way a reference to the Bible or the Star Wars might do. The schemas of the ST are not directly evoked but approximately reconstructed on the basis of culture-bound assumptions about the nature of the relationship between the ST and the TT.

Fundamentally, there are three questions to consider with respect to translation quality:

1. Does the TT conform to the reader’s expectations of what a translated text of this nature should look like?
2. Is the relationship between the ST and the TT what the reader expects it to be?
3. If either set of the expectations is defied, is the reader given adequate notice?

2.3.1.4 Quality as similarity to a ‘gold standard’

The gist of this approach is simple: an experienced translator is asked to produce a translation; the quality of other translations of the same ST is then measured in terms of similarity and divergence from it. Similarity is desirable; divergence is undesirable.

As pointed out already, this approach is largely antithetical to the dominant mindset in anglophone translation studies. The basic problem is that the very possibility of there being such a thing as a single ‘gold standard’ translation is extremely questionable — certainly if we are talking about the translation of texts rather than isolated phrases and sentences. For most non-trivial translation problems involving extended networks of meaning, there will generally exist

multiple viable solutions, and it is often extremely difficult, if not impossible, to decide which of them should be deemed optimal. When translation instructors provide a ‘clean copy’ translation to their trainees, it is, generally, on the understanding that the text is *an* acceptable solution, not *the* acceptable solution.

2.3.2 Analytic, holistic and task-based assessment

Lommel and Melby (2018) list three broad methodological approaches to TQA:

ANALYTIC: identifying specific issues;

HOLISTIC: assessing the text as a whole;

TASK-BASED: assessing the text in use.

Bottom-up TQA approaches where the evaluator attempts to catalogue issues exhaustively or near-exhaustively fall into the first category. In the second category, we find top-down approaches where the evaluator makes certain observations about the text as a whole and illustrates them with a few specific passages from the text. The third category, consists of empirical approaches that directly test the perlocutionary effect of a translated text. Typically, this involves seeing how well TL-speakers can follow a set of translated instructions by comparison to how well a comparable population of SL-speakers can follow the SL instructions (for example, see Sinaiko and Brislin 1970, pp. 40–44).

Holistic TQA is generally fastest but is often criticised for being too subjective. Task-based approaches are often presented as the Holy Grail, the ‘real-life’ test of the text. However, task-based TQA is expensive, time-consuming, and only practical for certain text types, mostly the ones that contain explicit instructions, e.g. equipment manuals (as in the case of Sinaiko and Brislin). Analytic issue-cataloguing TQA is meant to provide a more rigorously quantitative alternative to the broad brush of the holistic approaches but without running into the practical cumbersomeness and genre limitations of task-based approaches.

2.3.3 Approaches to quantification

Below I outline some approaches to quantifying translation quality, which can be split into three groups.

In 2.3.3.1, I briefly talk about issue typologies, an analytic and broadly equivalence-oriented method of assessment that is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

In 2.3.3.2, I talk about two holistic approaches. The first, multidimensional holistic assessment, is, as the name suggests, a broadly functionalist approach commonly seen in university-level translator training. The second, Han's pairwise comparison is an interesting proposal for quantifying intuitive snap judgements about the relative *overall* quality of two or more translations (Han 2020).

In 2.3.3.3, I very briefly mention task-based approaches — the most conceptually robust type of assessment but also the most expensive.

Finally, in 2.3.3.4, I briefly discuss three 'gold standard' approaches: grammar translation, a very old and unceasingly controversial translation-based FLT methodology; BLEU, a program developed for gauging the quality of computer-generated translations; and item-based assessment, a family of approaches where the assessor identifies common sticking points in the ST and checks whether they have been successfully navigated by different students.

2.3.3.1 Analytic approaches

Analytic approaches can be thought of as error-counting. The assessor seeks to identify specific problematic features within the text and, often, also to rate each one on some seriousness scale. The final quality rating is calculated using the number and weight of errors. The approach adopted within this study belongs to this category.

The approach is analytic in that the TT is being evaluated with reference to some set of standards that are understood to apply to a broad variety of texts, much as the rules of algebra are understood to apply to a broad variety of equations. These standards are, first and foremost, what we think of as the 'rules' of language, a type of knowledge that is 1) understood to be generally applicable and 2) convertible into explicit propositions and imperatives such as 'This word refers

to a class of things that can be described as...’, or ‘Regular English plurals end in -s’, or ‘Avoid contractions in formal writing’, etc. This knowledge can be checked against grammars, dictionaries, style guides, termbases, and analysis of corpus data or internet search results.

More intuitive stylistic judgements, such as ‘awkward’, are also often accepted on the assumption that the internalised linguistic proficiencies of which the assessor is not fully conscious can still function as a trustworthy ‘detector’ of deviations from established usage, provided the assessor has been adequately vetted.

Error typologies seek to regularise the identification and rating of problematic features, removing some of the arbitrariness and allowing for more effective training and monitoring of assessors. Such typologies are used in professional accreditation exams by the American Translators’ Association (ATA) and the UK Institute of Translators and Interpreters (ITI), as well as in a variety of industry TQA settings. They are discussed in more detail in the next section. In the case of professional exams and TQA, a threshold is normally set for the aggregate weighted error score, upon reaching which the text is deemed to have failed the assessment.

2.3.3.2 Holistic approaches

Below I discuss two types of holistic assessment: 1) the ubiquitous rubric-based assessment and 2) a pairwise comparison protocol described by Han (2020).

2.3.3.2.1 Rubric-based assessment grids Holistic assessment grids are common in educational settings. They are an attempt to impose some objective standards on the notoriously subjective business of grading the quality of entire texts. Before providing an overall mark, the assessor is asked to evaluate specific aspects of the text.

Assessment rubrics (dimensions of assessment) usually include preservation of propositional content, accuracy of TL grammar and spelling, acceptability as a piece of TL discourse, adherence to any relevant domain specific norms, and overall document presentation. Each rubric forms an axis running from the lowest to the highest possible mark (e.g. from 0 to 100), which is split into segments

corresponding to grading bands (e.g. <40, 40–49, 50–69, 60–69, 70–79, 80+) with descriptions of the criteria that must be fulfilled by the text in order to qualify for a mark within each band on a given particular axis. The assessor must choose the statement that is applicable to the text as a whole. The feedback may contain some specific examples from the text to justify the decisions, but, overall, the information flow is top-down — from assessment of the text as a whole to a few illustrative examples. The assessment grid used to mark the assessed translations at the University of Leeds at the time of writing is given in Appendix E.

While assessment of this kind can be criticised for being less rigorous than the analytic error-counting procedures mentioned earlier, a short summary of what is good and what is bad with a few illustrative examples makes for friendlier formative feedback than an exhaustive catalogue of the translation issues present in a student's text, which, even for a text of a couple of hundred words, can run well into double figures.

2.3.3.2.2 Pairwise comparison An interesting approach was recently described by Han (*ibid.*). Multiple judges are given pairs of translations and asked to decide which of the two is better overall. The process is repeated for multiple translations in various pairings. The object of the exercise is simply to arrange translations on an ordinal scale that represents the aggregate opinion of multiple judges. This is not meant to be an independent method of quality assessment but rather a supplement to other methods, a way of relating more granular data to the kind of intuitive judgements about overall quality that people often make in real life. Crucially, Han's method acknowledges the fact that judgements of quality are much easier to make when they are comparative rather than absolute.

2.3.3.3 Task-based approaches

Detailed discussion of task-based approaches is beyond the scope of this thesis. Their broad thrust is usually to establish a performance metric for the relevant task; for example, what proportion of TL-speaking mechanics using a translated manual complete a particular procedure successfully? How does their performance compare to that of SL-speaking mechanics who use the SL version of the manual?

Various metrics can be set up and various statistical methods used to process the results (for example, see Sinaiko and Brislin 1970).

2.3.3.4 Gold standard approaches

Here I discuss three ‘gold standard’ approaches: 1) defining target utterances for specially constructed translation prompts (used in FLT); 2) judging whole-text similarity (used for judging the quality of machine translation); 2) defining acceptable solutions to specific translation problems in a real text (used in the context of translator training).

2.3.3.4.1 Grammar translation This term refers to a type of language-learning exercises, which consist of a prompt in one language to be translated into another language, with the learner aiming to reproduce a ‘correct’ translation. Such exercises have, in some shape or form, been a feature of the language-pedagogy landscape for centuries. While, as Kirk (2018) points out, there is considerable variation in what exactly people understand ‘grammar translation’ to mean, both the most stereotypical and the most contentious kind of grammar translation is where L1 prompts are used to construct L2 utterances that are similar in form. Each prompt is intended to elicit a specific utterance or one of several similar utterances. Quantifying the learner’s performance then becomes a simple matter of counting answers that do and do not match the target utterances.

Such exercises, formerly known as ‘making Latins’ (for example, see Leedes 1676) have been a source of bitter acrimony among language teachers at least since the time of Roger Ascham’s *The Schoolmaster* (1570). The main criticism is that they cause the learner to calque L1 constructions into L2, which often results in very stilted patterns of L2 production. An all-out crusade against grammar translation was launched in late 19th century by a group of mostly German and British language teachers who came to be known as the Reform Movement (Howatt 1982). Indeed, the expression ‘grammar translation’ was coined by the them as a term of derogation. The Reform Movement had an enormous impact on many prominent teachers, textbook writers, and FLT scholars throughout the 20th century, many of whom came to share the Reformers’ distaste for grammar

translation. However, the exercises never disappeared entirely and currently flourish in online language-learning apps like DuoLingo.

Detailed discussion of the merits and demerits of grammar translation as a teaching tool is beyond the scope of this thesis. My own impression as a language teacher is that such exercises can be useful for teaching beginners; however, their usefulness rapidly diminishes as the learners progress into intermediate-to-advanced territory. The fundamental problem is this: the longer and the more linguistically sophisticated the text, the more viable translation solutions it allows, and, at the same time, the more obvious it makes the incompleteness of most equivalence relationships. Consequently, it becomes progressively more difficult to set up prompts that sound like viable L1 utterances and reliably elicit the target L2 vocabulary and constructions. When we are talking about translating several hundred words excerpted from a real SL text (what the students in this study were asked to do), the network of meanings is far too complex to allow for anything like a definitive ‘gold standard’ translation.

2.3.3.4.2 BLEU Another implementation of the ‘gold standard’ approach that deserves a brief mention is the programme BLEU (Babych and Hartley 2004), which has been used to assess the performance of MT engines. BLEU gives a numerical score reflecting the similarity of machine-generated translation to a ‘gold standard’ text produced by a professional human translator. To my knowledge, BLEU is not used in the training and assessment of human translators.

2.3.3.4.3 Item-based assessment A more flexible version of the ‘gold standard’ approach was recently developed by Eyckmans, Anckaert and Segers (2009) and Kockaert and Segers (2017) (both approaches summarised in Han 2020). This involves identifying likely problematic features within the ST and cataloguing acceptable and unacceptable ways to translate them. In this respect, the system is binary — there is no cline of acceptability. Student translations are then graded against this catalogue. The list can be expanded as more acceptable and unacceptable solutions come in. The problematic items can be identified statistically using a sample of existing student translations annotated independently by a panel of experts (CDI — calibration of dichotomous items; Eyckmans, Anckaert

and Segers 2009) or simply selected by the assessors (PIE — preselected item evaluation; Kockaert and Segers 2017).

The two main advantages of these methods are obvious: transparency and internal consistency. However, so are its potential drawbacks:

- Both CDI and PIE focus on systematic errors and actively filter out the more random ones, which can be every bit as damaging. One can easily imagine how in technical, medical or legal translation simple errors of oversight, like a missing *not* or a *1000* in place of *10.00*, could have more disastrous consequences than the more systematic translatorial failures like awkward handling of domain terminology or poor observance of collocational restrictions.
- The issues are not graded by severity. They are graded by difficulty (the percentage of people that struggle with this particular ST feature) but not by the impact that the issue has on the effectiveness of the text as a speech act.
- Both approaches require issues to be readily identifiable and processable at the level of microtextual equivalents. It is not clear how to deal with higher-level issues, like, for example, disruptions of thematic structure. Once we start to work at the level of relatively complex networks of meaning, it becomes extremely difficult, if not impossible, to catalogue acceptable and unacceptable solutions anywhere near exhaustively.

The item-based approach is similar to the analytic approaches discussed earlier in that it focuses on local features and proceeds by error-counting. However, it is different in important ways. Firstly, it is not open-ended. It restricts evaluation to the consideration of recurring problems, for which it seeks to identify discrete acceptable solutions. Secondly, it does not attempt to quantify the damage done by specific errors to communicative function. It focuses on difficulty, conceived as the frequency with which a particular error recurs. Frequent errors are assumed to correspond to more challenging translation problems.

In practice, there is some overlap between local ‘gold standard’ approaches and the analytical error-counting approaches. Chesterman’s TIANA principle is not truly universal. There are translation problems for which, at least within the

context of a specific communicative situation, a clear ‘right answer’ exists, and, in those cases, we want the student to give us that specific answer. Such problems include:

- proper names and domain terms with well-established equivalents;
- well-established collocations and constructions that are clearly more common, more tonally appropriate, or more economical than the available alternatives;
- minimal corrections — cases where a small specific problem within an otherwise sound passage can be fixed using a small specific change (for example, changing a preposition); other ways of fixing the same problem exist but require more radical rewording.

These are what Pym (1992) calls binary errors.⁹ However, their handling within analytical and ‘gold standard’ frameworks, though similar in outcome, is ultimately informed by a different sensibility.

In pedagogic settings, ‘gold standard’ approaches, like flashcards and grammar translation, are rooted in learning by repetition and discovery. Explanations of the linguistic phenomena involved and the rules governing them are, at best, very much optional. It is enough to know what the solution is; the rest your innate language acquisition faculties will handle unconsciously.

By contrast, analytic assessment is rooted in analytic learning. The assumption is that errors must be analysed; it is important to understand what rules are being broken and why they exist. This is why analytical frameworks frequently take the form of error typologies tied to various theoretical frameworks that define what constitutes errors and how they come about.

I believe learning by repetition and discovery works extremely well at lower proficiency levels, but begins to break down further up, where the linguistic phenomena involved are more complicated and less frequently encountered.

⁹In Pym’s framework, *binary errors* are TT features that are unambiguously ‘faulty’ from the perspective of the assessor. *Non-binary errors*, by contrast, are features about the acceptability of which the assessor is unsure. In the case of transfer, binary errors are readily recognisable and clearly undesirable distortions of sense. In the case of TL quality, they are readily recognisable and clearly undesirable departures from target dialect norm and usage.

Translation is an advanced skill. It is rarely possible to find a real text that is satisfactorily translatable using only the resources in the A1-A2 range. Furthermore, translation is not a naturally acquired skill. I was one of many bilinguals who found translation extremely difficult well into adulthood. In fact, I still do. It is an effortful activity that actively derails our innate mechanisms of language production. It requires considerable concentration and many deliberative decisions. It has to be taught if not wholly then to a very substantial extent analytically.

2.4 Features of existing error typologies

In this section, I discuss some of the existing error typologies. I use the term translation error typology to refer to any system of distinct labels that the assessor can attach to identifiable segments of the TT, the exact form and content of which is deemed to be in some way damaging to the communicative functionality of the text. An evaluator using such a typology works ‘bottom-up’, by attempting to understand and catalogue how individual linguistic features impact the overall functionality of the text as a whole.

Error typologies are quintessentially analytic in nature and, to some extent, always rooted in an equivalence-based understanding of quality, insofar as there are always some error categories that mark inadequate re-communication of local meanings. At the same time, the scope of such typologies is practically never restricted to the handling of such issues. The vast majority, if not all, also allow the assessor to highlight issues pertaining to the quality of TL prose, by which I mean observance of TL grammar and spelling conventions, aptness of register, and likely perlocutionary effectiveness. The latter concerns clearly pale into functionalist territory. Some typologies attempt to conceptually separate the TL ‘mechanics’ (i.e. grammar and spelling) from more pragmatic issues (register and communicative effectiveness). Many allow the evaluator to grade the severity of individual issues according to their perceived detriment to the functional adequacy of the text. Some also allow ‘kudos points’ to be awarded for what the assessor considers to be particularly good translation decisions (Secară 2005; Kübler 2008).

Historically, the development of granular typologies was largely driven by the desire to establish some measure of consistency in the quality of translation as a commercial product (see Secară 2005). However, more recent arrivals, such as the various typologies used for annotating learner translator corpora (e.g. MeLLANGE, KOPE and RusLTC), were created primarily with translator training in mind, as a means of identifying recurring sticking points.

In 2009, Teterleva & Popova opened their overview of existing approaches to translation error classification with the following statement:

In modern linguistics and translations studies there is no broad consensus with respect to the typology of translation errors.¹⁰

(ibid.)

Teterleva & Popova's review dealt exclusively with the russophone literature, but the above statement would have been equally applicable to anglophone translation studies and remains so to this day. To date there exists no 'periodic table' of translation errors. There are, however, certain structural themes and patterns that surface often in error typologies and unite them into a loose Wittgensteinian family. The purpose of this chapter is primarily to explore some of these themes and patterns.

It would be virtually impossible to give an exhaustive survey of all existing translation error typologies. There have been simply too many attempts to construct such typologies over the years. Many are now obscure by virtue of having been deprecated and replaced with something else, or having fallen into disuse. For example, LISA QA, a framework developed in the 1990s by the Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA), has since been superseded by MQM (MQM Council 2025a), while the BlackJack typology described by Secară (Secară 2005) was tied to an online tool that is no longer available. Some, like SAE J2540 (SAE International 2023), are difficult to access by virtue of being proprietary. Some — most notably Hatim & Mason (Hatim and Mason 2005) and the CELTraC annotation scheme (Fictumova, Obrusnik and Stepankova 2017) — simply came into my field of view too late to be given the attention that they

¹⁰All translations of scholarly texts in Russian my own unless otherwise specified.

unquestionably deserve. My aim in this chapter is not to capture the entire history of the field or even its full breadth today but to present a cross-section of the available stock of typologies and to discuss some of their more common and more interesting features. I also hope to draw attention to a substantial body of russophone literature on classification of translation errors, which, to my knowledge, has remained outside the field of view of most anglophone translation scholars.

The discussion below is mostly based on sixteen typologies that can be grouped as follows:

- three TQA tools that have some degree of prominence in the translation industry; all three were proposed as national or international industry standards: SICAL, SAE J2540, MQM Full/Core;
- the two frameworks used, respectively, by the the American Translators' Association (ATA) and the UK Institute of Translators and Interpreters (ITI) for marking professional accreditation exams;
- three typologies developed specifically for annotating learner translator corpora: MeLLANGE, AWEv and RusLTC;
- eight more frameworks that have come out of translation studies research but are not attached to well-publicised corpora:
 - one from a publication in French: Gouadec 1981;
 - three publications in English: Bensoussan and Rosenhouse 1990; Williams 2001; Karoubi 2016a;
 - four from publications in Russian: (Garbovskiy 2004; Latyshev 2005; Shevnin 2009a; Buzadzhi et al. 2009).

A brief description of each of these typologies, in most cases accompanied by the layout of the category tree, can be found in Appendix A. It was impractical to include this information in the body of this chapter, but the reader may find it helpful to refer to this appendix while reading about specific typologies.

Most of these typologies are either from the research literature published within the last two and a half decades or from the websites of various industry

bodies and commercial agencies that could be accessed at the time of writing. However, there are three exceptions: Gouadec (1981), SICAL and Bensoussan and Rosenhouse (1990), which are included mostly for the purposes of historical scene-setting.

2.4.1 General themes and organising principles

Most translation error typologies are organised as hierarchical trees. Most have two or three categories at the top, although some have as many as seven. The odd one out is Gouadec's system, which is designed as a matrix but, ultimately, still has two basic dimensions that can be thought of as two apical categories. In this section, we shall look at these basic categorisation patterns that appear at or near the top of the tree. These are:

- transfer / language
- transfer / norm & usage / style
- transfer / norm & usage / style / evaluation
- micro-textual features / macro-textual features
- logical variables / logical operators
- process / product
- other (6 or more apical categories)

2.4.1.1 Transfer / language

Accuracy of transfer, i.e. preservation of ST meaning, and quality of language, i.e. observance of TL norms and usage conventions, are often seen as the two principal axes of translation quality. This type of separation of content from form or message from code is the topmost organising principle of influential error typologies like SICAL (Williams 1989) and MeLLANGE (Secară 2005; Kübler 2008; Castagnoli et al. 2011), as well as the error-handling schemes of russophone scholars like Latyshev (2005), Komissarov (1990) and Shevnin (2003; 2009a; 2010), and the RusLTC error annotation scheme developed by Kunilovskaya (2013; 2015; 2016).

The basic idea is that it is possible for an utterance to be poorly formed but still decodable to a satisfactory extent or, conversely, well-formed but inadequate in terms of meaning. In the former case, the intended meaning can be retrieved to a satisfactory degree, albeit with unnecessary effort on the reader's part. In the latter case, the utterance takes no extra effort to parse but is unintentionally misleading. Content and form, therefore, constitute separate dimensions of utterance quality in general. In the specific case of translation, the intended meaning of the TT is understood to be one that is sufficiently and relevantly similar to that of the ST.

As a rule, meaning transfer issues are seen as more serious than issues of TL norm and usage observance. Some frameworks explicitly attempt to exclude issues that are purely 'linguistic', i.e. ones that do not have a significant bearing on the preservation of ST meaning (Gouadec 1981; Bensoussan and Rosenhouse 1990). However, as Latyshev ((2005)) and Buzadzhi et al. (2009) point out, while norm and usage issues may not directly distort meaning, when present in sufficient numbers, they can render the text functionally unviable as a speech act. Kunilovskaya et al. (2015) also point out that binary TL errors¹¹ can seriously affect the perceived prestige and trustworthiness of the text, the translator and the commissioner.

While appealing because of its simplicity and intuitiveness, the content/form dichotomy is also notoriously unstable. It is often hard to gauge whether a terminology error is likely to mislead rather than merely annoy the reader. Equally, it can be hard to tell at what point awkward or ungrammatical wording begins to constitute a genuine impediment to comprehension. The answer to such questions is likely to depend on the cognitive landscape and reading ability of each individual reader. For a text with a broad target audience, these can vary substantially.

Similarly, from a process-centred perspective, we cannot always be sure at what stage and for what reasons an error arose. For example, an over-literal translation could be the result of an actual failure to parse the relevant ST passage (defaulting to piecemeal 'mechanical' assembly of the TT, using formal equivalence relationships from dictionaries and grammar books); however, it could also be the result of anxiety about maintaining greatest possible resemblance to ST semantics.

¹¹For an explanation of the term, see footnote on page 97.

It could even be a case of foreignisation as a deliberate stylistic choice. While we can often make reasonable guesses about which of the above we are looking at in some given case, an element of uncertainty always remains and can only be resolved by speaking to the translator directly, which is not always possible.

Natural language is a messy system with a very high number of degrees of freedom, and neat Linnaean classification of phenomena can only come at the price of very considerable conceptual strain. This is hardly an original observation. In 1989, Williams wrote:

The [Canadian Government Translation] Bureau has found it practical to maintain the distinction between translation and language errors, while recognizing that an error of form can at the same time be an error of meaning and that a language error can cause a mistranslation or at the very least impede the reader's understanding of the translation.

It is difficult to disagree with the general sentiment that, whatever problems it might raise, thinking of language and transfer as different dimensions is often convenient, and some issues clearly affect one more than the other. However, data from a 2015 study by Kunilovskaya suggests that, for the En-Ru pair, in situations where issues have to be sorted into these two categories, even trained assessors, when asked to tag issues as either 'content' or 'language', consistently disagree in about 20% of the cases (for further discussion, see section 2.4.6).

2.4.1.2 Transfer / norm & usage / style

This tripartite scheme is similar to the bipartite one above but with the language category cleft in twain down a boundary reminiscent of the secondary school division between language and literature — the former being about knowing what rules you have to follow when you put words together, and the latter being about expressivity, idiomaticity, aesthetic appeal and situational aptness. The result is approximately equivalent to the three traditional 'levels' of linguistics: semantics, (morpho)syntax and pragmatics (for a good historical summary, see Sayward 1974).

This trichotomy is the main organising principle of the ATA marking framework (American Translators Association 2023). In anglophone literature, it appears in

Karoubi's framework (Karoubi 2016b) and, at a slightly lower level in RusLTC (Kunilovskaya 2016). In russophobe literature, we see it in the typologies of Garbovsky (2004) and Shevnin (2009b; 2009a; see also the summary in Yugova 2011).

This elaboration of the bipartite language/transfer scheme is likely, at least in part, a response to the criticisms levelled at early error classification frameworks like SICAL (see, for example, Secară 2005) and Gouadec's framework (see Hatim and Mason 2005), to the effect that they are too focused on sentence-level propositional content and pay insufficient attention to supra-sentence discursal variables. The tripartite frameworks add a dimension dedicated to what, as Larose puts it, lies 'beyond and between propositions' (Larose 2002).

Tripartite typologies continue to suffer from substantial conceptual strain. The boundaries are often fuzzy. The fundamental problem is that syntax, semantics and pragmatics, like Jakobson's six functions of language, are not categories but dimensions: they coexist in utterances and are often difficult to tease apart. These issues are explored further in the discussion of the ATA typology below.

2.4.1.3 Transfer / norm & usage / style / evaluation

Buzadzhi et al. (2009) adds not one but two extra dimensions to transfer and language: stylistic and evaluative, pertaining, respectively, to general stylistic adequacy and authorial affect. This is an interesting decision that seems to reflect the ambiguous nature of affect: it is not clear whether it is a semantic variable or a pragmatic one.

If we look at the other variables Steiner puts under tenor — situational roles, hierarchies of knowledge, power, class etc. — they are true social constructs that have no independent existence outside social situations. This is not the case with affective states. Like weather, they exist, regardless of whether we talk about them or not. At the same time, unlike weather, affect is more often signalled obliquely than referred to directly. In this respect, it seems to work more like a register variable. Moreover, because attitudes to displays of emotion are so culture-bound, distortions of affect very often result in distortions of speaker positioning on all the aforementioned socially constructed scales.

2.4.1.4 Process / product

In the context of examining translation errors, the product-centred perspective concerns their target-side communicative effect, while the process-centred perspective concerns their cognitive and procedural causes. Attempts to treat the two as separate typology branches are present in the work of at least two notable scholars from a russophobe background: Latyshev (2005) and Kunilovskaya (2016). Both of their frameworks have a dedicated branch that attempts to systematise our understanding of how translation errors come about. Technically, we could say that the product/process division is the topmost organising principle of their typologies. However, the product branch seems to be better developed and better organised, while the process branch is more of an auxiliary feature.

More generally, systematising our understanding of what causes translation errors is a prominent feature of russophobe translation scholarship. My discussion of the work of four Russophone scholars in section 2.4.7 focuses on process-centred analysis — trying to understand the knowledge structures and cognitive mechanisms that give rise to the errors. This is a prominent concern for all four scholars. For Buzadzhi, the youngest of the four, it is the main topic of his work.

2.4.1.5 Propositional and rhetorical structure

At least two scholars have attempted to parse translation issues in terms of formal propositional and rhetorical structures: Gouadec (1981; 1989) and Williams (2001).

Gouadec's work was part of the 'SICAL line of research' (Melis and Albir 2002). His framework brackets out TL hygiene issues and only deals with TT features that alter the meaning or otherwise clearly impact the communication of the ST's propositional content. Gouadec splits such errors into lexical and syntactic. The general idea is that lexis corresponds to the variables, and syntax, to the operators. The terms are quite broadly conceived with a variety of possible micro and macro-textual 'equations' in mind.

Williams adopts a similarly formalistic approach but without Gouadec's intimidating notation.

2.4.1.6 Micro-textual vs. macro-textual issues

Bensoussan & Rosenhouse (1990) and Karoubi (2016b; 2016a) differentiate between micro and macrostructural issues.

For Bensoussan & Rosenhouse, macrostructural issues are essentially framing issues, where the translator seems to lack adequate understanding of culture-bound macrostructures: frames, scripts, and genres. Microstructural issues are more local textual issues that can be linked to suboptimal choice of linguistic resources.

In Karoubi's framework, the micro/macro boundary seems to correspond to the boundary between semantics and pragmatics, with the latter being parsed in term of de Beaugrande and Dressler's seven standards of textuality (De Beaugrande and Dressler 1992).

2.4.1.7 Six or more apical categories

There are also four typologies with a comparatively flat top-level structure, having six or more apical categories: MQM Core, SAE J2540, ITI, and AWEv. This is, presumably, an attempt to avoid or, at least, lessen the conceptual strains mentioned earlier. For example, three of the frameworks (SAE J2450, MQM Core, and ITI) have a dedicated top-level category for terminology. Three also have dedicated categories for style and/or register (MQM Core, ITI, AWEv). ITI and AWEv separate general issues of lingua-cultural asymmetry from narrower concerns of genre and register (Style).

This approach avoids the conceptual tensions associated with the big structuralist divisions discussed earlier, arguably at the price of introducing less conspicuous fuzzy boundaries at lower levels. Its main disadvantage is that the bigger flatter typologies can be quite hard to navigate. AWEv has only two hierarchical levels with eight apical categories and fifty terminal categories immediately beneath. As I found out when working with TRISST, which has the same number of apical categories, namely eight, it is quite difficult to keep eight axes in mind at the same time.

2.4.2 Conceptual tensions in the ATA framework

Let us consider some of the conceptual tensions that arise in the ATA framework, a good example of an error typology with a small number of apical categories — three:

target language mechanics: ‘errors that clearly violate one or more rules that prescribe “correct” written form of the Target Language (e.g. grammar and spelling)’ but do not distort ‘the reader’s understanding of facts/ideas communicated in the source text’.

meaning transfer: errors that do distort ‘the reader’s understanding of facts/ideas communicated in the source text’

writing ability: errors that do not immediately distort the understanding of facts and ideas or violate normative rules but “sound wrong” (‘detract from the quality of the translation with non-idiomatic, inappropriate or unclear wording/phrasing’)

Each of these categories comes with a number of subcategories (see section A.2.1 in Appendix A).

The meaning transfer category (i.e. semantics) includes the subcategory of terminology. This covers:

- use of content words or phrases that actually distort meaning relative to ST;
- failure to use available domain-specific terms where equivalent terms are used in the ST.

The latter may not necessarily distort facts and ideas to any great extent, as illustrated by the XKCD cartoon where the parts of Saturn V rocket are labelled using only the 1000 most frequently used words in English (Munroe 2012). In context, it is obvious to anyone even vaguely familiar with the domain that *people box* equals *capsule* etc. The cartoon is stylistically odd — for comic effect — but adequately clear in terms of reference.

In practice, terminological issues can be clearly semantic, if the expression used is actually misleading or completely uninterpretable; clearly pragmatic, if

the meaning is clear, but the wording damages our perception of the document or the people associated with it; or somewhere in between, if the wording is both unconventional and somewhat opaque or open to interpretation, and may or may not be parsed correctly by the intended audience.

Also under meaning transfer, we find faithfulness, which seems to be intended primarily for translations that deviate too much from the information structure of the ST, i.e. change the order of the ‘major elements’ of a sentence or a paragraph in a way that ‘destroys the flow, changes emphasis, or obscures the author’s intent’. Somewhat counter-intuitively, this is separate from cohesion, which falls under meaning transfer too but specifically concerns the preservation of intra-textual links: soundness of anaphoric and cataphoric references, appropriateness of conjunctions, adequate signposting, etc.

Yet another subcategory of meaning transfer is literalness; however, if a ‘word-for-word rendition’ sounds awkward without changing meaning, the error should be logged not under literalness but under usage, a subcategory of writing ability. At the same time, the example of a literalness error given in the marking scheme guide under ‘Explanation of Categories’ does not seem especially referentially opaque:

(25) reduction of taxes of income

The correct version being:

(26) income tax reductions

While an EnTenTen21 search for *taxes of income* returns just 15 results, suggesting that it is indeed out of line with common usage, the clearly cognate *taxation of income* returns 1094 results, suggesting that most speakers of English would find the expression in (25) awkward but, nonetheless, readily interpretable.

One interesting detail is that addition and omission — both, predictably, under meaning transfer — pertain not only to external referential content but also to tone, which, in this case, seems to be equivalent to affect in Steiner’s unpacking of the Hallidaian register framework (‘irony, intensification, etc.’). Thus the ATA framework seems to treat inner states as a special kind of referent rather than a register variable. On the other hand, register, which the ATA framework seems to

restrict to degrees of formality, and style, here meaning features related to genre and text function, come under writing ability.

Meaning transfer also contains the ambiguity subcategory, which seems to be intended for clearly identifiable cases of syntactic or lexical ambiguity. This then must be distinct from unclear wording/phrasing, which is part of the definition of writing ability and, presumably, pertains to cases of more general opacity or vagueness by virtue of poor phrasing or word choice, to be classed as usage errors.

Finally, rather surprisingly, under writing ability we also find illegibility, a category for instances of unreadable handwriting, which one would expect to find under either target language mechanics, as an infringement of a set of norms, or under meaning transfer, as something that impedes understanding.

It is not the purpose of the above discussion to discredit ATA's assessment procedure. The ATA assessors achieve a good level of inter-assessor agreement (Phelan 2017), and there is little reason to doubt that the ATA exam adequately tests the skills of the translators who take it.¹² However, as Phelan points out, inter-assessor agreement is only achieved after the assessors undergo in-person training provided by the ATA. Agreement between untrained assessors is poor, even when they have substantial experience as translators. This suggests that on its own the typology is not very intuitive, and people struggle to deploy it consistently outside the institutional context of the ATA.

It is also important to point out that Phelan's study was concerned not with the assignment of individual errors to specific classes but with the cumulative score achieved by the examinee. This is calculated from the seriousness scores of individual errors. Let us remember that the ATA exam is ultimately a gate-keeping exercise. Its primary purpose is not to help translators organise their knowledge about things that can go wrong, but to determine whether certain features of the text are likely to impede its communicative functionality to some greater or lesser degree. Such judgements could well be more intuitive than analytic. This does not render them any less valid, provided the different assessors' intuition is primed in a consistent way that adequately reflects some set of real-world demands. The key thing is that the assessors must achieve a reasonable amount of agreement about

¹²According to the ATA's website (accessed 18/08/2025), the pass rate is below 20%.

certain passages being problematic and can rank the level of problematicity with a reasonable degree of consistency. How they go on to analyse and categorise the actual linguistic phenomena present, in the context of this type of assessment, is not very important.

2.4.3 Quantifying seriousness

Broadly speaking, there are three possible approaches to assessing the seriousness of individual issues:

- some typologies explicitly assign different scores to errors of different type (ATA) or, at least, strongly suggest that some types of issues are more significant than others are (Buzadzhi et al. 2009; SAE International 2023);
- some tie severity to loss of function (American Translators Association 2021; Kunilovskaya 2016; Gouadec 1981);
- some do not attempt to quantify the seriousness of errors (MeLLANGE, Kübler 2008).

2.4.4 Quantifying difficulty

To the best of my knowledge, no existing error typology has any provisions for assessing the difficulty of the ST. An attempt to estimate the difficulty of identifiable features/segments within a particular ST, based on how many translators mishandle them, was made by Han (2020).

2.4.5 Quantifying assessor confidence

I am not aware of any systematic research into this.

The fact that assessors are not always 100% certain about their judgements was highlighted by Pym as far back as 1992. Pym points out that while some features immediately send us reaching for the red pen, the status of other potentially problematic features is more ambiguous.

The general thrust of Pym's argument is that assessors are generally confident about identifying the most serious errors, and, as the degree of their certainty

wanes, so does the seriousness of the error. This is an intuitive argument; however, we must resist the temptation to conflate confidence with seriousness entirely. Ultimately, they are still two separate variables. It is possible to be very sure that a very minor *faux pas* is still, nonetheless, a *faux pas*, and the text would be better off without it. At the same time, thanks to the uncertainties attached to modelling the hypothetical target reader, it is also possible to be unsure about exactly how serious an error is. As I said, to my knowledge, there has been no systematic research addressing assessor confidence as a separate variable.

2.4.6 Inter-assessor agreement

The fact that this study was based on the work of a single assessor raises obvious questions about reproducibility. In this section, I attempt to understand, to what extent and about what exactly multiple assessors tend to agree with each other, and whether there is anything we can do to raise the likelihood of them agreeing.

A superb study on the validity of different TQA methods, including analytic (i.e. error-counting) was published by Waddington (2017). Waddington worked with a reasonably large and homogeneous sample: 64 students translating the same ST (330 words, Es–En), with each translation being graded three times using three different methods (intuitive, rubric-based and error-based) by five different markers, each marker returning three grades per student, one for each method. He then subjected the resulting dataset to very rigorous statistical analysis. He concludes that error-counting is somewhat more reliable than holistic assessment, which is to say that it results in better agreement between markers. Crucially, Waddington's markers received some training:

they had to practice each one on a series of other student translations of a different text (that is different from the text used in the exam, and different in the case of each method); each corrector, individually, then had to show me the results of this preliminary application, which were compared to the results of my own application, and differences and doubts were discussed.

(ibid., p. 25)

Waddington only looks at overall quality metrics that came out of the assessments. He does not attempt to gauge whether the translators identified the same errors or assigned them to the same severity bands. He finds that error-counting analytic approaches are somewhat more reliable than rubric-based holistic ones, although a 70/30 combination of the two (a combined mark from two different assessments) seems to be optimal. That the mixed option appears to be the most reliable could be the result of the papers simply being marked twice in a different order, levelling out the effects of the assessor's fatigue, hunger, evolving expectations etc.

That *trained* assessors using analytic TQA procedures tend to return reasonably consistent grades has been confirmed by Kunilovskaya (2015) and Karoubi (Karoubi 2016a). However, training is key, and agreement between untrained assessors seems to be poor, even when a detailed descriptions of the typology are available, as is the case with RusLTC and ATA frameworks (Kunilovskaya 2015; Phelan 2017).

Kunilovskaya attempts to gauge how much agreement there is between assessors concerning the locus, nature and seriousness of specific errors. She conducted two separate experiments. In the first one, 27 student translations of 6 different text (En-Ru; average TT length 280 words) were annotated by two translation teachers using the RusLTC typology. There was a significant disparity in the total number of errors tagged by the two teachers (630 vs. 448). The agreement on the loci of errors — that is to say, which specific textual features they tagged as problematic — can probably be described as fair: they agreed in 343 cases, including 33 cases of 'double or overlapping annotation'. In 80.5% of these 343 cases, they also agreed on the top-level category of the error, i.e. whether it is 'content-related' or 'language-related'. Kunilovskaya does not discuss to what extent they agreed on more granular levels. Only in 34% of the cases did they agree on the gravity of the error ('critical', 'major', 'minor'). It is not clear what training the assessors received, but, given that their performance is contrasted to that of a third 'untrained' assessor in the second experiment, we can assume that they had received some kind of training from the experimenters.

In the second experiment, as already mentioned, the same two assessors were joined by a third 'untrained' one. They annotated 17 translations of one text

(En-Ru; ST length = 571 words) and awarded each translation a grade on a 20 point scale. This was an intuitive holistic score rather than the outcome of a calculation based on error count. The third rater tagged significantly fewer errors (262 vs. 447 and 433). The agreement on locus across all three assessors was poor: 24% and 25% for the two trained assessors, and 42% for the untrained one. However, agreement between the two trained assessors was around 70%. They agreed with each other on the locus of almost three times as many errors, and in 78% of these cases they also agreed on top-level error category. The agreement on the seriousness of errors between assessor 1 and 2 also rose substantially compared to the first experiment: from 34% to 60%. This suggests that the assessors had been discussing how the severity scale should be applied and were getting closer to a consensus. The agreement on holistic scores (across all three assessors) is described as ‘close to acceptable’ (Krippendorff $\alpha = 0.734$, with the threshold set at 0.74). Kuniilovskaya indicates that the three main correlates of the holistic score seem to be the number of critical errors, the number of content errors, and the total number of errors (from most to least important).

Interestingly, the assessor agreement was far better for low-scoring translations than for high-scoring ones. The assessors were also somewhat more likely to disagree on language errors than on content errors. Another interesting detail is that the proportion of ‘content-related’ and ‘language-related’ errors seems almost constant at 60/40, which differs significantly from the 75/25 reported by Shevnin (2009a).

Kuniilovskaya’s data, as she herself acknowledges, is somewhat problematic because of the very small number of assessors; however, if we take it at face value, it would appear that inter-assessor agreement on issue locus is not bad, but the agreement on type and severity is, at best, middling to fair. There are at least two possible reasons for this:

Firstly, as discussed in section 2.4.1.1, there are conceptual tensions inherent in the language/content dichotomy. This might explain why, of the locus-agreed errors, about 20% were assigned to different top-level categories. These may well have been the genuinely ambiguous cases.

Secondly, there is considerable room for variation in issue tolerance. Tellingly,

in the first experiment, the assessor who tagged three times as many issues as ‘critical’ found nearly 30% more issues overall. Let us remind ourselves that both assessors were translation instructors, and we have little reason to doubt their fitness for the job. What Kunilovskaya’s data confirm is the intuitive notion that there are substantial grey areas where it is difficult to decide whether an issue is truly critical and whether it is an issue at all.

From Kunilovskaya’s study, we can draw three important conclusions: firstly, inter-assessor agreement is generally something of a problem area; secondly, assessor training is important — detailed descriptions of error categories are not enough (also supported by Phelan 2017); thirdly, consensus about how a marking system should be applied improves quite rapidly over time.

It is instructive to consider why assessor training is important, why it is not enough simply to provide the assessors with sufficiently precise descriptions of what constitutes an error of a particular kind. The problem is that, despite our best intentions, errors of meaning, appropriateness and acceptability tend not to fall into conceptually neat categories. Rather they tend to form loose Wittgensteinian families where the different members resemble each other in various ways to various extents. The formal definition of an error class, like the dictionary definition of a word, is only a schematic road sign pointing in the general direction of the actual meaning, which is far richer and far more tangled. Here, I side with Quine (1960): meanings are not defined with respect to other simpler meanings; they are acquired over time by repeated exposure in a variety of situations. What this means for a project like this, where other assessors only exist as a hypothetical possibility in the future, is that providing a variety of annotated examples is more important than providing detailed descriptions. If we cannot train other assessors in real time face-to-face, we must provide them with a reasonable sample of what we mean when we say ‘error of type X’.

2.4.7 The process-oriented perspective in russophone literature

Below I discuss the work of four Russophone scholars: Garbovsky (2004), Shevnin (2003; 2007; 2009b; 2009a; 2010), Latyshev (2005) and Buzadzhi et al. (2009).

As mentioned earlier, their work has a strong process-oriented component.

2.4.7.1 Types of SL comprehension issues (Garbovsky 2004)

Garbovsky's framework is a three-tier one, the top level categories being ST comprehension, TL re-expression and style. Garbovsky's is primarily concerned with the comprehension side of the equation. He argues that, historically, the bulk of translation theory was developed by translators themselves, who automatically assumed that their understanding of the text was adequate for the job, problematic translation choices being primarily a matter of failing to identify the optimal TL resources. According to Garbovsky, recent analyses of literary translations show that errors of comprehension are in fact quite common (Garbovsky 2004, p. 516).

Garbovsky divides errors of comprehension into four subcategories:

- simple concept errors;
- complex concept errors;
- errors of conception;
- situational errors.

These four levels correspond not so much to distinct stages within the translation process as to cognitive 'levels' at which the errors occur:

- simple referential meanings, corresponding to incorrect understanding of what individual content words and lexicalised expressions stand for;
- isolable relationships between things being referred to, corresponding to errors pertaining to readily isolable constituent relationships, i.e. relationships between specific words and expressions within the sentence;
- meanings embedded in more complex propositional structures, corresponding to errors of 'satisficing',¹³ where the meaning hypothesis is constructed on the basis of incomplete or inattentive reading;

¹³The term 'satisficing', a portmanteau of 'satisfy' and 'sacrifice', was originally coined by Herbert A. Simon to describe behaviour in situations where the optimal solution is hard to find (Simon 1956).

- meanings derived from background knowledge, corresponding to invocation of, on a local level, semantically plausible but, on a more global level, situationally incorrect frames.

This simple four-way subcategorisation of comprehension errors gives us a very convenient way of conceptualising the nature and scale of the miscomprehension. We can think of the first two categories as ‘localised’ errors where the miscomprehension can be easily traced back to a specific lexeme or a specific bundle of constituents. Such errors are amenable to precise semantic analysis. The last two categories are ‘delocalised’ errors, where the miscomprehension occurs on some bigger scale, and comes down to failures of attention and world-knowledge rather than linguistic competence. Trying to subject delocalised errors to equally detailed semantic analysis can be horrendously time-consuming and, ultimately, not very helpful. The issue is not one of recognising meanings, relationships, framing factors etc.; it is one of knowing and following sound reading and background research procedures. Given that, in an educational setting, part of the problem could well be lack of confidence, the dread of having to unravel something intimidatingly big and complicated, presenting the student a long list of individual linguistic errors, all of which seem to have occurred within a dozen or so words, is likely to be counter-productive.

2.4.7.1.1 Simple concept errors In Garbovsky’s framework, simple concept errors are errors of denotation where the translator has misunderstood what a particular lexical item stands for out in the extralinguistic world.

As an example, Garbovsky looks at translation of the word *абрикосовая* [abrikosovaja] {apricot:ADJ} in the opening scene of Bulgakov’s *Master and Margarita*. In this context, the word is an elliptical contraction of *абрикосковая вода* [abrikosovaja voda] {apricot water}, a fruit-flavoured fizzy drink. Garbovsky points out that French and English translators have used expressions that refer to *juice* squeezed directly from the fruit, rather than a *soda* made by carbonating a dilute solution of fruit syrup. Juice is generally thicker and not fizzy, unless fermented.

In Garbovsky’s view, this detail becomes consequential, because it causes a

coherence issue two sentences later, where Bulgakov talks about *обильная жёлтая пена* [*obil'naja želtaja pena*] {*plentiful yellow foam*} on top of the drink. This detail, preserved in the translations that Garbovskiy looks at, appears incongruent, because fruit juice (unlike soda) does not usually form a head of foam. The reader is forced to look for plausible implicatures: maybe the juice has fermented in the heat or is, in fact, a magic potion — both readings are hypothetically viable in the context of *Master and Margarita* but, according to Garbovsky, incorrect.

Garbovsky believes that the authorial intention here is to create a thoroughly mundane situation, and the apparent incongruity detracts from that. Whether his reading of the text is correct in this respect is a moot point. Bulgakov may have deliberately left room for 'phantasmagoric' interpretations. After all, regardless of what the drink is, there is something unnatural about yellow foam, and the apricot soda is the drink of last resort for Bulgakov's characters: the stall is out of every other beverage. Nonetheless, there is clearly a simple referential distortion present, albeit a fairly minor one: the ST talks about one kind of drink, and the TT talks about a slightly different kind, causing a minor internal coherence issue and, perhaps, nudging the reader towards an interpretation that would otherwise remain optional.

2.4.7.1.2 Complex concept errors These are the errors that happen not at the level of individual words and concepts but at the level of relationships between them. Here, Garbovsky looks at another expression from the same passage in *Master and Margarita*:

(27) **ST (Ru):**

<i>шляпа</i>	<i>пирожком</i>
šljapa	pirožkom
brimmed.hat	pastie:INST

a hat that resembles a pastie

This expression contains a simile, a comparison of one object to another. It refers to a hat with a pinched fold along the top, which makes it look a little like a Russian pastie (*пирожок* [*pirozhek*] {*little pie; pastie*}). This expression is used to refer to a variety of hats, but in Bulgakov's text it probably refers to something

similar to Gorbachev's famous trilby, a mark of solid respectability throughout the Soviet era.

At least one French translator struggled with the exact nature of the comparison (simple resemblance in shape). The French text quoted by Garbovsky reads as follows.

(28) **TT (Fr):**

il le tenait froissé dans sa main comme un de ces beignets
 he it held crumpled in his hand **like one of those beignets**
qu'on achète au coin des rues
 which.one buys on corner of streets

He held it in his hand, crumpled **like a beignet** that you buy on a street corner

where a *beignet* is a type of sweet fritter. The translator appears to have misread the ST syntax. Technically speaking, the ST is syntactically ambiguous. The instrumental case in Russian can be used to signpost means or manner, as in the case of:

(29) *Держи хвост пистолетом!*
 Derži xvost pistoletom!
 Keep tail pistol:INST!

Keep your tail like a pistol! {Keep your pecker up!}

Technically, the clause *шляпу пирожком нёс* [*šljapu pirožkom nės*] can be read either as {*he carried a brimmed hat that was like a pastie*} or as {*he carried a brimmed hat in the manner of a pastie*}. The latter interpretation would never occur to a native speaker, because *шляпа пирожком* is a lexicalised expression. However, in principle, such an interpretation would be grammatically and semantically viable.

2.4.7.1.3 Errors of conception These are errors that are difficult to reduce to the meaning of individual words or distinct relationships between them. Rather they pertain to 'entire conceptions and more complex logical constructions'. As an example, Garbovsky looks at a passage from a Russian translation of Michel Tournier's *Le Roi des aulnes*. The French text reads:

(30) **ST (Fr):**

l'homme qui mange son pain ne s'inquiète pas de la
 the.man who eats his bread NEG worries not about the
satisfaction qu'éprouve, ou n'éprouve pas, le pain à être
 satisfaction which.feels, or feels not, the bread at being
ainsi mangé
 thus eaten

the man eating his bread does not care about the satisfaction that the bread does or doesn't feel as a result of being eaten in this particular way

This passage, unambiguously a metaphor for the position of a selfish lover, was rendered by a Russian translator as:

(31) **TT (Ru):**

утоляя голод ломтем хлеба, мы равно не заботимся
 utoljaja golod lomtem xleba, my ravno ne zabotimsja
 sating hunger piece:INST bread:GEN, we equally not care
ни о собственном удовольствии, ни о том, чтобы
 ni o sobstvennom udovol'stvii, ni o tom, čtoby
 neither about own pleasure, nor about that
доставить его поглощаемой пище.
 dostavit' ego pogloščajemoj pišče.
 deliver it consumed:DAT food textsdat.

when sating hunger with a piece of bread, we care neither about our own pleasure, nor about giving pleasure to the food consumed.

On the level of logical form, (30) and (31) are very similar. Both can be summed up as:

(32) The man does NOT care that p AND q .

However, in (30):

(33) p = The bread feels pleasure. q = The bread does not feel pleasure.

while in (31):

(34) p = The bread feels pleasure. q = The man feels pleasure.

The most plausible explanation is that the translator has failed to reject a reasonable but ultimately incorrect meaning hypothesis constructed at a relatively early point. If we only read (30) up to the first comma, then

- (35) l'homme qui mange son pain ne s'inquiète pas de la satisfaction qu'éprouve.

can, in principle, be read as:

- (36) the man who eats his bread worries not about the satisfaction which he feels

Both of the verbs are in 3rd person plural ('mange', 's'inquiète'), and both appear to coordinate with the sentence subject ('l'homme'). Moreover, the belief that meaningless sex is unsatisfying to both parties is held by many people and seems like a reasonable belief to ascribe to a character in a novel. However, this interpretive hypothesis should have been rejected after parsing the rest of the sentence. The fact that it was not suggests that the sentence was never parsed fully, that the second half was merely 'mined' for important-looking content words without fully decoding the syntax.

If my projection of the reading and thinking patterns behind the errors in (28) and (31) is correct then we can be reasonably sure that the two translators were reading in markedly different ways. Two modes of reading L2 texts have been talked about in applied linguistics literature at least since Harold E. Palmer: intensive reading, a slow analytical mode of reading, and extensive reading, a faster and more enjoyable but also a less reliable mode of reading where the meanings of problematic words and structures are guessed from context (Nation 2016).

In the case of (28), we can easily track the error back to two specific linguistic features: a somewhat obscure compound lexeme and a site of syntactic ambiguity. This level of analytical precision is far harder to achieve in the case of (31), because an entire additional proposition has been constructed based on a loose assembly of individual word meanings and projections of the translator's world knowledge. Consequently, it is far easier to proceed on the level of generalised logical form — to identify what basic propositional elements the translator got right, and at what point they began to go wrong.

2.4.7.1.4 Situational errors Errors in this category span not just multiple linguistic features but multiple utterances. They are to do with the translators'

ability to make sense of the overall situation being talked about in the ST. In essence, they are errors arising from insufficient background knowledge.

Here Garbovsky invokes Minsky's concept of frames. The core of his argument is that frames are a product of cognitive experience, of us encountering certain things and thinking about them. Framing errors are thus a matter of the translator having insufficient domain-relevant cognitive experience or, in simpler terms, not enough background knowledge.

According to Garbovsky, three types of errors can arise from insufficient familiarity with the frame:

omissions: These are cases where the translator simply omits important information, because he does not know how to interpret the relevant passage.

'mechanical' calquing: These are cases where the translator only processes the text on the level of surface form without constructing a fully fledged meaning hypothesis. The TT is assembled from formally equivalent lexical items and grammatical relationships without a clear overall conception of the situation being referred to.

frame substitution: The translator constructs a 'best fit' meaning hypothesis using their available knowledge, in effect substituting unfamiliar elements with familiar ones.

As an example of a frame substitution error, Garbovsky examines another passage from the Russian translation of *Le Roi des aulnes*. Here the protagonist suffers an injury while carrying out a 'banal' car maintenance task that involves turning over the engine manually with a hand-crank. The engine kicks back, causing serious injury to the character's hand. The ST reads as follows:

(37) **ST (Fr):**

J'ai voulu en quelques tours de manivelle dégommer
 I'd wanted with a.few turns of hand-crank to.loosen/dislodge
les segments d'un moteur que ses batteries ne seraient pas
 the piston.rings of.a motor which its batteries NEG
parvenues à ranimer.
 would not manage

Un retour de manivelle m'a surpris
to reanimate. A return of the hand-crank

There was not enough power in the batteries to turn over the engine. I wanted to loosen the stuck piston rings with a few turns of the hand-crank. The kick-back caught me by surprise

The corresponding passage in Russian reads as follows:

(38) TT (Ru):

Вооружившись гаечным ключом, я пытался отвернуть
Vooruživšis' gaečnym ključom, ja pytalsja otvernut'
Having.armed.myself wrench:INST, I was.trying to.unscrew

гайки в навек заглошем моторе.
gajki v navek zagloššem motore.
nuts in forever stalled engine.

Очередной поворот оказался роковым
Očerednoj povорот okazalsja rokovym
Another turn proved fateful

Having armed myself with a wrench, I was trying to undo the nuts in the forever stalled engine. One more turn proved fateful

There are numerous issues here. For a start, two technical terms, *manivelle* {*hand-crank*} and *segments d'un moteur* {*piston rings*} are interpreted incorrectly as 'wrench' and 'nuts'. The mechanical fault also sounds much more serious in the TT than in the ST: the engine is described as *forever stalled*, and it sounds like the protagonist is trying to take it apart — a major intervention. The translator also interprets *retour* {*return*} as *another turn*, i.e. continuing circular motion in the same direction as before, whereas, in this particular case, it means 'kick-back', i.e. sudden motion in the opposite direction.

Clearly, the picture that the translator had in mind was significantly different to what Tournier himself had in mind. The most plausible explanation is that the translator was completely unfamiliar with the procedure that was being described and invoked a more general frame that we might loosely call 'mechanic at work': a person working on a prototypical mechanical object (a car) wields a prototypical mechanic's tool (a wrench) and manipulates a prototypical mechanical part (a nut); something has seized up, and, therefore, the operation required considerable physical exertion, and the mechanic eventually injures himself through over-strain.

This picture is internally coherent, but it is also inaccurate and causes various problems down the line. It is not very clear what exactly the character is doing and why. It is difficult to think of a *banal* procedure that would involve undoing seized nuts on a car engine. It is hard to understand how the injury described in the text — ruptured ligaments in the palm — could come about as a result of trying to loosen some nuts with a wrench. Finally, we lose the image of the engine coming to life and injuring the mechanic, which carries significance as a metaphor. Over the course of the story, the character's sexual proclivities and his flirtation with the Nazi ideology 'come to life' and 'kick back' in various ways.

Whether frame replacement errors are truly an independent category is a moot point. After all, not knowing what kind of drinks were commonly sold on the street in the USSR or what kind of hats were worn by functionaries are surely issues of background knowledge, a matter of familiarity with the relevant frames. The difference between this and the car repair scene in (37) is that the latter contains a cluster of several *related* simple concept errors that are all in some way connected to a wrongly invoked frame.

2.4.7.2 Types of TL re-expression issues (Shevnin 2009)

As mentioned earlier, Shevnin's typology has two top-level categories corresponding to ST comprehension and TL expression, which Shevnin calls impressive and expressive type errors, or agnonyms and paranormatives respectively. Shevnin further subdivides both agnonyms and paranormatives into lingua-cognitive, lingua-cultural and langue/parole errors, roughly corresponding to usage, framing, and norm, respectively.

A full description of the typology is to be found in Shevnin's monograph (2010), to which, unfortunately, I could not secure access. Here, I proceed from the description given in his 2009 paper, which only deals with the target-side half of the equation (Shevnin 2009a).

In Shevnin's sample of student translations, paranormatives constituted 75% of all translation errors. Agnonyms made up just 25%. This picture differs significantly from Kunilovskaya's 60%/40% split (see section 2.4.6), suggesting that Shevnin's conception of where the form/content boundary lies might be

different to Kunilovskaya's, or that his notions of what constitutes acceptable usage are more restrictive, or, indeed, that his notions of what constitutes adequate equivalence are more permissive.

2.4.7.2.1 Lingua-cognitive paranormatives Shevnin further subdivides this category of target-side usage errors into:

- type 1: errors involving infringement of TL combinability restrictions, and
- type 2: errors involving TL paronymy — mistaken use of a TL word that looks or sounds similar to the one that should have been used.

Combinability (type 1) issues are further subdivided into

- lexical, those to do with combinability of content words with other content words, and
- grammatical, those to do with conventions pertaining to choice of preposition, case governance, and coordination.

It should be pointed out that grammatical errors that fall into this category are not cases of actual ungrammaticality but rather what we would call 'awkward' phrasing, where rules of grammar are observed but, for example, a different preposition is used to what we would normally use in this context. One example Shevnin gives is *в выборах* [*v vyborax*] {lit.: in elections} as opposed to *на выборах* [*na vyborax*] {lit.: on elections}. Both versions are grammatically sound, in that the noun case is right for the preposition, and both prepositions are frequently used to mark participation in or belonging to events; however, in Russian the second option is conventionally regarded as correct.

Paronymy-related (type 2) issues are possibly the most interesting aspect of Shevnin's typology, insofar as they are rarely if at all spoken about in anglophone translation studies. Paronyms are words that look or sound similar but differ radically in meaning, e.g. *effect/affect* in English. One example he gives is translations of 'intolerable' as *нетерпимый* [*neterpimyj*] {intolerant} rather than *нестерпимый* [*nesterpimyj*] {intolerable}.

It should be noted that, in some cases, it is not entirely clear whether source-side or target-side paronymy is in play. One example given by Shevnin is the translation of *militant students* as *военные студенты* [*voennye studenty*] {*military students*}, rather than *воинствующие студенты* [*voinstvujučie studenty*] {*militant students*}. Here, it seems more likely that the confusion is between *militant* and *military* in English rather than the much more phonetically and graphologically dissimilar *военные* [*voennye*] and *воинствующие* [*voinstvujučie*] in Russian.

2.4.7.2.2 Lingua-cultural paranormatives Lingua-cultural paranormatives are aptness-related issues — essentially, issues of register and genre.

2.4.7.2.3 Langue/parole paranormatives Langue/parole paranormatives are what we might describe as ‘blunders’ or Pym’s ‘binary’ errors (1992): lapses of basic grammaticality (spelling errors, case/number/gender miscoordination, internal confusion with respect to tense/aspect/mood etc.) and logical coherence (e.g. tautology and contradiction), false friends and punctuation errors. These are the kind of issues that can often be easily spotted without reference to the ST.

It is interesting that the ‘hard’ norms, which fall under the remit of langue/parole paranormatives, cover both the rules of morphosyntactic selection/coordination, infringement of which is likely to be perceived as actually ungrammatical by most speakers, and the more arbitrary conventions of spelling and punctuation, which can be viewed as matters of hygiene. What they all have in common is that they are the kind of errors that are unlikely to be forgiven by a typical educated Russian reader. Departures from these norms and patterns of established usage, unless executed for some clearly deliberate effect, greatly damage the reader’s perception of the author’s prestige and credibility. In the context of mainstream russophone culture, ‘hygiene’ errors, even when they result in no significant distortion of ST meaning or and no real damage to TT comprehensibility, are, nonetheless, liable to be very damaging to communicative function — they radically alter tenor.

2.4.7.3 Types of lexical traps (Latyshev 2005)

Latyshev lists five types of lexical traps or five mechanisms that commonly derail the translator's search for situationally viable TL equivalents of SL words and phrases: false friends, derivational traps, forgotten meanings, figurative lexemes and significantly different toponyms.

2.4.7.3.1 False friends This is the most familiar type of trap. Here, the SL and TL have clearly cognate lexemes that originally entered either one or both of the languages as borrowings and have significantly diverged in meaning. For example:

- (39) a. **Ru:** батарея [*batareja*] {a household radiator}
En: battery {a device for generating electricity}
- b. **Ru:** аккуратный [*akkuratnyj*] {neat}
En: accurate {precise}

2.4.7.3.2 Derivational traps This refers to situations where the translator is misled by commonly accepted equivalence relationships between SL and TL morphemes.

Words and expressions with the same referents can have semantically different derivations. Consider this example given by Latyshev (Latyshev 2005, p. 189):

- (40) **Ru:** портной [*portnoj*] {tailor} – derived from *порты* [*porty*] {trousers}; a person who makes trousers
De: Schneider {tailor} – derived from *zu schneiden* {to cut}; a person who cuts
Bg: шивач [*šivač*] {tailor} – derived from *шить* [*šija*] {to sew}; a person who sews

And, conversely, words and expressions with semantically similar derivation can have different referential meanings. Here Latyshev illustrates the general principle using some football terms (*ibid.*, p. 189). He draws his examples from Russian and German, but, for the sake of convenience, we can substitute the German terms for English ones, which are derivationally and semantically very similar:

- (41) **En:**
free kick – a generic term that covers both direct and indirect free kicks
Ru:
свободный удар [*svobodnyj udar*] {*free strike*} – a term that refers specifically to indirect free kicks
Ru:
штрафной удар [*štrafnoj udar*] {*penalty kick*} – a term that refers specifically to direct free kicks

According to Latyshev, translators most commonly fall prey to derivational traps when dealing with domain terminology, where the same thing is described in different, though in retrospect explicable, ways. He lists a slew of military terms in Russian and German, where literal translation would constitute a departure from established usage. For example (*ibid.*, p. 191):

- (42) **De:**
Verband {*union, association*} – usually a battalion or a regiment, homogeneous in terms of troop type
Ru:
объединение [*ob"edinenie*] {*union, association*} – a large mixed-forces battle group, equivalent to German *Grossverband*
Ru:
подразделение [*podrazdelenie*] {*subdivision*} – a smaller homogeneous unit up to a battalion, approximately equivalent to German *Verband*

2.4.7.3.3 Forgotten meanings This refers to situations where a somewhat obscure meaning of a polysemous word is lost from sight and becomes substituted for a more common one.

Latyshev retells the following rather amusing story originally recorded by Chukovsky (2001). In a text by the French writer Charles-Louis Philippe, a young woman living in Paris sends money back to her grandfather in some provincial village. The money is accompanied by a note, which, in one Russian version, contains some unexpected advice (Latyshev 2005, p. 192):

- (43) **TT (Ru):**
- Сходи на эти деньги к девочкам, чтобы не утруждать*
Sxodi na èti den'gi k devočkam, čtoby ne utruždat'
Go with this money to girls, so.as not to.trouble
- бабушку.*
babušku.
grandma.

Use this money to go to the girls, so you don't have to trouble grandma.

In Russian, this utterance reads as an unambiguous instruction to go to a brothel. The Russian translator, Valentin Smetanich, was working from a German translation of Phillippe's text rather than the French original, and the problematic word was *Mädchen*, which, in this case, meant {*housemaid*}, an obscure meaning compared to the more common {*young woman*} or {*girlfriend*}. What makes this story particularly instructive, is that this one-off lexical issue led the translator to reframe the character as a whole. He took it as a signal of the character's 'fall', an innocent country girl being corrupted by life in Paris, which, in turn, prompted him to give her subsequent appearances in the text overtones of breezy cynicism. Clearly a case of the translator invoking the popular narrative template of [country girl leaves home and is corrupted] coupled to the ethnic stereotype of [the licentious French and their decadent capital]. Both of these schemas would have been very much in circulation at the time. To be fair to Smetanich, he realised his mistake when he came to read the French text.

It is not clear to what extent (43) is a case of real polysemy rather than metaphoric/metonymic use. We can certainly imagine a phrase like *employ the services of a girl* being used in a 20th century English text to talk about hiring a typist, a secretary, an *au pair* — all jobs that were typically done by unmarried young women at the time. At the same time, the word *girl*, at that point, never came to be truly synonymous with *typist* or *secretary*. This is an instance of context-bound interpretive resemblance rather than complete descriptive equivalence, i.e. metonymy rather than synonymy:

(44)

You should hire a girl.

RESEMBLES: You should hire a housemaid.

BECAUSE: It is mostly young women that work as housemaids.

If, on the other hand, we parse *girl* as an instance of descriptive rather than interpretive use, then we trigger an entirely different chain of reasoning:

(45) You should hire a girl.

ENTAILS: You should pay for the services of a young woman.

BECAUSE: Hiring means paying for services, and, in the context of a financial transaction, *girl* probably refers to a young woman, not a female child.

Here, being young and female appear to be the sole salient characteristics of the prospective hireling. The nature of the services is left unspecified. A reader who is looking for greatest possible contextual effects (see section 2.1.2) is likely to draw two conclusions: firstly, femaleness and youth must be closely linked to the nature of the service; secondly, the services must be such that the author either does not want to or does not consider it necessary to identify them explicitly. The most logical frame to invoke for further interpretation seems to be [sex work] rather than [domestic help].

Nonetheless, the basic thrust of Latyshev's argument — that certain uses of a word, be they descriptive or interpretive, can simply be forgotten about by the translator — is sound.

2.4.7.3.4 Figurative lexemes Lexicalised 'dead' figurative expressions are extremely common. We *bleed* radiators and *balance* accounts, drinks are *strong* or *weak*, tempers are *even* and *sweet*, waters are *calm* etc. These uses are so unremarkable that few people think of them as idiomatic. Rather we tend to think of them as quirky collocations. There are also more noticeable idioms: *cat's pyjamas*, *dog's breakfast*, *to play a blinder*, *to pass with flying colours*, *to clock somebody one* etc. Predictably, patterns of metaphoric use and hence the dead and dying metaphors and metonyms that make up the bulk of our quirky idioms differ greatly from one language to the next. Consequently, expressions like this are where literal translation commonly fails, either by resulting in a very marked TL utterances that can, nonetheless, still be parsed as viable metaphors (much to the delight of foreignising translators), or, in the worst cases, by resulting in utterances that are wholly opaque to the target-side reader.

2.4.7.3.5 Significantly different toponyms Geographical names that look and sound significantly different in the SL and TL are another common sticking point, according to Latyshev. One such case is discussed further below (see example (47) in section 2.4.7.4.1). There, a Russian translator transliterates the English name of the river Danube as *Дануб* [*Danub*] instead of using the established Russian name *Дунай* [*Dunaj*]. The two are sufficiently different for the transliterated version to be unrecognisable to most Russian-speakers.

2.4.7.4 Types of incoherence (Buzadzhi et al. 2009)

Like norm/usage issues, incoherence issues can be spotted without reference to the ST. They are instances of obvious contradiction or non-sense — utterances that clash with our knowledge of the world, the subject field, the specific situation being talked about, or our fundamental understanding of how words are used.

Buzadzhi et al. (2009) have developed a useful system for classifying such issues. They divide them into two broad categories: subject logic and concept logic. This distinction parallels the one between synthetic and analytic statements — statements that are true or false in virtue of contingent states of affairs (e.g. Cats hunt mice) vs. statements that are true or false in virtue of the conventional meanings of words (e.g. Cats are animals). Thus subject logic issues are to do with language that is somehow out of line with established frames, while concept logic issues are to do with basic interpretability.

2.4.7.4.1 Subject logic Subject logic issues generate a contradiction with some contingent state of affairs, something we know to be true about the world. The following example is given by Kalinin & Bikhmulina (2017):

(46) a. **TT (Ru):**

Издательства, объявившие об открытии бозона,
 Izdatel'stva, ob"javivšie ob otkrytii bozona,
 Publishers, which.announced about discovery boson:GEN,
указывали сотни авторов.
 ukazyvali sotni avtorov.
 indicated hundreds authors:GEN.

The publishers that announced the discovery of the boson listed hundreds of authors.

b. **TT (Ru):**

газеты с указанием полдюжины или больше сейчас
 gazety s ukazaniem poldjužiny ili bol'she sejčas
 newspaper with indication half-dozen:GEN or more in
во многих дисциплинах скорее правило
 vo mnogix disciplinax skoree pravilo
 many discipline sooner rule

newspapers indicating half a dozen or more [authors] are now, more likely, the norm in many disciplines

These passages seem odd for a number of reasons. Firstly, announcements about scientific discoveries are normally thought of as something delivered by researchers or, metonymically, by their papers, but not by publishers. Secondly, newspapers are not a common medium of professional communication in the sciences. Thirdly, we rarely think of newspapers as co-authored texts; rather we tend to conceptualise them as collections of single-author texts. Fourthly, half a dozen or so authors seems like a remarkably low rather than a remarkably high number of contributors to a newspaper.

Subject logic issues can be further separated into:

general: those pertaining to general background knowledge;

field-specific: those pertaining to field-specific knowledge;

situational: those pertaining to the understanding of a specific situation.

Examples of all three can be found in Boguslavskaya (2014).

2.4.7.4.1.1 General Here is an example of a general subject logic error (ibid.):

(47) TT (Ru):

<i>Такова была его отвага, что в 1462 году он переправился</i>
<i>Takova byla ego otvaga, čto v 1462 godu on perepravilsja</i>
<i>Such was his bravery, that in 1462 year he crossed</i>
<i>через Данубу и совершил ночью конный набег на лагерь</i>
<i>čerez Danubu i soveršil noč'ju konnyj nabeg na lager'</i>
<i>over Danub and made by night horseback raid on camp</i>
<i>самого султана Мехмеда Второго [...]</i>
<i>samogo sultana Mexmeda Vtorogo [...]</i>
<i>of very Sultan Mehmed Second [...]</i>

Such was his bravery that in 1462 he crossed the Danub¹⁴ and launched a horseback raid against the camp of the Sultan Mehmed II himself [...]

The issue here is that, instead of the established Russian name of the river Danube (Дунай [Dunaj]) the translator uses a transliteration of the its English name (Дануб

¹⁴This spelling is a back-transliteration from Russian. See text for discussion.

[*Danub*]). This version of the name is not readily recognisable to most Russian-speakers. The established name of this river and its approximate geographical location (which, in this case, ties into a broader narrative) belongs to a body of general knowledge that educated Russian adults are expected to have, much as educated British adults are expected to know roughly where Norway is, and the fact that, in English, it is called *Norway* rather than *Norge*.

The earlier discussed issues in (46a) and (46b) can also be viewed as matters of general subject logic, in that they involve aspects of what we can reasonably expect to be part of an educated Russian (and British) adult's general knowledge about scientists and newspapers.

2.4.7.4.1.2 Field-specific Here is an example of a field-specific subject logic error (Boguslavskaya 2014):

(48) **TT (Ru):**

Мы сидели на каменной скамье, высеченной прямо в стене
 Мы sideli na kamennoj skam'e, vysečennoj prjamo v stene
 We sat on stone bench carved right in wall
 одного из чудесных старинных "палаццо"
 odnogo iz čudesnyx starinnyx "palacco"
 of one of wonderful antique "palazzi"

We sat on a stone bench carved right into the wall of one of the wonderful old palazzi

As Boguslavskaya points out, to a person who has a reasonable conception of what a typical Italian palazzo looks like, such an architectural detail seems implausible. Firstly, it is not clear how a usable bench could be carved into a wall, unless that wall is very thick, like the wall of a castle — much thicker than we would expect the walls of a fancy city mansion to be. Secondly, walls that have niches are usually constructed with those niches already in place. Carving them out at a later point seems unnecessarily troublesome. And, indeed, the ST reads:

(49) We were sitting on a stone bench that projected from one of the fine old palazzi

This situation seems more plausible. However, the considerations themselves rely on a body of somewhat specialised knowledge.

2.4.7.4.1.3 Situational Here is an example of a situational subject logic error (ibid.):

(50) TT (Ru):

<i>Отец</i>	<i>пил</i>	<i>темное</i>	<i>красное</i>	<i>вино</i>	<i>из</i>	<i>бутылки</i>	<i>без</i>
Otec	pil	temnoe	krasnoe	vino	iz	butylki	bez
Father	drank	dark	red	wine	out of	bottle	without

наклейки, купленное за сантимы, и после каждой трапезы
 naklejki, kuplennoe za santimy, i posle každoj trapezy
 label, bought for centimes, and after each meal

тщательно затыкал бутылку пробкой и оборачивал
 tščatel'no zatykal butyl' probkoj i oboračival
 carefully plugged bottle with cork and wrapped

салфеткой.
 salfetkoj.
 with napkin

Father drank dark red wine, bought for centimes, straight from the bottle; and after each meal he would carefully cork the bottle and wrap it in a napkin

Without context, this passage may seem a little quirky but, ultimately, pretty unremarkable. We may ask ourselves, how come a person who drinks cheap wine out of the bottle bothers to re-cork the bottle and wrap it in a napkin, but people have stranger affectations than that. Who knows, perhaps some statement of a personal ideology that centres on the contradictions between civilisation and savagery. None of this seems to be beyond the realms of possibility — unless that is we take this sentence within the context of the book it is taken from, where the character in question comes across as an extremely fastidious gentleman, the last person to drink anything out of the bottle. The image of him doing so does not come into conflict with our general knowledge, nor with the body of knowledge within some specialised field of human activity, but it does violate the expectations set up within that particular text world. What we envisage comes into conflict with what we know about a specific person inhabiting a specific situation.

Buzadzhi's subject logic concerns world knowledge that is, like all articulated

knowledge, in one way or another interpretable via the application of frames. However, we should not mistake his tripartite division of it into general, field-specific and situational for a taxonomy of frames. Unlike Da Vega (Vega 1985) and Rojo Lopez (Rojo López 2004), Buzadzhi is not concerned with classifying knowledge structures by content and structure so much as how readily they can be accessed by an average reader: what kind of contradictions and deviations from actual states of affairs can be spotted by using general knowledge alone; what kind require us to do some research; what kind cannot be spotted without access to highly situation-bound information.

2.4.7.4.2 Concept logic Concept logic issues generate contradictions or tautologies on a semantic level. One classic examples is Chomsky's famous:

(51) Colourless green ideas sleep furiously.

There seems to be no possible world where this utterance can be read literally. Abstract entities like ideas cannot have the attribute of colour/colourlessness, at least not in the literal sense. And, similarly, the action of sleeping, in its literal sense, requires an animate agent. The contradictions seem to operate on an analytic rather than a synthetic level, or the level of the mental dictionary rather than the mental encyclopaedia.

Here is another example from Kalinin and Bikmulina (2017):

(52) **TT (Ru):**

<i>Возможно</i>	<i>однажды</i>	<i>это произойдёт</i>	<i>в будущем</i>
Vozmožno	odnaždy	èto proizojdèt	v buduščem
Maybe	at some point in future	this will happen	in future
	<i>снова.</i>		
	sнова.		
	again.		

Maybe at some point in future this will happen again in future.

There is a tautology here. The word 'однажды'|'odnaždy' here means {at some point in future}. It is difficult to make sense of the repetition of {in future}. A world where something happens at some point in future in future (repetition deliberate) does not seem to be imaginable.

2.4.7.4.3 Ambiguous cases As ever, a certain amount of uncertainty stems from the ambiguities built into language itself. In some cases, whether an assessor chooses to see some textual feature as a concept logic error (i.e. essentially non-sensical) comes down to what amount of cognitive effort they believe the hypothetical target reader should be willing to invest into decoding the utterance. Let us consider a specific case given by Kunilovskaya (Kunilovskaya 2016). The following is a student translation of an excerpt from a text about De Beers:

(53) a. **ST (En):**

America outlawed the company, effectively preventing it from opening its own outlets in the United States.

b. **TT (Ru):**

*Американское правительство [...] обвинило её в нарушении
 Amerikanskoje pravitel'stvo [...] obvinilo её v narušenii
 American government [...] accused it of breaches
 закона, тем самым не позволив ей открывать филиалы
 zakona, tem samym ne pozvoliv ej otkryvat' filialy
 of law, thus not permitting it to open branches
 в Соединённых Штатах.
 v Soedinënykh Štatax.
 in United States.*

The US government [...] accused it [the company] of breaking the law, thus not allowing it to open branches in the United States

Firstly, let us point out that this translation is wrong on a straightforwardly propositional level. The word *outlawed* in the ST is translated as *обвинило её в нарушении закона* [*obvinilo её v narušenii zakona*] {*accused it of breaking the law*}. Clearly, outlawing and accusation of law-breaking are not the same.

However, Kunilovskaya draws our attention to a different problem: the apparent contradiction between the accusation and the phrase *тем самым не позволив* [*tem samym ne pozvoliv*] {*thus not permitting*}. Kunilovskaya sees this as an example of coherence & cohesion issue — the student has ‘ignore[ed] extralinguistic presuppositions and contradict[ed] the logic of the world’. The crux of the problem is the polysemic verb *позволить* [*pozvolit'*], which is close in meaning to the English *to allow/to permit* and can similarly be interpreted as

referring either to the act of granting permission (Mumsnet 2023):

(54) Are your young teens allowed [to go] out after dark?

or to general non-hindrance (Constitutional Rights Foundation 2000):

(55) Back in my college days I wondered how people allowed the Holocaust to happen.

Kunilovskaya's own back-translation of (53b) unambiguously settles on the narrower sense of the word:

(56) accused it of breaking the law, and by doing it **forbade** opening branches in the USA

In other words, Kunilovskaya sees the issue as one of concept logic: a direct contradiction on the level of literal meanings: *accusation* \neq *forbidding*. However, the student's phrasing does allow for a more cooperative interpretation, where the accusation has the effect of in some way denying De Beers the possibility of opening branches in the US without making it explicitly illegal for the company to do so. Again, let us stress that this is not what actually happened in real life, but such a course of events is not unimaginable. For example, it could be that branches cannot be opened by a company that is currently under investigation. Whether this does or does not match actual states of affairs is the domain of specialist legal knowledge. The issue is now one of field-specific subject logic rather than concept logic.

Thus, if read more charitably, the student's translation is false but not automatically non-sensical. However, the student's word choice is still less than ideal. Given the legal context, the referential ambiguity of 'not allowing' could very well be initially resolved in favour of *{preventing by force of law}*. The reader would then experience a moment of confusion before, hopefully, putting some cognitive effort into looking for alternative interpretations and arriving at the more plausible one — an effect similar to the ill-famed 'garden path' sentences (Pinker 2014). So the student's lexical choice does precipitate a cohesion issue born of a combination of semantics (polysemy) and pragmatics (situational priming).

The question in cases like (53b) is, ultimately, whether the assessor believes that the hypothetical target reader is likely to invest the extra time and cognitive effort into resolving the ambiguity or simply abandon attempts to make sense of this particular passage.

2.4.8 Translation error typologies: a summary

Assuming the sample above is reasonably representative, several things can now be said about existing typologies.

The conceptual division between form and content — two very abstract concepts, around which many typologies are organised — is not very stable and gives rise to a significant number of cases where, at this topmost level, categorisation is very uncertain — individual errors, or even whole subcategories of errors, appear to belong in both categories. Attempting to separate stylistic issues, i.e. observance of situational and genre-specific norm and usage, from the ‘mechanics’ of the language, i.e. observance of the more generally applicable norm and usage, gives rise to similar problems. Consequently, it is preferable to use smaller and less abstract conceptual super-categories, and to make them more directly related to the description of the linguistic phenomena involved.

A distinction between process and product-oriented perspectives, on the other hand, can be maintained much more easily, and it is worth doing so. It is useful to separate goals from procedures and, at the same time, to understand that the latter are always informed by the former. ‘Too literal’ is not an error *per se*, because non-literality is rarely a goal in itself. The question is ‘too literal’ for what?

Some frameworks tend towards treating language as a set of logical equations, with words, expressions and clauses functioning as discrete variables and operators (Gouadec 1981, Shevnin 2010), or as neat sets of hierarchically arranged propositions (Williams 2001). In other words, they attempt to treat natural languages as formal ones.

While some frameworks, like AWEv, provide quite granular facilities for logging grammatical features, none, to my knowledge, provide similarly granular facilities for analysing semantic relations. AWEv does provide a lexis/semantics category, under which we find a catch-all semantic relations subcategory, but there is no

detail beyond that. To my knowledge, no typology attempts to tease apart the different semantic relationships.

Many frameworks provide scales for quantifying the seriousness of errors. The number of tiers on such scales varies between two (SICAL) and eight (AWEv), with the majority opting for between three and five. While such ratings are inevitably somewhat subjective, their benefit is obvious. Perhaps the most important information the typological approach can deliver is which errors are both common and serious.

Inter-rater agreement with respect to locus, type and seriousness of issues is heavily dependent on training. Where training cannot be provided in real time, we can attempt to maximise future-compatibility by keeping the descriptions of error categories short and examples of actual errors plentiful.

To my knowledge, no typology to date has provides a scale for recording the levels of confidence attached to individual error logging and rating decisions.

Similarly, to my knowledge, no typology to date has provided a scale for recording the perceived difficulty of translation problems.

2.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I first attempted to lay out the theoretical foundations of a mentalistic perspective on translation. Translation, in this picture, is a retelling of the contents of the ST for members of another speaker community, whose knowledge structures differ significantly from those of the SL speaker community but, nonetheless, have some islands of similarity that can be expanded.

I then tried to define translation in terms of ST-TT similarity. I identified three broad classes of similarity: similarity of isolated linguistic features, similarity of compositional meaning, and similarity of communicative function.

After that, I discussed common approaches to understanding and quantifying translation quality. I identified four ways of construing quality: as equivalence, as fitness for purpose, as conformance to expectation, and as similarity to a 'gold standard'.

I then described and discussed the relative merits of the four corresponding

methodological families of translation quality assessment.

Finally, I looked at some features present in a set of 16 existing error typologies and given a summary of the current state of the field.

Chapter 3

Methods

In this chapter, I explain how the data used within this study were collected.

In section 3.1, I describe the data collection tool. A new manual tagger intended specifically for working with ST-TT pairs was developed over the course of this project. I refer to it as MANTRA (MANual TRAnslation Annotator). I summarise core functions of the tool, list the programming languages used for its development and explain why they were chosen. I describe the current storage arrangements and give a description of the database structure and the interface.

In section 3.2, I discuss data acquisition. I describe the course and the cohort that served as the main data source. I explain the decisions to to exclude creative translation from the study and to focus on natural and social sciences. I give a summary of the collected data and state what part of them has been processed fully and used for analysis within this study. Finally, I give a detailed description of the data collection procedures, the ultimate goal of which was to implement the principles of *ad hoc* annotation outlined in section 1.3.3 of Chapter 1.

3.1 Data-collection tool (MANTRA)

This section describes MANTRA, a tool for cataloguing and annotating translation issues developed over the course of this project. Unlike most taggers, which are intended for working with stand-alone texts, MANTRA is intended for working with pairs of texts. The rationale is that it is important to know not only the location and composition of the problematic parts of the TT but also the location

and composition of the corresponding parts of the ST.

In MANTRA, a recorded issue is a bundle of ST and TT snippets to which the user can attach tags and comments. This arrangement is similar to the pairing of ST and TT segments in CAT tools — many commercial CAT tools allow paired ST and TT segments to be tagged and commented. There is, however, one significant difference. CAT tools allow only one-to-one pairing. Any given ST segment will have one and only one corresponding TT segment. MANTRA, on the other hand, allows many-to-many pairing. Multiple snippets from both the ST and the TT can be grouped together. This design decision was taken with several possible uses in mind:

1. Longer and shorter excerpts can be viewed side by side. The specific word or phrase constituting some problematic feature can be displayed next to the complete sentence where that feature occurs and perhaps one or two other sentences for context.
2. It is possible to draw attention to two or more words or phrases in different parts of a sentence.
3. It is possible to examine what Nord (Nord 1997) calls ‘vertical translation units’, i.e. collections of multiple functionally related features spread across the text, for example multiple markers of a particular register. In such cases, what matters is not the resemblance between local ST and TT semantics but the existence of disperse collections of ST and TT features that are broadly functionally similar.
4. It is also possible to group together recurring errors, for example a recurring mistranslation of a particular term.

In this chapter, to avoid confusion, I shall, from this point onwards, frequently refer to STs and TTs as ‘documents’. The word ‘text’, when seen on its own, should be understood as referring to a data format. In this sense, ‘text’ stands in opposition to other data formats, such as numbers, pictures, HTML etc. The reader should bear in mind that this forces us to use the word ‘document’ rather loosely. The STs used in this study do not constitute documents in the strict sense of being

complete genre-conformant communicative acts, and, consequently, neither do the TTs. Strictly speaking, they are not documents but extended excerpts from documents.

The word ‘segment’, in the context of this chapter, should be read as synonymous with ‘snippet’.

The word ‘bundle’ in this chapter refers to a bundle of ST and TT snippets representing a specific translation issue. To make the logic of the system clearer, the word ‘issue’ is occasionally used as a stand-in for ‘bundle’. Thus ‘issue-level’ tags and comments are the ones that are attached to bundles of snippets rather than whole documents.

3.1.1 Core functions

In very general terms, MANTRA allows the user to harvest snippets from either a single document or a pair of documents. These snippets can then be grouped into bundles, tagged and commented. A bundle associated with a specific translation issue typically contains:

- the TT sentence where the crux of the issue is located;
- the corresponding ST sentence;
- one or more TT word or phrase pinpointing the crux of the issue;
- corresponding word(s) or phrase(s) from the ST;
- some tags;
- a comment.

Four tagging fields are currently built into MANTRA:

issue type: a specification of why a given feature is problematic from the perspective of a potential reader (free tagging);

issue cause: the likely mechanism by which the issue came about (free tagging);

duplicate status: whether a specific issue has already been identified elsewhere in the document (yes/no);

issue weight: to what extent a given issue impairs the communicative functionality of the document (integer between 1 and 4);

No data were systematically collected for issue causes during this study. The field was retained with future use in mind.

A separate field is provided for recording general comments and suggestion regarding each issue (free text).

MANTRA stores the following information:

- complete STs and TTs;
- the name or alias of each ST's or TT's author;
- the language of each ST or TT;
- names of projects to which multiple STs and TTs can be assigned (typically, one ST and several TTs).
- comments and tags attached to STs and TTs;
- snippets from STs and TTs;
- the provenance of each snippet (which ST or TT it comes from);
- belonging of snippets to bundles corresponding to specific issues;
- tags and comments attached to such bundles.

No systematic use was made of document-level tagging and commenting during this study. This set of features was also retained with future use in mind.

3.1.2 Programming languages

MANTRA was written in PHP + MySQL + JavaScript (with inclusions of JQuery). By comparison to Python, which was the other option under consideration, this setup set-up makes it somewhat easier to add multi-user capability. At present, MANTRA operates as a single-user system, but a transition to multi-user is envisaged.

3.1.3 Storage arrangements

At present, MANTRA runs on an isolated PC. Migration onto the University servers is envisaged in the immediate future.

3.1.4 Database structure

A visual schema of the MANTRA database is shown in Figure 3.1.

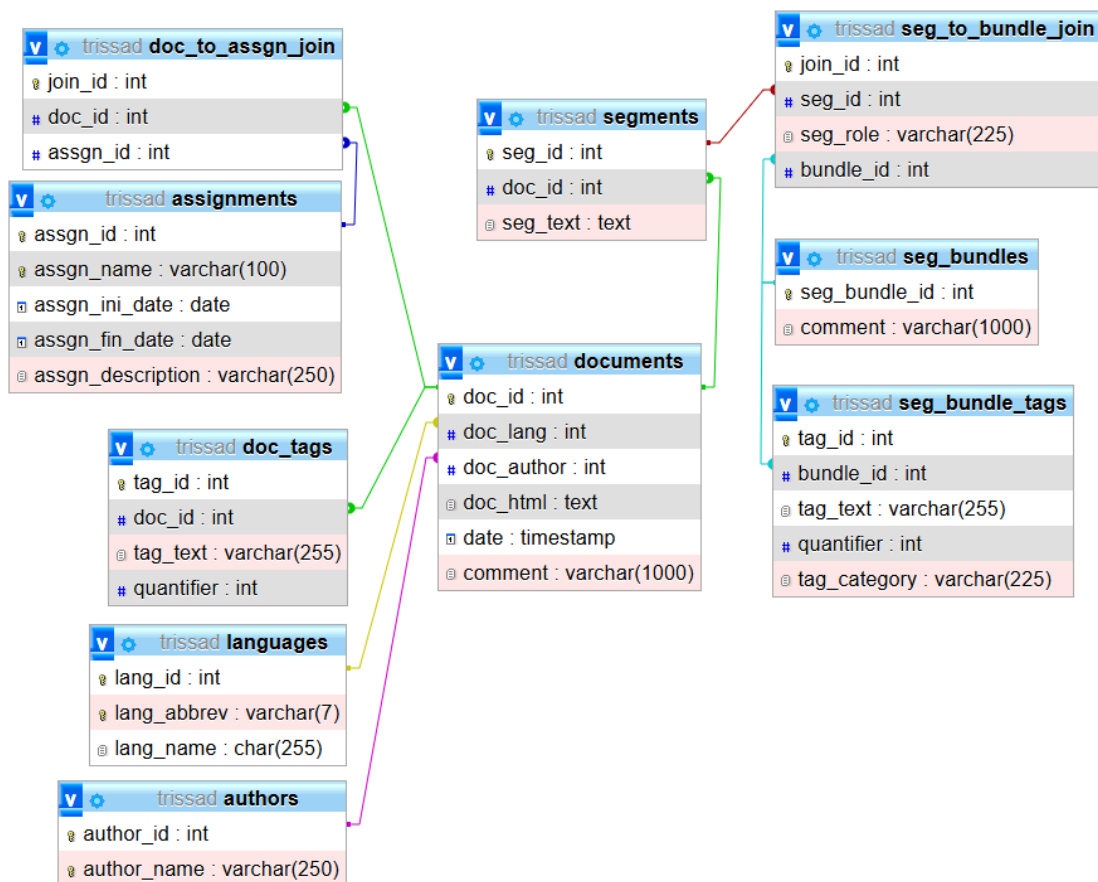


Figure 3.1: A visual schema of the MANTRA database.

Below I describe the tables individually in alphabetical order.

3.1.4.1 Table: assignments

As mentioned earlier, MANTRA allows us to group multiple document into assignments. The envisaged use case is that multiple translations of the same ST can be easily brought up and navigated between on the interface. The table contains:

- assignment ID;
- assignment name;
- assignment start date (not currently in use);
- assignment completion date (not currently in use);
- assignment description (not currently in use).

3.1.4.2 Table: authors

In this table we find information about authors. Only the following information is stored:

- author ID;
- author name.

In the case of students whose work was used in this study, an alias was stored in place of the real name.

3.1.4.3 Table: document

This table contains complete STs and TTs. The following information is stored.

- document ID;
- language ID;
- author ID;
- document content as HTML;
- a timestamp corresponding to when the document was first added to the database;
- document-level comment as plain text.

3.1.4.4 Table: doc_tags

As already mentioned, tags, like comments, can be document-level or issue-level. This table stores document-level comments. It contains:

- tag ID;
- document ID;
- tag text;
- integer quantifier.

3.1.4.5 Table: doc_to_assgn_join

This is a bridging table that links documents to assignments. It contains the following:

- join ID;
- document ID;
- assignment ID.

3.1.4.6 Table: languages

This table contains the languages currently available on the interface drop-down menus. The following information is stored:

- language ID;
- language name;
- language code (ISO639).

The list of languages is currently fixed. It is not possible to alter it via the interface. Changes require direct access to the database. The following options are currently available: Arabic, Chinese, Czech, English, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Thai, Ukrainian.

3.1.4.7 Table: segments

This table stores short snippets of ST and TT text. The table contains:

- snippet ID;
- document ID (the origin of the snippet);
- snippet text.

3.1.4.8 Table: seg_bundles

MANTRA allows ST and TT snippets to be grouped into bundles corresponding to distinct issues. This table stores the following information:

- bundle ID;
- bundle-level (i.e. issue-level) comment.

Database logic requires that a separate bridging table be maintained to connect bundle IDs to snippet IDs (see section 3.1.4.10 below).

3.1.4.9 Table: seg_bundle_tags

In this table we find the bundle-level (i.e. issue-level) tags. The table contains the following information:

- tag ID;
- bundle ID;
- tag text;
- integer quantifier;
- tag category — whether the tag in question describes issue type, issue cause, issues weight, or duplicate status.

3.1.4.10 Table: `seg_to_bundle_join`

This is a bridging table for connecting snippets to bundles. It contains the following:

- join ID;
- snippet ID;
- bundle ID
- snippet role — whether it is to be classed as source-side or target-side in the context of a specific issue.

3.1.4.11 A note concerning quantifiers

MANTRA requires both document-level and issue-level tags to be accompanied by integer quantifiers. These were originally conceived as a way to record levels of confidence associated with specific tagging decisions. However, this line of research was not pursued in the end. Nonetheless, the feature was retained, as one with many potential uses in the future. Its only systematic application during this project was in collecting issue weight data, i.e. estimations of the seriousness of errors. For this purpose a scale of 1 to 4 was used, with 1 being the least and 4 being the most serious (see further discussion in section 4.1.5)

3.1.5 Interface

MANTRA collects data using a browser interface. Functions are grouped into several expandable panels. Figure 3.2 shows the interface with all the panels collapsed.

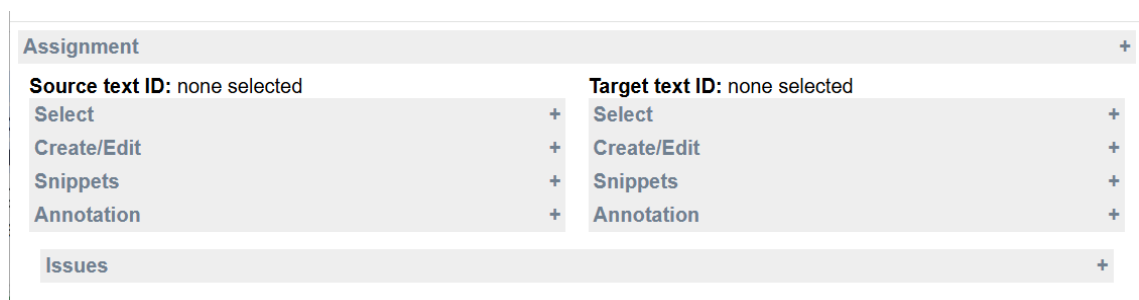


Figure 3.2: The MANTRA interface with all tabs collapsed.

3.1.5.1 Panel: Assignment

Figure 3.3 shows the Assignment panel expanded. A list of existing assignments is displayed on a drop-down list. This list acts as a filter. Changing the selection changes which documents are available in the Select panels.

New assignments can be created and existing ones can be deleted. The latter does not result in the deletion of the documents linked to the deleted assignment.

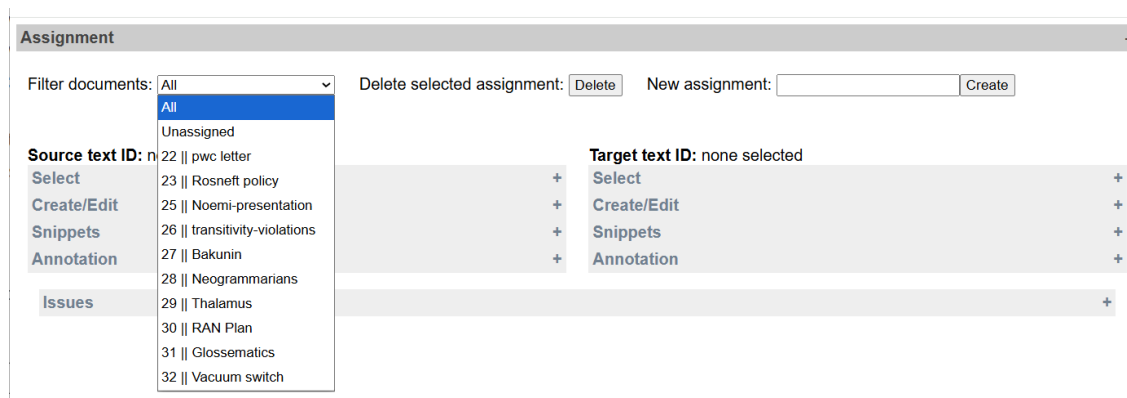


Figure 3.3: Assignments tab.

3.1.5.2 Panel: Select

Figure 3.4 shows the Select panels expanded. These panels control scrollable lists of documents that can be displayed and edited in the Create/Edit panel below.

Above the scrollable lists is a set of filters that can restrict which documents appear in the lists. Documents can be filtered by language, author, the presence of a specific search string, and various information relating to logged issues. We can choose to display only the documents for which issues with specific tags or tags belonging to one or more specific tag category (type, cause, weight, duplicate status) have been found. We can also choose to display only the document ‘paired’ with the document selected in the opposite Select panel. ‘Paired’ documents are documents for which at least one bundle exists with snippets from both documents attached, i.e. at least one issue has been identified.

Each panel contains a document selector showing the documents that have already been saved. Each line shows, the document’s ID, the name (or alias) of the author, and the first few words of the actual text. Clicking on any of the options available will bring up the corresponding document in the Create/Edit panel.

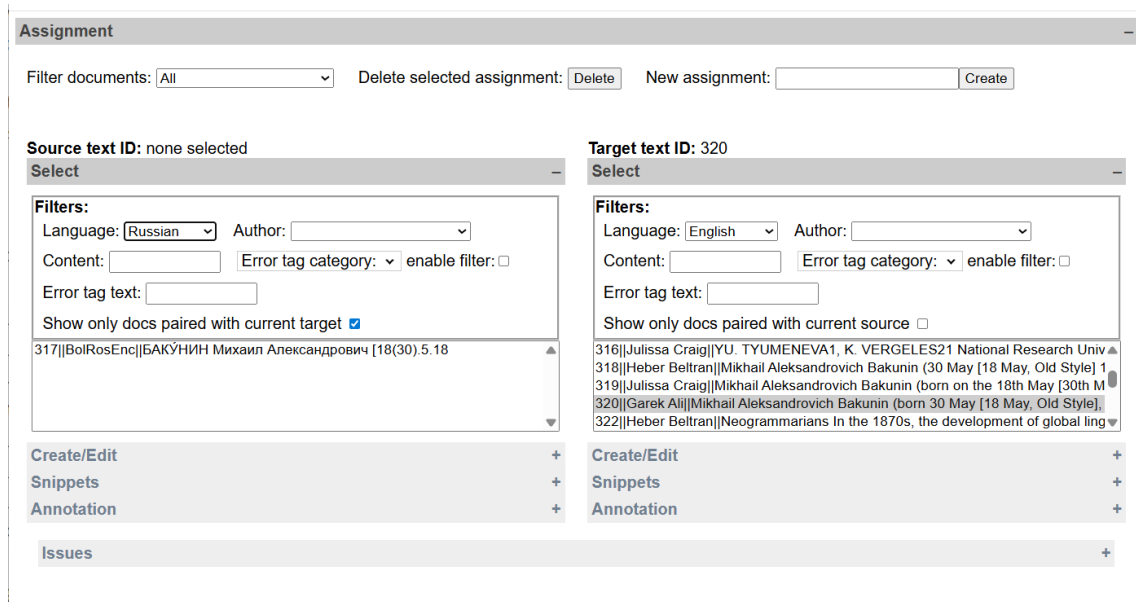


Figure 3.4: Select tabs.

Above each document selector is a set of filters that control which documents are available (in addition to filtering by assignment). These include: language, author, presence of a specified search string in the document, presence of specific tags (an autocomplete field that brings up matching tags that are currently in the database), presence of tags belonging to a particular category, being part of a ST/TT pair with the document selected in the opposite Select panel.

3.1.5.3 Panel: Create/Edit

Figure 3.5 shows the Create/Edit panels expanded. Here documents can be added, edited or deleted. Basic formatting functions are available. More advanced editing, such as, for example, changing the layout of a table, is possible in the HTML editing mode.

Any text entered into any part of the MANTRA interface, including the document editing fields on the Create/Edit panels, is sanitised before being saved to the database, in order to forestall the possibility of SQL injection attacks.

Immediately below the document editing window is a set of controls that allow us to perform the following operations:

- to save and delete documents;
- to clear the editor without deleting or over-writing the document that had

The screenshot shows the 'Assignment' interface with two columns for source and target texts. At the top, there are controls for filtering documents, deleting assignments, and creating new ones. Below this, the 'Source text ID: 299' and 'Target text ID: 341' are displayed, each with 'Select' and 'Create/Edit' buttons. The main content area is split into two panes, each with a rich text editor toolbar. The left pane shows the Russian text 'ГЛОССЕМАТИКА' and its content, while the right pane shows the English translation 'Glossematics'. Below the editors, there are fields for setting the language and author, and buttons for saving, deleting, clearing, and creating snippets. At the bottom, there are tabs for 'Snippets', 'Annotation', and 'Issues'.

Figure 3.5: Create/Edit tabs.

This screenshot shows the same 'Assignment' interface but with the 'Snippets' tabs selected. The source text pane (ID: 299) displays a list of numbered snippets (1618-1627) in Russian, and the target text pane (ID: 343) displays a list of numbered snippets (3951-3962) in English. Below the snippet lists, there are buttons for 'Delete snippet', 'Make new issue', and 'Add to issue'. The 'Annotation' and 'Issues' tabs are also visible at the bottom.

Figure 3.6: Snippets tabs.

been displayed previously;

- to set the document's language, author and assignment;
- to create snippets (by highlighting some text and clicking the Create snippet button).

3.1.5.4 Panel: Snippets

Figure 3.6 shows the interface with the Snippets panels expanded. Each contains a list of snippets that have been created from the currently selected documents. Snippets can be added to an existing issue (i.e. and existing bundle or snippets) or be used to create a new issue (i.e. a new bundle). Existing snippets can also be deleted from the database.

3.1.5.5 Panel: Annotation

Figure 3.7 shows expanded Document annotation panels. They contain facilities for adding document-level comments and tags. During this project, these facilities were occasionally used for keeping some rough notes, but they were not used for systematic data gathering.

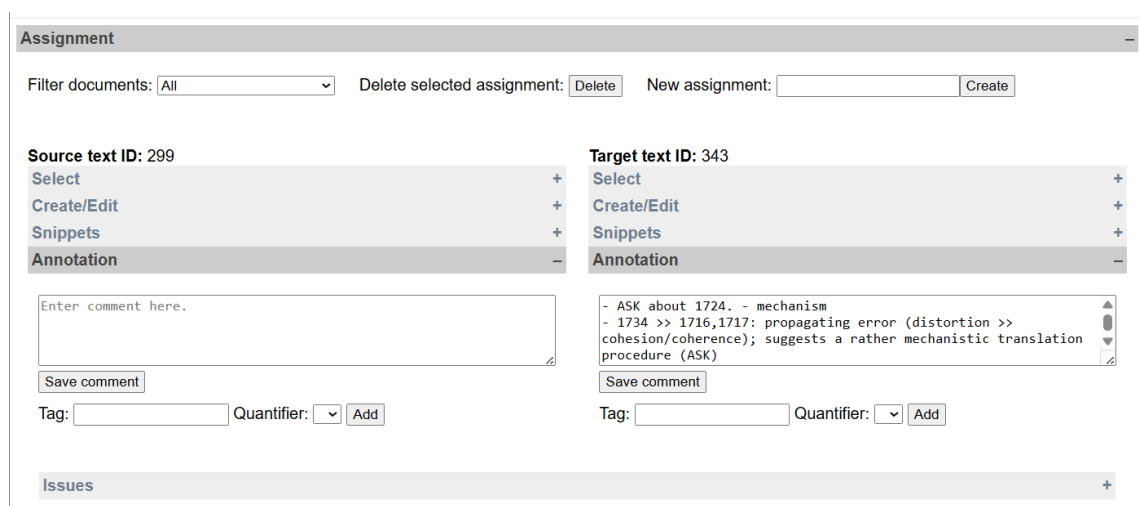


Figure 3.7: Document Annotation tabs.

3.1.5.6 Panel: Issues

Figure 3.8 shows the Issues panel expanded. It is broken up into three vertical columns.

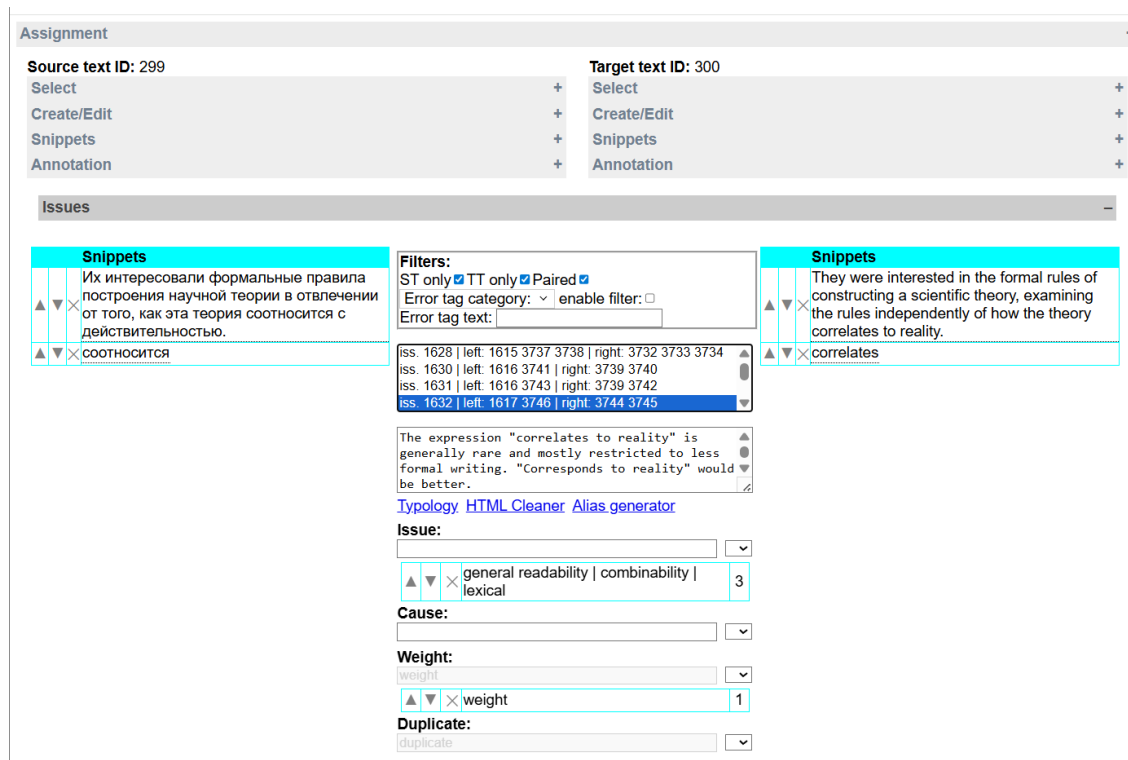


Figure 3.8: Issues tab.

The central column allows us to select and tag issues (i.e. bundles of snippets). At the top, there is a set of filters that controls which issues are displayed in the scrollable list under it. Each row corresponds to an issue. Selecting one causes the relevant ST and TT snippets to be displayed in the left and right column.

The buttons to the right of each snippet (two triangles and a cross) can be used to change the order of snippets and to remove them from the bundle. When all snippets are deleted from the bundle, it ceases to exist, and all information associated with it is erased.

Immediately below the scrollable issue selector is a comment field. The comments in question are attached to individual issues. They are saved automatically when the user creates a new issue or navigates to a different existing one.

Below the comment field are three links. The Typology link brings up a panel with text summarising the issue typology and the weighting (seriousness) scales.

The *HTML Cleaner* link takes the user to <https://html-cleaner.com/>, a site where one can strip junk tags out of a text. Junk tags are formatting, text-organisation and metadata tags generated by word-processing software. These tags are not useful for our purposes and can create distracting clutter in the text. Consequently, new documents are generally ‘cleaned’ before being pasted into MANTRA and saved. The *Alias generator* link takes the user to <https://www.name-generator.co/>. This is the site used for generating the aliases that are stored in the database in place of the students’ real names.

Under the links are four tagging fields, corresponding to the type, cause, weight, and duplicate status of the issue. Typing in one of the tag text fields brings up a list of matching tags currently in the database. The small drop-down box to the left of the tag text field allows the user to select a quantifier value. This must be selected in order for a new tag to be saved to the database. The Issue, Cause and Duplicate fields only allow the value of 1. The Weight field allows any integer between 1 and 4.

3.2 Data acquisition

In the last section, I described MANTRA, the data collection tool developed over the course of this project. In this section, I describe the actual data collection protocol and give an account of what data were collected. A summary of the data set is given in Table 3.1. Data collection and handling protocols were approved by the University of Leeds Arts Humanities and Cultures Research Ethics Committee.

3.2.1 Sourcing

3.2.1.1 Cohort

Exam scripts and homework assignments were collected from a cohort of 3 taught postgraduate students taking a course in Russian to English translation. All the students were speakers of British English as L1. All had undergraduate qualifications in Russian and were between 20 and 30 years old. Consent for participation in the study was sought and obtained. The text of the consent form

is given in Appendix G.

3.2.1.2 Course structure

The course in question runs for 20 weeks and is made up of four five-week blocks:

- Natural & Social Sciences (academic and educational texts)
- Business & Finance (professional communication in non-technical commercial settings)
- Creative (in this case, synonymous with ‘literary’)
- Industry & Technical (manuals, tutorials, specifications, technical sales)

3.2.1.3 Assignments

For each block, the students were given five STs to translate as homework and one more as an assessment. The STs varied in length from 319 to 572 words, with the majority falling between 400 and 450 words. All were excerpts from longer documents. Character and word counts of the texts collected and submitted are summarised in Table 3.1.

The choice to exclude the Creative block from the data set and other sampling choices is discussed below in section 3.2.1.5.

The students had in the region of a week to translate all homework assignments. The coming week’s assignment was discussed near the end of the class. This involved a brief analysis of the ST, the envisaged communicative situation and some likely difficulties.

In some cases, the students received a certain amount of help during the end-of-class discussion. For example, when the students were asked to translate part of the introduction to a published paper on quantitative methods in social sciences, it became clear that they were struggling to parse the central concept of *transitivity* (if $a > b$ and $b > c$ then necessarily $a > c$). I gave a quick explanation. While it can be argued that interventions like this ruin the purity of the experiment, the resulting scenario is not wholly unrealistic. As a rule, translators of texts written for domain experts either possess non-trivial amounts of relevant knowledge

themselves or have ready access to an expert whom they can consult. Such texts usually assume degree-level knowledge of the subject. The number and scope of such interventions remained limited, and the students still found most of the homework assignments challenging enough.

Assessments came in two different formats:

- take-home assignment (48 hours to complete)
- timed online exam (2 hours to complete)

The take-home assignment format was used for Natural & Social Sciences and Creative translation. The timed exam format was used for Business & Finance and Industry & Technical. A week before each timed exam, the students were given a 'key phrase' hinting at the subject area of the text. The text on the exam paper was always of the same genre as one of the homework assignments. The marking scheme is given in Appendix E. The STs and the translation specifications are given in Appendix F, with the exception of the Creative translation, which was excluded from this study for reasons discussed in the next section. Because of the limitations of space, I do not provide the source texts for the homework translations.

It should be noted that the marking scheme in Appendix E is used across all language combinations for which similar specialised translation courses are available and across all assignments. In practice, for a language like Russian, the scheme is often interpreted quite charitably, because the SL proficiency of the students is typically lower than what one sees for Germanic and Romance languages. There is also a certain amount of interpretive drift, depending on the difficulty of the specific assessment.

3.2.1.4 Marking scheme

The formal marking scheme for the graded assignments used in this study is given in Appendix E.

code	text type	domain	description	type	ST wd (ST char)	TT wd (TT char)	number of TTs	all issues (tags)	unique issues (tags)
stats	journal paper	statistics, social science	article about validity of measurements in social sciences	homework	423 (2903)	1508 (8813)	3	53 (60)	51 (58)
bakun	encyclopedia entry	biography, history, politics	article about Mikhail Bakunin	homework	448 (2679)	1845 (9839)	3	91 (115)	87 (111)
neogr	textbook chapter	history of linguistics	chapter about the neo-grammarians	homework	438 (2906)	1662 (9632) 1137* (6359)*	3 2*	91 (97) 85* (0)*	91 (97)
gloss	textbook chapter	history of linguistics	chapter about glossematics	assessed, take-home	437 (2986)	1641 (9549)	3	71 (77)	66 (72)
thalam	blog article	brain science	article about the thalamus	homework	572 (3394)	2035* (10285)*	3*	69* (0)*	–
ranpl	project schedule	academic management, philosophy	list of areas to be studied	homework	439 (3611)	1785* (11052)*	3*	73* (0)*	–
audit	legal letter	accounts, auditing	legal letter asserting validity of audit	homework	529 (3681)	600 (3318)	1	10 (13)	8 (11)
riskmg	policy document	corporate governance, risk management	document outlining risk mgt. procedures	assessed, timed	431 (3227)	1573 (9601)	3	71 (66)	52 (57)
compr	product presentation	engineering, compressors	PowerPoint presentation selling gas compressors	homework	319 (2517)	1121 (6795)	3	83 (102)	59 (73)
switch	product specifications	engineering, switchgear	GOST for an interrupter switch	assessed, timed	349 (2447)	1371 (7662)	3	94 (122)	84 (110)
TOTALS	–	–	–	–	4385 (30381)	11321 (65209) 6094* (34055)*	22 8*	564 (652) 227* (0)*	498 (589)

Table 3.1: Data summary by ST. Asterisks mark texts for which issues have been identified but not tagged.

3.2.1.5 Exclusion of Creative texts

Only the texts from the Natural & Social Sciences, Business & Finance, and Industry & Technical blocks were included in the data set. Such texts are mostly instrumental in nature and lend themselves well to functionalist analysis. Their primary source-side communicative function is usually immediately obvious. In Reissian terms, they tend to lie somewhere along the informative-operative axis: they seek to impart propositional information and/or impel the reader to pursue some course of action (Reiss 1986). Once we establish a plausible target-side communicative scenario, the translator's communicative priorities usually become similarly clear. In other words, these texts tend to come with a readily inferable implicit brief (Nord 1997) which leaves us with a set of reasonably well-defined set of criteria for judging the quality of the translation.

By contrast, the dominant function of creative — or, in Reissian terms, expressive — texts is notoriously difficult to define. The expected mode of engagement with such texts is much more open-ended. A large part of what we value about art is its *unclarity*. The associative and inferential landscapes that literary texts bring into existence are not only feature-rich but also highly ambiguous. These are texts that leave a good amount of room for reader interpretation. The situation is further complicated by the negotiable nature of translation norms (Toury 2012), which is nowhere as evident as in literary translation with its history of heated debates over what constitutes the 'correct' way of translating texts that are understood to have significant artistic merit (Venuti 2003). In short, literary translation is poorly suited to the kind of functionalist analysis used in this thesis. For this reason, texts from the Creative block were not included in the dataset.¹

¹My honest opinion is that literary translation only becomes meaningfully assessable if the student is allowed to explain in reasonable detail *what kind* of a literary translation they had set out to produce, or if some specific instructions to that effect are given by the assessor. At the very least, we must have some idea about the desired level of foreignisation/domestication (Venuti 2003). Without this, it is impossible to make coherent judgements about the acceptability of individual textual features.

3.2.1.6 Focus on Natural & Social Sciences

Submissions from the Natural & Social Sciences block form the core of the data set. There are two reasons for this:

Firstly, this part of the data set is the most complete. Natural & Social Sciences is the first block of the year. At this point, the students are very enthusiastic and not as yet exhausted or overburdened with other work. Consequently, everybody submits something for every homework assignment.

Secondly, narrower conceptual focus, as a rule, makes it easier to see the patterns in the data. Some data from the other two instrumental blocks have been included for comparison — to get some sense of whether there is likely to be a systematic difference in error patterns seen across the three blocks.

3.2.1.7 Extent of completion

Time constraints, only allowed student-generated TTs for four out the six assignments in the Natural & Social Science block to be processed fully. Consequently, the MT-generated TTs and the student-generated TTs for the remaining two assignments are excluded from further analysis within this thesis.

3.2.1.8 ST specifics

The STs used can be summarised as follows:

- Nat./Soc. Sciences ST1 (code: stats) — an excerpt from a published paper about quantitative measurement in social sciences;
- Nat./Soc. Sciences ST2 (code: bakun) — an excerpt from an encyclopaedia article about Mikhail Bakunin;
- Nat./Soc. Sciences ST3 (code: neogr) — an excerpt from a textbook about history of linguistics, chapter about the neo-grammarians;
- Nat./Soc. Sciences ST4 (code: gloss) — an excerpt from a textbook about history of linguistics, chapter about glossematics;
- Nat./Soc. Sciences ST5 (code: thalam) — an excerpt from a pop-science blog article about the thalamus (brain science);

- Nat./Soc. Sciences ST6 (code: ranpl) — an excerpt from the Russian Academy of Sciences research plan for 2020-2025 (philosophy);
- Business & Finance ST1 (code: audit) — an excerpt from a legal letter accompanying an auditors report attesting its validity;
- Business & Finance ST2 (code: riskmg) — an excerpt from a company policy document on risk management
- Industry & Technical ST1 (code: compr) — an excerpt from a product presentation (PowerPoint) by a company that manufactures gas compressors;
- Industry & Technical ST2 (code: switch) — standardised product specifications (GOST) for a high-voltage interrupter switch.

Further details are given in Table 3.1.

3.2.2 Data collection procedures

3.2.2.1 Saving texts

STs and TTs were put through the HTML cleaner mentioned in section 3.1.5.6, retaining only the most basic formatting: bold, italic, underline, headings, paragraphing, and simple tabulation. All pictures and other graphic elements were stripped out. The resulting ‘clean’ HTML code was pasted into the MANTRA document editor (see section 3.1.5.3) and saved.

A slightly more involved procedure was used for the excerpt from technical specifications (the last text in Table 3.1). The ST contains recurring tables which function as extended header and footer (i.e. repeat on every page). These tables provide labelled spaces for the serial number of the product, the reference number of the document itself, certain yes/no fields, a field for the signature of the authorising member of staff etc. For the purposes of data processing, the recurring tables were removed, and the contents of individual cells were pasted into the MANTRA document editor as separate paragraphs.

A similar procedure was used for the technical PowerPoint presentation (second to last text in Table 3.1).

It should be pointed out that the assignment was designed to encourage the students to use a CAT tool. The recurring segments were not meant to be translated individually. They were to be translated only once, with the CAT tool propagating this translation throughout the rest of the document.

3.2.2.2 Manual segmentation

All STs were segmented immediately after saving. Sentences, titles and captions, items on newline-separated lists, diagram labels, and the contents of individual table cells were saved as a separate snippets.

3.2.2.3 Identifying issues

Individual problematic features within the text were identified. For each such feature, a new issue, i.e. a new bundle of snippets, was created. Each bundle contained: the relevant ST segment, the corresponding TT segment, and, in most cases, smaller ST and TT snippets pinpointing the location of the feature more precisely. A short comment was then added, indicating the general thrust of the problem and/or suggesting an alternative solution.

I aimed for exhaustive issue identification. The goal was to create an issue bundle for every textual feature that was deemed in some way problematic. While this is, arguably, an unreachable goal, I believe that the resulting catalogue of problematic features is comprehensive enough to give a good idea of what the problem areas are.

3.2.2.4 Tagging

Issue identification and tagging formed two distinct procedural steps. First, all issues in all the STs corresponding to any given TT were identified and saved as commented but untagged bundles of snippets, then all the identified issues were reviewed and tagged. The tagging involved the assignment of at least one issue type tag and a weight rating.

This procedural separation between issue identification and tagging was introduced in order to improve the speed, quality and reliability of analysis. The tagging decisions were often time-consuming and cognitively taxing. The process

pulled my attention away from the text as a whole and towards the local feature under consideration. Consequently, this analytical step was made procedurally separate from initial issue identification in order to lessen the risk of the latter being derailed by excessive focus on local detail. Thus the issues were first identified in relatively quick succession, and a short comment was attached to each issue to indicate the likely direction of future analysis. Then, at a later point, they were systematically reviewed and analysed one at a time.

3.2.2.5 Evolution of the tag set

The translation error typology (TRISST) that evolved over the course of this project is described in detail in the next chapter. It has been refined continuously throughout the project, with the goal of making it simultaneously more classroom-friendly, more conceptually coherent, and more generally applicable within the context of Russian-English translation.

3.2.2.6 Tag review and identification of further divisions

A final systematic review of all issue type tags took place during the writing of chapter 4.1. A significant proportion of the issues (in the region of 20–30%) were re-tagged. A small number of issues (<10%) were deemed unproblematic and deleted from the database. There was no systematic review of issue weights, and only a handful were changed.

One of the objects of the final review was to identify meaningful divisions that are below the current resolution of TRISST. I sought only to identify them. I did not seek to collect any quantitative data systematically. The process involved looking for patterns in the relevant data (ST and TT snippets and issue type tags) grouped by issue type and tabulated in a human-friendly format.

Limitations of time did not permit for systematic collection of quantitative data for the newly found subcategories identified during this process, as this would have entailed re-tagging the entire data set, i.e. another major review. Any numbers I cite in connection with these subcategories are merely a snapshot of the data set at a particular point during the last review cycle. In many cases, these numbers do not reflect the final state of the data set. They are to be approached

with caution — as a general indication of the likely quantitative relationship between the different sub-terminal categories, not as its precise measure.

3.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have given a description of MANTRA, a new manual tagger intended specifically for working with ST-TT pairs. I have outlined the sources and scope of my data set and the procedures used to collect it. The contents of the data set are summarised in Table 3.1.

Chapter 4

Results

In this chapter, I describe the main outcomes of this project.

In section 4.1, I describe TRISST, the issue typology that was developed over the course of the project, using *ad hoc* annotation guided by the principles described in section 1.3.3.

In section 4.2, I describe the outcomes of a statistical analysis of the data collected, performed with a view to evaluating the three hypotheses put forward in section 1.3.4 as a test of usefulness.

I find that, on the whole, my judgement in assessing the quality of student translations remained broadly stable across holistic and analytic perspectives, but there were noticeable inconsistencies on the level of individual assessments.

There is a loose correlation between the mark and several specific error types (structural combinability, referential distortion, unclear constituency, and non-standard / uncommon terminology).

There is evidence of two internally cross-correlated error type clusters: a referential cluster, consisting of reference, terminology and SL feature errors, and a relational cluster, consisting of conjunctive, scalar-structural and temporal-modal errors.

There is no evidence of student-specific error patterns, but there is evidence of genre-specific error patterns, with a separation between strictly instrumental workplace texts and the more narrative and educational texts.

4.1 Error typology (TRISST)

An error typology was constructed on the basis of the core methodological principles set out in section 1.3.3. I refer to this typology as TRISST (translation issue typology). At present, it consists of a solely product-oriented issue nomenclature attached to a weighting scale. The nomenclature is organised as a hierarchical tree with eight apical categories:

- **Reference**
- **Relation**
- **Textuality**
- **General readability**
- **Register**
- **SL features**
- **Terminology**
- **Hygiene**

73 terminal categories are currently in use. A schematic overview of TRISST in its entirety is given in Appendix B.

My most immediate influences in compiling TRISST were Halliday and Hasan's *Cohesion in English* (1976) and Saeed's *Semantics* (2008). The three best-developed apical categories — relation, textuality, and general readability — all concern the analysis of what, in Hallidaian terms, constitutes the ideational and textual scaffolding of the text.

I am, ultimately, most interested in patterns of misunderstanding, and, as a consequence, TRISST is capable of generating the most interesting results when looking at comparatively generic psychological variables like modality, temporality, mereological relationships etc., which contribute to our ability to construct a coherent text-world.

In the rest of this section, I first look at the design principles underpinning TRISST. I then discuss its relationship to other frameworks. I explain the format of

the definitions, discussions and examples used in this chapter, and discuss issues surrounding subjectivity of individual judgements. I describe the error weighting scheme used. Finally, I describe the typology itself.

4.1.1 Design principles

4.1.1.1 Working from *ad hoc* annotation

TRISST is, first and foremost, the outcome of *ad hoc* error annotation governed by the core principles given in section 1.3.3.

4.1.1.2 Product-orientation

I believe it is important to maintain a clear conceptual separation between the actual error and its various causes, i.e. between understanding why a specific textual feature is detrimental to TT function and why the translator made that specific linguistic choice. Ideally, an error typology should have both an issue type branch and issue cause branch; however, this project was subject to limitations of time, and only the former could be examined systematically. Thus, at present, TRISST is a wholly product-oriented error typology.

4.1.1.3 Focus on meaning and textuality

My primary concern is with meaning and textuality. By the latter I mean cohesion, coherence and general readability (ease of parsing).

4.1.1.4 A ‘flat-top’ hierarchy

TRISST is somewhat similar to Angela Wurm’s AWEv typology (Wurm 2016; see section A.3.2 in the appendices), insofar as it attempts to cover a broad gamut of issues with a high level of granularity and does not attempt to structure itself around some version of conceptual distinction between form and content (i.e. language and transfer) but rather uses bottom-up grouping, where narrower categories of linguistic phenomena are grouped into more general ones by conceptual similarity. Both TRISST and AWEv have eight apical categories. Both

typologies have a high number of terminal tags: AWEv has 50; TRISST, at the time of writing, has 72.

However, there are significant differences. Firstly, while seven out of AWEv's eight dimensions are product-focused, one is process-focused. TRISST is, at present, entirely product-focused. Secondly, TRISST is more narrowly focused on meaning, particularly on semantic relationships, and cohesion and readability issues. Unlike AWEv, TRISST provides no facilities for cataloguing formal grammatical features, such as coordination by case, number and gender, and the treatment of document structure and layout is, by comparison with AWEv, very basic.

4.1.1.5 Tagging rule 1: terminal tags only

Only terminal tags are allowed. Unlike the RusLTC typology, TRISST is not designed to allow the user to go up a level in cases where they are not sure about which terminal category is applicable. The intent is to force the assessor to crystallise their thoughts concerning what exactly is happening in any given instance — to work at a level that would allow one to formulate explanations that are sufficiently granular to be pedagogically useful.

4.1.1.6 Tagging rule 2: multiple tags allowed

Assigning two or more tags per issue is allowed. Indeed, in some cases, TRISST requires you to do so (FROM and TO tags for certain types of distortion).

4.1.2 Relationship to other typologies

TRISST does not constitute a conscious attempt to build upon any specific pre-existing typology. It is the outcome of *ad hoc* error annotation procedures based on the principles set out in section 1.3. Yet it was, of course influenced by all the typologies discussed in the previous chapter and borrows features from many of them.

The limited similarity between TRISST and AWEv that was discussed above is a case of convergence rather than conscious emulation. The two typologies that

were most seriously considered for possible use in this study were MeLLANGE and the RusLTC typology, both of which were rejected because of the conceptual tensions surrounding the language/transfer division and insufficient granularity when it came to the analysis of semantic problems. AWEv was also considered but only briefly. Ironically, it was rejected on account of poor navigability: a very heterogeneous collection of 50 terminal tags spread across eight rather disparate apical categories seemed impossible to remember. I realise that exactly the same criticism could now be levelled at TRISST with eight apical categories and 73 terminal tags (significantly more are possible in theory). The tag set can definitely sometimes feel sprawling and disparate. Perhaps, such is the price of trying to cover a broad range of linguistic issues with a reasonable level of granularity, while avoiding the conceptual tensions associated with overly structuralist organising principles.

4.1.3 Examples

For the more semantically and pragmatically challenging error categories, I provide several glossed examples accompanied by an explanation of the issue at hand. As discussed in section 2.4.6, research shows that consistency with which assessors apply error-classification frameworks depends far more on training than on availability of detailed descriptions. Within the constraints of the present format, the closest that I can offer to training is some worked examples.

Few or no glossed examples are provided for the terminal categories that fall under SL features, terminology and hygiene. This was partly a result of limitations of time but also of the fact that these are the less semantically and pragmatically thorny categories. The issues in question are mostly to do with the application of well-understood conventions that are the currency of style guides.

In total, 89 glossed examples are given. Because of the limitations of space and the necessity to gloss the examples, I typically only give only between three and five examples per terminal category. Predictably, this is nowhere near enough to cover the full gamut of interesting phenomena in the data set or all recorded combinations of different tags. not all categories are covered in equal depth. I focus on the issues that I consider the most important and/or the most in need

of analysis. The more ‘mechanical’ error types, such as most terminology and hygiene issues, are given a fairly cursory treatment.

The suggested translations accompanying my examples should, for the most part, be treated as just that: *suggested* translations, not prescribed ones. In the majority of cases, other acceptable solutions are possible. The translations that I give here were produced for the purpose of illustrating specific points made with reference to other existing translations — the students’. When translating the whole text independently, I often arrived at radically different solutions that would not have been as well-suited for illustrating the points I want to make here.

While, as noted in section 2.3.3.4.3, certain local features can have the status of a ‘right answer’, these should be understood to be a weak version of the ‘gold standard’ approach. Such ‘right answers’ are 1) very local — feature-level rather than utterance or text-level — and 2) always accompanied by a justification. I try to completely avoid ‘gold standards’ in the stronger sense, where entire utterances and texts are set up as the ‘right answer’, the validity of which a gentleman does not have to explain. I do not want my students to absorb some ineffable ‘it’ that I have. I want them to learn how to make *reasoned* translation decisions. TRISST is a framework for guiding explanation and discussion, not simply for labelling things that I happen not to like.

At the same time, as I point out in section 1.3.3.6, judgements with respect to choice and observance of specific rules are irreducibly subjective. Languages are dynamic frameworks with many contested areas. I am just another participant in a never-ending negotiation surrounding norm and usage. I do refer to specific textbooks and style manuals, and try to buttress up my judgements with interpretations of corpus data. This means that my positions are not wholly arbitrary, but they are still subjective. I still choose to trust some textbooks and style manuals over others; I still make decisions with respect to the situational scope of various rules and the manner in which they are applied in specific cases; I still shape corpus searches and interpret their results in a way informed by my unique cognitive landscape etc. There is no way for me to lift myself by my own hair out of the first-person perspective that I inhabit. The most I can do is try to make my reference points and chains of reasoning clear and to remain open to

negotiation.

4.1.4 Subdivisions within terminal categories

A systematic statistical analysis of the data collated over the course of this project is given in the section 4.2. This analysis uses the end-state data as it stood at the conclusion of the project.

In addition to this, I also discuss some trends and groupings that were identified during the final review cycle. These currently lie below the resolution of TRISST. No corresponding tags exist in the database. They are potential further subdivisions within the current terminal categories. They were identified during the final data collection step, i. e. the final tag review. Any numbers cited in connection with them are merely a snapshot taken some particular point during this review. In some cases, as the review progressed, individual issues were re-tagged and sent to categories that had already been reviewed earlier. Such changes were frequent enough to make it difficult to keep track of them without creating corresponding tags and adding them to the database. This would have required another major review cycle with much (most!) of the data being re-tagged. This was not feasible, given the limitations of time.

I am confident that the subdivisions I have identified are real; however, any numbers cited in connection with them should be taken only as a rough indication of their distribution, not its exact shape. I have chosen to include some of them, because they can be quite informative. They allow us to see certain general trends, groupings and conspicuous absences in the data, even if it is only on the level of uncertain outlines requiring further confirmation.

4.1.5 Issue weight

By comparison with the taxonomy of issue types described in section 4.1.6, little work has gone into developing the weighting system. The guidelines presented here are loosely based on Kunilovskaya's functionalist three-tier scale, which can be summarised as follows:

- **Minor (1)** — features that are only somewhat problematic, the kind of issues

where the teacher's comment is likely to take the form of a suggestion rather than a correction;

- **Major (2)** — features that are clearly detrimental to the communicative functionality of the document and/or the reader's perception of the author and/or the translator but which do not render the document as a whole unusable;
- **Critical (3)** — features that are ruinous to the functionality of the document as a whole.

My addition of a fourth tier was intended to forestall assessor indecision. When the scale on a form has an odd number of options, people often default to the middle option as the equivalent of 'not sure' (Sharoff, personal communications 2014). An even number of steps should, in principle, force the respondent to decide whether to pick the option closer to the top or the bottom of the scale. In this case, that would correspond to forcing the assessor to decide whether, all in all, he/she views a particular issue as a big one or a little one, with the possibility of further qualifying it as very big or very little. Some reflections concerning the limitations of this arrangement are given in section 5.3.5.

The guidelines used to assign an error to a specific band are summarised below. The errors can be evaluated along three dimensions: readability, accuracy, and aptness. These dimensions are not treated as truly separable, with most errors being expected to affect more than one of them. Where different dimension are affected to a different degree, the assessor should always choose the rating corresponding to the worst affected dimension.

4.1.5.1 Readability

The following are the guidelines used to appraise issue seriousness with respect to readability:

- WEIGHT = 1 (very minor)
 - Readily intelligible
 - Significant slow-down unlikely

- WEIGHT = 2 (minor)
 - Some problems with intelligibility
 - Slows down the reader
 - Passage may need to be read twice or more
 - Significant misinterpretation unlikely
- WEIGHT = 3 (major)
 - Significant problems with intelligibility
 - Likely to necessitate multiple readings
 - Misinterpretation or satisficing/skipping likely
- WEIGHT = 4 (critical)
 - Likely unintelligible without access to ST

4.1.5.2 Accuracy

The following are the guidelines used to appraise issue seriousness with respect to accuracy of transfer:

- WEIGHT = 1 (very minor)
 - Only minor/tangential details or shades of meaning affected
- WEIGHT = 2 (minor)
 - Significant loss/distortion in reference, logic, or attitude¹ but no significant knock-on effect
- WEIGHT = 3 (major)
 - Significant loss/distortion in reference, logic, or attitude with some significant knock-on effects
- WEIGHT = 4 (critical)

¹'Attitude' is broadly conceived here, ranging from affect and interpersonal positioning to modality and evidentiality.

- Significant loss/distortion in reference, logic, or attitude that makes the document as a whole unusable

4.1.5.3 Aptness

The following are the guidelines used to appraise issue seriousness with respect to TL aptness:

- WEIGHT = 1 (very minor)
 - Minor grammar/usage issues and/or minor terminology issues
 - Little if any damage to communicative function
 - Some damage to perception of the speaker possible
- WEIGHT = 2 (minor)
 - Clear issues with register and/or domain language
 - Passage remains broadly communicatively functional
 - Some damage to perception of the speaker likely
- WEIGHT = 3 (major)
 - Clear issues with register and/or domain language
 - Noticeable damage to overall document function
- WEIGHT = 4 (critical)
 - Major issues with register and/or domain language
 - Major damage to overall document function

4.1.5.4 A note concerning rater subjectivity

The goal of the criteria outlined in sections 4.1.5.1–4.1.5.3 is to create a structured framework for recording reader responses. Again, my goal is not to eliminate subjectivity. Trying to second guess the likely responses of hypothetical target readers is always uncertain business, and such guesses are inevitably coloured, but the only reader response we have unimpeded access — our own — which is, of course, unstable and dependent on fatigue, hunger, mood, changing beliefs etc.

4.1.6 Issue type

A schematic summary of the issue type branch of TRISST can be found in Appendix B.

As already mentioned, I attempt to separate communicative effects from procedural or cognitive causes, and deal solely with the former. It is normal for the reader to infer causes when attempting to make sense of problematic expressions and passages, but the two can be meaningfully separated. For example, if we see the expression *side wall* followed by *wall side* several lines later, it is obvious, even without reference to the ST, that the latter is probably either a typo or an MT post-editing oversight. However, these likely causal factors can be separated from what actually makes the expression problematic. The reason we halt and begin to look for explanations in the first place is probably the fact that *wall side* is an unusual term the meaning of which it takes a second or two to work out.

That said, the cause cannot be bracketed out entirely. Being able to guess how a problematic feature came about makes it easier to adjust our interpretation of it. The impact of the issue might, therefore, be lower than it would have been otherwise.

In the context of this chapter, causes are regularly discussed in passing, but there is no attempt to catalogue them.

4.1.6.1 Reference

Here we are primarily concerned with reference in the narrow sense of lexical meaning, i.e. words and expressions ‘pointing’ at identifiable things, concepts, actions, events and states.

There are three subcategories of reference issues:

distorted: There is a clear shift in the nature of things, abstract concepts, actions, states etc. being referred to that cannot be justified in terms of a reasonable shift in communicative function or circumstances of reception.

lost: Some clearly identifiable referential component or a complete proposition that was present within the ST is missing from the TT, and its absence

cannot be readily justified in terms of a shift in communicative function or circumstances of reception.

unclear: The chosen expression is difficult to interpret or allows for multiple competing interpretations.

4.1.6.1.1 Distorted Practically all the issues tagged as reference | distorted can be described as simple lexical errors. At least three types of phenomena can come into play:

- **false cognates**
- **over-specification**
- **under-specification** (vagueness)
- **illusion of semantic similarity**

* * *

Below is an example an issue involving false cognates:

(57) a. **ST (Ru) — gloss:**

<i>Помимо</i>	концепции	Ф. де	Соссюра,	на
Pomimo	konceptii	F. de	Sossjura,	na
Beside	vision/framework	F. de	Saussure:GEN,	on
<i>глоссематику</i>	<i>значительно</i>	<i>повлияло</i>		
glossematiku	značitel'no	povlijalo		
glossematics-FEM.ACC	significantly	influenced		
<i>важное</i>	<i>философское</i>	<i>направление</i>		
važnoe	filosofskoe	napravlenie		
important:NEUT.NOM	philosophical-NEUT.NOM	current:NEUT.NOM		
<i>тех</i>	<i>лет</i>	<i>— неопозитивизм.</i>		
tex	let	— neopozitivizm.		
those:GEN	years:GEN	— neopositivism:NOM		

In addition to Saussure's **ideas**, Hjelmslev was significantly influenced by an important philosophical current of those years, neopositivism.

b. **TT (En):**

*In addition to Saussure's **concept**, glossematics was significantly influenced by neopositivism, which was an important philosophical movement of the time.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

reference | DISTORTED

Both the Russian noun *концепция* [*konceptcija*] in (57a) and the English *concept* in (57b) relate to ideas. However, a *concept* is normally a fairly distinct stand-alone idea, while *концепция* [*konceptcija*] is usually a framework of ideas, an overarching *conception*. The five most common genitive collocates of this word in *RuTenTen20* are:

- *развития* [*razvitija*] {*development:GEN*};
- *политики* [*politiki*] {*policy:GEN*};
- *маркетинга* [*marketinga*] {*marketing:GEN*};
- *модернизации* [*modernizacii*] {*modernisation:GEN*};
- *реформы* [*reformy*] {*reform:GEN*}.

All of these refer to major projects, in combination with which *концепция* [*konceptcija*] would imply some sort complex strategic planning involving multiple interlocking notions and ideas. By contrast, the five most common collocates of *concept of* in *EnTenTen21* all refer to reasonably distinct notions:

- *freedom*
- *justice*
- *right*
- *identity*
- *God*

One would expect a discussion of the *concept of freedom* or the *concept of justice* to centre on explaining what *freedom* and *justice* mean.

In this case, one way to sidestep the issue of having to look for a more exact equivalent, would be to use synecdoche: to replace *Saussure's ideas* with just *Saussure*.

* * *

Below is an example of over-specification:

(58) a. **ST (Ru) — neogr:**

Учение позитивизма впервые было сформулировано
 Učenje pozitivizma vprvye bylo sformulirovano
 Teaching positivism:GEN first was formulated
 французским ученым О. Контом в 20-30-е гг. XIX
 francuzskim učenym O. Kontom v 20-30-e gg. XIX
 French:INST [?]scholar A. Comte in 20s-30s years 19th:GEN
 в., но его господство в европейской науке
 v., no ego gospodstvo v evropejskoj nauke
 century:GEN, but its dominance in European [?]scholarship
 стало явным во второй половине века и в
 stalo javnym vo vtoroj polovine veka i v
 became evident in second half century:GEN and in
 основном продолжалось до Первой мировой войны.
 osnovnom prodolžalos' do Pervoj mirovoj vojny.
 main continued until First world war.

The tenets of positivism were first formulated by the French thinker Auguste Comte in the 1820s and 30s; however, it was in the second half of the century that its dominance within Europe's **intellectual landscape** became apparent, in most quarters persisting until WWI.

b. **TT (En):**

*The concept of positivism was first formulated by the French scholar Auguste Comte in the 1820s to 1830s, but its dominance in European **science** only became apparent in the second half of the century and continued until the First World War.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

reference | DISTORTED

Here, the problem is a cultural one: there seems to be a genuine semantic gap in the TL. In English, the word *science* is usually understood to be a shorthand for *natural sciences*. The more quantitative aspects of the humanities are something of a contested territory. Economics, sociology and psychology might be collectively referred to as *social sciences*, but they are unlikely to be the first thing people think of when somebody mentions *science* or *scientist*. They bear the same relationship to *science* as *penguin* does to *bird*: they are peripheral members of the category

(see section 2.1.3.1.1). It is certainly unusual for English-speakers to refer to unambiguously text-based disciplines like history or philosophy as *science*.

The Russian word *наука* [*nauka*], which is frequently treated as a binary equivalent of *science*, has a substantially broader meaning. Like the German *Wissenschaft*, it can cover any kind of systematic academic activity. This includes work in literature, history and philosophy. To my knowledge, there is no matching term in English: *scholarship* tends to refer specifically to the humanities,² *research* is too activity-focused, *academia* is too institution-focused etc.

In my suggested translation in (59a), I use the very general expression *intellectual landscape*. My reasoning is that, in this case, it is better to be too general than too specific. There is no harm in implying that the influence of positivism extended beyond academia — this is highly likely. However, there is some harm in implying that it was limited either to the natural sciences or to the humanities, which is highly unlikely.

* * *

Below is an example of under-specification:

(59) a. ST (Ru) — *stats*:

<i>Если транзитивность не соблюдается, то</i>	мотивы
Esli tranzitivnost' ne sobljudaetsja, to	motivy
If transitivity not is. observed, then	motives
<i>невозможно оценивать даже в порядковой шкале [...]</i>	
nevozmožno ocenivat' daže v porjadkovoј škale [...]	
impossible to.gauge even in ordinal	scale

If transitivity is not observed, then even to put **motivations** on an ordinal scale [in order of rising importance] is impossible [...]

b. TT (En):

*If transitivity is violated, then the levels of the **psychological attribute** cannot be ordered, even on an ordinal scale [...]*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

reference | DISTORTED

²The top ten collocates of *scholarship on* in EnTenTen21 are *literature, Islam, gender, slavery, religion, history, cinema, Asia, period* and *artist*.

Psychological attribute is a far more general term than *motivation*. In this case, the distortion is only moderately functionally significant, because the ST does, in fact, make general claims about measurement in psychology and social sciences. However, what is being discussed in this particular passage is the specifics of what the authors did in a particular study, and the parameter they were working with was, specifically, motivation.

* * *

Below is an example of an issue involving illusion of semantic similarity:

(60) a. **ST (Ru) — switch:**

<i>Ввиду</i>	<i>высокой</i>	<i>электрической прочности</i>	<i>вакуумного</i>
Vvidu	vysokoj	èlektričeskoj pročnosti	vakuumnogo
In.view.of	high	electric strength/toughness	VACUUM:MASC.GEN
	<i>промежутка</i>	[...]	
	<i>promežutka</i>	[...]	
	gap:MASC.GEN	[...]	

Given the high **dielectric strength** of the vacuum gap [...]

b. **TT (En):**

*Due to the high **resistance** of the vacuum gap [...]*

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

reference | DISTORTED
terminology | wrong term

This is a terminology error. The translator has substituted one physical parameter for another. The relevant terms are *resistance* and *dielectric strength*. The respective Russian equivalents are *сопротивление* [*soprotivlenie*] {lit. *resistance*} and *электрическая прочность* [*èlektričeskaja pročnost'*] {lit. *electrical strength/toughness*}.

In the context of the ST, which talks about vacuum preventing a spark from jumping between two electrodes, the two terms sound plausibly synonymous: both involve hindering the flow of electric current. However, the similarity is superficial, and the underlying concepts are quite different. If we compare electric current to flowing water, resistance is roughly equivalent to how fast water can flow through a particular riverbed (depends, on width, depth, incline, number of

bends...), while dielectric strength is equivalent to how much water a particular dam can hold before it breaks (depends on height, width, thickness, strength of materials...).

This substitution of one term for another is quite likely to be a case of translator ‘satisficing’, i.e. settling for a suboptimal but seemingly acceptable solution to save time and effort (Simon 1956). *Resistance*, both the concept and the term, is familiar to most people from secondary school science. *Dielectric strength*, on the other hand, is a more niche concept. It is quite likely that the student chose to settle for a familiar and, in context, hypothetically plausible term without checking the details.

From a pedagogic perspective, this type of error does come with a silver lining of sorts: it is evidence of the student actually engaging with a conceptually difficult ST and trying to construct a coherent picture of what it describes rather than blindly slotting in dictionary equivalents into calqued constructions. The problem is insufficient depth of research.

* * *

Here is another mention-worthy example of illusion of semantic similarity:

(61) a. ST (Ru) — *switch*:

оперативное включение
 оперативное **vključenie**
 operative **switching.on**

the ON operation

b. TT (En):

*Operational **opening** of the circuit*

WEIGHT: 4

TAGS:

reference | DISTORTED

The error in (61a)/(61b) is, from a functional point of view, definitely a consequential one: in a text about high-voltage electrical equipment, the translator consistently mixes up *ON* and *OFF* operations.

The likely cause is quite amusing. The translator was probably proceeding by analogy with kitchen and bathroom taps, where an *open* tap is *on* — the water is

free to flow — while a *closed* tap is *off* — the water stops. Unfortunately, with electrical switches, it is the other way round. An *open* circuit is *off* — the circuit is broken, and current cannot flow. A *closed* circuit is *on* — the circuit is complete, and the current is free to flow.

Incredibly, when the assessment was being marked, repeated instances of the above issue were missed by at least two separate markers, present author included. This oversight illustrates three things:

Firstly, marking is a cognitively taxing process, and when the overall workload is substantial, markers begin to miss even the most functionally serious and the least conceptually complicated errors, which should, in theory, be the first to be noticed.

Secondly, if the text is genuinely technical, the markers may be only very superficially familiar with the relevant subject matter. This means that keeping track of how the text world operates itself becomes a significant source of cognitive load. A domain expert may well spot an issue like the one in (61a)/(61b) without referring to the ST, because he/she is likely to spend less of the available cognitive resources on constructing local models of the text world and to have more of a ‘bird’s eye view’ of the text, against which certain incoherences and infelicities will stand out better.

Thirdly, when marking translations, the marker usually proceeds chiefly by reading the TT as a stand-alone text, referring to the ST when some TT passage appears problematic. It would be immensely time-consuming and utterly exhausting to mark by constantly comparing the two texts sentence by sentence. Obviously, the more diligent markers will read the ST first, some will even read it very carefully; however, few of us will be able to retain much textual detail when working under pressure outside our immediate domain of expertise.

It is worth bearing in mind that errors are also becoming less noticeable thanks to the nature of modern text-generating technologies. The ability of MT and LLMs to produce stylistically human-like text far outstrips their ability to monitor the quality of content. Consequently, content errors that ten years ago would have been accompanied by certain stylistic ‘tells’ are now likely to be masked.

The obvious solution to the three problems outlined above, at least for the

shorter translation assignments of a few hundred words, is for the marker to create their own reference translation before marking. This forces the marker to build up a coherent granular picture of the text world. In this particular instance, I did not have the time to prepare my own translation. The error was only spotted months later when processing the data for this project.

4.1.6.1.2 Lost Broadly speaking, issues that are tagged as reference | lost can be divided into:

1. those where the omitted information constitutes some kind of qualification, removal of which changes the meaning of some adjacent element, and
2. those where the omitted information can be viewed as constituting an independent component, the removal of which does not directly affect the meaning of adjacent elements.

* * *

In the example below, the omitted information is qualifying (carried by the second noun in a hyphenated compound in the ST):

(62) a. **ST (Ru) — *compr*:**

<i>В 1996 г.</i>	<i>фирмой</i>	<i>было приобретено</i>	на инвестиционных
<i>V 1996 g.</i>	<i>firnoj</i>	<i>bylo priobreteno</i>	na investicionnyx
<i>In 1996 year</i>	<i>firm:INST</i>	<i>was acquired</i>	at investment

торгах	<i>предприятие-банкрот,</i>	<i>которое</i>	<i>(по условиям</i>
torgax	<i>predprijatie-bankrot,</i>	<i>kotoroe</i>	<i>(po uslovijam</i>
auction	<i>enterprise-bankrupt,</i>	<i>which</i>	<i>(by conditions</i>

<i>конкурса)</i>	<i>преобразовано</i>	<i>в</i>	<i>общество с</i>
<i>konkursu)</i>	<i>preobrazovano</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>obščestvo s</i>
<i>bidding:GEN)</i>	<i>was transformed</i>	<i>into</i>	<i>society with</i>

<i>ограниченной</i>	<i>ответственностью</i>	<i>“Верейский</i>
<i>ograničenoj</i>	<i>otvetstvennost’ju</i>	<i>“Verejskij</i>
<i>limited</i>	<i>liability</i>	<i>“Vereiskii</i>

<i>механический</i>	<i>завод”.</i>
<i>mexaničeskij</i>	<i>zavod”.</i>
<i>mechanical</i>	<i>factory”.</i>

In 1996, an enterprise in administration was acquired by the firm **at an investment auction**. This enterprise, as per the conditions of the bid,

was transformed into the *Vereiskii mechanical factory* limited liability company.

b. **TT (En):**

*In 1996, the firm acquired **another** company at an investment auction, which, under the terms of the tender, was converted into a limited liability company called Vereisky Mechanical Plant.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

reference | LOST

Here the TT omits the information about the purchased company being bankrupt. This omission is somewhat important, given the cultural context. We are talking about a medium-size factory formerly owned by the state. Its sale was part of the wave of post-Soviet privatisations. The ST tries to portray the transaction in a favourable light: as an act of rescue rather than profiteering. Without this element of rhetorical framing, the information about the company changing hands becomes a boring tangential detail, and it is less than clear why significant space is devoted to it in a product presentation.

* * *

There are numerous things wrong with the TT passage below; however, here we are concerned with the omission of the qualifier *booster*:

(63) a. **ST (Ru) — compr:**

Компрессорная станция типа	ДККС
Kompressornaia stancija tipa	DKKS
Compressor station type:MASC.GEN	CBCS

[**дожимная** блочно-контейнерная компрессорная станция]

[**dožimnaja** bločno-kontejnernaja kompressornaia stancija]

[containerised **booster** compressor station]

Containerised **booster** compressor module

b. **TT (En):**

Stationary container compressor stations

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

reference | LOST

textuality | confusing repetition

The abbreviation ДККС [DKKS] stands for *дожимная блочно-контейнерная компрессорная станция* [*dožimnaja bločno-kontejnernaja kompressornaja stancija*], which can be translated in various ways, but for our purposes, let us for now settle on the reasonably descriptive *containerised booster compressor module*. It refers to a transportable module consisting of a compressor and some peripherals mounted inside a container. The qualifier *booster* refers to a particular application within the gas industry, for which the compressor in question is optimised. Omission of this qualifier, which specifies the basic design and intended application of the machine, is obviously problematic. Without it, we are talking not about a particular type of compressor but about compressors in general, albeit with some constraints with respect to housing.

Interestingly, the anglophone terminology does not normally specify the type of housing when talking about machines of this type. This could reflect unavailability of or lack of demand for other options on the anglophone market, or, alternatively, it could reflect a different perception of product options, with housing being a minor detail that does not need to be flagged up in promotional material.

* * *

It is important to point out that, when we talk about qualification, the relationship being referred to is a semantic one, not a grammatical one. The omitted information does not have to be carried by an adjective, a nominal determinant, an adverb, or some other constituent that performs a similar role in the clause. In the example below, the omitted information is carried by a noun in the ST, while the retained information is carried by the associated adjective (converted to a noun in the TT):

(64) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

<i>революц.</i>	выступления
<i>revoljuc.</i>	vystuplenija
revolutionary	protests

revolutionary **unrest**

b. TT (En):

revolution

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

reference | LOST

Revolutionary unrest can be viewed as a frequent component of *revolution*, but the two are not a hypernym–hyponym pair. Unrest must be of a certain scale, before it can be regarded as even an attempted, let alone a successful, revolution.

* * *

Most commonly, the omission of an independent component takes the form of losing one out of several items on a list. For example:

(65) a. ST (Ru) — *stats*:

либо различить, **либо** упорядочить мотивы
libo različit', **libo** uporjadočit' motivy
either to.distinguish, **or** to.order motives

either to distinguish between the different kinds of motivation **or to arrange them in order of importance**

b. TT (En):

to distinguish levels of motivation

WEIGHT: 4

TAGS:

reference | LOST

In (65a)/(65b), the information about distinguishing types motivation is preserved, but the information about being able to arrange them in sequence by rising importance is lost.

4.1.6.1.3 Unclear Three factors can contribute to referential unclarity (tagged as reference | unclear):

1. The semantic content of the expression itself. As already pointed out, an expression can be referentially vague, ambiguous or incoherent. It can also contain additional aspects of meaning that nudge the reader away from the correct interpretation.
2. Inadequate or misleading contextualisation, where the surrounding text fails to specify, disambiguate or explain.

3. Poor register control — use of expressions that are confusing by virtue of not being situationally apt.

We can also talk about two different kinds of unclarity:

opacity: the expression simply cannot be assigned a contextually viable interpretation without further explanation or contextualisation. For example: *This **tripartite bicycle** costs ten pounds.*

ambiguity: where the expression has two or more competing conventional meanings, and there are not enough contextual clues for the reader to make a judgement about which one is the intended one. For example: *They met by the **bank**.* vs. *They met by the **river bank**.* vs. *They met by the **bank branch**.*

As of 23/07/2025, the total number of *reference | unclear* issues in the database stood at 31. There were 25 cases of opacity, and 6 of ambiguity.

* * *

Let us revisit (61a)/(61b) but this time focus on another word in this phrase, which is a locus of opacity:

- (66) a. ST (Ru) — *switch*:

Оперативное отключение
Operativnoe otključenie
In-operation switching.off

Routine disconnection

- b. TT (En):

Operational closing of the circuit breaker

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

reference | UNCLEAR
 general readability | verbose

The word *Operational* in 66b, seems to render what is otherwise a reasonably comprehensible expression quite puzzling. It is impossible to guess what this qualifier actually means in this context and what it might be contrasted against.

What the Russian word *оперативное* [*operativnoe*] actually refers to in this case is that the disconnection is taking place under normal operating conditions — the switchgear (a protective mechanism) is functioning as intended.

* * *

Here is another example of opacity:

(67) a. **ST (Ru)** — *switch*:

счетчик **хода**
sčetčik **xoda**
 counter **operation:GEN**

operations counter

b. **TT (En)**:

progress counter
 WEIGHT: 3
 TAGS:
 reference | UNCLEAR

It is unclear what *progress* in (67b) refers to. The machine on which the counter is mounted is an automated switch that makes near-instantaneous *ON* and *OFF* operations. There is no completion point to progress towards over time. Moreover, since progress is normally thought of as a continuous rather than a discrete variable, without some further explanation, it is not clear how it can be countable.

* * *

Let us now consider a case of ambiguity:

(68) a. **ST (Ru)** — *gloss*:

<i>чтобы</i>	создать	<i>истинную</i>	<i>лингвистику,</i>	<i>которая не</i>	
<i>čtoby</i>	sozdat'	<i>istinnuju</i>	<i>lingvistiku,</i>	<i>kotoraja ne</i>	
<i>'in.order.to</i>	create	<i>real</i>	<i>linguistics,</i>	<i>which not</i>	
<i>есть</i>	<i>лишь</i>	<i>вспомогательная</i>	<i>наука,</i>	<i>нужно</i>	<i>сделать</i>
<i>est'</i>	<i>liš'</i>	<i>vspomogatel'naja</i>	<i>nauka,</i>	<i>nužno</i>	<i>sdelat'</i>
<i>is</i>	<i>only</i>	<i>helping</i>	<i>science,</i>	<i>is.necessary</i>	<i>to.to</i>
<i>что-то</i>	<i>еще.'</i>				
<i>čto-to</i>	<i>ešče.'</i>				
<i>something</i>	<i>more'</i>				

‘to establish a true linguistics, which cannot be a mere ancillary or derivative science, something else must be done’ [taken from Fr.J. Whitfield’s translation of *Prolegomena* (Hjelmslev and Whitfield 1961)]

b. TT (En):

‘in order to **cultivate** true linguistics, which is not just an auxiliary science, a further aspect is needed’

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

reference | UNCLEAR

The word of interest in (68b) is *cultivate*, which, in this case, means {*to nurture*} or {*to foster the development of*}. This verb is vague with respect to point of inception: we do not know whether the thing being nurtured is newly created or pre-existing but found in an unsatisfactory state. Thus the passage allows for two competing interpretations: one where Hjelmslev is the creator of an entirely new discipline and another where he is the rescuer of an existing one. The correct one is the former. According to the ST, Hjelmslev saw himself as a maverick scholar starting a new fundamental discipline (Alpatov 2005).

* * *

Now let us consider a case where unclarity results from poor register control:

(69) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

C 1835 **в отставке**, поселился в Москве.

S 1835 **v otstavke**, poselilsja v Moskve.

From 1835 **in retirement**, settled in Moscow.

Resigned commission in 1835 and settled in Moscow.

b. TT (En):

After **resigning** in 1835, he settled in Moscow.

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

register | aptness

reference | UNCLEAR

The passage describes Bakunin leaving his post as a junior artillery officer. The problematic word is *resign*. We normally speak about people resigning from some ‘serious’ position — a position associated with some measure of power,

expertise, social capital etc.³ This framing does not fit the case of a very young man abandoning a very junior position about which he was never enthusiastic to begin with. Consequently, in this context, the word has a discombobulating effect. On first reading, I was momentarily confused and could not understand what Bakunin is supposed to have resigned from.

My proposed solution is to replace *resigned* with the more domain-specific *resigned commission*. This anchors us within the military frame and, at the same time, removes the connotation of the position being an important one.

It is worth noting that the Russian expression *в отставку* [*v otstavke*] {lit. *in retirement*} is also domain specific and normally only applies to retirement from service to the state, especially military. This domain specificity helps to maintain cohesion in a narrative where a rather unexpected thing happens: somebody retires in their early 20s.

4.1.6.2 Relation

Here we are concerned with the relational aspects of propositional meanings: how distinct referential units relate to each other. This should be distinguished from cohesive relationships that are more associative in character and tend to exist between rather than within syntactic trees (see sections 4.1.6.3 and 4.1.6.4 below).

There are six subcategories within this category:

conjunction: A coordinative relationship between clauses or clause constituents that is coordinative rather than constitutive in nature is created, lost, distorted or obscured.

temporal-modal: This category of tags pertains to the variables normally associated with the tense-aspect-mood system in verbs. It has three further subdivisions:

temporality: Information pertaining to where on the timeline states and

³The top ten collocates of *resign from* in EnTenTen21 are *post, position, board, job, office, role, Senate, Cabinet, party, Congress*. The following are identified as modifier collocates of *job* in *resign from + job* are *well-paid, well-paying, COO, cushy, teaching* (usually talking about university staff), *lucrative, full-time, stressful* and *part-time*.

events are set relative to the narrative viewpoint, how far and in what direction they extend, whether they are punctitive, durative or iterative is lost, added, obscured, distorted or internally incoherent.

deonticity: Information pertaining to the signalling of obligations and their strength is lost, added, obscured, distorted or internally incoherent.
(no recorded cases currently in the database)

commitment / attribution: Information pertaining to who the beliefs, sentiments, imperatives etc. are ascribed to and the strength of the relevant person's commitment to these beliefs is created, lost, distorted or obscured.

scalar-structural: Information pertaining spatial, mereological or graded variables is lost, added, obscured or distorted.

role: Constituency is preserved, but the role of at least one constituent is altered.

constituency: This category of tags pertains to the vector of pairwise constituent relationships. It has two further subdivisions:

distorted: TT constituency relationships depart from ST constituency relationships in a way that adversely affects communicative function.

unclear: The TT passage is significantly syntactically ambiguous (immediate disambiguation from context unlikely).

restrictiveness: An expression that should identify another constituent uniquely is worded, placed and/or punctuated as if it is parenthetical, or vice versa.

It should be noted that attached to all the above definitions, as well as all the other category definitions in this section, is the implicit condition 'and the result is detrimental to communicative function'. We are interested in the effect of the text, not in grammatical or features or propositional form for their own sake.

The following general directions of change can be marked:

LOST: A relationship that was specified in the ST is unspecified in the TT.

ADDED: A relationship that was unspecified in the ST is specified in the TT.

	ADDED	LOST	FROM	TO	WITHIN	UNCLEAR
additive	1			1	1	3
adversative		3	2	3		
causative	4					
continuative					2	
temporal				3		1

Table 4.1: Distribution of tags assigned: type of conjunctive relation vs. type of change. There were no duplicates in this category.

UNCLEAR: The nature or the constituency of the relationship is unclear.

DISTORTED: The nature or the constituency of the relationship has been distorted. This is further specified as **FROM**, **TO** or **WITHIN**.

FROM: This marks the cases where the ST relationship has been replaced by some other kind of relationship in the TT.

TO: This marks the cases where the TT relationship incorrectly represents some other kind of relationship in the ST.

WITHIN: The relationship in the TT does not match the relationship in the ST, but there is no change in relationship category.

In the case of **FROM** / **TO** changes, two tags must be assigned, one corresponding to each component.

4.1.6.2.1 Conjunction The term conjunction can be variously defined in the contexts of grammar, semantics and formal logic. The definition given above is similar in spirit to the way the term is used by Halliday and Hasan (1976).

The distribution of data within this category as of 24/08/2025 is summarised in Table 4.1. The numbers are too low to draw any solid conclusions; however, it would appear that:

- additive and adversative relations are more commonly affected than other types, together accounting for almost two thirds of the tags assigned;

FROM	TO	count
conjunction adversative	conjunction additive	1
conjunction adversative	scalar-structural rate / frequency	1
scalar-structural order	scalar-structural rate / frequency	1
scalar-structural quantity / degree	conjunction adversative	3
scalar-structural quantity / degree	conjunction temporal	3
scalar-structural space / parthood	scalar-structural quantity / degree	1

Table 4.2: FROM / TO distortion pairs for conjunction and scalar-structural variables.

- addition of causative links seems to be a distinct phenomenon.

Table 4.2 lists the FROM/TO pairs for conjunction and scalar-structural variables. Traffic between these two relational categories is common.

We can divide all conjunction issues into two subcategories:

- where a **new discourse marker or connector** that has no counterpart in the ST is introduced in the TT;
- where **an adjective or an adverb** carrying relational information is **omitted** or translated in a way that loses or alters the information in question.

The newly introduced markers are mostly causative. The lost and distorted markers are mostly adversative.

A special note should be made about temporal relationships. There is obvious potential for overlap between conjunction | temporal and temporal-modal variables | temporal (see section 4.1.6.2.2). These categories are, somewhat arbitrarily, separated along grammatical lines. Issues involving temporal function words, such as *before*, *after*, *since*, *until*, *then* etc., and issues involving temporal adverbials are considered **conjunction | temporal** issues. Under **temporal-modal variables | temporality**, we find issues revolving around the tense-aspect-mood system of verbs.

* * *

The following case is interesting, because it contains both a distortion FROM an adversative relation TO qualification of rate / frequency, resulting from a misinterpreted adverbial, and, on top of that, an ADDED causative.

(70) a. ST (Ru) — *neogr*:

Ученые конца XIX в. обычно не замыкались

Učenyje konca XIX v. obyčno ne zamykalis'

Scholar end:GEN 19th c. generally not constrained.themselves

в рамках лингвистики, комплексность исследований

v ramkax lingvistiki, kompleksnost' issledovanij

in frame linguistics:GEN, interdisciplinarity research:sooner

скорее возросла.

skoree vozrosla.

increased.

19th century scholars did not constrain themselves to linguistics alone. **In fact, it is probably fair to say that** research had become more interdisciplinary.

b. TT (En):

*Scholars of the late 19th century did not confine themselves within the scope of linguistics, **therefore** the complexity of their research **quickly** increased.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | conjunction | adversative | FROM

relation | scalar-structural⁴ | rate / frequency | TO

relation | conjunction | causative | ADDED

The literal translation of *skoree* [*skoree*] is *sooner*. However, same as the English *sooner*, this word can be used to mark hedged adversation. When used in this way, its meaning becomes closer to *more like*. It indicates two things: that the content of the qualified word or phrase is counter to expectation (adversation), and that the judgement being communicated is not very high-confidence (hedging). The student looks for a literal interpretation of the word and translates it as *quickly*.

The loss of hedging and adversation is not a serious issue. If we simply remove *skoree* [*skoree*] from the ST passage, adversation can still be inferred from the content of the two clauses, although the hedging is lost. The student mistakenly converts a marker of adversation into a descriptor of speed, but this too has little effect on the functionality of the text as a whole.

⁴Perhaps counter-intuitively, speed or rate at which something is happening are not considered temporal variables within TRISST. They are considered to be scalar quantities similar to temperature or amount.

What makes the passage problematic is that the student not only omits an adversative link but elsewhere inserts a causative one. The relationship between the first and second clause is reversed: from B being unexpected after A to B being the natural consequence of A.

The case of (70a)/(70b), though atypical in terms of the concentration of conjunctive issues, is typical in terms of the nature of the linguistic features involved. Firstly, adversation is marked in the ST not by an adversative coordinator like *но* [no] {but} or *несмотря на* [nesmotrja na] {in spite of} but by a construction with a qualifier, such as *собственно* [sobstvenno] {actual} + NP, or *ещё* [eščě] {still} + VP, or, in this case, *скорее* [skoree] {more like} + VP. Secondly, the addition of a causative link in the TT takes the shape of a new dedicated discourse marker. In this case, there is a new conjunctive adverb *however*. Other cases involve introductory words and phrases (*consequently; for this reason*) and actual conjunctions (*due to, and*). These features have no ST equivalent and appear to be purely an attempt to improve target-side cohesion.

* * *

Below is the case with an additive *and*, which is marked as both ADDED and UNCLEAR:

(71) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

БАКУНИН	Михаил	Александрович	[18(30).5.1814, с.	
BAKUNIN	Mixail	Aleksandrovič	[18(30).5.1814, s.	
BAKUNIN	Mikhail	Aleksandrovich	[18(30).5.1814, village	
	Премухино	Новоторжского у.	Тверской губ. –	
	Premuxino	Novotoržskogo u.	Tverskoj gub. –	
	Premukhino,	Novotorzhsky Uezd,	Tver' Governorate –	
	1.7.1876, Берн,	Швейцария],	рос. философ, публицист,	
	1.7.1876, Bern,	Švejcarija],	ros. filosof, publicist,	
	1.7.1876, Bern,	Switzerland],	Russian philosopher, essayist,	
	деятель	революц.	движения,	один из идеологов
	dejatel'	revoljuc.	dviženija,	odin iz ideologov
	activist	revolutionary:GEN	movement:GEN,	one of ideologues
	анархизма	и	народничества.	Из рода Бакуниных.
	anarxizma	i	narodničestva.	Iz roda Bakuninyx.
	anarchism:GEN	and	narodnichestvo.	From clan Bakunins:GEN.

Mikhail Aleksandrovich BAKUNIN [born 18.5.1814 old style,⁵ 18.5.1814 new style, village of Premukhino, Novotorzhsky Uezd, Tver' Governorate; died 1.7.1876, Bern, Switzerland] — Russian philosopher, essayist, revolutionary activist, one of the ideologues of anarchism and *narodnichestvo*. Born into the Bakunin family (a prominent aristocratic line).

b. TT (En):

Mikhail Aleksandrovich Bakunin (born 30 May [18 May, Old Style], 1814 in Premukhino, Novotorzhsky in Tver Governorate – died 01 July, 1876 in Bern, Switzerland) was a Russian philosopher, writer and revolutionary activist. He was a chief propagator of the ideological movement of anarchism and populism, and was from the noble family of Bakunin.

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

relation | conjunction | additive | ADDED
 relation | conjunction | additive | UNCLEAR
 textuality | sentence / paragraph breaks

In the ST, the sentence break marks a change of subject: from reasons for notability to family background. In the TT the student introduces a sentence break earlier: between the more generic and more specific characteristics — philosopher, writer, activist vs. an important figure in two specific political movements. This is fine. However, the second part is then fused with the passage about family origins. This creates the impression that there should be some logical link between the two, the nature of which is obscure. In this case, the addition of what is usually thought of as a cohesion-maintaining element — the coordinator *and* — results in a disruption of cohesion.

* * *

The cases of distortion WITHIN a conjunctive category involve simple lapses of comprehension. In one case, a disjunctive coordinator *либо ... либо* [*libo ... libo*] {*either ... or*} is replaced by a negating conjunction *ни neither ... nor*. In the other two cases, the qualifier *Характерно* [*Xarakterno*] {*Characteristically*} at the start of a sentence is somewhat misinterpreted and replaced with *Notably* or *It is notable that*. Here is one of these cases

⁵‘Old style’ and ‘new style’ correspond to dates according to Julian and Gregorian calendars respectively. Russian switched from the former to the latter in 1918.

(72) a. ST (Ru) — *neogr*:

Окончательно ушли в прошлое идеи “духа
 Okončatel’no ušli v prošloe idei “duxa
 Completely were.gone into past ideas “spirit:GEN
 народа”, отзвуки которых еще заметны у
 naroda”, otzvuki kotoryx ešče zametny u
 people:GEN”, echoes which:GEN still are.noticeable in
 А. Шлейхера. **Характерно** и вытеснение из
 A. Šlejxera. **Xarakterno** i vytesnenie iz
 A. Schleicher. **Is.characteristic** also displacement from
 науки проблем происхождения языка и
 nauki problem proisxoždenija jazyka i
 science problems:GEN origin:GEN language:GEN and
 стадильности как “метафизических”.
 stadial’nosti kak “metafizičeskix”.
 stadiality:GEN as “metaphysical”.

Notions like “the spirit of the people”, still present in the work of Schleicher, were now completely gone. **Another feature of the period is** the increasing distaste for work on the origins of language and stadial development as “metaphysical”.

b. TT (En):

Notably, the issues of language origin and the developmental stages were disregarded from the sciences as “metaphysical”.

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | conjunction | continuative | WITHIN

This was, unambiguously, a teaching failure on my part. The meaning of *характерно* [*xarakterno*] was discussed in class, and I struggled to articulate what the translation problem actually was, namely this:

In the ST, *Характерно и...* [*Xarakterno i...*] {*Also characteristically...*} marks a slight change of subject. The preceding clause talks about “the spirit of the nation” falling into obscurity. However, the clause that follows talks about something being characteristic of the period as a whole — not of the specific processes that led up to a specific concept becoming unfashionable.

Once the nature of the problem is clear, it is easy to arrive at a paraphrastic solution like the one in my suggested translation in (72a). However, on the day, I

struggled to articulate my thoughts clearly. I got as far as making the point that *Характерно* [*Xarakterno*] means that we are talking about notable characteristics of the period. Two of my students walked away with the impression that the correct solution is *Notably* or something similar. It is specifically cases like this that motivated this project. I would like to be able to formulate the nature of translation problems more clearly.

* * *

The example below contains a temporal adverbial with an UNCLEAR (ambiguous) prepositional construction:

(73) a. **ST (Ru) — neogr:**

C	70-х гг.	<i>XIX в. развитие</i>	<i>мирового, прежде всего</i>
S	70-х gg.	<i>XIX v. razvitie</i>	<i>mirovogo, prežde vsego</i>
From 70s	years	<i>19th c. development</i>	<i>global:GEN, before all</i>
		<i>европейского языкознания</i>	<i>вступает в новый этап.</i>
		<i>evropejskogo jazykoznanija</i>	<i>vstupaet v novyj ètap.</i>
		<i>European:GEN linguistics:GEN</i>	<i>enters into new stage.</i>

Starting from the 1870s, linguistics worldwide and especially European linguistics enters a new phase.

b. **TT (En):**

Since the 1970s *the development of world, primarily European, linguistics has been entering a new stage.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | conjunction | temporal | UNCLEAR

There are various things wrong with the TT passage, including the date being out by a century; however, for now let us bracket most of them out. What we are concerned with here is the ambiguity embedded in *since* when it is followed by an expression that describes a period rather than a point in time. In the context of (73b), *Since the 1970s* can mean either {*Starting from the 1970s*} or {*By comparison to the 1970s*}.

* * *

Below is an interesting error that surfaced in the work of all three students. There is a distortion FROM qualification for quantity / degree and TO temporal qualification with adversative shading:

(74) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

<i>В сер.</i>	1860-х	гг.	окончательно	оформилась
<i>V ser.</i>	1860-х	gg.	okončatel'no	oformilas'
In middle	1860:GEN	years:GEN	finally/completely	took.shape
	<i>концепция</i>	<i>анархизма</i>	<i>Б.</i>	
	<i>konceptija</i>	<i>anarxizma</i>	<i>В.</i>	
	<i>conception</i>	<i>anarchism:GEN</i>	<i>Bakunin:GEN.</i>	

In mid-1860s, Bakunin's conception of anarchism **fully** took shape.

b. TT (En):

*In the mid-1860s, Bakunin's concept of anarchism **finally** took shape.*

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

relation | scalar-structural | quantity / degree | FROM
 relation | conjunction | adversative | TO
 relation | conjunction | temporal | TO

The Russian adjective *окончательный* [*okončatel'nyj*] and the English *final* are often synonymous. Both can mark an end point or state. Yet the cognate adverbs *окончательно* [*okončatel'no*] and *finally* are subtly different. *Окончательно* [*okončatel'no*] marks the end of a process and is approximately synonymous with *fully* or *completely*. However, *finally* merely marks a change of state and can be either the end or the beginning of something. Consider the following:

(75)

- He has completely forgotten how to solve differential equations.
- He has finally forgotten how to solve differential equations.
- [?] Completely the train is moving.
- Finally the train is moving moving.

Aside from marking a point of inflection on the timeline, *finally* can also be viewed as an adversative: it draws a contrast between the 'before' and 'after' states.⁶ In

⁶Here, I am using 'adversative' in the broad sense in which it is used by Halliday and Hasan (Halliday and Hasan 1976). In Malchukov's more granular nomenclature, this use of *finally* would probably be classed as contrastive (Malchukov 2004).

the ST, Bakunin has reached the end of an intellectual journey: his ideas are now in their fully mature state. In the TT, the journey seems to be only beginning: what was, presumably, a haze of chaotic intuitions has, at last, crystallised into a coherent *concept* that can now be further refined by means of organised and purposeful theorisation. To give the reader some context, the ST is talking about a point towards the end rather than the beginning of Bakunin's career.

4.1.6.2.2 Temporal-modal variables This category of tags pertains to the variables normally associated with the tense-aspect-mood system in verbs.

4.1.6.2.2.1 Temporality All the temporality errors recorded to date fall into the WITHIN category with respect to direction of change. This is unsurprising, given that the category is defined so as to include only the issues connected to tense and aspect of verbs. It is difficult to lose such information entirely or to alter it in a way that would put it in a qualitatively different category. As we already saw, the situation is different when temporal information is communicated by function words or other types of content word.

In the current context, temporality errors fall into three groups according to the main contributing factor:

- **tense;**
- **lexical aspect;**
- **order of predicates.**

Tense errors are the most common, accounting for seven out of the ten temporality errors in the database as of 02/07/2025.

All the tense errors recorded to date involve descriptions of events set in the past. English and Russian tense and aspect systems differ in a number of ways, but perhaps the most significant differences are:

1. much looser constraints on the use of perfective and imperfective verbs in Russian by comparison to perfect and simple tenses in English;

2. Russian having no separation equivalent to the one between present perfect and past perfect tenses in English;
3. frequent use of imperfective present tense active participles to talk about actions and events that are set in the past.

In English, to talk about completed actions the outcome of which is still relevant at the time when the narrative is set, we generally use one of the perfect tenses — present perfect if the narrative is set in the present, past perfect if the narrative is set in the past. Russian perfective verbs can perform a similar function, but, in practice, they are often (although far from always) used interchangeably with imperfective cognates. For example:⁷

(76) a. Я уже ел.
Ja uže el.
I already eat:IMPF.PST.

I have already eaten.

b. Я уже поел.
Ja uže poel.
I already eat:PF.PST.

I have already eaten.

As mentioned above, Russian also has no separation equivalent to the English present perfect and past perfect. There are no grammatical resources for moving narrative viewpoint relative to speaker viewpoint:

⁷It is worth noting that *есть* [*estʹ*] {to eat} is polysemous and forms at least two distinct aspectual pairs: the atelic *есть/поестʹ* [*estʹ/poestʹ*], referring to the general activity of eating or having a meal, and the telic *есть/съестʹ* [*estʹ/sʹestʹ*], referring to the act of eating some specific thing, e.g. an apple, until it is fully consumed. Additional confusion stems from the existence of related prefixed forms with the root *-ед-* [*-ed-*] like *съедать* [*sʹʹedatʹ*] and *поедать* [*poedatʹ*], which, in this specific case, are functionally similar to the suffixed *-ива-/-ыва-/-ва-/-а-* [*-iva-/-yva-/-va-/-a-*] forms for more regular verbs like *говорить/поговорить/говаривать/поговаривать* [*govoritʹ/pogovoritʹ/govarivatʹ/pogovarivatʹ*], which tend to describe iterative or habitual actions and states of affairs, and are often used to speak about things that were the case some time ago (similar to the English *used to* construction). The grammatical status of such forms is ambiguous. A summary of the debate is given by Valeeva (2011). The verbs *sʹʹedatʹ* and *poedatʹ* above are probably best glossed as imperfective iteratives: {to.eat.fully:IMPF.ITER} and {to.eat.voraciously:IMPF.ITER}. The situation is complicated further still by the existence of prefixed verbs where the verb suffixed with *-ива-/-ыва-/-ва-/-а-* acts simply as the imperfective form of a prefixed verb that does not have an unprefixed imperfective counterpart, e.g. *спросить/спрашивать* [*sprositʹ/sprašivatʹ*] {to.ask.a.question:PF/to.ask.a.question:IMPF} — compare with *попросить/просить* [*poprositʹ/prositʹ*] {to.make.a.request:PF/to.make.a.request:IMPF}.

- (77) a. Я уже поел. Мне надо бежать.
 Ja uže poel. Mne nado bežat'.
 I already eat:PF.PST. Me is.necessary to.run.

I have already eaten. I must run.

[narrative view point = now]

- b. Я утром поел и к полудню ещё не был голоден.
 Ja utrom poel i k poludnju eščë ne byl goloden.
 I morning eat:PF.PST and by midday yet not was hungry.

I had eaten in the morning and was not yet hungry by midday.

[narrative view point = some afternoon in the past]

Also, as already mentioned, Russian-speakers also frequently use active present participles to talk about events set in the past:

- (78) a. Лежащий на солнце кот спит.
]Ležaščij na solnce kot spit.
 LyingIMP.F.PRES in the sun cat

The cat lying in the sun is sleeping.

- b. Лежащий на солнце кот спал.
]Ležaščij na solnce kot spal.
 LyingIMP.F.PRES in the sun cat

The cat lying in the sun was sleeping.

- c. Лежавший на солнце кот спал.
]Ležavčij na solnce kot spal.
 LyingIMP.F.PST in the sun cat

The cat lying in the sun was sleeping.

(78b) and (78c) are referentially equivalent.⁸ This situation causes some confusion when Russian participles are taught as equivalent to the *which is...* or *which was...* phrases in English — a common pedagogic practice (see, for example, DeBlasio and Savenkova 2023).

English tense and aspect system is generally much more granular and much more rigid. An event set in the past could be described using past simple, present perfect, past perfect, past progressive or past habitual — for the sake of brevity, I am omitting all the counterfactual past tenses with *would*, *could*, *might* etc. For a

⁸Arguably, the past participle has more of a distancing effect.

translator working ‘mechanically’, i.e. by combining local equivalents without paying much attention to overall TT cohesion and coherence, choosing the right English VP construction becomes a game of dice.

* * *

The example below contains a repeating tense error that results in a slight loss of cohesion and, more importantly, in a significant distortion of the situation being described.

(79) a. ST (Ru) — *neogr*:

Во многих науках	наступила	пора	отказа	от
Vo mnogix naukax	nastupila	pora	otkaza	ot
In many disciplines	came:PF	period	abandonment:GEN	from
обобщений,	но	в то же	время	интенсивно
obobščeniĭ,	no	v to že	vremĭa	intensivno
generalisations,	but	at that same	time	intensively
накапливались	факты,	ставились		
nakaplivalis'	fakty,	stavilis'		
were.accumulated:IMPF	facts,	were.staged:IMPF		
эксперименты,	развивалась	исследовательская		
eksperimenty,	razvivalas'	issledovatel'skaja		
experiments,	was.developed:IMPF	research		
методика.				
metodika.				
methodology.				

This **was** a time when many disciplines had turned away from generalisations; yet, simultaneously, facts **were being** rapidly **accumulated**, experiments **were being staged**, and research methods **were being developed**.

b. TT (En):

*In many sciences, the time **had come** to abandon generalisations, yet at the same time, facts **have been** intensively **accumulated**, experiments **have been** carried out, and research methods **have been** developed.*

WEIGHT: 4

TAGS:

relation | temporal-modal | temporality | WITHIN

In the TT, the past perfect in the first clause sets the reader viewpoint in the past (*had come*). This clashes with the present perfect in the remaining three clauses, which set the reader viewpoint in the present (*have been*).

The overall density of disfluencies is low, so complete breakdown in reader comprehension is unlikely. We can assume that the reader will make some adjustments ‘on the fly’ to keep the text world coherent. Unfortunately, these adjustments are likely to be in the wrong direction.

Generally speaking, interpretive adjustments aim to minimise cognitive work. One consequence of this is that we are more likely to reject new incoming information than to backtrack and make amendments to our existing presuppositions. If at the start of the sentence the narrative perspective is set in the past, the reader will expect this perspective to remain stable, and subsequent jumps into the present are likely to be rejected as misspeaking. In the specific case of (79b), the reader would, or at least might, mentally move accrual of facts, experimentation and development of methodologies into the past relative to the narrative perspective. This would be a serious distortion, given that the ST is describing the developments happening at the time.

* * *

As of 02/07/2023, there is only one temporality issue involving lexical aspect. It concerns the loss of a point of inception. The information in question is carried not by a verb but by a process noun:

(80) a. **ST (Ru)** — *neogr*:

<i>срабатывающей</i>	<i>при</i>	подаче	<i>электрического</i>	<i>импульса</i>
<i>srabatyvajušcej</i>	<i>pri</i>	подаче	<i>èlektričeskogo</i>	<i>impul'sa</i>
triggered	on	supply:INCP	electrical:GEN	signal:GEN

triggered by an electrical signal

b. **TT (En)**:

tripped by the supply of an electrical impulse

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | temporal-modal | temporality | WITHIN
general readability | verbose

When talking about electricity, the noun *supply*, usually refers to running provision with no fixed starting point. The corresponding verb in the ST is *подача* [*podáčá*]. It is perhaps best explained as an {*instantaneous act of supplying*}. This word usually marks a point of inception. Among other things, it can refer to a *service* in tennis — the action that starts the game by supplying the opponent with an incoming ball.

In the case of (80b), we can guess from context that *supply* means something like {*instantaneous act of supplying*} or {*sudden arrival*}, but the word still sounds somewhat incongruous. To be fair, it is hard to be certain to what extent this feeling of discomfort is the result of a semantic clash. There are at least two other problems in the passage. Firstly, there is a degree of opacity resulting from a terminological error: *electrical impulse* should be *electrical signal*. Secondly, the word *supply* is, in this case, in English, simply unnecessary. It is not clear what this word contributes to the message, which in itself can be a source of reader discomfort (see verbosity, section 4.1.6.4.3).

* * *

In the example below, there is an interesting interplay between the order of predicates and the polysemy of the verb *to commission*:

(81) a. ST (Ru) — *compr*:

выполняет	шеф-монтажные	и	пуско-наладочные
vypolnjaet	šef-montažnye	i	pusko-naladočnye
carries.out	installation-supervision:ADJ	and	launch-setup:ADJ

работы	<i>поставляемого</i>	<i>оборудования</i>
raboty	<i>postavljaemogo</i>	<i>oborudovanija</i>
works	<i>supplied:GEN</i>	<i>equipment:GEN</i>

supervises the installation of and commissions the machinery
supplied

b. TT (En):

commission and perform installation supervision of supplied
machinery

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

relation | temporal-modal | temporality | WITHIN
reference | DISTORTED

The verb *to commission* can, in this context, be read in one of two ways. It can be read as {*to order a bespoke product*}, as in:

- (82) In 1510 the City Council commissioned Dürer to produce a pair of panel paintings (Wolf 2012, p. 43)

Or, alternatively, as {*to perform commissioning works; to launch something into active service*}, as in:

- (83) the Company's operations team has successfully commissioned the facility and has launched full commercial operations. (Green Stock News 2024)

Both meanings are plausible in the general context of a product presentation by a company that sells gas compressors. In this case, the correct sense would be the second one, the one synonymous with *to perform launch-and-setup works*. However, the order of predicates in (81b) suggests that commissioning is something that happens before rather than after installation, which can only be the case if the word is used in the first rather than the second sense, i.e. the one synonymous with *to order*.

4.1.6.2.2.2 Commitment / attribution As of 24/08/2025, there were ten issues in this category. Nine of these involve loss of information that attributes belief or sentiment to somebody other than the author and/or qualifies the strength of commitment. Technically speaking, labelling these cases as 'commitment/attribution | LOST' is wrong. It is virtually impossible to lose such information entirely, so long as the utterance remains coherent. In the absence of qualification, we return to a default setting: the speaker is communicating own beliefs held as true, or own sincere desires and intentions.

One case involves a distortion in the level of commitment, which is classed as commitment/attribution | WITHIN.

A total of four issues involve the use of quotation marks, sometimes for direct quotation, sometimes for distancing (a.k.a. 'scare quotes'). This includes the case marked as 'WITHIN'.

The example below contains a change in both attribution and commitment. In the ST, an assumption is indirectly ascribed to the research community at large and questioned by the authors. In the TT, the assumption is not explicitly ascribed to anyone; consequently, we understand it to be the authors' own.

(84) a. **ST (Ru) — stats:**

<i>Измерение</i>	<i>в</i>	<i>социальных</i>	<i>науках</i>	<i>подразумевает, что</i>
<i>Izmerenie</i>	<i>v</i>	<i>social'nyx</i>	<i>naukax</i>	<i>podrazumevaet, čto</i>
<i>Measurement</i>	<i>in</i>	<i>social</i>	<i>sciences</i>	<i>presupposes, that</i>
<i>измеряемый</i>	<i>признак</i>	<i>количественный</i>		
<i>izmerjaemyj</i>	<i>priznak</i>	<i>količestvennyj</i>		
<i>measured</i>	<i>attribute</i>	<i>quantitative</i>		

Measurements in social sciences presuppose that the thing being measured is quantifiable

b. **TT (En):**

*In social sciences, measurement of psychological attributes, such as motivation, **is** quantifiable*

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

relation | temporal-modal | commitment / attribution | LOST

In the context of the ST, explicitly stating that the belief in question is a presupposition implies that this presupposition might not be entirely safe, and the authors are about to examine it. However, in the absence of any such qualification, our assumption is that the authors are simply voicing their own beliefs.

* * *

The TT passage below contains two separate but connected issues. Firstly, quotation marks are omitted. We cannot be entirely sure whether in the ST they mark actual direct quotation or sarcasm; it is possible that they mark both. In any event, it is clear that in (85a) the belief that something constituted '*metaphysics*' is ascribed to a third party, and the author disagrees with this assessment. In the TT this element of distancing is removed:

(85) a. ST (Ru) — *neogr*:

все остальное	признавалось	“метафизикой”	и
vse ostal'noe	priznavalos'	“metafizikoj”	i
all else	was.publicly.recognised	“metaphysics:INST”	and
изгонялось	из	науки	
izgonjalos'	iz	nauki	
was.banished	from	science	

all else was **declared** to be ‘**metaphysics**’ and banished from science

b. TT (En):

*everything else was **recognised** as **metaphysics** and banished from the science*

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

relation | temporal-modal | commitment / attribution | LOST

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

elation | temporal-modal | commitment / attribution | WITHIN

The omission of the quotation marks would probably have been a very minor issue if *metaphysics* was not preceded by **recognised as**. The English verb *to recognise* is, as a rule, factive. An utterance like *I recognise that P*. carries a presupposition that *P* is true. Attribution to some subjective recogniser — and thus the non-final nature of the judgement — requires additional marking of conditionality, such as *tentatively* or *legally*. Since neither is present in (85b), the passage commits the author to the belief that something was **correctly** recognised as metaphysics.

The corresponding verb construction in the ST — *признаваться* [*priznavat'sja*] with an object in instrumental — is not generally used as a factive. It is most commonly seen in legal and administrative contexts, where it is used to refer not to recognition in general but to *public recognition* — a formal but nonetheless a subjective judgement that may be revoked in future.

4.1.6.2.3 Scalar-structural variables The distribution of scalar-structural errors across the various subcategories is summarised in Table 4.3.

The majority of issues involve omission or misinterpretation of information contained in adverbial and adjectival qualifiers. There is also one case involving change of measurement units.

	ADDED	LOST	FROM	TO	WITHIN	UNCLEAR
quantity/degree	2	3	1	4		
space/parthood		1				
rate/frequency				2		
order		1				

Table 4.3: Distribution of tags assigned: type of scalar-structural relation vs. type of change. There were no duplicates in this category.

Most commonly, errors in this category involve addition, omission or distortion of information related to scalar variables, i.e. the quantity or degree of something. A space and parthood dimension was envisaged, but no currently assigned tags make use of it.

* * *

The following is an example of a distortion WITHIN qualification in quantity / degree:

(86) a. **ST (Ru)** — *gloss*:

Описание должно быть свободным от противоречий
 Opisanie dolžno byt' svobodnym ot protivorečij
 Description must be free from contradictions

(самоудовлетворяющим), исчерпывающим и предельно
 (samoudovletvorajuščim), isčerpывajuščim i **predel'no**
 (self-satisfying), exhaustive and **maximally**

простым.
 prostym.
 simple.

The description shall be free of contradiction (self-consistent), exhaustive, and **as simple as possible**. (translator: Fr.J. Whitfield)

b. **TT (En)**:

*description should be free from contradictions (self-satisfying),
 exhaustive and **extremely** simple.*

WEIGHT: 2

relation | scalar-structural | quantity / degree | WITHIN

The ST talks about an ideal theory being as simple as possible. The TT, on the other hand, talks about the theory being merely very simple. This may seem like a hair-splitting distinction, but, in this case, it is quite important. In the TT, the judgement is made relative to an absolute scale, the end of which — the point of highest possible theoretical parsimony — it is possible to reach. *Extremely* implies that the degree of something is very high but not necessarily the highest possible – for example, 95/100 is an extremely high mark, but not the highest possible. It is also a word that implies subjective judgement. It is virtually guaranteed that somewhere there exists a parent who considers 95/100 acceptable and no more than that, whereas the status of 100/100 as the highest mark possible is beyond dispute. In this case, the distinction is important, because Hjelmslev specifically insisted on *maximal* theoretical parsimony, not merely on a high level of user-friendliness.

* * *

There are several problems in the example below, but the one we are concerned with is the distortion FROM qualification of order TO qualification of frequency:

(87) a. **ST (Ru) — gloss:**

<i>Неопозитивизм</i>	<i>оказал</i>	<i>значительное</i>	<i>влияние</i>	<i>на</i>
Neopozitivizm	okazal	značitel'noe	vlijanie	na
Neopositivism	exerte	significant	influence	on

<i>развитие</i>	<i>структурной</i>	<i>лингвистики,</i>	<i>однако</i>
razvitie	strukturnoj	lingvistiki,	odnako
development	structural:GEN	linguistics:GEN,	however

<i>последовательное</i>	<i>выражение его принципы</i>
<i>posledovatel'noe</i>	<i>vyraženie ego principy</i>
<i>consistent/methodical/coherent</i>	<i>expression its principles</i>

<i>нашли среди направлений</i>	<i>структурализма</i>	<i>именно</i>	<i>в</i>
našli sredi napravlenij	strukturalizma	imenno	v
found among directions	structuralism:GEN	specifically	in

гlossenематике.

glossematike.

glossematics.

Neopositivism exerted a considerable influence over the development of structural linguistics in general; however, the branch

of structuralism where the neopositivist principles were applied most **consistently** was glossematics.

b. TT (En):

*Neopositivism had a significant impact on the development of structural linguistics. However, its principles were **regularly** expressed within the different branches of structuralism, particularly in glossematics.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | scalar-structural | order | FROM

relation | scalar-structural | rate / frequency | TO

The expression *последовательное выражение* [*posledovatel'noe vyraženie*] in the ST refers a {*consistent application*} of a certain set of philosophical principles. Here, *consistent* means not only {*sustained in time*} but also {*systematic*} and {*logically coherent*}. In other words, the principles in question were applied in an *ordered* way. The expression used in the TT is *regularly expressed*. Here, *regularly* can be replaced with *often*. It suggests frequent reoccurrence, rather than a sustained and ordered process.

4.1.6.2.4 Role As discussed in Chapter 2, I use the LIRICS role nomenclature. Definitions of the general concept of role and of individual roles are given in section 2.2.2.2.3.2.

All the errors in this category constitute FROM/TO pairs. Their distribution is shown in Table 4.4.

Role distortion can result from the choice of the content word describing process or state, from the structure of the argument, or from a combination of both. The content word can be any part of speech capable of referring to processes and states. Argument structure can involve, choice of preposition or absence of one, linking expressions involving content words (e.g. *with the help of*), inflected forms, word order, and choice of active or passive constructions.

In most cases, fixing the issues requires quite significant rephrasing. However, in some cases, the solution can be as simple as replacing a preposition.

FROM	TO	count
agent	beneficiary	1
agent	theme	2
beneficiary	setting	1
beneficiary	theme	1
means	reasons	1
patient	cause	2
setting	partner	1
setting	purpose	1
setting	time	2
theme	instrument	1
theme	path	1
theme	patient	1
theme	reasons	1
time	initialTime	2

Table 4.4: FROM/TO distortion pairs for conjunction and scalar-structural variables.

The example below revolves around a choice of verb, which, in turn, dictates the choice of preposition and passive construction.

(88) a. **ST (Ru)** — *bakun*:

B 1843 в Швейцарии **познакомился** с В. Вейтлингом
V 1843 v Shveïřarii **poznakomilsĭa** s V. Veitlingom
 IN 1843 in Switzerland **became.acquainted with** W. Weitling
 u ego teorueĭ.
 i ego teorieĭ.
 and his theory.

In 1843, while in Switzerland, he [Bakunin] **became acquainted with** W. Weitling and his theory.

b. **TT (En)**:

*In 1843, he **was introduced to** Wilhelm Weitling and his theory, while in Switzerland.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | role | agent | FROM
 relation | role | beneficiary | TO

In the ST, Bakunin is the AGENT, the ‘doer’ of becoming acquainted. In the ST, the process involves an intermediary, with Bakunin being a BENEFICIARY. Indicating

the existence of an intermediary but not specifying who it is, in this case, makes the utterance informationally incomplete. In the context of an encyclopaedia article, being informed that an intermediary was involved leads us to the inference that this must have been someone notable, perhaps another notable intellectual or an important coterie. However, we are never told who the intermediary was, frustrating our search for adequate contextual effects.

It is worth mentioning that, in this case, it is not entirely clear whether in the ST Bakunin is a BENEFICIARY or a THEME (see definitions in section 2.2.2.2.3.2). In this case, we can construe him as either the ‘object’ of the introduction or the party that benefits from it.

* * *

In the TT passage below there are multiple issues suggesting that the translator really had difficulty understanding the ST. What concerns us presently are two interacting role distortions. Because of the interaction, *the loci of individual errors are difficult to identify*, and correction would probably require substantial rewording.

(89) a. ST (Ru) — *switch*:

Оперативное	отключение	производится	цилиндрической
Operativnoe	otključenje	proizvoditsja	cilindričeskoj
Operative	disconnection	is.made	cylindrical:INST

пружиной,	установленной	на	каждом	приводе
pružinoj,	ustanovlennoj	na	každome	privode
spring:INST,	mounted	on	each	drive

выключателя,	срабатывающей	при	подаче	электрического
vyklučatelja,	srbatyvajuščej	pri	podatse	èlektričeskogo
switch:GEN,	firing:GEN	on	supply	electrical:GEN

импульса	на	отключение	или	механического
impul'sa	na	otključenje	ili	mexaničeskogo
signal:GEN	for	disconnection	or	mechanical

воздействия,	при	ручном	отключении.
vozdjeystvija,	pri	ručnom	otključenii.
action,	on	manual	disconnection.

The ‘connect’ operation is performed via the action of a cylindrical spring mounted on each moving electrode. This **spring is released**

when a disconnection-triggering signal is received or when a manual disconnection is performed.

b. **TT (En):**

*Operative disconnection is carried out by a coil **spring** installed on each circuit breaker drive, which **is applied to trigger the disconnection by an electric pulse** or mechanical action during manual disconnection.*

WEIGHT: 4

TAGS:

relation | role | patient | FROM
relation | role | cause | TO

In the ST, the spring is the PATIENT released by the signal. In the TT, the spring is the CAUSE that triggers the signal.

The reversal of causality between the arrival of the signal and the release of the spring precipitates another change in causality: in the ST the immediate CAUSE of disconnection is the *spring*, whereas in the TT it is the *signal (impulse in the TT)*.

In the analysis just given, I proceed from the standard LIRICS definitions, where an INSTRUMENT requires a conscious wielder, while a CAUSE is intention-free. However, I do not feel entirely comfortable with this. While, technically, we can say that the disconnection happens as a consequence of the spring being released, the relationship between the two seems more intimate. The spring being released is the disconnection operation, to the same extent as striking the earth with a spade is making a hole in the ground. The relationship is more one of participation than causation. It should be noted that the role played by the spring in the ST does not fit very comfortably into other plausible-sounding categories: MANNER, MEDIUM and MEANS (see definitions in section 2.2.2.2.3.2).

* * *

Below is an example of a subtle drift in meaning resulting solely from preposition choice:

(90) a. **ST (Ru) — *bakun*:**

<i>Был деятельным участником философской</i>	<i>и</i>	<i>лит.</i>
Byl dejatel'nyĭm učastnikom filosofskoj	i	lit.
Was active participant	philosophical:GEN and literary:GEN	

полемики 1830-х гг.
polemiki 1830-x gg.
polemic:GEN 1830s:GEN years:GEN.

Participated actively in the philosophical and literary **polemics of the 1830s**.

b. TT (En):

*He was an active participant in the philosophical and literary **controversy in the 1830s**.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | role | setting | FROM

relation | role | time | TO

textuality | information structure

In the TT, the 1830s refer only to a TIME. In the ST, they refer to a richer SETTING, a particular cultural milieu, like the Renaissance or the Enlightenment, of which the polemics in question are a characteristic. In both English and Russian, this distinction can be signalled grammatically. The locative constructions with *in* in English and *в* [v] {*in*} in Russian mark TIME. The *of* construction in English, and the corresponding genitive construction in Russian mark SETTING.

4.1.6.2.5 Constituency Here we are concerned primarily with the vector of pairwise constituent relationships: what connects to what. Needless to say, what concerns us is not linguistic form but the outline of the situation being described. We are interested in semantic roles, not syntactic ones.

4.1.6.2.5.1 Distorted No clear patterns or internal divisions have been identified within this category to date.

* * *

Below is a simple example involving a change in the scope of qualification:

(91) a. ST (Ru) — neogr:

<i>При</i>	<i>отходе</i>	<i>от</i>	<i>обобщений</i>	<i>новое</i>	<i>поколение</i>
Pri	otxode	ot	obobščenij	novoe	pokolenie
During	departure	from	generalisation	new	generation

языковедов	сохранило	от	прошлого	представление
jazykovedov	soxranilo	ot	prošlogo	predstavlenie
language.scholars	preserved	from	past	conception

о своей науке как исторической
о svoej nauke kak istoričeskoj
about their science as historical

While turning away from generalisations, the new generation of language scholars **continued to see their discipline as a historical one**

b. TT (En):

As linguists moved away from generalisations, the new generation
preserved the historical view of their field.

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

relation | constituency | DISTORTED

In this case, we can summarise the change in constituency as follows:

(92)

ST: [view [of their **field** as **historical**]]

TL: [**historical view** [of their field]]

In the ST, *historical* qualifies the *field* itself; language scholars saw their work as primarily historical in character — leaning towards historical linguistics. In the TT, *historical* qualifies the *view* of the field: scholars were prone to look at how their discipline developed over time — leaning towards sociology of science.

* * *

The following example involves omission of a noun and the reattachment of the adjective that qualified it to another noun:

(93) a. ST (Ru) — *stats*:

что	оправдывает	использование	порядковых	шкал	для
čto	opravdyvaet	ispol'zovanie	porjadkovyx	škal	dlja
what	justifies	use	ordinal:GEN	scales:GEN	for

оценки,	по крайней мере,	для указанных мотивов
ocenki,	po krajnej mere,	dlja ukazannyx motivov
evaluation,	at least measure,	for specified motives

и для двух величин: “больше” и “меньше”

i dlja dvux veličin: “bol’she” i “men’she”

and for two values: “more” and “less”;

which justifies the use of ordinal scales at least for evaluating **the specified motives with respect to two values**: “greater than” and “less than”

b. TT (En):

*This justifies the use of ordinal scales for assessing at least **the two specified values**: ‘more’ and ‘less’*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

reference | LOST
 general readability | combinability | lexical
 relation | constituency | DISTORTED

The ST contains the phrase *для указанных мотивов* [*dlja ukazannyx motivov*] {for the specified motives}. It is part of an additive pair:

- (94) [*для указанных мотивов*] и [*для двух величин*]
 [*dlja ukazannyx motivov*] i [*dlja dvux veličin*]
 [for specified motives] and [for two values]

In the TT, there is not mention of *motives*, and the qualifier *specified* is reattached to *values*, leaving us with:

- (95) [two specified values]

* * *

In the following example, the TT copies and amplifies a punctuation error in the ST:

- (96) a. ST (Ru) — *compr*:

для охлаждения (нагрева) жидких или газообразных сред,
dlja oxlaždenija (nagreva) židkix ili gazoobraznyx sred,
 for cooling (heating) liquid or gaseous media,

в т. ч. взрывоопасных и вредных [,] в
v t. č. vzryvoopasnyx i vrednyx [,] v
 among that number explosive and harmful [,] in

различных технологических процессах
različnyx tehnologičeskix processax
 various technological processes

for cooling and heating liquids and gases, including explosive and harmful ones, in various industrial processes

b. **TT (En):**

to cool (or heat) liquid or gaseous media, including those explosive and harmful in various technological processes

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

hygiene | capitalisation / punctuation / typography
relation | constituency | DISTORTED

The ST, the phrase *в т.ч. взрывоопасных и вредных* [*v t.č. vzryvoopasnyx i vrednyx*] {including explosive and harmful} is a parenthetical qualifier of *жидких или газообразных сред* [*židkix ili gazoobraznyx sred*] {liquid and gaseous media}:

- (97) *жидких или газообразных сред, в т.ч. взрывоопасных и вредных*
židkix ili gazoobraznyx sred, v t.č. vzryvoopasnyx i vrednyx
 liquids and gaseous media, among that number
 explosive and harmful

liquids and gases, including ones that are harmful and explosive

In Russian, same as in English, such parentheticals are normally set off by commas at both ends; however, in the ST the closing comma is missing. If read as punctuated, the subsequent prepositional phrase *в различных процессах* [*v različnyx processax*] {in various processes} becomes part of the parenthetical:

- (98) a. [*для охлаждения (нагрева) [жидких или газообразных сред,*
 [dlja oxlaždenija (nagreva) [židkix ili gazoobraznyx sred,
 [for cooling (heating) [liquids and gaseous media,
 [*в т.ч. взрывоопасных и вредных в*
 [*v t.č. vzryvoopasnyx i vrednyx v*
 [among that number explosive and harmful in
 [*различных процессах]]*
 [*različnyx processax]]*
 [*various processes]]*]

[for heating or cooling [of liquids and gases [including ones that are harmful and explosive in various processes]]]

However, it is reasonably clear from context that *in various processes* is meant to qualify not *harmful and explosive* but *cooling and heating*:

- (99) а. [для охлаждения (нагрева) [жидких или газообразных сред,
 dlja oxlaždenija (nagreva) židkix ili gazoobraznyx sred,
 for cooling (heating) liquids and gaseous media,
 [в т. ч. взрывоопасных и вредных]] в
 v t. č. vzryvoopasnyx i vrednyx v
 among that number explosive and harmful in
 различных процессах]
 različnyx processax
 various processes

[for heating or cooling [of liquids and gases [including harmful and explosive ones]] in various processes]

In (99a), the liquids and gases in question are harmful and explosive in general, not just in some specific processes.

What differentiates the suggested translations in (98a) and (99a) is the placing of additional elements of cohesion: *ones that are* in (98a) and just *ones* in (99a). In (98a), *ones that are* appears near the start of the parenthetical, nudging us to parse *ones that are harmful and explosive in various processes* as a single syntactic unit, with AdjP directly governing PP. In (98a), *ones* appears between *harmful and explosive* and *in various processes*, creating a ‘boundary’ between the AdjP and the PP. In (96b), the student opts for a structure similar to (98a). Consequently, the reader is nudged in the wrong direction.

4.1.6.2.5.2 Unclear As of 26/08/2025, there are 6 instances of this tag being assigned. They can be separated into two categories by the part of speech whose syntactic status is ambiguous:

- noun (5 cases)
- past participle acting as an adjective (2 cases)

Of the five cases with nouns at the crux, four involve scenarios where the noun in question can plausibly be read as a determinant qualifying another noun (e.g. *risk* in *risk management*). The competing interpretations involve the word being interpreted as either a ‘stand-alone’ nominal — a noun that can enter into subject and object relationships with a verb, be governed by a preposition, govern other

prepositional phrases, be qualified by subordinate clauses or appositives etc. (3 cases) — or the determinant of a different noun (1 case).

* * *

The following is an example of competition between a nominal determinant interpretation and a nodal noun one:

(100) a. **ST (Ru)** — *riskmg*:

СТРАТЕГИЯ И ПОСТАНОВКА ЦЕЛЕЙ
 STRATEGIJa I POSTANOVKA CELEJ
 strategy:FEM.NOM and setting:FEM.NOM goals:PL.GEN

STRATEGY AND GOAL-SETTING

b. **TT (En)**:

STRATEGY AND GOAL SETTING

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | constituency | UNCLEAR

hygiene | capitalisation / punctuation / typography

The TT can be read as:

(101) [STRATEGY] AND [[GOAL] SETTING]

where *STRATEGY* is a stand-alone noun, or as:

(102) [[STRATEGY AND GOAL] SETTING]

where *STRATEGY* is part of the determinant qualifying *SETTINGS*. Both readings are plausible. The correct one is the one in (101). The simplest way to remove the ambiguity is to insert a hyphen between *GOAL* and *SETTING*.

* * *

The following is an example of two competing nominal determinant relationships:

(103) a. **ST (Ru) — *compr*:**

<i>KCO</i> [камера	<i>сборная</i>	<i>одностороннего</i>
<i>KSO</i> [kamera	<i>sbornaja</i>	<i>odnostoronnego</i>
[camera:FEM.NOM	assemblable:FEM.NOM	one-side:NEUT.GEN
<i>обслуживания]</i>		
<i>obsluživanija]</i>		
<i>service:NEUT.GEN]</i>		

modular front-access switchgear

b. **TT (En):**

single-end service assembled chambers

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

reference | UNCLEAR

terminology | non-standard / uncommon

Here, we can read the TT as either:

(104) [[single-end service] [assembled] chambers]

i.e. the chambers in question can only be serviced from one end and come pre-assembled (roughly speaking, the correct interpretation), or as:

(105) [[single-end] [service assembled] chambers]

i.e. the chambers have, in some technical sense, one end rather than many and are assembled by or as part of some service. In the ST, there is no ambiguity, because *обслуживания* [*obsluživanija*] (*service:NEUT.GEN*) clearly coordinates with *одностороннего* [*odnostoronnego*] (*one-side:NEUT.GEN*) but not *сборная* [*sbornaja*] *assemblable:FEM.NOM*.

* * *

In the example below, a past participle *tripped* can qualify one of two nouns, *spring* or *actuator*:

(106) a. **ST (Ru) — *switch*:**

<i>цилиндрической</i>	<i>пружиной,</i>	<i>установленной</i>	<i>на</i>
<i>cilindričeskoj</i>	<i>pružinoj,</i>	<i>ustanovlennoj</i>	<i>na</i>
<i>cylindrical:FEM.INST</i>	<i>spring:FEM.INST,</i>	<i>mounted:FEM.INST</i>	<i>on</i>
<i>каждом</i>	<i>приводе</i>	<i>выключателя,</i>	
<i>každom</i>	<i>privode</i>	<i>vyklučatelja,</i>	
<i>each:MASC.PREP</i>	<i>actuator:MASC.PREP</i>	<i>switch:MASC.GEN,</i>	

срабатывающей при подаче электрического
 srbatyvajuščej pri podače èlektričeskogo
 going.off:FEM.INST on supply:MASC.PREP electrical:MASC.GEN
 импульса
 impul'sa
 impulse:MASC.GEN

by a cylindrical spring mounted on each moving electrode, which is released in response to an electrical signal

b. **TT (En):**

by a cylindrical spring installed on each circuit breaker actuator, tripped by the supply of an electrical impulse

WEIGHT:

TAGS:

relation | constituency | UNCLEAR

The correct interpretation involves the *spring* rather than the *actuator* being *tripped*. Unfortunately, misleading collocational and semantic cues comes into play.

The verb *to trip* often takes various electrical devices and components as object. Common collocates include, *circuit breaker, alarm, fuse, relay, sensor, switch, detector* etc. (all from EnTenTen21). *Actuator* readily falls into this pattern. *Spring*, which is not an electrical device, is not among the common collocates of *to trip*.

In addition to this, we know that something is *tripped* by electricity, rather than by mechanical action, and it seems logical to assume that this something is itself electrical rather than mechanical in character.

Once again, this ambiguity does not exist in the ST, because *срабатывающей* (*going.off:PTCP.FEM.INST*) clearly coordinates with *пружиной* (*spring:N.FEM.INST*) but not with *приводе* (*actuator:N.MASC.PREP*).

4.1.6.2.6 Restrictiveness A permissive approach was taken with respect to such issues. Rules concerning the use of *that* and *which*, and punctuation of restrictive and non-restrictive modifiers were not policed for their own sake. Cases marked as problematic were the cases where unclarity or misinterpretation was deemed likely.

As of 08/08/2025, all the instances of this issue in the database are connected to the punctuation of relative clauses starting with *which*.

It should be noted that, in Russian, the rules pertaining to the punctuation of qualifiers are significantly different to what they are in English, with syntax rather than semantics being the main determining factor. Among other things, all relative clauses are always set off by commas, with restrictiveness inferred from context and with no explicit rules pertaining to the choice of relative pronouns.

* * *

In the example below, what is a restrictive modifier in the ST becomes a non-restrictive one in the TT because of a combination of punctuation, relative pronoun choice and choice of main verb:

(107) a. ST (Ru) — *riskmg*:

Мероприятия	по	управлению	рисками	включают
Meroprijatija	po	upravljeniju	riskami	vklučajut
Measures	for	control	risks:GEN	include

мероприятия	по	управлению	стратегическими	рисками,
meroprijatija	po	upravljeniju	strategičeskimi	riskami,
measures	for	control	strategic:GEN	risks:GEN,

мероприятия	по	управлению	рисками
meroprijatija	po	upravljeniju	riskami
measures	for	control	risks:GEN

финансово-хозяйственной	деятельности	и
finansovo-hozjajstvennoj	dejatel'nosti	i
financial-asset:ADJ.GEN	risks:GEN	and

контрольные процедуры,	являющиеся	мероприятиями
kontrol'nye	procedury,	javljajuščiesja
control:ADJ	procedures,	constituting
		measures

по управлению	рисками	бизнес-процессов.
po upravleniju	riskami	biznes-processov.
for control	risks:GEN	business-processes:GEN.

Risk management measures include measures for the control of strategic risks, measures for the control of financial and operational risks, and **control procedures that constitute measures for the control of business-process risks.**

b. TT (En):

Risk management measures include strategic risk management measures, financial and operational risk management measures and

control procedures, which are measures to manage the risks of business pro

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

relation | restrictiveness

In the ST, the relative clause is restrictive, while in the TT, it is non-restrictive. Consequently, in the ST, the implication is that there exist *control procedures* that are not *measures for the control of business-process risks*, while in the TT, the latter (here translated as *measures to manage the risks of business processes*) appears to be an explanation of the former.

As I mentioned in the paragraph before last, the non-restrictiveness in the TT is marked not only by the punctuation and relative pronoun choice but also by a lexical choice. *Are*, a copular verb form, is, at least in this context, likely to be interpreted as equative, whereas what is required here is a constitutive verb such as *constitute*, *are considered*, *are deemed to be* etc.

* * *

Below, the problem is reversed: a clause that should be punctuated as non-restrictive is punctuated as a restrictive one, resulting in a distortion of constituency:

(108) a. ST (Ru) — *switch*:

Оперативное отключение производится цилиндрической	
Operativnoe otključenje proizvodijsja cilindričeskoj	
Operative disconnection is performed cylindrical:INST	
пружиной,	установленной на каждом приводе
pružinoj,	ustanovlennoj na každom privode
spring:FEM.INST,	mounted:FEM.INST on each drive
выключателя,	срабатывающей при подаче
vyklučatelja,	srbatyvajuščej pri podače
switch:GEN,	triggered:FEM.INST on supply
электрического импульса на отключение	
èlektričeskogo impul'sa na otključenje	
electrical:GEN signal:GEN for disconnection	

The 'connect' operation is performed via the action of a cylindrical **spring** which is mounted on each moving electrode and **released** when a disconnection-triggering signal is received

b. TT (En):

*Operational closing of the circuit breaker is carried out by a cylindrical spring installed on each drive of the **circuit breaker which is triggered** when an electric pulse or a mechanical action is applied.*

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

relation | restrictiveness

relation | constituency | DISTORTED

In the ST, *срабатывающей* [srabatyvajuščej] {triggered:FEM.INST} unambiguously coordinates with *пружиной* [pružinoj] {spring:FEM.INST}. In the TT, the clause starting with *triggered* is non-restrictive (not set off by commas) and appears to qualify *circuit breaker* rather than *spring*.

4.1.6.3 Textuality

Here we are concerned with cohesion and coherence, the aspects of the text that make it a text rather than a collection of isolated sentences and phrases.

There are six subcategories within this category:

co-reference: I use the term *co-reference* quite loosely, in a way that covers some aspects of what Halliday and Hasan (1976) call grammatical and semantic cohesion, as well as actual co-reference, i.e. repeated reference to the same referent.

distorted: Intended co-referential relationship is replaced by some other referential relationship.

lost: Intended co-referential relationship is lost.

unclear: The target of a co-referential element in the ST cannot be discerned or is ambiguous, with there being a significant chance of the reader settling on the wrong interpretation.

information structure: The positioning of a constituent within the sentence and/or the presence or absence of topic and focus markers results in a weakening, loss or distortion of cohesive relationships within the text; and/or the form of a constituent incorrectly signals the knownness or newness of the information it contains.

missing component: A clause or a phrase is incomplete; a component generally regarded as obligatory is missing, and the omission cannot be explained by ellipsis.

confusing repetition: Some element of parallelism (lexical or structural repetition) within the TT has no clear cohesive function.

disparallelism: Functionally equivalent elements within a sentence are syntactically dissimilar.

sentence / paragraph: A sentence or paragraph break is superfluous or unhelpful; alternatively, there is no sentence or paragraph break where one would be helpful.

4.1.6.3.1 Co-reference This term covers:

- repeated use of the same word or expression;
- use of a different word or expression understood to have the same referent (including pronouns and deictics);
- use of a different word or expression that is grammatically and/or semantically coordinated with some other word or expression in the text but without the two entering into an immediate constituency or dependency relationship.

4.1.6.3.1.1 Distorted As of 25/08/2024, the data set contains 4 issues tagged as coreference | distorted.

* * *

In the example below, co-reference is distorted because of a failure to resolve grammatical coordination:

(109) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

последовательно выступал за революц. разрешение
 posledovatel'no vystupal za revoljuc. razrešenie
 consistently spoke:**MASC** for revolutionary resolution

слав. вопроса
 slav. voprosa
 Slavic:GEN question:GEN

he consistently called for resolving the Slavic question by revolution

b. TT (En):

the government was in favour of a revolutionary resolution to
 the Slavic question

WEIGHT: 4

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | DISTORTED

In the ST, the past tense masculine ending of the verb in the ST coordinates with *Михаил Бакунин* [*Mikhail Bakunin*] earlier in the text. In the TT, this implied subject is replaced by *government*, which radically changes the meaning of the passage.

* * *

In the example the grammatical number of a specific noun changes, and an anaphoric pronoun later in the text is not updated to match it:

(110) a. ST (Ru) — *riskmg*:

Формализация выявления и оценки рисков
 Formalizacija vyjavlenija i ocenki riskov
 Formalisation identification:GEN and assessment risks:GEN

позволяет получить сравнимые результаты
 pozvoljaet polučit' sravnimye rezul'taty
 allows to.obtain comparable results

оценки **рисков** для приоритизации усилий
 ocenki **riskov** dlja prioritizacii usilij
 assessment:GEN **risks:GEN** for prioritising efforts

по управлению **ими**
 po upravljeniju **imi**
 towards controlling **them**

Formalising the identification and assessment of **risks** allows us to obtain comparable risk assessment results for the purpose of prioritising **risk** control measures

b. TT (En):

*Formalising risk identification and assessment allows for comparable **risk** assessment results to prioritise efforts in managing **them***

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | DISTORTED

In the ST, the nearest plausible antecedent of *ими* [imi] {*them*} is *рисков* [riskov] {*risks:GEN*}. This word appears at the end of *результаты оценки рисков* [rezul'taty ocenki riskov] {*results of assessment of risks*}. In the TT, this phrase is translated as *risk assessment results*. This is a reasonable translation decision; however, singular *risk* no longer coordinates with *them*. Instead it sounds like what is being managed is the results.

It does not help that the phrase *allows for comparable risk assessment results to prioritise efforts* is extremely opaque, because in a construction of the form [A] *allows for* [B] *to* [do C], we normally expect B to be the agent rather than the instrument.

* * *

In the example below, co-reference is altered, because a deictic pronoun in the ST is substituted for an indefinite one in the TT:

(111) a. ST (Ru) — *stats*:

в **этих** случаях

v **ètix** slučajax

in **these** cases

in **these** cases

b.

in **some** cases

WEIGHT: 4

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | DISTORTED

The co-referent, in this case, is a range of experimental observations mentioned earlier in the text. The scope of co-reference changes from *all* to *some* (i.e. not all).

4.1.6.3.1.2 Lost As of 25/08/2024, the data set contains 1 instance of this tag.

* * *

The example below contains an interesting confluence of omissions that result in a significant weakening of cohesion:

(112) a. ST (Ru) — gloss:

с	помощью	языка	познаются	физика	и
s	pomošč'ju	jazyka	poznajutsja	fizika	i
with	help	language:GEN	become.known	physics	and
	физиология	звучков	речи,	психология	человека,
	fiziologija	zvukov	reči,	psixologija	čeloveka,
	physiology	speech:GEN,	psychology	human:GEN,	history
	история	общества	и т. д. Л.	Ельмслев	
	istorija	obščestva	i t. d. L.	El'mslev	
	society:GEN	and	so on. L.	Hjelmslev	not
	не	отрицает	правомерность	таких	исследований,
	ne	otricaet	pravomernost'	takix	issledovanij,
	denies	legitimacy	such:GEN	research,	but
	но	опасно	при этом	забыть	о самом
	no	opasno	pri ètom	zabyt'	o samom
	is.dangerous	during	this	to.forget	about
	языке.				itself language.
	языке.	Помимо	всего	перечисленного	нужна
	jazyke.	Pomimo	vsego	perečislennogo	nužna
	Aside.from	all:GEN	listed	is.necessary	also
	собственно	лингвистика			actually
	sobstvenno	lingvistika			
	linguistics				

language is used for studying the physics and physiology of speech, as well as human psychology, development of societies etc. Hjelmslev does not deny the legitimacy of such research, but it is dangerous to forget about language itself. **Apart from all the listed disciplines, we also need actual linguistics**

b. TT (En):

*with the help of language, we better understand phonetics, human psychology, the history of society, etc. Hjelmslev did not deny the legitimacy of such research but warned against overlooking language itself. Linguistics is **also** necessary*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | LOST
 relation | conjunction | adversative | FROM
 relation | conjunction | additive | TO

The ST contains four separate elements that combine to mark contrast with something earlier in the text and to restrict the possible scope of this contrast:

- the preposition *помимо* [*potimo*] {*besides*}, which marks the addition of something to a list but also carries overtones of adversation, because it marks this addition as non-obvious, as counter to expectation;
- anaphoric *всего перечисленного* [*vsego perečislennogo*] {*everything listed*}, which refers to a list of disciplines given a couple of sentences earlier;
- *u* [*i*], here meaning {*also, as well, too*}, a second marker of both addition and adversation — again the addition is marked as non-obvious;
- a third marker of adversation *sobstvenno* [*sobstvenno*] {*actually*}, which also restricts the scope of the adversation: we are looking for contrast with something that is categorically similar to *лингвистика* [*lingvistika*] {*linguistics*}.

Of these four devices of cohesion, only the third, the least selective, is retained in the ST. This significantly weakens cohesion. It is no longer immediately clear what the information in *Linguistics is also necessary* is being added to, what the basis of comparison is.

4.1.6.3.1.3 Unclear As of 25/08/2024, the data set contains 10 instances of this tag.

The majority of the issues in this category involve some form of pronoun ambiguity. There is also one case where the site of unclarity is a content word with no clear referent back in the text.

Pronoun ambiguity is a relatively common sticking point in translating from Russian to English. In Russian, many classes of pronouns are marked for number, gender and case, which makes it easier to resolve both constitutive and co-referential relationships between non-adjacent components. English does not have this set of resources. Consequently, when translating from Russian into English, to preserve the same semantic relationships while minimising syntactic ambiguity, we must often substantially restructure the sentence. At the same time, departures from ST information structure often precipitate lapses in cohesion, including, rather ironically, instances of pronoun ambiguity (see (114a)/(114b) and (118a)/(118b) below). The tension between these two sets of considerations is probably the greatest single source of wicked translation problems a Ru > En translator has to navigate on a regular basis.

* * *

The example below is a typical case of pronoun ambiguity:

(113) a. ST (Ru) — *stats*:

<i>это базовое допущение</i>	<i>зачастую</i>	<i>игнорируется.</i>	<i>В</i>
<i>èto bazovoe dopuščenie</i>	<i>začastuju</i>	<i>ignoriruetsja.</i>	<i>V</i>
<i>this basic assumption</i>	<i>often</i>	<i>is.ignored.</i>	<i>In</i>

<i>пользу игнорирования</i>	<i>имеются свои доводы,</i>	<i>но</i>
<i>pol'zu ignorirovanija</i>	<i>imejutsja svoi dovody,</i>	<i>no</i>
<i>favour ignoring:NEUT.GEN</i>	<i>there.are own arguments,</i>	<i>but</i>

<i>фундаментально оно</i>	<i>отвлекает социальные</i>
<i>fundamental'no ono</i>	<i>otvlekaet social'nye</i>
<i>fundamentally it:NEUT.NOM</i>	<i>distracts social</i>

<i>науки от выполнения основной задачи</i>
<i>nauki ot vpolnenija osnovnoj zadači</i>
<i>sciences from carrying.out main task</i>

this basic **assumption is often left unexamined**. There are some arguments in favour of **this practice**, but, fundamentally, it draws social sciences away from their main task

b. TT (En):

*the need to test this assumption is often ignored. There are arguments for **ignoring this assumption**, however, **it** ultimately draws attention away from the main objective of the social sciences*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | UNCLEAR

In the ST, *оно* [ono] {it:NEUT} clearly coordinates with *игнорирование* [ignorirovanie] *ignoring:NEUT*. The corresponding *it* in the TT can be read as referring either to the state of affairs described by the preceding clause — *There are arguments for ignoring this assumption* — or only to *this assumption*.

* * *

The effect of changing information structure is particularly well-illustrated by the case below, where breaking up a sentence and moving an anaphoric pronoun further from its intended co-referent results in the broadening of the pronoun's referential scope:

(114) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

<i>Поселился в Париже, сблизился</i>	<i>с</i>	<i>П. Пруденом,</i>
Poselilsja v Pariže, sblizilsja	s	P. Prudonom,
He settled in Paris, became.closer	with	P. Proudhon,
<i>П. Леру, Э. Кабе, познакомился с известными</i>		
P. Leru, È. Kabe, poznakomilsja s izvestnymi		
P. Leroux, É. Cabet, got acquainted	with	famous
<i>европ. радикалами и установил контакты с</i>		
evrop. radikalami i ustanovil kontakty s		
European radicals	and established contacts	with
<i>польск. эмигрантами, с помощью которых надеялся</i>		
pol'sk. èmigrantami, s pomošč'ju kotoryx nadejalsja		
Polish émigrés,	with aid	whom:GEN hoped
<i>устроить революц. выступления в России.</i>		
ustroit' revoljuc. vystuplenija v Rossii.		
to.arrange revolutionary protests		in Russia.

He settled in Paris and drew closer to P. Proudhon, P. Leroux and É. Cabet; he got acquainted with famous European radicals and established links with **Polish émigrés**, with **whose** aid he hoped to arrange revolutionary protests in Russia.

b.

Bakunin then settled in Paris and became a close acquaintance

of **Proudhon, Leroux and Kabe**, meeting well-known **European radicals** and establishing contacts with **Polish émigrés**. He hoped to arrange revolutionary demonstrations in Russia with **their** help.

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | UNCLEAR

textuality | information structure

In the ST, it is clear that *которых* [*kotoryx*] {*of which / of whom*} refers back to the immediately adjacent *польск. эмигрантами* [*pol'sk. èmigrantami*] {Polish emigrants}. The effect of proximity is buttressed up by the target readers' encyclopaedic knowledge. To most educated adult speakers of Russian as L1 it will be obvious that, of the people mentioned, Polish immigrants would be the most likely to have connections with revolutionary radicals inside the Russian Empire.

In the TT, there is a sentence break immediately after the *Polish émigrés*. We now find *with whose help* at the end of a separate sentence, and *whose* seems to refer back not just to the *Polish émigrés* but also to *Proudhon, Leroux and Kabe* and *European radicals*.

The problem is likely twofold. The specific link between *Polish émigrés* and *whose* is lost partly because of loss of adjacency. However, it is not clear whether simply restoring adjacency fixes the problem fully. In (115) below, the referential scope of *their* still remains rather ambiguous because of the sentence break:

- (115) Bakunin then settled in Paris and became a close acquaintance of Proudhon, Leroux and Kabe, meeting well-known European radicals and establishing contacts with Polish émigrés. With their help, he hoped to arrange revolutionary demonstrations in Russia.

The second likely cause of the problem is that introducing a sentence break 'resets' reader expectations with respect to the flow of communicative dynamism (CD). The ST passage in (114a) consists of a single sentence that seems to obey the principle of rising CD: the sentence progresses from broader to narrower referential scope. We can schematise it as follows:

- (116) Protagonist moves to a specific location → where protagonist meets A, B and C → for the last of whom protagonist has specific goals in mind.

By breaking up the sentence, we disrupt the expectation of rising CD. The start of a new sentence means a new theme. The reader is ‘reset’ to expect a constituent with a comparatively broad referential scope. We can, consequently, schematise (115) as follows:

- (117) Protagonist moves to a specific location → where protagonist meets A, B and C.
For the people mentioned earlier, protagonist has specific goals in mind.

* * *

Below is an example of a ‘garden path’ structure, where the reader is initially nudged towards one way of resolving pronoun ambiguity and then forced to swap to another:

- (118) a. **ST (Ru) — compr:**

<i>B</i>	1996	г.	фирмой	было	приобретено	на
<i>V</i>	1996	g.	firmoj	bylo	priobreno	na
<i>In</i>	1996	year	firm:FEM.INST	was	acquired	at
			<i>инвестиционных торгах</i>		<i>предприятие-банкрот,</i>	
			<i>investicionnyx torgax</i>		<i>predprijatie-bankrot,</i>	
			<i>investment auctions</i>		<i>enterprise:NEUT.NOM-bankrupt,</i>	
			которое (по условиям конкурса)			<i>преобразовано</i>
			kotoroe (po uslovijam konkursa)			<i>preobrazovano</i>
			which:NEUT (by conditions of the auction)			<i>is.transformed</i>
			<i>в общество с ограниченной ответственностью</i>			
			<i>v obščestvo s ograničennoj otvetstvennost'ju</i>			
			<i>into society with limited liability</i>			
			<i>“Верейский механический завод”.</i>			
			<i>“Verejskij mehaničeskij zavod”.</i>			
			<i>“Vereya mechanical factory”.</i>			

In 1996, the firm acquired a bankrupt enterprise at an investment option. This enterprise was, in accordance with the conditions of sale, transformed into a limited liability company *Vereya Mechanical Factory*.

- b. In 1996, **the company acquired a bankrupt enterprise** at an investment auction, **which** (under the terms of the deal) was transformed into the limited liability company “*Vereya Mechanical Plant*”.

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | UNCLEAR

In the ST, the number/gender inflection makes it clear that *которое* [*kotoroe*] {*which:NEUT*} coordinates with *предприятие* [*predprijatie*] {*enterprise:NEUT*}. In the TT, this relationship is no longer as obvious.

The content of the parenthetical immediately after *which* pertains to the conditions of sale, so, initially, the most logical way to interpret the relative clause in the TT seems to be as qualifying the entirety of the main clause which states the fact of the sale — *the company acquired a bankrupt enterprise at an investment auction*. As we read past the parenthetical, it becomes clear that the predicate within the relative clause — *was transformed into the limited liability company* — has to relate to the company, not the fact of purchase. There is a slight jolt as we are forced to reject rather than refine our initial meaning hypothesis.

The effect is compounded by a slight change in the relative positioning of constituents. In the ST, *которое* [*kotoroe*] {*which:NEUT*} appears immediately after *предприятие* [*predprijatie*] {*enterprise:NEUT*}. In the TT, *which* appears immediately after *investment auction*.

* * *

In the example below, co-reference is, at least on first reading, likely to be resolved wrongly because of collocational patterns:

(119) a. ST (Ru):

<i>В данной статье на примере измерения</i>	<i>мотивации</i>
V dannoj stat'e na primere izmerenija	motivacii
In this article on example measurement:GEN	motivation:GEN
<i>обучения показано, что для</i>	<i>участников</i>
obučenija pokazano, što dlja	učastnikov
is.shown, that for	participants turns-out
<i>оказывается не всегда возможным</i>	<i>упорядочить</i>
okazyvaetsja ne vsegda vozmožnym	uporjadočit'
not always possible to.order	different
<i>разные виды</i>	<i>мотивов между собой.</i>
raznye vidy	motivov meždu soboj.
types motivation:GEN among themselves.	

In this article, we use motivation data to show that participants sometimes struggle to rank **different types of motivation** by importance consistently.

b. TT (En):

*This paper uses the example of measuring motivation in relation to learning, to show that it is not always possible for **participants** to organise **different types of motivation among themselves**.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | UNCLEAR

In the ST, *между собой* [*meždu soboj*] {among themselves} clearly links back to *разные виды мотивов* [*raznye vidy motivov*] {different types of motives}. The equivalent expression in the TT, *among themselves*, is, at least on first reading, more likely to be read as linking back to *participants*. The main reason for this is that, in English, when a sentence specifies multiple animate agents, *among themselves* usually links back to these agents. The Russian *между собой* [*meždu soboj*] has a somewhat broader range and is also frequently used when talking about interactions or interrelationships between constituents or parameters in a system. For example:

- (120) a. *дыхание и окислительно-восстановительные процессы*
 dyhanie i okislitel'no-vosstanovitel'nye processy
 respiration and redox processes

тесно связаны между собой.
 tesno svjazany **meždu soboj.**
 tightly are.connected **between themselves**

respiration and redox processes are closely **inter**-related

- b. *крупинки склеены между собой.*
 krupinki skleeny **meždu soboj.**
 grains are.glued **between themselves**

the adhere **to each other**

* * *

As mentioned earlier, the data set contains one issue where the focal point of the ambiguity is a content word:

(121) a. ST (Ru) — *stats*:

На выборке в 250 студентов показано, что **около**
 Na vyborke v 250 studentov pokazano, čto **okolo**
 From sample of 250 students is shown, that **around**

половины респондентов соблюдали транзитивность
poloviny respondentov sobljudali tranzitivnost'
half respondents:GEN observed transitivity

при упорядочивании величин мотивов (внутренних,
 pri uporjadočivanii veličin motivov (vnutrennix,
 while ordering magnitudes motives:GEN (internal,

внешних и социальных), **что** оправдывает
 vnešnix i social'nyx), **čto** opravdyvaet
 external and social), **which** justifies

использование порядковых шкал
 ispol'zovanie porjadkovyx škal
 use ordinal:GEN scales:GEN

Using a sample of 250 students, we show that **around half of respondents observe the transitivity requirement** when arranging motivations (internal, external and social) by magnitude. **This** justifies the use of ordinal scales

b. TT (En):

*A sample of 250 students showed that approximately half of the respondents observed transitivity requirements when ordering levels of motivation (intrinsic, extrinsic, and social motivation). This **example** justifies the use of ordinal scales*

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

textuality | co-reference | UNCLEAR

In this case, the problem is that the word *example* in the TT has no obvious anaphoric referent. Nothing either in the preceding sentence or further back in the text can be readily described as an example.

4.1.6.3.2 Information structure Of the nine information structure issues in the database as of 26/05/2025, eight can be reduced primarily to the relative positioning of constituents within a sentence. One issue comes down to the signalling of knownness by function words. The interesting thing is that the function word in question is not a determiner but a preposition.

Two cases where changes in the proximity of constituents and the introduction of a sentence break have adverse effect on likely interpretation were discussed earlier (see the discussion of (114a)/(114b) and (118a)/(118b) above).

It is difficult to find anything resembling clear subdivisions within this category; however, it is possible to identify six types of issues that surface sometimes on their own and sometimes in various combinations:

1. **thematisation / dethematisation** — inappropriate or inadequate anchoring of the sentence in the discourse resulting from constituents being moved to or from the front of the sentence;
2. **change of focus** — shift in what constitutes the ‘communicative kernel’ of the sentence, the most important information the speaker wants to convey, resulting from constituents being moved to or from the end of the sentence;
3. **delayed topic reveal** — the reader has to wait a long time before it becomes clear what the sentence is actually about (usually a consequence of overlong introductory phrases);
4. **change in co-referential scope resulting from changes in adjacency** — loss or gain of co-referential specificity resulting from constituents being moved closer or further away from each other;
5. **change in co-referential scope resulting from breaking up a long sentence** — loss or gain of co-referential specificity resulting from loss of sentence-level context;
6. **addition, omission, poor choice or poor placing of dedicated topic and focus-markers** — choice of function words or word order within a phrase send misleading signals concerning the knownness or newness of incoming information.

Before going any further, a disclaimer is warranted. The majority of claims and judgements regarding information structure are somewhat uncertain. Communicative dynamism, thematicity and rhematicity, topic and focus, newness and knownness cannot be cleanly ‘decoded’ with reference to observable

morphosyntactic features or patterns of co-occurrence. The most reliable way of accessing information structure empirically seems to be by tracking intonation (Halliday and Hasan 1976, p.325). In practice, this would require a dedicated experimental setup with volunteer readers, recording equipment, frequency analysis software, and significant amounts of data processing. It is not feasible to run such checks within the context of the present study. Consequently, what I describe below are my own intuitions. The reader is reminded that, in the final analysis, TRISST is merely a framework for logging reader responses.

* * *

In the example below the problem is completely reducible to order of constituents:

(122) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

B	1843	в Швейцарии	познакомился	с	B.
V	1843	v Švejcarii	poznakomilsja	s	V.
In	1843	in Switzerland	became.acquainted:MASC	with	W.
		<i>Вейтлингом</i>	<i>и его теорией.</i>		
		<i>Vejtlingom</i>	<i>i ego teoriej.</i>		
		<i>Weitling</i>	<i>and his theory.</i>		

In 1843, while **in Switzerland**, he became acquainted with Weitling and his theories.

b. TT (En):

*In 1843, he was introduced to Wilhelm Weitling and his theory, **while in Switzerland.***

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | information structure

In (122b), the student has moved the information about location to the end of the sentence. This sentence is part of a biographical encyclopaedia article where the text is structured primarily by chronology and geography (*On date X, in location Y, the protagonist performed actions A, B and C. etc.*). One of the main functions of information about time and place is to orient the reader within the text. The logical place for such information is near the front of the sentence, in theme position. Shifting the geographical information to the end of the sentence makes it

the focus of the sentence. It suggests that this particular geographical information is especially significant. This, in turn, sends the reader looking for non-existent additional inferences.

* * *

The issue below is a mirror image of the one just discussed. Information is moved from the middle to the beginning of the sentence:

(123) a. **ST (Ru) — compr:**

<i>В 1996 г.</i>	<i>фирмой</i>	<i>было приобретено</i>	на инвестиционных
<i>V 1996 g.</i>	<i>firnoj</i>	<i>bylo priobreno</i>	na investicionnyx
<i>In 1996 year</i>	<i>firm:INST</i>	<i>was acquired</i>	at investment

торгах	<i>предприятие-банкрот,</i>	<i>которое (по условиям</i>
torgax	<i>predprijatie-bankrot,</i>	<i>kotoroe (po uslovijam</i>
auction	<i>enterprise-bankrupt,</i>	<i>which (by conditions</i>

<i>конкурса)</i>	<i>преобразовано</i>	<i>в общество с</i>
<i>konkursu)</i>	<i>preobrazovano</i>	<i>v obščestvo s</i>
<i>bidding:GEN)</i>	<i>was transformed</i>	<i>into society with</i>

<i>ограниченной</i>	<i>ответственностью</i>	<i>“Верейский</i>
<i>ograničennoj</i>	<i>otvetstvennost’ju</i>	<i>“Verejskij</i>
<i>limited</i>	<i>liability</i>	<i>“Vereiskii</i>

<i>механический завод”.</i>
<i>mexaničeskij zavod”.</i>
<i>mechanical factory”.</i>

In 1996, an enterprise in administration was acquired by the firm **at an investment auction**. This enterprise, as per the conditions of the bid, was transformed into the *Vereiskii mechanical factory* limited liability company.

b. **TT (En):**

*In 1996, **at an auction**, the company was acquired as an enterprise in default, which (abiding by the auction conditions) was transformed into the limited liability company “Vereya Mechanical Plant”.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | information structure

In this case, the sentence is part of a product presentation by a company that makes industrial gas compressors. The specific slide in question is a brief historical

exposition. It consists of two sentences presented as bullet-points. The other sentence on the slide is much shorter, a total of six words in Russian, and only tells us that the parent company was founded in 1990. The next slide moves onto other matters: internal organisation of the company, number of employees etc.

In this case, moving information about location (*at an auction*) to the front of the sentence, feels inappropriately wordy — as if the writer is about to launch into a much grander narrative, structured by time and place, like the biographical text in the previous example.

* * *

Below is an example of a semantically ‘light’ constituent being put in the focus position, resulting in low end-weight:

(124) a. ST (Ru) — *neogr*:

<i>В это время</i>	<i>Французская академия отказывается</i>	вообще
<i>V èto vremja</i>	<i>Francuzskaja akademija otkazyvaetsja</i>	voobščè
<i>At this time</i>	<i>French academy refuses</i>	at.all

<i>принимать к рассмотрению работы, касающиеся</i>	
<i>prinimat' k rassmotreniju raboty, kasajuščiesja</i>	
<i>to.accept for consideration works, concerning</i>	

<i>происхождения языка</i>	<i>и</i>	<i>универсальных всемирных</i>
<i>proisxoždenija jazyka</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>universal'nyx vsemirnyx</i>
<i>origin language:GEN</i>	<i>and</i>	<i>universal global</i>

языков.
jazykov.
languages.

At this point, the French Academy **completely** refuses to consider any manuscripts dealing with the origin of language or universal whole-world languages.

b. TT (En):

*At this time, the French Academy refused to accept works concerning the origin of language and universal world languages **at all**.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | information structure

In (124b), the sentence ends on a very ‘light’ — i.e. short and referentially unspecific — adverbial *at all*. Immediately before it is a ‘heavy’ — bulky and

referentially narrow — direct object *works concerning the origin of language and universal world languages*. The result feels rather unsatisfying, as if we are given less information than we were led to believe we would be.

We could attempt to fix this sentence in at least three different ways. We could remove *at all* and add a synonymous qualifier earlier in the sentence:

(125) At this time, the French Academy completely refused to accept works concerning the origin of language and universal world languages.

We could replace *at all* with a bulkier qualifier:

(126) At this time, the French Academy refused to accept works concerning the origin of language and universal world languages under any circumstances whatsoever.

Finally, we could add CD to *at all* by indicating marked intonation with italics:

(127) At this time, the French Academy refused to accept works concerning the origin of language and universal world languages *at all*.

The last two solutions suggest that the reader should treat this constituent as inferentially richer than its semantic face value would suggest. Both additional bulk and marked information prompt us to look for additional contextual effects. There is a change in the communicative thrust of the sentence. The sentence is now much more evaluative and focuses not on the type of publications that were being turned away but on the totality of the ban.

* * *

In the example below, the topic of the TT sentence only becomes clear about half way through the sentence:

(128) a. **ST (Ru)** — *gloss*:

Согласно	Л. Ельмслеву,	индукция ,	не	допускающая
Soglasno	L. El'mslevu,	indukcija ,	ne	dopuskajuščaja
According.to	L. Hjelmslev,	induction ,	not	allowing
	формулировки	общих	понятий,	не может
	formulirovki	obščix	ponjatij,	ne možet
	formulation	general:GEN	notions:GEN,	not can
	обеспечить	непротиворечивое	и	простое описание.
	obespečit'	neprotivorečivoe	i	prostoe opisanie.
	guarantee	non-contradictory	and	simple description.

According to Hjelmslev, **induction** bars us from formulating general notions and, therefore, cannot be used for setting up simple coherent descriptions.

b. **TT (En):**

According to Hjelmslev, as induction does not allow the formulation of general concepts, it cannot provide consistent and simple description.

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

textuality | information structure

The sentence in (128b) opens with an introductory phrase followed by a subordinate clause, which makes it quite difficult to project what might be coming next. The subject of the main clause, *it*, points back to *induction* back at the start of the subordinate clause. This — the 14th word out of 20 — finally resolves the question of what the sentence is about.

It is reasonable to ask, why in (128b) we cannot simply treat *induction* as the sentence topic. The answer is, because of a combination of form and context. It would be possible to do so, either if the word had been mentioned earlier in the text, or if it were the subject of a main rather than a subordinate clause. As is, however, the mention of *induction* initially feels more like a parenthetical aside than a signal of what the sentence is about.

It is worth noting that (128b) is also difficult to parse because three abstract nouns come in quick succession: *induction*, *formulation* and *concepts*. At least one of these is an easily avoidable nominalisation: *allow the formulation of* can be replaced by *allow us to formulate*.

* * *

The database contains one issue where the internal form of a constituent — to be exact, the choice of preposition — sends misleading signals about the newness/knownness of the information contained:

(129) a. **ST (Ru) — bakun:**

Был	деятельным	участником	философской	и
Byl	dejatel'nyum	učastnikom	filosofskoj	i
Was:MASC	active	participant	philosophical:GEN	and

лит.	полемики	1830-х гг.
lit.	polemiki	1830-x
literary:GEN	polemics:GEN	1830s:GEN

He participated actively in the philosophical and literary debates **of the 1830s**.

b. TT (En):

*He was an active participant in the philosophical and literary controversy **in the 1830s**.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

relation | role | setting | FROM
 relation | role | time | TO
 textuality | information structure

The definite article at the head of *the philosophical and literary controversy* in (129b) suggests that this phrase should be treated as inferentially rich. However, it is difficult to arrive at any additional inferences without some further information about the nature of the controversy. No such information is given. The next sentence in the TT moves onto a different topic. Same as in 124b, it feels like important new information is hinted at but never actually delivered. This could easily be fixed by substituting *in* for *of*:

(130) He was an active participant in the philosophical and literary controversy **of** the 1830s.

Let us consider why this is a better option.

Phrases of the form *in TIME-PERIOD* simply set things on a timeline. When found at the end of a sentence, such phrases tend to qualify verbs and process nouns. For example:

(131)

- a. The first public playhouses were built in London in the late 1500s.// (EnTenTen21)
- b. *Reaganland* depicts the rise of Ronald Reagan in the late 1970s.// (EnTenTen21)

It is worth noting that *the rise of Ronald Reagan* can be easily replaced by a synonymous phrase with a cognate verb, *how Ronald Reagan rose*.

By contrast, phrases of the form *of TIME-PERIOD* can only qualify non-process nouns. We could not substitute *in* for *of* in (131a) and (131b). Such qualifiers do something more than merely set things on a timeline: they mark them as part of an established cultural frame. Things that are *of* a time period are not merely happening during this period — they belong to it. They are assumed to be a recognised part of the general cultural backdrop for that period.

What *of* signals in (130) is knownness — not in the sense of the notion being necessarily known to the reader or having appeared earlier in the text, but in the sense of it already having an independent existence within the discourse. Things that are *of* a period are assumed to need no further explanation at the point of first appearance in the text.

* * *

The following example involves the omission of a focus-marker.

(132) a. ST (Ru) — *stats*:

однако	даже	в	этих	случаях	для	обоснования
Byodnako	daže	v	ètix	slučajax	dlja	obosnovanija
however	even	in	these	cases	for	justification

использования	шкал	Ликерта	требуется	дальнейшая
ispol'zovanija	škal	Likerta	trebuetsja	dal'nejšaja
use:GEN	scales:GEN	Likert:GEN	is.necessary	further

проверка	допущений	об	аддитивности	для
proverka	dopuščenij	ob	additivnosti	dlja
checking	assumptions:GEN	about	additivity	for

измерения	мотивов.
izmerenija	motivov.
measuring	motives:GEN.

however, **even in these cases**, the use of Likert scales requires further testing of the assumptions regarding the additivity of motivation measurements.

b. TT (En):

*however, **in these situations**, to justify the use of Likert scales, further testing of additivity assumptions when measuring motivation is necessary.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | information structure

In the ST, the adverbial *в этих случаях* [*v ètix slučajax*] {*in these cases*} is preceded by the focus-marking *даже* [*daže*] {*even*}, signalling that the expression that follows is counter to expectation and inferentially rich.

In the TT, there is no focus-marker. Consequently, the clause-initial position of *in these situations* causes us to interpret this phrase as a theme — simply a co-referential anchor tethering the clause within the sentence with no further implications. We have lost both the inferential richness and the adversation.

4.1.6.3.3 Missing component Missing components fall into two categories:

1. complements (1 case)
2. conjunctions (2 cases)

Complements are obligatory dependents, such as, for example, the direct object of a transitive verb. When such a constituent is missing, the phrase or the clause is generally considered incomplete. Conjunctions are words or collections of words that signal logical relationships between content words, expressions and clauses but have no referential meaning of their own.

Let us consider two examples:

* * *

The word *aspect* generally requires us to specify an aspect of what we are talking about. No such specification is given in (133b) below.

(133) a. **ST (Ru) — gloss:**

<i>чтобы</i>	<i>создать</i>	<i>истинную</i>	<i>лингвистику,</i>	<i>которая не</i>
<i>čtoby</i>	<i>sozdat'</i>	<i>istinnuju</i>	<i>lingvistiku,</i>	<i>kotoraja ne</i>
<i>in.order.to</i>	<i>create</i>	<i>true</i>	<i>linguistics,</i>	<i>which not</i>

<i>есть</i>	<i>лишь</i>	<i>вспомогательная</i>	<i>наука,</i>	<i>нужно</i>	<i>сделать</i>
<i>est'</i>	<i>liš'</i>	<i>vspomogatel'naja</i>	<i>nauka,</i>	<i>nužno</i>	<i>sdelat'</i>
<i>is</i>	<i>just</i>	<i>helping</i>	<i>science,</i>	<i>is.necessary</i>	<i>to.do</i>

что-то ещё.
čto-to eščë.
something more.

to establish a true linguistics, which cannot be a mere ancillary or derivative science, **something else** must be done.

(Fr.J. Whitfield's translation of *Prolegomena*; Hjelmslev and Whitfield 1961)

b. TT (En):

Linguistics is also necessary and 'in order to cultivate true linguistics, which is not just an auxiliary science, a further aspect is needed. '

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | missing component

* * *

Asyndetic lists are allowed in Russian; however, in English an *and* is generally expected before the last item. This is omitted in (134b) below:

(134) a. ST (Ru) — *riskmg*:

<i>цели, задачи,</i>	<i>принципы функционирования</i>	<i>системы</i>
celi, zadači,	principy funkcionirovanija	sistemy
goals, objectives,	principles functioning:GEN	system:GEN
<i>управления</i>	<i>рисками</i>	
upravljenija	riskami	
management:GEN	risk:GEN	

the goals, objectives **and** principles governing the operation of the risk management system

b. TT (En):

the goals, objectives, principles of the Company's risk management

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | missing component

4.1.6.3.4 Confusing repetition Confusing repetition is the opposite of disparallelism (see section 4.1.6.3.5).

Cases of lexical or structural repetition with no clear cohesive function are problematic, because repetition generally signals that the features in question are either co-referential or functionally similar, i.e. perform similar roles within the

sentence. Consequently, their spurious appearance in features that are neither co-referential nor functionally similar can thoroughly confuse the reader. The result is often the linguistic equivalent of Escher stairs, where the text appears to loop back on itself, somehow changing the system of coordinates in process.⁹

We can identify three types of undesirable repetition which can occur on their own or in various combinations:

1. repetition of complete content word;
2. repetition of word stem;
3. repetition of structural features and patterns.

The last can include, function words, affixes, and various phrasal templates (distinctive combinations of syntactic relationships).

With the data still somewhat in flux, it is difficult to judge the prevalence of various contributing factors, but, provisionally, we can say that repetition of words and stems seems to be more common than purely structural repetition.

Recorded cases of ‘pure’ structural repetition fall into the following three categories:

1. nested *of*... constructions
2. repetitions of *and*...
3. nested *-ing* + direct object

It is worth noting that, while most issues in this category can probably be attributed to lack of stylistic polish, a few are clearly hygiene errors where the translator appears to have lost focus partway through editing a passage and forgotten to delete something (see section 4.1.6.8 below).

* * *

Let us start by looking at a simple example of repeating stems.

⁹I thank Lorraine Yang for this wonderful simile.

(135) a. ST (Ru) — *compr*:

Компрессорная	станция	типа
Kompressorная	stancija	tipa
Compressor	station	type-GEN

ДККС

DKKS

containerised booster compressor station

Containerised booster compressor station/module

b. TT (En):

stationary container compressor stations

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

reference | LOST

textuality | confusing repetition

The meaning of the abbreviation ДККС [DKKS] was explained when discussing (63a/63b) (p. 185). It stands for *дожимная блочно-контейнерная компрессорная станция* [*dožimnaja bločno-kontejnernaia kompressorная stancija*], which I translated as *containerised booster compressor module*.

The suffix *-ary* typically means {*having the property of*} or {*pertaining to*}. This is not actually the case here — booster compressor stations can be mobile, i.e. non-stationary — but the combination of *stationary* and *station* still comes across as confusingly tautological in the same way as *revolutionary revolution* or *cautionary caution*. *Static booster container stations* would have worked, as would have simply *booster container stations*. In English this qualifier is usually omitted. Such plant is usually static and only occasionally mounted on wheeled platforms. Consequently, the default assumption is that we are dealing with the static rather than the mobile version.

* * *

The following example also involves repetition of stems but with an added structural dimension:

(136) a. ST (Ru) — *gloss*:

Он отвергал индуктивный, исходящий из описания
 On otvergal induktivnyj, isxodjaščij iz opisanija
 He rejected inductive, stemming from description
 языковых фактов подход, на основе которого
 jazykovyx faktov podxod, na osnove kotorogo
 language:ADJ.GEN facts approach, on basis which:GEN
 обычно старались построить теорию языка его
 obyčno staralis' postroit' teoriju jazyka ego
 usually tried to.build theory language:GEN his
 предшественники
 predšestvenniki
 predecessors

He rejected the inductive approach favoured by his predecessors, where theories were derived from the descriptions of facts about language.

b. TT (En):

*He rejected the inductive approach, **based on** the description of linguistic facts, **on the basis** of which his predecessors usually tried to build a theory of language.*

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

textuality | confusing repetition

In this case, the words with the repeating stem (*based* and *basis*) are both part of prepositional constructions with *on*. To complicate matters further, the two constructions are not quite equivalent, and one is nested inside the other. All of this is quite hard to keep track of, and a the sentence is somewhat difficult to parse on first reading.

* * *

In the example below, a complete word is repeated:

(137) a. ST (Ru) — *compr*:

винтовых // поршневых // ротационно-пластинчатых и
 vintovyx // poršnevux // rotacionno-plastinčatyx i
 screw-type || piston || rotary-plate and
 водокольцевых
 vodokol'cevux
 liquid-ring

screw-type || piston || rotary-plate and liquid-ring

b. TT (En):

pump || piston || rotary plate and liquid ring **pump**

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

textuality | disparallelism

textuality | confusing repetition

This is supposed to be a list, with each of the three items referring to a different type of compressor. What is perplexing is that the word *pump* seems to be repeated across two different taxonomic levels (pumps in general and specific types of pump) and is present in the name of one specific type of pump but omitted from the other.

* * *

In the example below, the repetition of the same word is clearly a hygiene issue, an oversight rather than a genuine stylistic flaw:

(138) a. ST (Ru) — *audit*:

Москва, ул. Академика Волгина, д. 6.

Moskva, ul. Akademika Volgina, d. 6.

Moscow, street Academician:GEN Volgin:GEN, no. 6

6 Academician Volgin Street, Moscow

b. TT (En):

6 **Ulitsa** Akademika Volgina **Ulitsa**, Moscow

WEIGHT:3

TAGS:

textuality | confusing repetition

The student has, sensibly, chosen to transliterate the Russian address but has somehow ended up with the word *ulitsa* (*street*) at both the beginning and the end of the street name.

* * *

The following is an example of a repeating *and*:

(139) a. **ST (Ru) — *bakun*:**

Один из руководителей Пражского восстания 1848
 Odin iz rukovoditelej Pražskogo vosstanija 1848
 One of leaders Prague:GEN uprising:GEN 1848:GEN
 и восстания в Дрездене 1849 (см. Революция
 i vosstanija v Drezdene 1849 (sm. Revoljucija
 and uprising in Dresden 1849:GEN (see Revolution
 1848-49 в Германии); арестован, приговорён к
 1848-49 v Germanii); arestovan, prigovorën k
 1948-49:GEN in Germany); arrested, sentenced to
 смертной казни
 smertnoj kazni
 capital punishment

He was one of the leaders of the Prague Uprising, 1848, and the Dresden Uprising, 1849 (see German Revolutions of 1848-49). He was subsequently arrested and sentenced to death.

b. **TT (En):**

Bakunin was one of the leaders of the Prague Uprising of 1848 and the Dresden Uprising of 1849 (see the German revolutions of 1848-1849), and was arrested and sentenced to death.

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | confusing repetition

* * *

The following is an example of a nested *of* construction:

(140) a. **ST (Ru) — *stats*:**

Это подрывает одно из основных допущений об
 Èto podryvaet odno iz osnovnyx dopuščenij ob
 This undermines one of main allowances about
 измеримости индивидуальных признаков
 izmerimosti individual'nyx priznakov
 measurability individual:GEN traits:GEN

This undermines one of the main assumptions regarding measurability of individual traits

b. **TT (En):**

*This compromises one **of** the main assumptions **of** the measurability **of** individual traits- their ordinal structure.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | confusing repetition

Though not incomprehensible, this passage might be quite cognitively taxing to read. There is definitely an argument for breaking up or rephrasing such structures. Interestingly, the corresponding construction in Russian — nested genitives — is subject to significantly looser restrictions that are essentially phonological in character. According to Lashkevich (Lashkevich 2017), the crucial thing is to avoid repetition of the same inflectional ending in adjacent words, especially if the word stems are similar enough to result in strong rhyme. When this condition is fulfilled, chains of up to four genitives can become ‘practically unnoticeable’.

* * *

Finally here is a ‘pure’ structural issue. The repetition is entirely on the level of morphosyntax. There are no repeating words or semantic morphemes:

(141) a. ST (Ru) — *riskmg*:

<i>формулирование</i>	<i>целей</i>	<i>с</i>	<i>использованием</i>	<i>показателей,</i>
formulirovanie	celej	s	ispol'zovaniem	pokazatelej,
formulating	goals	with	use	indicators:GEN,

<i>которые</i>	<i>являются</i>	<i>однозначно</i>	<i>трактуемыми</i>
kotorye	javlajutsja	odnoznačno	traktuemymi
which	are	unambiguously	interpreted

formulating goals by using indicators that are unambiguously defined

b. TT (En):

setting goals using indicators that are unambiguous

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

textuality | confusing repetition

In (141b), the repeating element is the construction with an *-ing* form followed by a direct object. The repetition is a bit awkward, partly because the two *-ing* forms are functionally different: *setting* is a verbal noun, while *using* is a progressive participle. Again, the task of disambiguation is clearly not impossible, but it

creates avoidable cognitive load. It is worth recalling that, in relevance theory, additional cognitive load causes the reader to anticipate something especially important on the level of content. If the anticipated contextual effects do not arrive, the reader is likely to feel annoyed.

4.1.6.3.5 Disparallelism All the examples of disparallelism in the database as of 01/07/2025 are lists where the items are in some way ‘mismatched’. This is not entirely surprising, given that lists generate the strongest expectations of repeating structures and belonging to a single class.

The examples currently in the database fall into the following categories:

- elision of
 - content words
 - function words
- class inconsistency

Let us look at some examples:

* * *

In order to talk about elisions, we must first recognise that elision of repeating elements in parallel constructions is a well-established rhetorical device, usually referred to as zeugma. The claim here is not that this device is problematic *per se* but rather that it can become such in some specific cases.

There is substantial variation in the way zeugma is defined. Perhaps the simplest and most inclusive definition is given by Baldick (2015). He defines zeugma as any case of one word in a sentence entering into a ‘yoking’ syntactic relationship with two or more others. This can be a direct dependency relationship, as in this example, where a single verb has two subjects:

- (142) *Not marble nor the gilded monuments*
Of princes shall outlive this powerful rhyme
(Shakespeare, *Sonnet 55*, in *ibid.*)

or an indirect relationship dependent on implied co-referential repetition as in this example:¹⁰

- (143) *she lives in Washington and he in Miami*
 she lives in Washington and he [lives] in Miami
 (Laska 1991)

Here the connection depends on the implied repetition of *lives* in the second clause.

Many authors, going all the way back to Samuel Johnson (2021, first published in 1755), see specifically the indirect relationships combining parallel constructions with ellipsis, like what we see in 143, as the definitive characteristic of zeugma (for a list of more recent adherents of this school of thought, see the references cited by Dupriez 1991, p. 475).

Some sources, like Morier (1975), add the condition that the explicitly voiced version of the word which is subsequently omitted should *not* grammatically agree with the constituents to which it is linked solely by relationships of cohesion but not dependence, as in:

- (144) *The head is warm, the hands cold, the legs icy.*
 The head is warm, the hands are cold, the legs are icy.
 (Giraudoux 1970, transl. A.W. Halsall)

While some authors, like Johnson, Dupriez and Baldick, define zeugma in purely syntactic terms, many sources add a semantic condition: that the device must have a punning aspect with the ‘pivot’ word being interpreted differently in different clauses, as in:

- (145) *John lost his coat and his temper.*
 (literary devices.net, accessed 15/09/2025)

where in the first clause the word is used literally and in the second figuratively. The OED, among others, sets this as a necessary condition (oed.com, accessed 15/09/2025).

The definition I use in this thesis is the same as Samuel Johnson’s. I define zeugma as a rhetorical figure where, in parallel constructions with a repeating

¹⁰Here I cite a different example from Baldick (2015), who uses the last line of Sonnet 128, where two zeugmas are cleverly interwoven. I chose simpler example to make the core principle behind the device more obvious.

phrasal component, some instances of the said component are retained and others omitted.

As a rule, in those cases where three or more parallel constructions are involved, only one instance of the omitted component is retained. For example:

- (146) a. *The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful.*
 The various *modes of worship* which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher [they were considered] as equally false; and by the magistrate [they were considered] as equally useful.
 (E. Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*)

It is possible to imagine circumstances where more than one instance of the elided constituent is retained:

- (147) a. *Sam lives in Bolton, Jim lives in Barnsley, and John lives in Bingley.*
 Sam lives in Bolton, Jim lives in Barnsley, and John [lives] in Bingley.
- b. *Sam lives in Bolton, Jim lives in Barnsley, and John lives in Bingley.*
 Sam lives in Bolton, Jim [lives] in Barnsley, and John lives in Bingley.

However, the result feels distinctly marked and gestures towards a literary register. Here, I refer to such cases as partial zeugma. In most non-literary texts, this device feels out of place.

* * *

Here is an example of a partial zeugma from my database:

- (148) a. **ST (Ru) — riskmg:**

<i>Риск-аппетит</i>	[...]	<i>связан</i>	<i>с</i>	<i>целями</i>	<i>Компании,</i>
Risk-appetit	[...]	svjazan	s	celjami	Kompanii,
Risk-appetite	[...]	is.connected	with	goals	Company:GEN,
<i>определяется</i>	<i>централизованно</i>	<i>и</i>	<i>ежегодно</i>		
opredeljaetsja	centralizovanno	i	ežegodno		
is.determined	centrally	and	yearly		

утверждается на Совете директоров ПАО "НК
 utverždaetsja na Sovete direktorov PAO "NK
 is.approved at Council Directors:GEN PAO NK
 "Роснефть".
 "Rosneft".
 Rosneft.

Risk appetite [...] is tied to the Company's goals; it is determined centrally and approved yearly at the meeting of the Board of Directors of PAO NK Rosneft

b. TT (En):

The risk appetite [...] is related to the Company's goals, determined centrally, and is approved annually by the Board of Directors of PJSC "NK Rosneft".

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

relation | constituency | UNCLEAR
 textuality | disparallelism

In (148b), the disappearance of *is* in the second verb phrase and its reappearance in the third feels peculiar and inappropriate in the context of a company policy document.

* * *

Ordinarily, the term *zeugma* is used to describe the elision of content words, most commonly verbs, but the same principle can extend to function words. For example:

- (149) a. *And like the first, second and third industrial revolutions, the fourth is having profound effects on our lives.*
 And like the first, [the] second and [the] third industrial revolutions, the fourth is having profound effects on our lives.

(EnTenTen21)

However, cases where the function word is not introduced straight away, or introduced, then elided, then introduced again can feel like they should have some additional significance — like the choice is not purely stylistic and should be read as somehow affecting referential scope and/or information structure.

Here is an example from the database:

(150)

a. **ST (Ru)** — *neogr*:

Задача ученого сводилась к наблюдению, регистрации
 Zadača učenogo svodilas' k nabljudeniju, registraciji
 Task scholar:GEN was.reduced to observation, registration
 и первичному обобщению фактов
 i prvičnomu obobščeniju faktov
 and initial generalisation facts:GEN

The task of the scholar was reduced to the observation, recording and initial synthesis of facts

b. **TT (En)**:

*The scientist's job was reduced to observation, registration, and **the** initial generalisation of facts.*

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

textuality | disparallelism

* * *

A different mechanism comes into play when a set of parallel components belong to 'mismatched' classes. This mismatch can be either morphosyntactic or semantic in nature, or, potentially, a combination of both. We already saw an example of this earlier: the very inhomogeneous list in (137a)/(137b) above.

4.1.6.3.6 Sentence / paragraph breaks As of 26/08/2025, three issues have been marked with this tag. One concerns the introduction of a spurious sentence break. Another concerns an overlong sentence that probably should have been broken up for for ease of reading. The third concerns a spurious fusing of two thematically disparate sentences.

The reader might recall the case of (114a)/(114b) above, where a sentence break contributed to a change in co-referential scope. After some deliberations, I decided not to mark the sentence break itself as problematic in that particular case. The decision to split the sentence was not automatically a bad one. It did improve readability. And while one way to go about fixing that problem of altered co-reference would be to remove the sentence break and restore something close to the ST information structure, the other way would be to retain the sentence

break but use a more targetted anaphor — something like *with the help of the latter* instead of *with their help*.

* * *

Below is the passage where a spurious sentence break was introduced, leaving a detached subordinate clause on its own:

(151) a. **ST (Ru) — gloss:**

Эмпирический метод противопоставлен у Л. Ельмслева
 Èmpiričeskij metod protivopostavljen u L. El'msleva
 Empirical method is.contrasted in L. Hjelmslev
 априорному; имеется в виду, что априорный метод
 apriornomu; imeetsja v vidu, čto apriornyj metod
 a.priori:DAT; having in mind, that a.priori method
 рассматривает язык в каких-то категориях,
 rassmatrivaet jazyk v kakix-to kategorijax,
 examines language in some categories,
 выходящих за пределы лингвистики, а
 vухodjaščix за predely lingvistiki, a
 going beyond bounds linguistics:GEN, while
 эмпирический метод не накладывает на теорию
 èmpiričeskij metod ne nakladyvaet na teoriju
 empirical method not imposes on theory
 никаких особых ограничений, кроме данных трех
 nikakix osobyx ograničenij, krome dannyx trex
 any particular limits, beside these three
 принципов: непротиворечивости, простоты
 principov: neprotivorečivosti, prostoty
 principles: non-contradiction, simplicity,
 и полноты.
 i polnoty.
 completeness.

Hjelmslev contrasts the empirical method with the a priori method. According to him, the a priori method attempts to understand language in terms of categories external to linguistics itself, whereas the imperial method imposes no particular limits on theorisation, except three basic principles: non-contradiction, simplicity and completeness.

b. **TT (En):**

Hjelmslev contrasts the empirical method with the a priori method. This means that the a priori method considers language in some categories that go beyond linguistics. Whereas the empirical method imposes no special restrictions on the theory, except for these three principles: consistency, simplicity and completeness.

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

textuality | sentence / paragraph breaks

Here, the student breaks up one, admittedly rather unwieldy, ST sentence into three. The first sentence break corresponds to the semicolon in ST and is unproblematic. The second corresponds to a joint between a main and a subordinate clause, and leaves the latter stranded on its own.

* * *

Below is the sentence that definitely could and probably should have been broken up for readability.

(152) a. **ST (Ru) — switch:**

Блоки управления вакуумными выключателями являются
 Bloki upravljenja vakuumnymi vyključateljami javljajutsja
 Blocks control:GEN vacuum:GEN switches constitute

их неотъемлемой частью и изготавливаются в
 ix neot'emletoj čast'ju i izgotavlivajutsja v
 their integral part and are.manufactured in

виде отдельных блоков, устанавливаемых в релейных
 vide otdel'nyx blokov, ustanavlivaemyx v relejnyx
 form separate:GEN blocks:GEN, installed:GEN in relay

отсеках КРУ, на панелях камер КСО или
 otseках KRU, na paneljax kamer KSO ili
 compartments of modular switchgear, on the control

на выкатных элементах КРУ.
 na vykatnyx èlementax KRU.
 panels of front-access cabinets,

Vacuum switch control blocks are a necessary part of the system; they are manufactured as pre-assembled modules, to be installed in relay compartments of modular switchgear, on the control panels of front-access cabinets, and on roll-out switchgear components.

b. **TT (En):**

Vacuum circuit breaker control units are an integral part of vacuum circuit breakers and are manufactured as separate units, installed in relay compartments of the switchgear, on the panels of the cubicle assembly chambers or on withdrawable switchgear elements.

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

textuality | sentence / paragraph breaks
textuality | disparallelism

Here, the TT feels decidedly unwieldy — more so than the ST. This is to do with disparallelism in the predicate structure. The TT contains two predicates, both of which begin with *are*. However, in the first case, *are* is followed by a noun phrase, while in the second case, *are* is followed by a participle phrase. The easiest way to get around this problem would be simply to break up the sentence:

(153) Vacuum circuit breaker control units are an integral part of vacuum circuit breakers. They are manufactured as separate units...

* * *

The third case currently in the database was discussed earlier (see example 71a71b).

4.1.6.4 General readability

Here we are concerned with issues pertaining to ease of parsing, i.e. features that cause the reader to slow down or re-read parts of the ST, without the extra cognitive effort being justified by increased contextual effects.

There are three subcategories within this category:

combinability: Situations where a TT expression, though readily interpretable and likely to communicate ST meaning without significant distortion, may be deemed odd or unacceptable by the native speakers of British English on account of infringing established patterns of co-occurrence.

lexical: Two content words directly linked by syntax or co-reference violate established patterns of co-occurrence and/or disrupt the consistency of the interpretive frame; however, significant misinterpretation or failure to interpret remains unlikely.

structural: Choice of markers of constitutive or coordinative relationships (function words, inflectional morphemes, word order etc.) violates established patterns of co-occurrence for the relevant content words or semantic classes; however, significant misinterpretation or failure to interpret remains unlikely.

nominalisation: a noun is used where it could easily be replaced by a verb construction.

verbose: TT wording is unnecessarily bulky. A poor ratio of linguistic weight to informativity cannot be justified in terms of improved information structure or deliberate rhetorical choice.

4.1.6.4.1 Combinability Baker (2011, pp. 12–13) draws a distinction between collocational and selectional restrictions. Collocational restrictions pertain to patterns of essentially arbitrary co-occurrence, and selectional restrictions to patterns of semantically determined co-occurrence.

We can view the choice of the qualifier *strong* in the expression *strong wind* as essentially arbitrary. There is no particular reason why the wind should be strong rather than, say, *big*. Indeed, in addition to *strong wind*, English also allows us to talk about *high winds*, with a seemingly arbitrary preference for plural over singular: *high winds* is acceptable; *high wind* is somewhat peculiar.

By contrast, an expression like *local beer* is acceptable by virtue of being semantically viable: the adjective *local* can qualify locally made products, and beer is generally thought of as having a specifiable point of origin.

A classic example of broken selectional restrictions is Chomsky's *Colourless green ideas sleep furiously* (Noam Chomsky 1956). The utterance is syntactically well-formed but difficult to assign a meaning to because of all the semantic clashes. That said, as Baker (2011) points out, selectional restrictions are often flouted deliberately, inviting figurative interpretations. In the right context one could plausibly interpret *colourless green ideas* as something like {*Unexciting proposals that purport to address environmental issues*}.

In truth, I find this distinction somewhat problematic. My construal of collocational restrictions is Lakoffian in spirit: I think of them not as wholly

arbitrary patterns of co-occurrence but rather as very well-established choices of framing metaphor (Lakoff 1990; Lakoff 2003). For example, the collocation *strong wind* reflects a common way of thinking about wind: as a strong animate being capable of acting on physical objects. The top ten verb collocates of *wind* in EnTenTen21 include *whip*, *push*, *carry* and *knock*. Meanwhile *high winds* represents a different way of thinking about wind: as a measurable parameter, like temperature or volume. Interestingly, when thus conceived, wind becomes a scalar rather than a vector variable. In EnTenTen21, there are some 680 instances of *strong westerly winds* and only 17 instances of *high westerly winds*, despite *high* being overall a far more common word than *strong* (approximately 34.2 and 11.4 million instances respectively). In this case at least, the metaphors do not seem to mix much.

The discomfort resulting from broken collocational restrictions is, in my view, if not always then often the discomfort of a mixed metaphor, the jolt of being pulled out of a stable cognitive frame. For the purposes of TRISST, mixed metaphors that we are more conscious of are also regarded as issues of lexical combinability. They fall under the standard conception of infringed selectional restrictions.

Needless to say, I do not want to follow in the footsteps of the various learned gentlemen of the 18th century in asserting that mixed metaphors are always a bad thing. Same as deliberate flouting of collocational restrictions, they can be a viable stylistic choice. Nonetheless, students should be aware of the associated cognitive cost for the reader. All devices that generate markedness are to be approached as strong spice: to be used consciously and sparingly, so as not to overwhelm.

In this thesis, the term collocation is used quite broadly, encompassing not only co-occurrence of content words with other content words, such as *strong wind*, but also co-occurrence of content words with function words or with phrasal patterns. Furthermore, I do not attempt to maintain a distinction between what Chomsky (Noam. Chomsky 1965) calls grammaticalness and acceptability, the former being an expression of some underlying structural logic, while the latter is a matter of arbitrary speaker habit. In the present context, I understand acceptability to be a continuous cline ranging from ‘ungrammatical’ at one end to ‘completely acceptable’ at the other, with ‘very awkward’ and ‘slightly off’ somewhere in

between. Structural logic exists on the fundamentally deeper level of constituency. Preferences for specific word forms and phrasal patterns are always, at heart, arbitrary and mutable.

For the purposes of TRISST, I do treat lexical and structural combinability issues as separate categories. The data allows for reasonably clean separation between these categories, and this is pedagogically useful, because it allows us to maintain two convenient points of focus in discussions of combinability: lexis and phrasal form.

4.1.6.4.1.1 Lexical Let us consider some examples of lexical combinability issues.

* * *

Let us consider this simple conflict on the level of content word meanings:

(154) a. **ST (Ru) — stats:**

мотивы невозможно оценивать даже в порядковой шкале
 motivy nevozmožno ocenivat' daže v porjadkovoј škale
 motives impossible to.appraise even on ordinal sclae

(“больше — меньше”, “сильнее - слабее”), не говоря
 (“bol’še — men’še”, ‘sil’nee — slabee”), ne govorja
 (“more - less”, “stronger - weaker”), not speaking

уже об их количественном измерении
 uže ob ix količestvennom izmerenii
 already about their quantitative dimension

motives cannot even be ordered by magnitude (more/less, stronger/weaker), never mind measured quantitatively

b.

motives cannot be assessed even on an ordinal scale (i.e., *more than -less than or stronger - weaker*), not to mention **assigned** their quantitative **measurement**

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

general readability | combinability | lexical

There are numerous problems in this passage, but the one we are concerned with presently is the combination of *assigned* and *measurement*. A measurement is, by

definition, something derived from the measured object rather than imposed upon or assigned to it. Nonetheless, the intended meaning will probably be reasonably clear to a sympathetic reader.

* * *

Below is another example of word-level conflict:

(155) a. ST (Ru) — *riskmg*:

с целью обеспечения дальнейшего управления рисками
 s cel'ju obespečenija dal'nejšego upravljenja riskami
 with aim ensuring:GEN further management risks:GEN

in order to ensure continued risk management

b. TT (En):

with a view to **ensure further risk management**

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

general readability | combinability | lexical

In constructions of the form *insure further [A]*, where *A* is a noun, *A* typically describes some addition to the current state of affairs. This addition is usually a positive one: *progress, growth, support, success, development* etc. An expression like *ensuring further opportunities* implies that the opportunities in question will be new, that they will come in addition to whatever opportunities exist already. Consequently, this construction does not work well with the notion of management, conceived of as an ongoing practice — *ensuring ongoing/continued risk management* would have been a better option.

It is worth mentioning that the expression *ensure further management* does appear in certain technical contexts, especially healthcare, where *further management* is an established way of referring to aftercare. In this context, *ensuring further care*, once again, refers to something happening in addition to an installation, a repair or a one-off medical procedure.

4.1.6.4.1.2 Structural Let us now consider some examples of structural combinability issues.

* * *

Below is a case where the conflict exists on the level of phrasal structure:

(156) a. **ST (Ru) — gloss:**

Л. Ельмслев **развивал идеи** Ф. де Соссюра
 L. El'msløv **razvival idei** F. de Sossjura
 L. Hjelmslev **developed ideas** F. de Saussure:GEN

Louis Hjelmslev **developed the ideas** of Ferdinand de Saussure

b. **TT (En):**

*Louis Hjelmslev **developed upon the ideas** of Ferdinand de Saussure*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

general readability | combinability | structural

In (154b), the construction *[A] developed upon [B]* is clearly meant to be read as synonymous with *[A] developed [B]* or *[A] built upon [B]* — as a simple transitive construction with *A* performing some act of development and *B* undergoing it. To my knowledge, *developed upon* is not commonly used in this way. There are other ways in which it can be used:

(157) a. the trade unions **developed upon the ruins** of Chartism

b. There are several web development frameworks **developed upon python**.

c. Her distinctive style **developed upon her return** to Paris in the 1920s post exile.

In all these cases, *developed* is a past participle, and *A* is the thing undergoing development. In (157a) and 157b, *upon B* refers to the figurative location of development. In (157c), it refers to time marked by the completion of an action (the return).¹¹

In all probability, *[A] developed upon [B]* is an accidental hybrid of *[A] developed [B]* and *[A] built upon [B]*.

* * *

Here is another similar issue:

¹¹It could equally well be the inception of an action, e.g. *upon starting the journey*.

	time	minute	day	age	century
ADJ movement of the	848	6	385	66	70
ADJ movement of this	20	0	1	7	39
ADJ movement during the	25	0	65	2	1
ADJ movement during this	37	0	1	0	6

Table 4.5: Popularity of ‘of’/‘during’ and ‘the’/‘this’ when talking about movements and times (number of occurrences in EnTenTen21; ADJ = adjective).

(158) a. **ST (Ru) — neogr:**

важное философское **направление тех лет**
 važное filosofskoe **napravlenie tex let**
 important philosophical **direction those:GEN years:GEN**

an important philosophical **current of those years**

b. **TT (En):**

*an important philosophical **movement during this time***

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

general readability | combinability | structural

An EnTenTen21 search for *[ADJ] movement during this time* returns 37 results; *[ADJ] movement of the time* returns 848 results. The preference is not for a fixed expression but for a pattern. Table 4.5 shows that there is generally a clear preference for *of the* when talking about cultural movements and times. While other constructions have islands of relative popularity corresponding to set expressions like *during the day(s) of* or *of this century*, the *of the* construction consistently comes out on top overall. It is a safe formulation to use when talking about movements and times.

In fact, different ways of marking time are attached to different semantic classes. *Of the time*, is often used to qualify nouns referring to institutions, practices and artefacts characteristic of some general historical period:

(159) a. social mores of the time

b. literature of the time

c. customs of the time

By contrast, *during this time* usually qualifies verbs and nouns that describe durative processes or recurrent events:

- (160) a. I learned a lot during that time
 b. Clarke's efforts during this time

* * *

As mentioned earlier, I include cases of what would traditionally be classed as 'bad grammar' under structural combinability issues. Same as in the cases of lexical combinability issues, here I am concerned with those case where infringement of convention does not result in opacity or distortion, i.e. where the utterance drops in acceptability but remains interpretable, and the correct interpretation remains likely. For example:

- (161) a. Polish emigrants, *whom he hoped would help him

WEIGHT: 2

- b. collaboration *between language historians *with historians and archaeologists

WEIGHT: 2

In (161a), the relative pronoun is the subject of the relative clause. Consequently, the use of an oblique pronoun is, in this case, ungrammatical.

The prepositional construction *between [A] with [B]* in (161b) does not exist. It is, likely, a hybrid of two different constructions: *between [A] and [B]* and *[A] with [B]*.

Neither of these issues seems to be radically different in quality to, for example, the issues surrounding the hybrid constructions in (156b) and the choice of prepositional construction in (158b).

* * *

It goes without saying that combinability restrictions can be register and variety-specific.

For example, *switching on and off from [A]* is an acceptable construction in more colloquial settings but not in formal or technical writing.

In British and American English, the prepositional construction *in connection with* is subject to certain restrictions when used in the introductory sentence of a letter. As a rule, this construction is preceded by a verb phrase, e.g. *You are receiving this letter in connection with...* or *I am writing in connection with...* On the other hand, in some Asian and African varieties, a simple copula construction, like *This letter is in connection with...*, seems to be acceptable.¹²

4.1.6.4.2 Nominalisation Authors from Strunk (1920) onwards have pointed out that nominalisation is undesirable in English, because verb phrases seem to be a surer way of creating mental images. Alley (2018) reiterates the validity of this and many other of Strunk's point for the specific context of scientific and technical writing.

Nine issues have been assigned this tag. Three examples are discussed below.

* * *

Below is a simple example where a somewhat abstract process noun, *formulation*, that can easily be converted into a verb attached to a tangible actor:

(162) a. **ST (Ru) — gloss:**

Согласно	Л.	Ельмслеву,	индукция,	не	допускающая
Soglasno	L.	El'mslevu,	indukcija,	ne	dopuskajuščaja
According.to	L/	Hjelmslev,	induction,	not	allowing

формулировки	общих	понятий,	не	может	обеспечить
formulirovki	obščix	ponjatij,	ne	možet	obespečit'
formulation:GEN	general	concepts,	not	can	guarantee

<i>непротиворечивое</i>	<i>и</i>	<i>простое</i>	<i>описание.</i>
neprotivorečivoje	i	prostoe	opisanie.
non-contradictory	and	simple	description.

According to Hjelmslev, as induction does not allow **us to formulate** general concepts, it cannot provide consistent and simple description.

b. **TT (En):**

¹²This claim is based on a cursory survey of EnTenTen21 concordances and Google search results. It should be treated as provisional.

According to Hjelmslev, as induction does not allow **the formulation of** general concepts, it cannot provide consistent and simple description.

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

general readability | nominalisation

The *us* in my proposed translation of (162a) can, of course, be replaced by *one* or *researchers*, if a more formal tone is desirable.

* * *

The following example is more complicated:

(163) a. **ST (Ru)** — *riskmg*:

<i>Постановка</i>	<i>целей</i>	<i>Компании</i>	<i>является</i>
Postanovka	celej	Kompanii	javljaetsja
Setting	goals:GEN	Company:GEN	constitutes

<i>предварительным</i>	<i>условием</i>	<i>для выявления</i>	<i>и</i>	<i>оценки</i>
predvaritel'nyj	usloviem	dlja vyjavlenija	i	ocenki
prerequisite	condition	for identification	and	appraisal
<i>рисков.</i>				
riskov.				
risks:GEN.				

To identify and assess risks we must first establish the Company's goals.

b. **TT (En)**:

Establishing the Company's goals is a prerequisite for identifying and assessing risks.

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

general readability | nominalisation

The student's translation closely follows the ST structure. It is a copular sentence, where the verb carries little semantic weight. It is worth noting that, in the student's version, the verb is even lighter than in the ST. The Russian verb *являться* is a marker of formality, like the English *to constitute*. The English *to be* is stylistically neutral.

The TT passage describes a relationship of logical necessity between three procedural steps: step A must be completed for steps B and C to become possible.

Steps A, B and C are denoted by gerunds (-ing form verbal nouns): *establishing*, *identifying* and *assessing*. The relationship between them is denoted by what we might call a ‘modal phrase’ *is a prerequisite*, where the bulk of the meaning is carried by a nominalised adjective. In my translation, I convert all of these elements into verbs and specify an agent: *we*. Again, if desired, we can replace the first-person *we* with a more impersonal alternative such as *one*, *management*, *the board*, etc.

The relative economy of direct and active constructions in English can readily be seen by comparing the student’s translation in (163b) with the denominalised version in (163a): 87 and 73 characters, respectively (including spaces).

To be fair, in this case, Russian is similar, and denominalising the Russian sentence in (163a) results in a comparable cut in character count:

- (164) a. *Чтобы выявить и оценить риски, мы должны сначала*
Čtoby vyjavit’ i ocenit’ riski, my dolžny snačala
 In.order.to identify and evaluate risks, **we must** first
postanovit’ celi Kompanii.
 postanovit’ celi Kompanii.
 set goals Company:GEN.

To identify and evaluate risks, **we must** first set the Company’s goals.

The Russian sentence in (164a) is 74 characters long, as opposed to the 90 characters in (163a). However, Russian also allows for a similarly concise impersonal alternative:

- (165) a. *Чтобы выявить и оценить риски, необходимо*
Čtoby vyjavit’ i ocenit’ riski, neobходимо
 In.order.to identify and evaluate risks, **it.is.necessary**
сначала постановить цели Компании.
 snačala postanovit’ celi Kompanii.
 first set goals Company:GEN.

To identify and evaluate risks, **it is necessary** first to set the Company’s goals.

The Russian sentence in (165a) is 75 characters long, just one character longer than the one with the active construction in (164a). As mentioned earlier, in

Russian it is easy to keep impersonal constructions quite compact, which is likely one of the reason why Russians do not find them as irritating.

* * *

While discussing the last example, I described the English gerunds as ‘-ing form verbal nouns’. On closer examination, this is not, strictly speaking, the case. As we shall see shortly, gerunds are something of a halfway point between verbs and real nouns, and substituting a noun for a gerund can give us some of the benefits of substituting a noun for a verb without having to radically restructure the sentence.

Consider the following example:

(166) a. **ST (Ru) — riskmg:**

с целью обеспечения дальнейшего управления рисками
 s cel’ju obespečenija dal’nejšego upravlenija riskami
 with purpose ensuring:GEN further management risk:GEN

посредством **внедрения** необходимых мероприятий по
 posredstvom **vnedrenija** neodimimyx meroprijatij po
 by.means.of **introducing** necessary measures for
 управлению рисками.
 upravleniju riskami.
 management risks:GEN.

in order to ensure continued risk management by **implementing** the necessary risk management measures.

b. **TT (En):**

*in order to ensure further risk management through the **implementation** of the necessary risk management measures.*

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

general readability | nominalisation

We can replace *implementation* with *implementing*. At first appearance, this may seem like a pointless exercise. However, there are two different ways to do this, and one of them does result in a simplification of the syntax:

(167) a. through the implementing of the necessary risk management measures

b. through implementing the necessary risk management measures

In (167a), *implementing* functions as a nominal and is virtually indistinguishable from *implementation* in (166b), unambiguously a deverbal noun — preceded by a determiner and followed by a prepositional phrase starting with *of*. In (167b), on the other hand, it functions as a gerund and displays certain verb-like behaviours. It is followed by a direct object without a preposition and cannot be preceded by a determiner:

(168) *through the implementing the necessary risk management measures

The verb-like construction in (167b) can be viewed as partial denominalisation. It does not allow us to introduce a tangible agent into the clause; but it does allow us to gain some of the economy associated with direct verbal constructions in English.

4.1.6.4.3 Verbose As of 27/07/2025, there is a total of 26 issues in this category. They can be grouped as follows:

Too literal: ST wording is too close to ST form; TL allows for more economical phrasing (18 cases);

Bulky rephrase: ST wording significantly deviates from ST form but attempts to preserve ST content (4 cases);

Unnecessary addition: a distinct component that is clearly absent from the ST, such as an explicatory phrase, is present in the TT (4 cases)

Let us consider some examples:

* * *

Below is an example of over-literal translation resulting in slight verbosity:

(169) a. **ST (Ru) — gloss:**

с	помощью	языка	познаются	физика	и
s	pomošć'ju	jazyka	poznajutsja	fizika	i
with	aid	language:GEN	are.explored	physics	and
	физиология	звуков	речи,	психология	человека,
	fiziologija	zvukov	reči,	psixologija	čeloveka,
	physiology	sounds:GEN	speech:GEN,	psychology	human:GEN,

история общества и т. д.
 istorija obščestva i t. d.
 history society:GEN and so forth.

with the aid of language, researchers learn about the physics and physiology of speech, human psychology, social history etc.

b. **TT (En):**

*With the help of language, one can explore the physics and physiology of speech **sounds**, human psychology, the history of society, and more.*

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

general readability | verbose

The word *sounds* can be removed from the (169b) without any harm. Doing so does not introduce any unclarity or distortion. As of 26/08/2025, Google returns 40 results for *physics and physiology of speech* and only 9 for *physics and physiology of speech sounds*,¹³ suggesting that this element of specification is generally regarded as unnecessary. It is not clear what *sound* might be contrasted against in this case.

It is worth noting that the Russian word *речь* [*reč'*], aside from being used to refer to *speech* in the everyday sense, i.e. the act and the content of speaking, is also used as a domain term in linguistics where it stands for Saussure's *parole*, a theoretical concept that applies to both speaking and writing. Specifying that we are talking about *речи* [*zvuki reči*] {*sounds of speech*} disambiguates between these two meanings, directing the reader towards the former, everyday one. In English, where the term *parole* exists as a borrowing, there is no equivalent ambiguity. In the context of linguistics, *speech* usually refers to spoken production.

* * *

Below is another example of an over-literal translation. In this case, there are no clearly superfluous elements; rather, a constituent phrase has a more economical and more natural-sounding alternative:

¹³While where possible I try to work with EnTenTen21 or RuTenTen20, the numbers for the strings in question are too low to be of much use: a total of three occurrences, one with *sounds* and two without.

(170) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

контакты с польск. эмигрантами, **с помощью которых**
 kontakty s pol'sk. èmigrantami, **s pomošč'ju kotoryx**
 contacts with Polish émigrés, **with help whom:GEN**

надеялся устроить революц. выступления в России.
 nadejalsja ustroit' revoljuc. vystuplenija v Rossii.
 he.hoped to.arrange revolutionary protests in Russia.

contacts with Polish émigrés, **with whose help** he hoped to arrange
 revolutionary protests in Russia.

b. TT (En):

*contacts with Polish emigrants, **with the help of whom** he hoped
 to arrange a revolution in Russia.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

general readability | verbose

The phrase *with the help of whom* has a fully synonymous but significantly more economical alternative: *with whose help*.

The more verbose alternative is unusual. In EnTenTen21, there are only 30 instances of *with the help of whom* and 447 instances of *with whose help*. The appearance of the former in (170b) is almost certainly the result of calquing. The use of genitive to mark membership or possession in Russian is commonly taught as equivalent to using *of* to mark membership or possession in English.

* * *

While most cases of verbosity do seem to involve over-literal translation, there are some that clearly significantly deviate from ST structure. For example:

(171) a. ST (Ru) — *stats*:

Измерение в социальных науках подразумевает, что
 Izmerenie v social'nyx nauках podrazumevaet, čto
 Measurement in social sciences entails, that

измеряемый признак количественный, то есть можно
 izmerjaemyj priznak količestvennyj, to est' možno
 measured property quantitative, that is is.possible

не только упорядочить **величины признака**, но и
 ne tol'ko uporjadočit' **veličiny priznaka**, no i
 not only to.order **magnitudes property:GEN**, but also

разницу между упорядоченными величинами выразить
 raznicu meždu uporjadočennymi veličinami vyrazit'
 difference between ordered properties to.express
 с помощью некоторой единицы измерения.
 s pomošč'ju nekotoroj edinicy izmerenija.
 with aid some:GEN unit measurement:GEN.

In social sciences, measurement presupposes quantifiability, i.e. that it is possible not only to order the recorded values by magnitude but also to express the difference between them in terms of some unit of measurement.

b. TT (En):

*Measurement in social sciences assumes that the attribute measured is quantifiable. Therefore, one can arrange **the values taken from measuring these attributes** using an ordinal scale, but also express the distance between these ordered values using a unit of measurement.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

general readability | verbose

This is a tricky passage for a number of reasons, but here we are concerned with the translation of *величины признака* [veličiny priznaka] {values of the attribute}. The word *признака* [priznaka] {attribute:GEN} in this phrase is a co-referential link back to *измеряемый признак* [izmerjaemyj priznak] {measured attribute} earlier in the sentence.

The student translates the phrase in question as the rather bulky *the values taken from measuring these attributes*. He/she is, presumably, trying to make the co-referential link extra clear, adding an anaphoric *these* to *attributes*. The student also adds an explicit link back to the mention of something being *measured* earlier in the sentence. This is understandable. The student is probably trying to compensate for some loss of cohesion resulting from the word *value* having a somewhat broader meaning than *величина* [veličina] {magnitude} and the mismatch in the grammatical number of *attribute/attributes*. However, the TL allows for a much more elegant solution: *recorded values*. Here *recorded* functions as semantic link back to *measured*, eliminating the need for the repetition of *attribute* and, simultaneously, constraining the meaning of *values* in the desired way.

* * *

There are also some cases where verbosity seems to stem from simple addition. Some distinct element in the TT has no functional counterpart in the ST. For example:

(172) a. ST (Ru) — *gloss*:

<i>Их</i>	<i>интересовали</i>	<i>формальные</i>	<i>правила</i>	<i>построения</i>
lx	interesovali	formal'nye	pravila	postroenija
They	were interested	by formal	rules	of constructing
<i>научной</i>	<i>теории</i>	<i>в отвлечении</i>	<i>от того, как эта</i>	
naučnoj	teorii	v otvlečenii	ot togo, kak èta	
scientific	theory	in isolation	from that, how this	
<i>теория</i>	<i>соотносится</i>	<i>с действительностью.</i>		
teorija	sootnositsja	s dejstvitel'nost'ju.		
theory	corresponds	to reality.		

They were interested in the formal rules of theory-construction in science, regardless of how such theories relate to reality.

b. TT (En):

*They were interested in the formal rules of constructing a scientific theory, **examining the rules** independently of how the theory correlates to reality.*

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

general readability | verbose

In this case, (172a) and (172b) are, on the whole, quite structurally close; however, the phrase *examining the rules* in (172b) has no clear counterpart in (172a). This addition seems to be superfluous and can be removed without harm.

* * *

While, most of the cases of superfluous addition are similar to (172a)/(172b), in that they involve content words and attempt to add clarifying or qualifying information to the sentence, there is one interesting case where only function words are involved and the change is purely one of register:

(173) a. **ST (Ru) — bakun:**

БАКУ́НИН Михаил Александрович [18(30).5.1814, с.
 BAKÚNIN Mixail Aleksandrovič [18(30).5.1814, s.
 Bakunin Mikhail Aleksandrovich [18(30).5.1814, village
 Премухино Новоторжского у. Тверской
 Premuxino Novotoržskogo u. Tverskoj
 Premukhino Novotorzhsky:GEN Uezd:GEN Tverskaya:GEN
 губ. – 1.7.1876, Берн, Швейцария], рос.
 gub. – 1.7.1876, Bern, Švejcarija], ros.
 Gubernia:GEN – 1.7.1876, Bern Switzerland], Russian
 философ, публицист, деятель революц.
 filosof, publicist, dejatel' revoljuc.
 philosopher, essayist, activist revolutionary:GEN
 движения, один из идеологов анархизма и
 dviženija, odin iz ideologov anarxizma i
 movement, one of ideologues anarchism:GEN and
 народничества.
 narodničestva.
 narodnichestvo:GEN.

Bakunin, Mikhail Aleksandrovich (b. 18.05.1814 old style, 30.05.1814
 new style, Premukhino, Novotorzhsky Uezd, Tver Gubernia; d.
 17.7.1876, Bern Switzerland), Russian philosopher, essayist,
 revolutionary activist, one of the ideologues of anarchism and
 narodnichestvo.

b. **TT (En):**

*Mikhail Aleksandrovich Bakunin (born **on the** 18th; May [30th
 May, New Style] 1814 **in the** Premukhino village, Novotorzhsky
 district **of the** Tver province, **and** died **on the** 1st July 1876
in Bern, Switzerland) **was** a Russian philosopher, writer,
 revolutionary activist, and one of the ideologists of anarchism
 and populism.*

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

register | aptness
 general readability | verbose

Here, the student has converted the passage from a 'telegraph style'
 encyclopaedia entry header to a complete sentence, adding conjunctions,
 prepositions and determiners, as per the English grammatical norm. However,

truncated syntax is part of the genre conventions for encyclopaedia entries in both Russian and English. Replacing most of the highlighted words by commas and, in some cases, simply deleting them yields an acceptable genre-appropriate passage. Meanwhile conversion to smooth prose, arguably, makes the text come across as less authoritative, less like an encyclopaedia entry and more like a school essay.

* * *

Beyond the three categories listed at the start of this section — too literal, bulky paraphrase, unnecessary addition — we can also classify instances of verbosity by type of solution:

- resolvable by simply removing one or more words
- requiring significant rewording

Table 4.6 summarises how type of solution varies by type of verbosity. Predictably, all unnecessary additions can be simply removed without altering the rest of the passage to any significant extent, while most of the bulky rephrases require rewording. What is interesting, though, is that two thirds of the cases where SL form has been calqued over into the TL still leave us the option of simply deleting some words. Only a minority require significant rewording.

	TL	BR	UA
superfluous words	12	1	4
rewording required	6	3	0
TOTAL	18	4	4

Table 4.6: Verbosity issues by category (TL = too literal; BR = bulky rephrase; UA = unnecessary addition).

Except for (173a)/(173b) above, where the additions are purely stylistic and consist entirely of function words, all the other passages with ‘removable’ elements involve explicit voicing of information that, in English, seems readily inferable from context. Here is a list of these elements:

- *sounds* (noun)

- *the results of*
- *at the enterprises*
- *inclination towards*
- *aspiration for*
- *tendencies towards*
- *the doctrine of*
- *world* (nominal determinant in *universal world languages*)
- *ultimately*
- *operational* (appears in the work of all three students)

Though rather heterogeneous from a morphosyntactic point of view, all the items on this list play a subsidiary role within the sentence: they clarify or elaborate the meaning of other elements. Even the word *sounds* in the expression *speech sounds*, which we looked at earlier, though technically a head noun qualified by the nominal determinant *speech* is, in practice, specifier. It specifies what aspect of speech we are interested in.

The fact that distinct units of information can be simply deleted from the sentence, seemingly without detriment to communicative function, brings to mind Baker's observation that desired levels of informativity vary from culture to culture (Baker 2011, pp. 246–247). English appears to be somewhat more laconic than Russian — not just in terms of often needing fewer characters to express the same information explicitly but also in terms of leaving more for the reader to infer.

4.1.6.5 Register

I have chosen not to introduce Halliday's three dimensions of register (see section 2.2.2.3.4) into TRISST, because, on the level of individual linguistic features, they are often impossible to separate. Field, tenor and mode, like Jakobson's six functions of language, are always present in every utterance at the same time and will often be affected simultaneously by some specific linguistic choice.

Consider the admittedly very hypothetical example of a barrister addressing a judge as *Babes!*. From the perspective of structuring interpersonal relationships (tenor), this would constitute an attempt — probably not very successful — to shorten social distance and to level or even reverse the hierarchies of expertise and institutional power. From the perspective of general situational expectations (field), this expression would not fit readily into any of the rhetorical schemes associated with the setting and would actively hinder the hearer from projecting the likely flow of text. From the perspective of structural relationships between the explicit linguistic content and the assumptions about shared situational and background knowledge (mode), a shortening of social distance would normally imply that there is less need to and voice expository information and logical linkages (see example (4), section 2.1) — language would become a little less constitutive and a little more auxiliary in function.

For the purposes of TRISST, I separate register into only two intuitive components:

aptness: Choice of word or construction is situationally inappropriate or at odds with likely illocutionary intent — either source-side (ST author's) or target-side (the translator's), whichever happens to be the more important in the given situation.

affect: The evaluative attitudes communicated by the TT are internally contradictory or depart from those communicated by the ST in a way that adversely affects the communicative functionality of the TT.

Aptness can still be parsed with respect to the three Hallidaian dimensions of register. Affect is parsed chiefly with respect to valence/arousal model mentioned in section 2.2.2.3.4.

Unlike Steiner (2004), I do not consider affect a dimension of tenor. It is not intrinsically interpersonal in the same sense as hierarchies of power, expertise, education etc., or roles played by the participants in a given social script, all of which require multiple participants for a meaningful definition to be possible. Affect does not fit comfortably into the Hallidaian framework, because it is,

fundamentally, not a situational variable but an ideational one¹⁴ — an expression of inner states whose existence is not contingent on being part of a communicative situation. Yet expressions of affect are not straightforwardly referential. Affective meanings are often associative rather than denotative, which is why I follow Steiner in including it under register rather than reference or scalar-structural variables.

A huge range of features and issues can, potentially, have some effect on register; however, this category is primarily intended for ‘pure’ register issues, i.e. ones where a translation choice impacts situational appropriateness or affective shading without significant loss of comprehensibility or distortion of the basic message to be conveyed.

I also draw a distinction between situational aptness and general acceptability. Infringements of collocational restrictions, spelling conventions or rules of grammar are problematic for most audiences under most circumstances. Deviations from a specific target register are problematic in the communicative scenario at hand but may well be unproblematic in many others.

4.1.6.5.1 Aptness As of 07/07/2025, there are 24 aptness issues in the database. In very general terms, we can say that they operate on three levels:

- **phrase/sentence form;**
- **lexical choice;**
- **explicit informativity.**

The first two items on the list are self-explanatory. They also very frequently work in tandem. The third item may need explaining. What I mean by explicit informativity is, literally, how much information is encoded in the utterance. The level of optimal informativity will vary with the audience. Explications that are helpful to one audience will be patronising to another and utterly perplexing to a third.

¹⁴The factors that make up field in Steiner’s framework, though corresponding to the ideational metafunction in the context of the Hallidaian register framework, are still fundamentally situational in nature. They are descriptors of domain and activity-specific genres, not of the actual content of communication.

* * *

One case of the basic sentence structure acting as a register marker was discussed above — see section 4.1.6.4.3, examples (173a)/(173b). Below is another interesting case that concerns register-marking on the level of form rather than lexical choice:

(174) a. ST (Ru) — *neogr*:

После Х. Штейнталя	типология,	ассоциировавшаяся со	
Posle X. Štejntalja	tipologija,	associirovavšajasja	so
After H. Steintahl	typology,	associated	with
	стадиальностью,	на полвека	перестает развиваться,
	stadial'nost'ju,	na polveka	perestaet razvivat'sja,
	stadiality,	for half.century	ceases to.develop,
	возродит ее лишь Э. Сепир	в 20-е гг. XX в.	
	vozrodit ee liš' È. Sepir	v 20-e gg. XX v.	
	will.revive it only E. Sapir	in the 1920s.	

After Steintahl, typological work, which was associated with theories of stadal **development**, ceased for half a century. It would only be resumed by Sapir in the 1920s.

b. TT (En):

After Steinthal, typology associated with stadal development ceased developing until Sapir went on to revive it in the 1920s.

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

register | aptness

The repetition of *develop* is probably deliberate wordplay. The question is whether such wordplay is tonally appropriate in an otherwise quite dry reference text.

* * *

Here is an example where form, lexis and informativity all come into play:

(175) a. ST (Ru) — *switch*:

Включение и отключение	выключателя
Vključenje i otključenje	vyključatelja
switching.on and switching.off	switch:GEN

connect and disconnect operations

b. **TT (En):**

Switching the circuit breaker on and off

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

register | aptness

general readability | verbose

There are no problems with either the content or the general acceptability of the student's translation. However, in the context of technical specifications, the wording comes across as a little 'untechnical'. One potential alternative might be:

(176) CONNECT and DISCONNECT operations

The general succinctness and avoidance of function words are more evocative of a formal engineering register. The specific word *operations* is less common and, therefore, more marked than *switching*. It is also narrower in meaning and brings to mind actions, functions, mechanisms etc., rather than the act of toggling. Finally, by omitting the *circuit-breaker*, we have decreased the explicit informativity of the phrase — we are proceeding on the assumption that the target reader will find this part of the message obvious from context.

4.1.6.5.2 Affect As already mentioned in section 2.2.1, a Hallidaian framework for parsing affect exists (Martin and White 2005) but was not used in this study, because the task at hand does not justify the deployment of such a hefty theoretical superstructure. Here, I mostly talk about affect using the basic valence/arousal model.

* * *

In the example below, a common word directly referring to an affective state — a state of perceiving danger — is replaced with a TL word that is more marked and, simultaneously, more affectively neutral:

(177) a. ST (Ru) — *gloss*:

Л. Ельмслев не отрицает правомерность таких
 L. El'mslev ne otricaet pravomernost' takix
 L. Hjelmslev not denies legitimacy such:GEN

исследований, но **опасно** при этом забыть о
 issledovanij, no **opasno** pri ètom zabyt' o
 studies:GEN, but **is.dangerous** during this to.forget about

самом языке.
 samom jazyke.
 actual language.

Hjelmslev does not deny the legitimacy of such research but argues that we **run the risk** of forgetting about language itself.

b. TT (En):

*Hjelmslev does not deny the legitimacy of such research, but **it is disadvantageous** to forget about language itself.*

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

register | affect

The ST uses the word *опасно* [*opasno*] {dangerous}, one of the 500 most commonly used words in Russian (Sharoff, Umanskaya and J. Wilson 2013). The TT uses *disadvantageous*, a marked Latinate word that signals formality and a ‘reason over passions’ stance. This word is typically seen in the context of weighing up courses of action with some external opposing forces or competitors in mind. In the TT, Hjelmslev’s appeal to his colleagues no longer attempts to invoke a shared pathos — a shared understanding that something is dangerous. Instead, it seems to contain something like a veiled legal threat.

* * *

In the example below, a neutral expression is replaced with an evaluative one:

(178) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

один из **идеологов** анархизма и народничество
 odin iz *ideologov* anarxizma i narodničestva
 one of *ideologists* anarchism:GEN and narodnichestvo:GEN

one of the **ideologists** of anarchism and narodnichestvo

b. TT (En):

a chief **propagator of the ideological movement** of anarchism
and populism

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

register | affect

In English, the word *propagator* has unambiguously negative semantic prosody. Of the top five collocates of *propagator of* in EnTenTen21, four are generally considered to be undesirable: *falsehood*, *disinformation*, *Islamophobia*, *heresy*. The collocates of *ideologist of* are just a list of political ideologies and factions, and social groups: *Narodism*, *bourgeoisie*, *Kremlin*, *peasantry*, *anarchism*, *Nazism*, *neoliberalism* etc., including everything from *revolution* to *capitalism*. The word is only negative to the extent that the concept of ideology tends to be somewhat negative, at least in popular anglophone discourse.

Interestingly, the student appears to have copied the much more openly derogatory *chief propagator of* verbatim from an online *Britannica* entry for Bakunin (Ryan and Carr 2025). Clearly, Prof. Alan Ryan and Sir Edward Hallet Carr had their own ideological sympathies and antipathies.

* * *

The example below contains two clashing affective signals:

(179) a. ST (Ru) — gloss:

Л. Ельмслев	развивал	идеи	Ф. де	Соссюра,
L. El'mslev	razvival	idei	F. de	Sossjura,
L. Hjelmslev	developed	ideas	F. Saussure;	nonetheless

однако	достаточно	разнородные	и	зачастую
odnako	dostatočno	raznorodnye	i	začastuju
quite	heterogeneous	and	often	<i>contradictory</i>

противоречивые
protivorečivye

Hjelmslev systematised and extended Saussure's ideas, which, it must be said, were quite **heterogeneous** and often internally **contradictory**

b. TT (En):

Louis Hjelmslev further developed the rather **diverse** and often **contradictory** ideas of Ferdinand de Saussure.

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

register | affect

Things that are *diverse* are generally good. The top four collocates of *diverse and* are *inclusive, rich, vibrant* and *complex*. Things that are *contradictory* are usually bad. The top four collocates of *contradictory and* are *confusing, inconsistent, ambiguous* and *conflicting*. Consequently, the TT is affectively dissonant. It is difficult to parse the speaker's affective stance.

4.1.6.6 SL features

This family of tags pertains to what MELLANGE calls 'SL intrusion': SL expressions or passages that have been left untranslated, or have been transliterated or otherwise domesticated in a way that is out of line with established convention (Secară 2005; Kübler 2008; Castagnoli et al. 2011). Because of time constraints and the relatively straightforward nature of such issues, I shall keep the discussion brief, omitting the glossed examples.

There are three subcategories within this category:

proper names and titles: A proper name or title is domesticated or transliterated in a way that departs from established practice.

transliteration: A transliterated word or expression within the TT deviates from the applicable transliteration convention.

unwarranted loan / untranslated: An expression that should have been translated or domesticated is left in Cyrillics or transliterated.

4.1.6.6.1 proper names and titles We can identify five subtypes of proper name and title issues:

- **unwanted translations;**
- **handling of possessives;**
- **enquotation;**

- **non-capitalisation;**
- **unconventional spelling or wording.**

4.1.6.6.1.1 Unwanted translation This pertains to translating information that should be transliterated, because likely use cases involve back-transliteration. In this category, we find addresses, company names, titles of academic publications, and culture-specific abbreviations like *KGB*.

The rationale for transliterating rather than translating titles of academic publications is that they will be easier to find in a library or a database if the SL title can be reliably restored by back-transliterating. Similar logic applies to postal addresses. Concerning company names and culture-specific abbreviations, see the note on page 293.

4.1.6.6.1.2 Handling of possessives In Russian, belonging to a place, a person, an institutions etc. is often marked using possessive adjectives. These are sometimes transliterated as is, retaining the possessive form — e.g. *Мариинский меамп* [*Mariinskij teatr*] {*Marija's theatre*} → *Mariinsky Theatre* — and sometimes converted back to a noun, i.e. the ‘possessor’ — e.g. *Кировская академия балета* [*Kirovskaja akademija baleta*] {*Kirov's academy of ballet*} → *Kirov Academy of Ballet*. There is no universal rule, although there are some trends. For example, as a rule, names of monasteries retain the possessive form — e.g. *Соловецкий монастырь* [*Soloveckij monastyr'*] {*Monastery of Solovki*} → *Solovetsky Monastery* — but names of universities do not — e.g. *Московский государственный университет* [*Moskovskij gosudarstvennyj universitet*] {state university of Moscow} → *Moscow State University*.

Deciding whether to retain the possessive or not in any given case is a matter of weighing up general trends, idiosyncratic conventions (as in the case of *Mariinsky Theatre*), and likely use cases. For example, is the user likely to back-transliterate and search for the exact name in Russian, or is the reader more likely to look for the person or place with which the entity in question is associated?

If we do decide to retain the possessive, then there is the question of which transliteration convention to use. A masculine possessive ending in *-ский* [-*skij*]

could be transliterated as *-sky*, *-ski* *-skiy*, *-skii*, *-skii*, or *-skij*. For further discussion of transliteration issues, see section 4.1.6.6.2.

If we decide not to retain the possessive, then we must find out who the ‘possessor’ is. This is not always obvious. An adjective like *Михайловский* [*Mixajlovskij*] could refer to St. Michael, some other, as yet unbeatified, person named *Михаил* [*Mixail*] or *Михайло* [*Mixajlo*], or somebody with the surname *Михайлов* [*Mixajlov*] or *Михайлова* [*Mixajlova*], or a village named *Михайлово* [*Mixajlovo*] or *Михаловское* [*Mixajlovskoe*], or a town named *Михайлов* [*Mixajlov*] or *Михайловск* [*Mixajlovsk*].

4.1.6.6.1.3 Enquotation In Russian, titles of works of art, institutions, products etc. are often put in quotation marks. This is not standard practice in English, and quotation marks carried over into the TT can come across as ‘scare quotes’, i.e. as marking distancing or sarcasm.

4.1.6.6.1.4 Non-capitalisation Here, I am talking about cases where a proper name is not capitalised at all — i.e. not marked as a proper name. Cases where capitalisation of proper names follows SL rather than TL conventions (first word only rather than every content word), as well as cases of inconsistent capitalisation are classed as hygiene issues and marked as capitalisation / punctuation / typography (see section 4.1.6.8.1).

4.1.6.6.1.5 Unconventional spelling or wording These are simple cases of deviation from established form, e.g. *Kabe* instead of *Cabet*, or *First International* instead of the *First International*

4.1.6.6.2 transliteration Which transliteration standards are applicable will depend on, on whether an established spelling is already in circulation (as in the case of *Mariinsky* above) or whether we are dealing with a new transliteration task. If the latter is the case, then various institution and domain-specific standards will apply.

There is only a handful of issues in this category.

One concerns a village name the spelling of which appears to have changed in Russian: from *Премухино* [*Premuxino*] in the 19th century to *Прямухино* [*Prjamuxino*] at present. The student used the current spelling in the context of an encyclopaedia article about events set in the 19th century — a very minor issue if an issue at all.

Another case concerns yet another complication connected to possessives: a degree of confusion can arise when an institution changes in status (e.g. from school to college) and the grammatical gender or number of the new designation does not match that of the old designation, resulting in any attached adjectival qualifiers also changing gender. This may or may not matter, depending on whether there are any established conventions in the TL, whether we want to talk about the institution in general or during a specific period, and whether we think that likely use cases might involve back-transliteration — might the reader search for more information in the SL? The problematic case in question concerned a military training institution that was at one point *Михайловское училище* [*Mixajlovskoe učilišče*] {*Michailovskoe college:NEUT*} but then became *Михайловская академия* [*Mixajlovskaja akademija:FEM*]. The student used a hybrid: *Mikhailovskaya Artillery College*.

Two more cases concern the transliteration of a product code in an engineering context. In one case, the student appears to have used a deprecated transliteration convention; in another, a mixture of two different conventions.

4.1.6.6.3 unwarranted loan / untranslated All the issues assigned this tag that are currently in the database involve transliteration of abbreviations that should have been localised, either because established equivalents exist, or because the abbreviation is ST-specific, and the full term in English would have to be abbreviated differently.

4.1.6.7 Terminology

This family of tags pertains to the handling of domain terms and expressions.

There are four subcategories within this category:

inconsistent: The same ST domain term is translated in two or more different

ways in the TT.

non-standard / uncommon: The TT expression used is out of line with established convention.

wrong term: The TL expression used in the TT exists as a domain term in the TL but refers to something other than the corresponding SL expression used in the ST.

wrong TL convention: Multiple acceptable TL equivalents of an SL term exist; however, the one that is used is out of line with the conventions applicable to the specific communicative scenario at hand.

Once again, because of time constraints and the relatively straightforward nature of such issues, I shall keep the discussion brief, omitting glossed examples.

4.1.6.7.1 inconsistent The majority of cases marked as terminology | inconsistent involve the handling of set technical terms, e.g. a specific part of a machine being referred to by several different names. One case involves inconsistent translation of an old administrative division, *губерния* [*gubernija*] — as *governorate* in one case and *district* in another. There is also one case of inconsistent abbreviation, where *replacement* is in one place abbreviated as *repl.* and in another as *rpl.*

4.1.6.7.2 non-standard / uncommon Issues marked as terminology | non-standard / uncommon range from very minor, where the meaning of the expression is reasonably clear, but the unfamiliarity might result in loss of readability or departure from the desired register, to critical, where the expression is uninterpretable and the loss of meaning makes the entire document unusable.

An example of a very minor issue (weight = 1) would be using *consistent* instead of *non-contradictory* to describe Hjelmslev's requirements for a good theory.

An example of a minor issue (weight = 2) would be using *support* in place of *frame* or *chassis* in an engineering context. While the intended meaning is probably

still retrievable, the reader is likely to slow down or halt, and/or to think worse of the translator.

An example of a major but non-critical issue (weight = 3) would be using an expression like *operative power* instead of *control current* in the context of electrical engineering. A *control current* is a current that controls the state of some electrical device. It stands in opposition to *power current* which powers the device. The meaning of *operative power*, in this context, would be opaque. However, the effect of the error is local, and intended meaning might be retrievable from context.

An example of a critical issue (weight = 4) would be simply transliterating the Russian abbreviation ЛНД [LND], which stands for *локальные нормативные документы* [*lokal'nye normativnye dokumenty*] {*local normative documents*}, meaning *local policies and procedures*, in the context of a document with a significant legal dimension.

4.1.6.7.3 wrong term An example of a very minor error (weight = 1) tagged as terminology | wrong term is using *heat-exchange surface* instead of *heat-exchanger* in an engineering context. The two are not the same, but the intended meaning is readily recoverable.

An example of a minor error (weight = 2) is using *developmental stages* in place of *stadiality* in the context of historical linguistics. While the intended meaning is probably still recoverable from context, this is a term from a completely different cluster of domains (biology, psychology and early language development), generally used to mean something different.

An example of a major error (weight = 3) is using *rollers* in place of *block shaft* in an engineering context. This is actively misleading. *Rollers* are bring to mind some sort of wheels or rotating cylinders. A *block shaft* — a shaft used for some sort of a blocking operation — is, presumably, something that prevents some sort of motion. An error like this is definitely ‘on the cusp’ of being critical, but, in this specific case, the damage was deemed to be local.

A critical error (weight = 4) is using *New Grammatism* instead of *Neo-grammarians* as a chapter title in a book about linguistics. The two refer to radically different fields. The *neo-grammarians* were a prominent strand of late

19th century empiricism within language study (Alpatov 2005, pp.92–105). *New grammatism* is a somewhat obscure direction in late 20th century natural language processing (Pulman 2018). A person looking at a list of search results and seeing one instead of the other might never actually read the text!

4.1.6.7.4 wrong TL convention All the issues marked as terminology | wrong TL convention to date have been deemed to be very minor (weight = 1), and all of them concern the handling of institutional abbreviations similar to the English *Ltd.* and *PLC.* Russian abbreviations such as *ООО* [OOO], *ОАО* [OAO] and *ПАО* [PAO]¹⁵ are sometimes domesticated as *LLC*, *OJSC* and *PJSC*, respectively, and sometimes transliterated as *ООО*, *ОАО* and *РАО*. The current legal norm in the UK seems to be to treat these abbreviations as part of the company name, meaning that they should be transliterated (see the note under the entry for *ООО* on Multitran, last accessed 12/08/2025). However, many Russian companies already have a substantial body of existing documentation and publicity materials where they use the domesticated abbreviations. The decision which one to use comes down to whether, in a given communicative scenario, legal norm trumps established usage and the company's own preferences. If the document has a significant legal dimension (e.g. auditing documentation), then it probably does. If the document is chiefly intended for shareholders, customers, journalists etc., then it probably does not.

4.1.6.8 Hygiene

Under this general heading I include issues affecting orthography, text presentation, localisation, and accurate transfer of numbers. Such issues are, at heart, not linguistic. They are unlikely to be a direct reflection of the translator's SL comprehension and TL production proficiencies. Nor are they likely to reflect their familiarity with the subject matter.

There are five subcategories within this category:

¹⁵These abbreviations stand for *общество с ограниченной ответственностью* [obščestvo s ograničenoj otvetstvennost'ju] {society with limited liability}, *открытое акционерное общество* [otkrytoe akcionernoje obščestvo] {open shareholders' society} and *публичное акционерное общество* [publičnoje akcionernoje obščestvo] {public shareholder's society} respectively.

capitalisation / punctuation / typography: The passage departs from common practice with respect to punctuation, capitalisation or typography.

layout: Layout interferes with communicative function.

localisation: Locale-specific conventions with respect to the formatting of specific types of information are not observed or are observed inconsistently.

spelling and diacritics: A word in the TT clearly deviates from normative TL orthography

numbers: The numbers in the TT do not correspond to the numbers in the ST.

4.1.6.8.1 Capitalisation / punctuation / typography Mistakes of this type are extremely common but, as a rule, not very serious. As of 06/07/2025, there were 66 instances in the database. The majority (39) were classed as very minor (weight = 1). A significant number (24) were classed as minor (weight = 2). Only two were classed as serious (weight = 3). None were classed as critical (weight = 4). In the majority of cases, errors like this might damage our perception of the speaker, but they rarely significantly impede comprehension or alter the message. Because of the limitations of time, I will only discuss some of the more common or more serious subtypes of issue in this category.

Different types of issues within this category are listed in table 4.7. Just under half (29) involve commas. One of the issues deemed serious involved a superfluous comma that made a restrictive clause into a non-restrictive one:

(180) Risk management measures include strategic risk management measures, financial risk management measures and control procedures, which are process risk management measures.

Here, the comma before *which* makes it sound like the clause that follows qualifies all the items in the preceding list (*strategic risk management measures, financial risk management measures and control procedures*) rather than just the last one (*control procedures*).

There were two other issues involving the punctuation of relative clauses, but they were deemed less serious. One did not result in a change of qualification

type	count
missing comma / before jointing conjunction	7
missing comma / non-restrictive relative clause	2
missing comma / bracketing (date/time)	9
superfluous comma / before non-jointing <i>but</i>	1
superfluous comma / after subordinating conjunction	2
superfluous comma / restrictive relative clause	1
superfluous comma / unnecessary bracketing	1
comma in place of other sign / semicolon	5
comma in place of other sign / brackets	1
superfluous quotation marks / text and institution titles	21
missing dash / between determinant and noun	2
dash in place of other sign / colon	2
no italics / foreign words and phrases	4
capitalisation / first word only	1
capitalisation / inconsistent	4
missing space / after hyphen	1
superfluous space / before en-dash	1
full stop before quotation mark (after quoted phrase)	1

Table 4.7: Types of capitalisation, punctuation and typography issues.

scope. The other one did, but the change was deemed less misleading. It also involved a calque of an equally unfortunate ST structure.

(181) a. **ST (Ru) — *compr*:**

<i>Сварные пластинчатые теплообменники предназначены</i>	
Svarnye plastinčatye teploobmenniki prednaznačeny	
Welded plate heat-exchangers intended	
<i>для охлаждения (нагрева) жидких или газообразных</i>	
dlja oxlaždenija (nagreva) židkix ili gazoobraznyx	
for the cooling (heating) liquid:GEN or	
<i>сред, в т.ч. взрывоопасных и вредных в</i>	
sred, v t.č. vzryvoopasnyx i vrednyx v	
gaseous media, including explosive and harmful	
<i>различных технологических процессах</i>	
različnyx tehnologičeskix processax	
in various technological	

Welded plate heat-exchangers intended for cooling (or heating) liquid or gaseous media, including explosive and hazardous ones, in various technological processes

b. **TT (En):**

Welded plate heat exchangers are designed to cool (or heat) liquid or gaseous media, including those explosive and harmful in various technological processes.

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

hygiene | capitalisation / punctuation / typography
relation | constituency | DISTORTED

Both the ST and the TT are missing a comma after *harmful*. The nature of the situation suggests that *explosive and harmful* should qualify *media*, while *in various technological processes* should qualify *to cool (or heat)*. However, the way the clause is punctuated, it sounds like *in various technological processes* qualifies *explosive and harmful* — i.e. the media are explosive and harmful in some processes but not in others. Luckily, within the context of the text as a whole, this is a fairly tangential detail, misinterpretation of which is unlikely to cause serious consequences.

Nine of the issues involving commas concerned the punctuation of phrases such as *in 1842*. While the use of bracketing commas with such phrases is optional in English, it has become very common, especially when the phrase in question is at the start of the clause. Consequently, I have treated it as a *de facto* rule of usage. At the same time, such issues were all considered very minor (weight = 1).

Five issues involved run-on sentences that retained the Russian punctuation. In Russian, it is acceptable to join two clauses with only a comma (no conjunction). In English, such a join generally requires a semicolon.

21 issues involved superfluous quotation marks around proper names, in particular titles of documents and institutions. For example:

(182) a. **ST (Ru) — gloss:**

“Пролегомены” Л. Ельмслева

“Prolegomeny” L. El’msleva

“Prolegomena” L. Hjelmslev:GEN

Hjelmslev’s *Prolegomena*

b. **TT (En):**

Hjelmslev’s “Prolegomena”

WEIGHT: 1

TAGS:

hygiene | capitalisation / punctuation / typography

This type of punctuation is normal in Russian but not in English, where names and titles may be italicised but are rarely enquoted.

One of the issues involving quotation marks was deemed serious:

(183) a. ST (Ru) — *bakun*:

по требованию	имп.	Николая		написал
po trebovaniju	imp.	Nikolaja		napisal
on demand	emperor:GEN	Nicholas:GEN		wrote

“Исповедь”
“Ispoved”
“Confession”

on the order of Tsar Nicholas I, [Bakunin] wrote **Confession**

b. TT (En):

at the request of Emperor Nicholas I, he wrote a ‘confession’

WEIGHT: 3

TAGS:

SL features | proper names and titles

hygiene | capitalisation / punctuation / typography

Here, the quotation marks, combined with the loss of a capital and the addition of an indefinite article, result in serious pragmatic distortion: it sounds like the enquoted word is not the name of a text but a regular noun being used sarcastically.¹⁶

Capitalisation issues are quite rare (a total of five) and involve either inconsistency within the TT or, once again, failing to switch from the Russian to the English norm. In English, when the title of a text or an organisation consists of multiple words, the norm is to capitalise every content word in the title. In Russian, as a rule, only the first word is capitalised.

4.1.6.8.2 Layout Unlike the textuality | sentence / paragraph breaks, this category does deal with the creation of logical divisions. It is purely to do with the visual flow.

As of 06/07/2025, there are two issues in this category. Both concern spurious line breaks, which were almost certainly an artefact of the

¹⁶To be fair, Bakunin would probably not object to such an interpretation.

word-processing software rather than a deliberate choice. Both were rated as minor (weight = 2).

4.1.6.8.3 Localisation As of 07/07/2025, there is a total of ten issues in this category. They fall into three categories:

- names of people in academic texts (4 cases);
- numbering of centuries (1 case);
- alphabetical lists (5 cases).

With the exception of the one issue pertaining to the numbering of centuries which was rated as very minor (weight = 1), all others were rated as minor (weight = 2).

Let us consider some examples:

* * *

In the example below, the TT departs from established TL conventions concerning the format of in-text references to famous thinkers:

(184) a. **ST (Ru)** — *bakun*:

<i>изучал</i>	<i>труды</i>	И.	<i>Канта,</i>	И.	<i>Фихте,</i>	<i>с</i>	<i>1837</i>	Г.
<i>izučal</i>	<i>trudy</i>	I.	<i>Kanta,</i>	I.	<i>Fixte,</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>1837</i>	G.
<i>studied</i>	<i>works</i>	I.	<i>Kant:GEN,</i>	J.	<i>Fichte:GEN,</i>	<i>from</i>	<i>1837</i>	G.

Гегеля
Gegelja
Hegel:GEN

studied the works of Kant, Fichte and, from 1837, Hegel

b. **TT (En)**:

studied the works of I. Kant and J. Fichte. From 1837, he studied and promoted the ideas of G. Hegel.

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

hygiene | localisation

In English, the initials of well known authors, like Kant and Hegel, are usually omitted from running text. However, if the initials are included, the convention

is to include all the initials rather than just the first. So it should be not *G. Hegel* but *G.W.F. Hegel* and not *J. Fichte* but *J.G. Fichte*'.

* * *

The aforementioned case of inconsistency in the numbering of centuries involved both *19th century* and *nineteenth century* appearing in the body text of the same document. Either would have been an acceptable way to localise the century numbers, for which Russian traditionally uses Roman numerals, but the inconsistency looks unprofessional.

* * *

Here is a typical issue involving an item from an alphabetical list:

(185) a. **ST (Ru)** — *switch*:

в приложении **Д**
 v priloženii **D**
 in appendix **D**

in appendix **E**

b. **TT (En)**:

in appendix D

WEIGHT: 2

TAGS:

hygiene | localisation

Here the student simply transliterates the index of the appendix. The problem is that *D* is the fourth letter of the Roman alphabet, while *Д* [*D*] is the fifth letter of the Cyrillic alphabet. Assuming the number and sequence of appendices stays the same, in English this should be appendix *E* rather than appendix *D*.

4.1.6.8.4 Spelling and diacritics Because of the ubiquity of spellcheckers, such issues are rare. As of 07/07/2025, there is only one in the database: the student had somebody *sentenced to exhale* rather than *sentenced to exile*. This issue was deemed minor (weight = 2). The intended meaning is clear from context, but the damage to the translator's reputation would be palpable. TL paronymy errors tend to make the translator look uneducated and out of their depth.

4.1.6.8.5 Numbers As of 07/07/2025, there are only two such issues in the database. Though thankfully rare, such issues are, obviously, potentially very serious.

In one case, the student changed the date range from the 1870s to the 1970s (see (73a)/(73b) in section 4.1.6.2.2 above). In a chronologically structured historical narrative, this is a critical error and was, accordingly, given the maximum weight of 4.

In the other case, the student changed a digit in a product code. Luckily, this information was not central to the functionality of the document as a whole. It was classed as major (weight = 3).

4.1.7 Duplicate issues

This tag is assigned when the exact same issue has already been tagged elsewhere in the text, for example, repeated use of a wrong term. Issues that are categorically similar, for example repeated use of a problematic construction but with somewhat different lexical content, are not considered to be duplicates.

4.2 Statistical analysis

Over the course of this project, I have completed the processing of 3374 words or 23376 characters of ST text and of 11321 words or 65209 characters of TT text. A total of 554 issues were identified and tagged. A total of 652 error type tags were assigned. These numbers are very low by the standards of linguistic corpora, but some basic statistical analysis is possible.

The chief aim of this section is to revisit the three hypotheses put forward in section 1.3.4 as a test of analytical usefulness. I will now restate them:

- **Hypothesis 1:** there is a discernible quantitative relationship between the number and type of issues and the final grade the student is awarded on the basis of holistic assessment.
- **Hypothesis 2:** there are discernible relationships of association between different kinds of issues.

- **Hypothesis 3:** individual students have ‘fingerprint’ issue patterns.

4.2.1 What correlates with marks?

For the assessed translations, Spearman and Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated for marks given and various aggregate quantities, such as total error count, total issue weight, average issues weight, weight standards deviation (population), error count per character, weight per character, and various aggregate error category counts and weights (e.g. all reference errors, all register errors, all hygiene errors etc.).

The Spearman coefficient ρ is a measure of ordinality and monotonicity. In simple terms, if some parameter B goes up whenever parameter A goes up, ρ will be close to 1. If B always goes down when A goes up, ρ will be close to -1. If B sometimes goes up and sometimes goes down as A goes up, ρ will be close to zero.

The Pearson coefficient r is a measure of linearity. In other words, if when you plot A against B, the two form a straight line and the line slopes upwards, the r be close to 1. If the line slopes downwards, r will be close to -1. If the line is flat, if the points form a disperse cloud, or if the relationship is non-linear, r will be close to zero.

Thus the Spearman calculation allows us to test the intuitive assumption that more errors and/or errors of greater seriousness results in lower marks — without making any further assumption about the nature of the relationship. The Pearson calculation tests specifically for linearity, i.e. that over the interval covered there exists a direct first-order correlation between the grade and some parameter indicative of the number and seriousness of errors.

No meaningful correlations were found between raw marks and any of the parameters listed at the start of this section. This is not surprising. There is substantial variation in the difficulty of the assessments — the size of the ST, the lexical and grammatical complexity of the ST, and the amount of time pressure. Although there are no formal procedures for adjusting marking scales to account for this, this is often done *de facto*, with more challenging assessments being marked more leniently. Thus the same number of errors of comparative seriousness might result in a higher or a lower mark, depending on the length of ST, the number

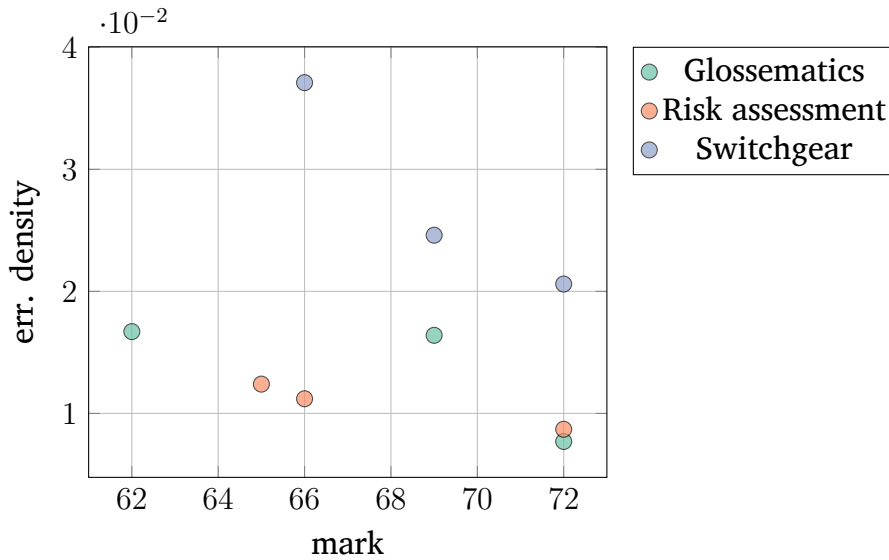


Figure 4.1: Mark vs. error density (with duplicates removed from data set.)

and difficulty translation problems, and the amount of time the student had to complete the translation.

Figure 4.1 is a plot of marks against error densities ED , calculated as:

$$ED = \frac{W}{N_{\text{ch.ST}}} \quad (4.1)$$

where W is the total error weight for the TT in question, and $N_{\text{ch.ST}}$ is the number of characters in the ST. Since this factors out variation stemming from ST size, what we are left with is the variation stemming from ST difficulty.

The switchgear translations clearly form a separate group. This assessment was unambiguously harder than the other two. It involved the translation of a short but genuinely difficult technical text under significant time pressure. Consequently, the submissions were marked quite leniently.

To account for the variation in ST difficulty, we can also normalise ED values with respect to the assignment mean $ED_{\text{mean.assg}}$, defined as:

$$ED_{\text{mean.assg}} = \frac{\sum ED}{N_{\text{assg}}} \quad (4.2)$$

where the sum runs over all the TTs submitted for a given assignment, and N_{assg} is the number of TTs submitted for the assignment. The normalised error density ED_{norm} can then be calculated as follows:

$$ED_{\text{norm}} = \frac{ED - ED_{\text{mean.assg}}}{ED_{\text{mean.assg}}} \quad (4.3)$$

We can expand this equation as:

$$ED_{\text{norm}} = \frac{\frac{W}{N_{\text{ch.ST}}} - \frac{\sum \frac{W}{N_{\text{ch.ST}}}}{N_{\text{assg}}}}{\frac{\sum \frac{W}{N_{\text{ch.ST}}}}{N_{\text{assg}}}} \quad (4.4)$$

The $N_{\text{ch.ST}}$ terms cancel out, leaving us with:

$$ED_{\text{norm}} = \frac{W - \frac{\sum W}{N_{\text{assg}}}}{\frac{\sum W}{N_{\text{assg}}}} \quad (4.5)$$

Thus normalised ED is equal to normalised W , and we can now rewrite equation 4.5 as:

$$ED_{\text{norm}} = W_{\text{norm}} = \frac{W - W_{\text{mean.assg}}}{W_{\text{mean.assg}}} \quad (4.6)$$

We can use a similar procedure to calculate normalised raw (unweighted) error count:

$$C_{\text{norm}} = \frac{C - C_{\text{mean.assg}}}{C_{\text{mean.assg}}} \quad (4.7)$$

where C is the number of errors in a given TT, and $C_{\text{mean.assg}}$ is the mean error count for the assignment to which this TT belongs.

C_{norm} and W_{norm} compare the number and seriousness of errors in a given ST to that in other submissions for the same assignment. These comparisons assume that all students were making a genuine effort to perform well and that no significant extraneous factors, beyond those listed earlier, unduly influenced any individual's performance.

When thus adjusted, a correlation between marks and error weights emerges (see Figure 4.2). The r and ρ values, and corresponding p -values, are listed in Table 4.8. Interestingly, the correlation becomes stronger when duplicate issues are removed from the dataset. Moreover, the fact that r and ρ values are now equal to two significant figures — both at -0.81, with p -values of 0.0087 and 0.0078 respectively — suggests that, at least over the interval in question, the

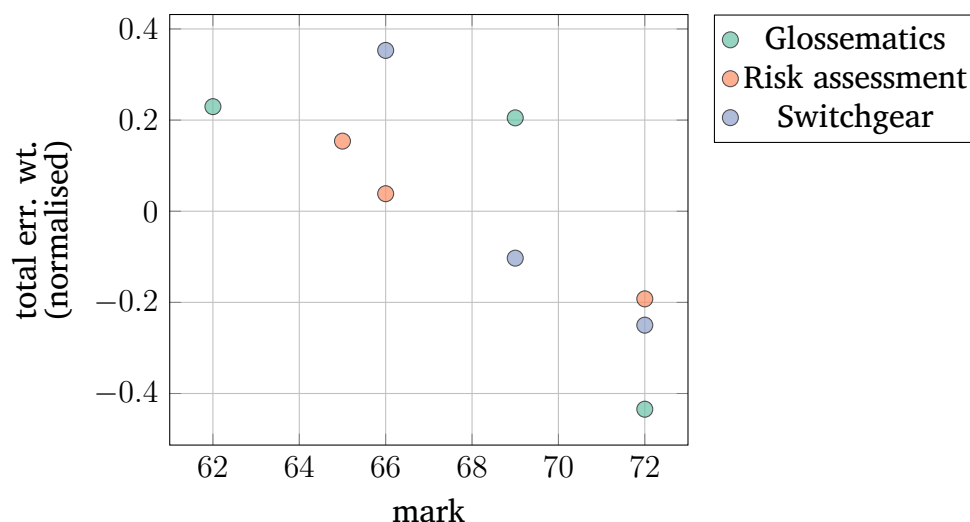


Figure 4.2: Mark vs. total error weight (with duplicates removed from data set.)

relationship is approximately linear.

The correlation improves further if we adjust one of the technical translation marks to account for a recurring critical error that was missed missed by the marker (see (61a)/(61b) above). With the relevant mark lowered from 66 to 61 — a realistic adjustment and quite charitable, given the nature of the error — the correlation metrics improve further, to $r = 0.87$ $\rho = 0.91$ and $p = 0.00540$ with p -values of 0.0021 and 0.0006 respectively (compare Figures 4.2 and 4.3).

Table 4.8 also shows the correlation metrics for mark vs. normalised error count (without weighting). There is no meaningful correlation for a complete and uncorrected data set. When duplicates are removed, a statistically significant but rather coarse and non-linear relationship appears ($\rho = 0.68$; $p = 0.0421$). When the correction discussed above is introduced, the correlation becomes stronger, and even a coarse linear relationship begins to pass the $p = < 0.05$ threshold of statistical significance ($r = 0.67$; $p = 0.0469$), but all correlations remain much weaker than for normalised weight. At no point does p drop below 0.01.

Statistically meaningful correlations were found between marks and the aggregate weights for four terminal error categories: structural combinability ($r = -0.78$, $p = 0.0126$), referential distortion ($r = -0.68$, $p = 0.0441$), unclear constituency ($r = -0.71$, $p = 0.0318$), and non-standard / uncommon terminology ($r = -0.79$, $p = 0.0117$).

No other parameters were found to correlate meaningfully with marks.

	r (p)	ρ (p)
<i>mark</i> vs. W_{norm} (with duplicates)	-0.78 (0.0138)	-0.74 (0.0240)
<i>mark</i> vs. W_{norm} (no duplicates)	-0.81 (0.0087)	-0.81 (0.0078)
<i>mark</i> vs. W_{norm} (with duplicates, corrected)	-0.82 (0.0062)	-0.85 (0.0036)
<i>mark</i> vs. W_{norm} (no duplicates, corrected)	-0.87 (0.0021)	-0.91 (0.0006)
<i>mark</i> vs. C_{norm} (with duplicates)	-0.46 (0.2091)	-0.57 (0.1069)
<i>mark</i> vs. C_{norm} (no duplicates)	-0.58 (0.1034)	-0.68 (0.0421)
<i>mark</i> vs. C_{norm} (with duplicates, corrected)	-0.54 (0.1310)	-0.67 (0.0479)
<i>mark</i> vs. C_{norm} (no duplicates, corrected)	-0.67 (0.0469)	-0.76 (0.0180)

Table 4.8: Correlation metrics for marks awarded vs. normalised error weight and normalised error count.

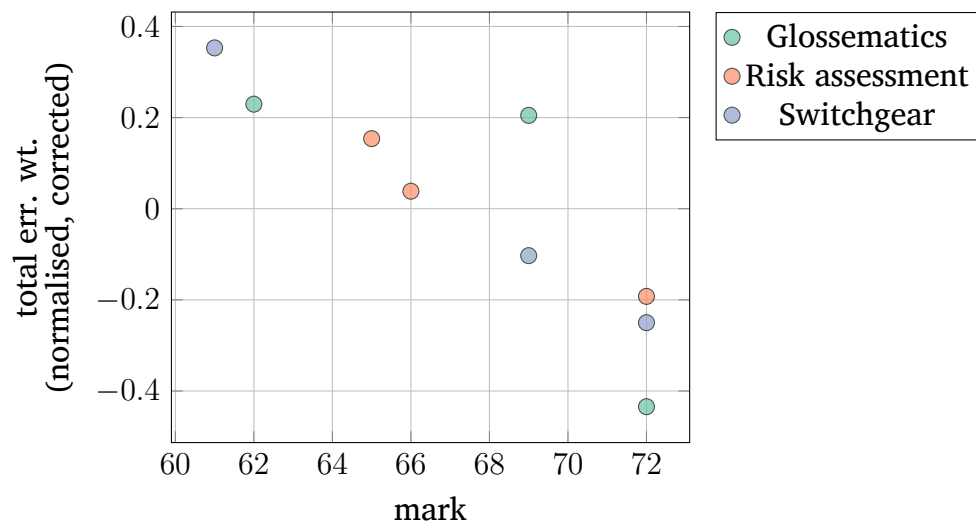


Figure 4.3: Mark vs. total error weight, corrected (with duplicates removed from data set.)

The overall correlation between marks and normalised total error weights suggests that my judgement is broadly stable across two different perspectives: holistic and analytic. This observation is not trivial. We can view it as going some way towards refuting the common criticism of error-counting approaches to translation quality assessment: that they are unreliable, because the assessor's attention is pulled too much towards local detail at the expense of being able to keep track of various text-level variables. What the data show is that the outcome of assessment remains broadly similar, regardless of whether I adopt a holistic or an analytic procedure. It is worth stressing that there was a genuine change in perspective. The original marks were produced using standard rubric-based holistic assessment and released before the systematic error counting was even initiated, never mind completed. Indeed, as already pointed out, there was a cases where a bundle of critical errors was missed during the initial holistic assessment and only came to light many weeks later during analytic re-evaluation (see (61a)/(61b) and accompanying discussion).

The correlation, though good enough to strongly suggest that the same construct is being measured, is far from flawless, particularly if we look at the distribution of marks within individual assessments. The most problematic is the *Risk assessment*, where the two lower marks differ by seven points — a lot in the context of this data set — while the difference in normalised total error weights is very small (0.025). At the same time, the difference between the highest mark and the next one down is much smaller (3 points), despite the difference in normalised total error weights being almost an order of magnitude higher (0.23). Thus, for this specific assignment, the relationship is clearly a non-linear one. What this suggests is that my judgement is *broadly* stable across holistic and analytic perspectives if we consider multiple assignments, However, locally, i.e. within the context of individual assignments, significant irregularities remain very much possible. There is thus a strong argument for favouring analytic assessment methods as the more methodical. Holistic appraisal seems to generate quite a lot of random error, which averages out over multiple assessments but can present a real problem for any given assignment.

4.2.2 Correlations between issue types

Correlation matrices were calculated for category-specific error counts C_{cat} , using the following (mostly higher-order) error categories:

- reference
- relation | constituency
- relation | role
- relation | conjunction
- relation | temporal-modal
- relation | scalar-structural
- relation | restrictiveness
- textuality
- general readability
- register
- SL features
- terminology
- hygiene

Six statistically meaningful pairwise correlations involving a total of six categories were identified. These are listed in Table 4.9, along with correlation metrics and instance counts. The table gives total assigned tag counts for each category and the number of cases where they occur jointly, i.e. are assigned to the same issue.

There are two families of inter-correlated parameters:

- referential
 - reference

- terminology
- SL features
- relational
 - conjunctive
 - scalar-structural
 - temporal-modal

There is, clearly, very considerable overlap between reference and terminology. There are 25 issues that are tagged as both reference and terminology. However, there is comparatively little overlap between reference and SL features, as well as between terminology and SL features. There are only two instances of overlap between reference and SL features — too low a number of points to produce the correlation metrics that we see. Consequently, we are looking at a correlation between *different* errors, meaning that, if you have some errors in a given TT that are classed as reference, you are also likely to have some *other* errors in the same text that are classed as SL features.

Table 4.9 shows a correlation matrix for the terminal category in the referential family. The categories with no relevant correlations have been removed. What we can see is that terminology errors correlate chiefly with referential unclarity, rather than distortion or loss of reference. The same is true of transliteration issues. On the other hand, poor domestication of proper names and titles, correlates with referential distortion, but not with loss or unclarity. Terminology and SL ingress errors correlate almost across the board. Finally, it is interesting to note that the three types of terminology issues included in Table 4.9 all strongly correlate with each other.

No attempts to perform a finer grained analysis of the relational category were made because of the low numbers.

4.2.3 TT clustering

Principal component analysis (PCA) was performed for the same broad categories that were listed on page 307. Loadings and variances can be found in Appendix D.

	A	B	A and B	r (p)
reference \leftrightarrow SL features	104	33	2	0.78 (0.013)
reference \leftrightarrow terminology	104	122	25	0.85 (0.004)
SL features \leftrightarrow terminology	33	122	5	0.90 (0.001)
conjunction \leftrightarrow scalar-structural	23	14	4	0.87 (0.002)
conjunction \leftrightarrow temporal-modal	23	19	7	0.81 (0.008)
scalar-structural \leftrightarrow temporal-modal	14	19	4	0.82 (0.006)

Table 4.9: Total number of occurrences and number of joint occurrences for correlated high-level error categories, and correlation metrics (calculated using the data set with duplicates removed).

	reference distorted	reference lost	reference unclear	SL features proper names and titles	SL features transliteration	terminology inconsistent	terminology non-std / uncommon
reference lost	0.125 (0.748)	-	-	-	-	-	-
reference unclear	0.399 (0.287)	0.805 (0.009)	-	-	-	-	-
SL features proper names and titles	0.851 (0.004)	0.095 (0.807)	0.586 (0.098)	-	-	-	-
SL features transliteration	0.423 (0.257)	0.533 (0.139)	0.840 (0.005)	0.661 (0.052)	-	-	-
terminology inconsistent	0.423 (0.257)	0.533 (0.139)	0.840 (0.005)	0.661 (0.052)	1.000 (< 0.01)	-	-
terminology non-std / uncommon	0.652 (0.057)	0.599 (0.088)	0.892 (0.001)	0.825 (0.006)	0.849 (0.004)	0.849 (0.004)	-
terminology wrong term	0.691 (0.039)	0.353 (0.351)	0.805 (0.009)	0.911 (0.001)	0.857 (0.002)	0.875 (0.002)	0.896 (0.001)

Table 4.10: Correlation matrix for terminal categories in the referential group (categories with no statistically significant correlations removed).

PCA is a dimensionality reduction technique. It allows data containing multiple variables to be projected onto a two-dimensional graph in a way that gives some indication of how the data is clustered. Points that are close to each other in multi-dimensional space remain close to each other on a PCA plot.

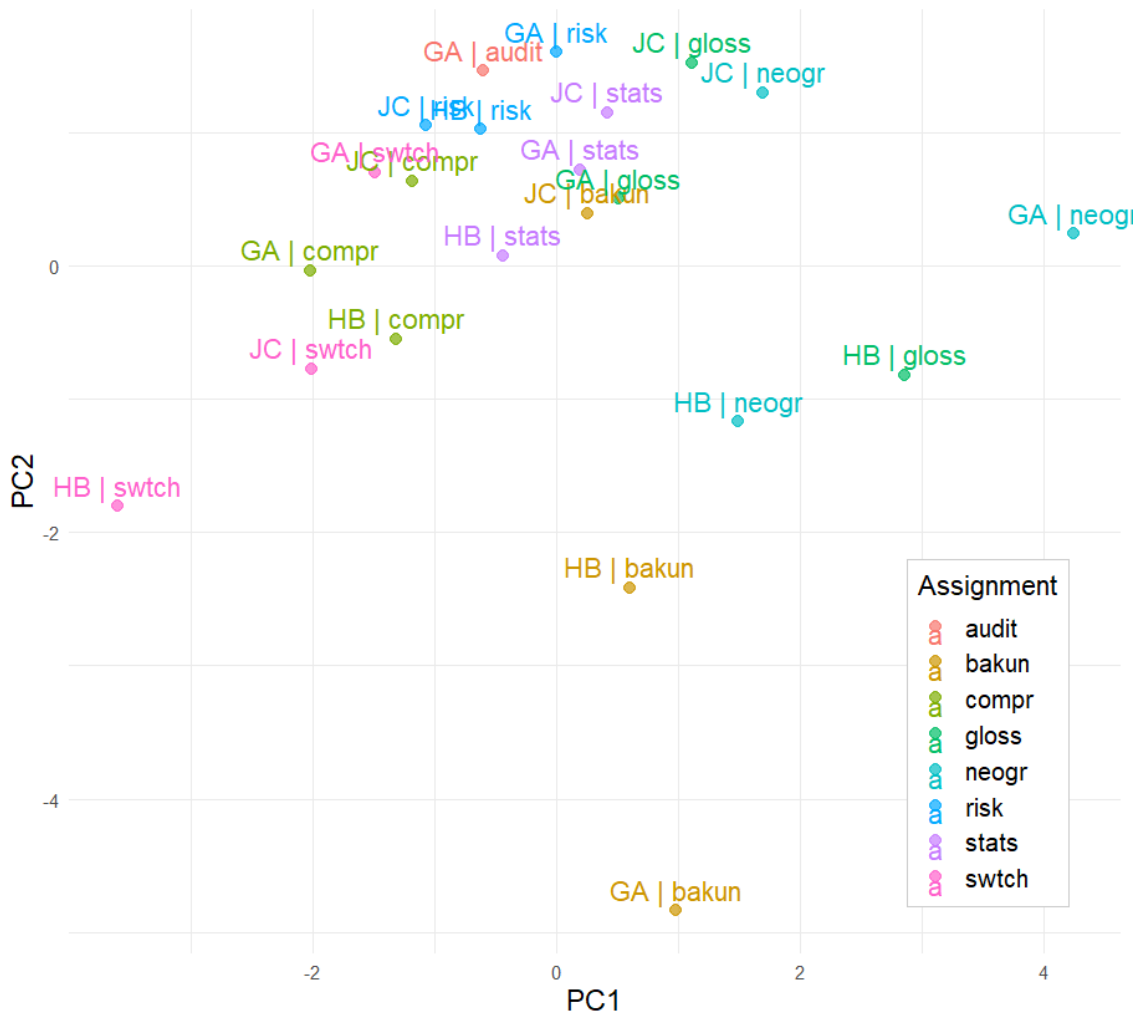


Figure 4.4: PCA plot for issue types, first two principal components. Projects: audit = audit letter; risk = risk assessment policy; compr = compressor presentation; switch = switchgear specification; stats = statistics journal article; neogr = neo-grammarians chapter; gloss = glossematics chapter; bakun = Bakunin encyclopaedia article.

More thorough factor analysis was envisaged, but, probably because of its small size, the data set failed one of the two suitability tests for such analysis. It passed the Bartlett test (p -value = 0.0010) but failed the Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) test, returning a measure of sampling accuracy (MSA) of 0.39 overall and varying between 0.27 and 0.49 for individual higher-level error categories. Anything below 0.5 is considered unacceptable.

Figure 4.4 shows a scatter-plot for the first two principal components, which together account for 41% of the variance in the data. The points are labelled with project name and student alias initials. They fall into two distinct groups. The majority form a dense cluster in the top-left half of the plot. Five more are scattered quite loosely in the opposite half of the diagram.

At first glance, the five outliers have two distinguishing characteristics. Firstly, they all correspond to texts with a strong narrative dimension: three translations of excerpts from a book about the history of linguistics and two translations of a biographical encyclopaedia entry. Secondly, they contain no submissions by JC, the strongest student in the cohort.

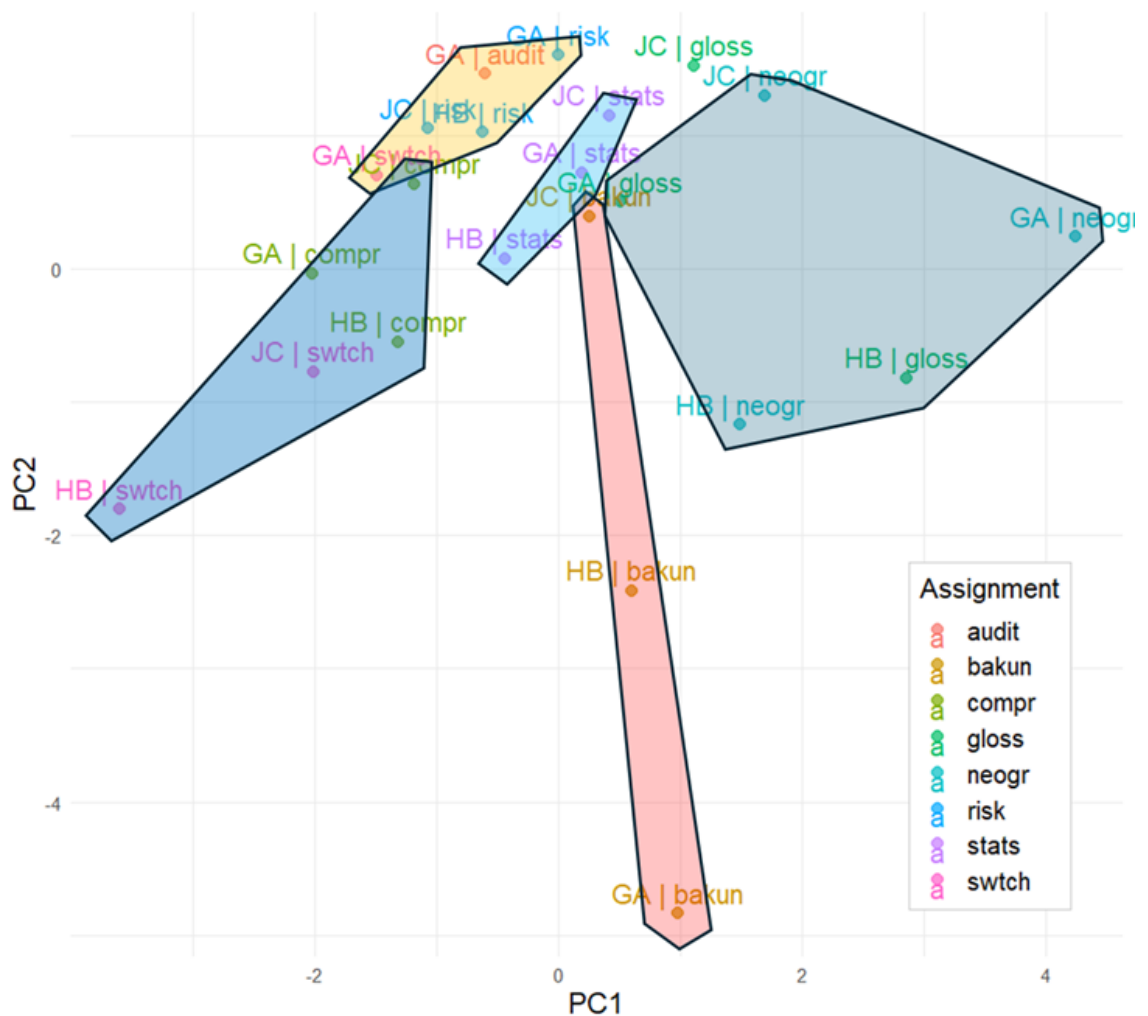


Figure 4.5: PCA plot for issue types — genre regions (coloured polygons are a guide to the eye).

We can also identify up to five regions corresponding to plausible genre divisions: technical, administrative, scientific, encyclopaedic-biographical, and

educational-narrative (see Figure 4.5). It must be stressed that these are regions rather than islands. What they suggest is continuous rather than discrete variation. Of course, these projections and any conclusions drawn from them must be treated with a good deal of caution because of the low number of data points.

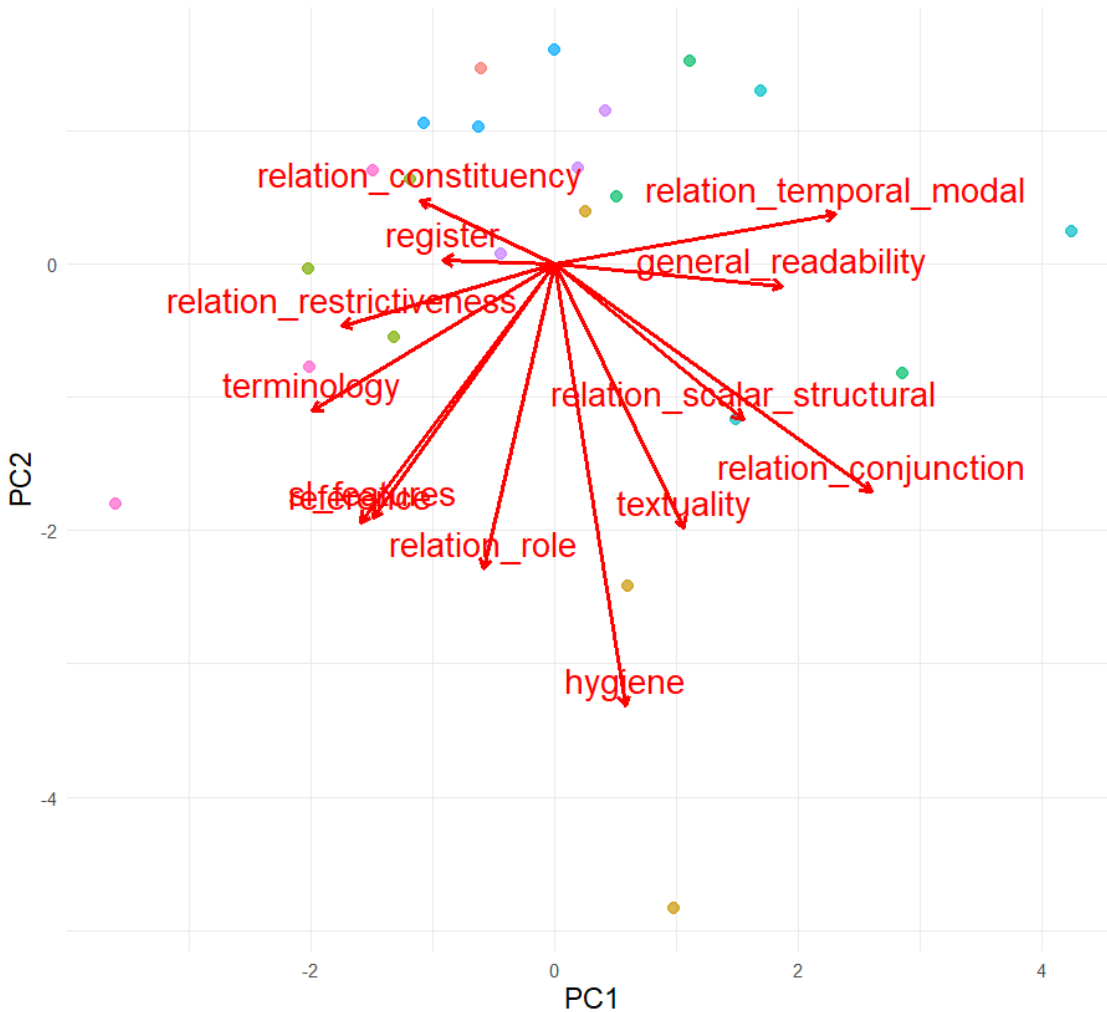


Figure 4.6: PCA plot for issue types — loadings.

Figure 4.6 shows the loadings. To a rough approximation, loadings can be understood as a measure of how strongly a particular type of error pulls a data point in a particular direction on the diagram.

It is interesting that the technical, administrative, and scientific regions in Figure 4.5, which make up the bulk of the main cluster, both individually and collectively form oblong shapes with a diagonal slant from top-right to bottom-left. This most strongly lines up with the loadings for the cross-correlated lexical

variables: reference, SL features, and terminology. What this suggests is that the handling of referential meanings and lexical equivalences varies significantly from student to student, and for texts of this nature, this variation is important.

The two loading vectors pointing towards the centre of the educational-narrative region are the temporal-modal relations and general readability. This is reasonable. Such texts are chronologically structured. Moreover, chronology is a large part of what they try to communicate. Consequently, temporal distortions can be disastrous. Such texts must also be stylistically quite smooth in order to remain functionally viable. Educational texts that are not readable tend not to get read.

The principal axis of variation for the encyclopaedic-biographical texts is hygiene. One plausible explanation is that texts of this nature are particularly susceptible localisation issues. There are quite tight genre constraints with respect to presentation and prose style, and there are many proper names to transliterate or domesticate.

It is interesting to note that general readability and register are almost at 180° to each other. This makes sense. Register errors are comparatively subtle pragmatic shifts. For them to be discernible at all, the text must be comparatively smooth.

Similarly, as one would expect, constituency is almost at 180° to conjunctive and scalar-structural relations. Again, generally speaking, for conjunctive and scalar-structural issues to be identifiable, constituency must be preserved. Changes in constituency destroy the framework within which such relationships exist. On the other hand, temporal-modal relationships are often expressed using meanings and inflections bound to individual words, which remain unaffected by constituency issues.

It is interesting that the conjunction – scalar-structural – constituency axis runs more or less orthogonally to the primary axis of variation in the main cluster. They seem to be what separates the various workplace genres from the educational and encyclopaedic texts. Another major contributor to this difference seems to be textuality. Again, it seems reasonable that preservation of cohesive and comparative relationships would be more important in texts that are more

narrative in character. Workplace texts, on the other hand, richer in complex sentence-level constructions but, simultaneously, more reliant on genre-specific document layout for maintaining cohesion across sentences and list items. They are also more cognitively taxing, because the subject matter is difficult, and, in a classroom setting at least, the reader is often unfamiliar with the frame. Consequently, it often becomes difficult to keep track of what connects to what on both a grammatical and a conceptual level.

4.2.4 Evaluation of hypotheses

In this chapter, I have looked at the correlations between the marks awarded for assessed translation and a variety of parameters related to error count and weight, I have looked at cross-correlations between different types of errors, and I have looked at the clustering of student submissions in dimension-reduced error space.

With respect to Hypothesis 1, we can say that there is reasonably convincing evidence of grades correlating with aggregate error weights. There also seems to be a looser correlation with several specific types of error: structural combinability, referential distortion, unclear constituency, and non-standard / uncommon terminology. It is worth noting that the correlations are for the data set as a whole and can break down for individual assessments.

With respect to Hypothesis 2, I have found evidence of two cross-correlating clusters of error types: a referential cluster, consisting of reference, terminology and SL feature errors, and a relational cluster, consisting of conjunctive, scalar-structural and temporal-modal errors.

With respect to Hypothesis 3, I have found no evidence of distinctive error patterns for specific students. There is, however, some evidence of clustering by genre with separation between strictly instrumental workplace texts and the more narrative and educational ones.

4.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have given a detailed description of TRISST, the translation issue typology developed over the course of this project.

I have also described the results of a statistical analysis carried out with a view to evaluating the three hypotheses put forward in section 1.3.4 as a test of usefulness.

There is an overall correlation between marks and normalised total error weights, suggesting that my judgement was broadly stable across holistic and analytic assessment. However, this correlation can break down for individual assignments, suggesting that a significant element of arbitrariness can creep into analytic assessment.

There are also coarse but statistically significant correlations between marks and errors belonging to specific categories (structural combinability, referential distortion, unclear constituency, and non-standard / uncommon terminology).

There are meaningful groupings within the data. There seem to be two clusters of cross-correlating errors: referential (reference, terminology, SL feature) and relational (conjunctive, scalar-structural, temporal-modal). This is probably a result of genre differences — some text types are rich in lexical problems, while others are rich in problems to do with coordinative relationships.

I have found no evidence of student-specific error patterns. There is, however, evidence of genre-specific error patterns, with workplace texts forming a comparatively tight cluster and educational and encyclopaedic texts falling clearly outside it.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

This is the conclusion of the thesis. In this chapter, I summarise my contributions to the field. I outline the theoretical implications of my work. I reflect on the limitations of this study. I set out some practical implications for pedagogy and assessment. I present some avenues for future research. Finally, I gauge how far I have succeeded in addressing the two big motives behind this project: a desire to extend our understanding of what it is that trainee translators tend to get wrong, and a desire to extend the available metalanguage for discussing translation problems in class. I then leave the reader with an important caveat: stay human.

5.1 Summary of contributions

I have built a corpus-building tool (MANTRA), assembled a small corpus of learner translations, developed an error typology for annotating it (TRISST), and performed statistical analysis on a body of data assembled. These are the four principal outputs of this study.

5.1.1 A corpus-building tool for translation pedagogy

MANTRA is a tool for assembling corpora of translation problems. It is not a tool for assembling traditional parallel corpora where texts are aligned segment by segment. Rather it is a tool that can harvest snippets from a pair of texts and

assemble them into bundles corresponding to specific issues. These bundles can then be tagged and commented.

MANTRA is designed for maximum flexibility. The user is not limited to working with pairs of segments aligned one-to-one. A bundle can include multiple segments for context, including non-adjacent segments, as well as multiple specific words or expressions. Thus, while replicating one of the main attractions of CAT tools — an environment where two texts can be seen and worked with side by side — it avoids what can be, from the perspective of a researcher, one of the CAT tools' main limitations: obligatory one-to-one alignment. MANTRA is designed for many-to-many alignment. The drawback is that, whatever model of alignment the user chooses to implement, it must be implemented by hand. Segmentation and alignment are not automated.

The current version of MANTRA is a single-user prototype. However, as a proof of concept, it has been a success. It has supported the iterative development of TRISST and enabled the quantitative analyses discussed in this thesis.

5.1.2 A mini-corpus Ru-En learner translations

The mini-corpus assembled during this project, while modest in size, represents the first dedicated collection of Ru-En learner translations produced by speakers of English as L1.

To date, 11321 words of target-side text have been fully processed and 589 tags have been assigned across 498 unique issues. The reader should bear in mind that learner translation corpora are generally quite small, because assembling them is such a labour-intensive process. For comparison, for their 2019 study by Kübler et al. assembled two corpora which together came to 63,058 tokens of target-side text. The RusLTC project, which has been running for over ten years, has generated a corpus that currently weighs in at 81235 tokens of English and 1645033 tokens of Russian — across both directions, Ru-En and En-Ru, and counting both source and target-side text (RusLTC Team 2023, accessed 28/08/2025).

This study has focused on translation of workplace and educational texts. A total of 8 different STs were used, ranging from academic journal articles and encyclopaedia entries to technical specifications and corporate policy documents,

with the total amount of source side text processed currently at 4385 words.

While by no means huge, the mini-corpus is big enough for meaningful and enlightening statistical analysis.

5.1.3 A semantically-oriented error typology

The development of TRISST constitutes perhaps the most substantial theoretical contribution of this project. It is an error typology with 8 apical and, currently, 73 terminal categories that attempts to provide a structured framework for comparatively granular semantic analysis, as well as for the analysis of cohesion, style, terminology and hygiene issues etc. But it is the semantic dimension that makes TRISST unique.

Crucially, TRISST has demonstrated its practical utility even with a very small dataset, producing statistically significant results that suggest its categories capture meaningful distinctions in the data. This robustness is particularly noteworthy given the challenges typically associated with quantitative analysis of small corpora.

Like RusLTC and unlike MeLLANGE, TRISST provides weighting bands. This feature has, unambiguously, shown its worth. The correlation between holistic assessment grades and total error counts is barely statistically significant. The correlation between the same grades and total error weights is quite good. This validates the practice of using identification and weighting of errors as a basis for grades awarded in professional accreditation exams set by ATA and ITI and opens up the possibility of similarly systematised marking in educational settings.

TRISST also reveals some of the inherent limitations of forcing a pyramid of hierarchically arranged pigeonholes onto natural language as a system of meanings rather than just structural features — a system that tends towards continuous rather than discrete variation and may, in the final analysis, be irreducibly complex. However we set up our categories, maintaining satisfactory separation between them is always going to be a challenge.

5.1.4 Empirical findings

The statistical analyses conducted in this project provide several useful and interesting insights.

The strong correlation between assessment-mean-normalised error weights and final grades suggests that systematic error analysis can indeed capture the same aspects of translation quality as holistic assessment. The identification of specific error categories that correlate particularly strongly with grades — structural combinability, referential distortion, unclear constituency, and terminology issues — offers some useful guidance for teaching practice.

Another significant finding is that duplicate errors do not seem to factor into holistic judgements. Better correlations emerge when duplicates are excluded from the data set. This suggests that assessors disregard repeated instances of the same error, focusing instead on the range and variety of problems present in a text.

The discovery of two clusters of inter-correlating errors (referential and relational) is interesting. While the referential cluster can be reduced to what we traditionally think of as vocabulary errors, the relational cluster cannot be as easily reduced to grammar errors. The scalar-structural errors, which are part of the relational cluster, are more semantic than syntactic in quality. It seems likely that the relational cluster corresponds to failures of conceptualisation rather than morphosyntactic parsing. Whether this is so is a question worth investigating further.

At the same time, I have found no indication of a meaningful separation between what would traditionally be conceived of as ‘language’ and ‘transfer’ issues.

I also found no clear difference between assessed and unassessed translations, indicating that the translation difficulties captured by TRISST appear to be systemic rather than performance-specific. This finding has implications for how we understand the relationship between translation competence and assessment conditions.

The genre-based clustering observed in the PCA analysis, while tentative given the small sample size, hints at the possibility that different text types

present systematically different challenges to student translators. However, there was no evidence of individual translators having distinctive 'fingerprint' error patterns, suggesting that the development of translation competences may follow a comparatively universal pattern — the students who struggle tend to struggle in the same way, which is ultimately determined by the specifics of the text.

The successful emergence of statistically significant patterns despite the small dataset size speaks to the robustness of TRISST as a categorisation system and suggests that meaningful insights into translation quality can be obtained even with limited data.

5.2 Theoretical implications

The successful development of a semantically-grounded error typology supports arguments for maintaining connections between translation studies and formal linguistics, contrary to the strong disciplinary boundaries advocated by scholars like Snell-Hornby. The demonstrable utility of concepts drawn from semantic theory — speaker commitment, temporal variables, commitment and attribution — suggests that the linguistic tradition in translation studies remains pedagogically relevant.

5.3 Limitations and methodological reflections

This project had a number of limitations.

5.3.1 Single annotator

The reliance on a single annotator raises obvious questions regarding potential assessor agreement issues.

5.3.2 Small numbers

The corpus remains small, covering only three students and eight source texts. The correlations identified, while meaningful, explain only a modest part of the

variance in assessment outcomes. Given the small sample size, it is quite likely that other meaningful relationships were obscured by noise. The small size of the data set allowed only for exploratory PCA, which amounts to a rough visual gauging of clustering patterns. More robust factor analysis, for now, remains out of bounds because of the failed KMO test.

5.3.3 Potential non-generality

The iterative development of TRISST, while methodologically sound, means that the typology is closely fitted to this particular dataset. Whether the same categories would prove equally useful for other language pairs, different text types, or students at different levels of competence remains to be established.

5.3.4 Unresolved conceptual tensions

Part of the design philosophy was that a ‘flat’ top — a higher number of top-level categories, more than the usual two or three (see section 2.4) — would reduce conceptual strain. I am not convinced this has worked. I may have simply shifted the problem to a different scale. Is the division between textuality and general readability actually meaningful? And, surely, having two temporality categories separated by an arbitrary grammatical boundary goes against the basic logic of the system. But then setting aside the variables associated with the tense/aspect/mood system of verbs seems useful, because they are likely to be grouped together in students’ and teachers’ heads... These and other similar questions remain unresolved. Natural language is a messy system. Imposing anything like a neat hierarchical taxonomy onto a tangle of overlapping fuzzy sets and sliding scales with uncertain parameterisation is always going to be a somewhat strained exercise.

5.3.5 Imprecision and arbitrariness of error weighting

In practice, it is extremely difficult to apply a scale such as the one outlined in section 4.1.5 with any measure of precision. The functional goals of the TT are often not very well-defined, and the assessor’s modelling of the target-reader’s

cognitive landscape is subject to many uncertainties. It is often difficult to say whether the damage to document functionality caused by some undesirable feature is very local, fairly local, clearly non-local, or clearly global, or whether the deviation from the desired perlocutionary effect would be barely noticeable, quite noticeable but comparatively minor, very noticeable and quite serious, or blatant and utterly catastrophic. Such judgements are largely intuitive. The criteria given by my weighting scheme, like the holistic marking rubrics discussed in 2.3.3.2.1, offer the marker some rough qualitative sanity checks but no more than that. This situation is hardly satisfactory, but it reflects the reality of marking practice in most text-based disciplines.

One practical consequence of this is that we can expect coarser frameworks to yield more consistent weightings. A few broad bands will precipitate less uncertainty than many narrow ones. This is why I opted for a weighting scheme closer to Kunilovskaya's three weighting bands than Wurm's eight weighting bands (Kunilovskaya 2016; Wurm 2016). Indeed, on reflection, I believe my addition of a fourth band brought little benefit. Rather than reducing indecision, it increased it, with 'Significant' often acquiring the status of a very broad 'not sure' category. While, the four-tier weighting scheme used in this study ultimately passed the test of usefulness, insofar as the data it has generated can be used for meaningful statistical analysis to good effect, the outcome might have been no worse if I had used Kunilovskaya's three-tier scheme.

In principle, a more rigorous way to quantify the seriousness of errors might be to arrange them on an ordinal scale using pairwise comparison — a procedure similar to the one employed by Han (2020) for quantifying overall TT quality (see section 2.3.3.2.2). This would not eliminate observer bias, in that different observers might still order the errors differently; however, it would mitigate for the instability of an individual observer's intuitive judgements with respect to the criteria outlined above. In other words, it would reduce the effect of extraneous factors such as fatigue, hunger, mood etc. However, such an approach would be very time-consuming, and the constraints of the present project rendered it impracticable.

5.3.6 Assessor confidence remains unaddressed

Early on in the project I tried to collect data about how confident I was about individual tagging decisions. These attempts were abandoned because the process was time-consuming and cognitively taxing. Given the limitations of time, a decision was taken to focus on developing the typology.

5.3.7 Issue cause remains unaddressed

While a separate issues cause arm was initially envisaged within TRISST, attempts to collect data on issue causes were similarly abandoned because of limitations of time. A rough sketch of an issue cause arm for TRISST can be seen in Appendix B.

5.4 Implications for pedagogy and assessment

The findings of this project have several practical implications for translation teaching and assessment.

Identification of several error types that correlate with overall quality judgements largely confirm conventional intuitions about what competences we should focus on when teaching translation of instrumental texts: lexical and terminological precisions, avoidance of syntactic ambiguity, grammatical accuracy, and observance of collocational patterns pertaining to the use of function words.

The clustering patterns seem to support the idea that lexical competence and ability to conceptualise the text world as a coherent system are two different competences that can be worked on and assessed in a targeted way. Thus the practice of giving and testing vocabulary lists remains relevant, but we also need to somehow train and test the mental stamina required to build up a coherent and interpretively sound text world in a situation where the basic act of decoding the incoming linguistic matter is effortful.

Good correlation between total error weights from systematic error analysis and grades from holistic assessment suggests that the two approaches are, fundamentally, measuring the same variable. This means that, for short

assessments at least, identification and weighting of errors can be a viable way to reduce the subjectivity and random variation in marking.

At the same time, there can be no universal marking scale, because assessments vary in difficulty. What we can do is use total error weights to judge the quality of multiple submission for a given assignment relative to each other, but how we then parameterise the conversion to actual grades is going to vary from one assessment to the next. That said, we should aim for a situation where the relationship between the assessment-mean-normalised weight and the grade holds across different assessments. We should decide whether the relationship between total error weight and the grade awarded should be overall linear, exponential, or something else.

5.5 Future research directions

The project opens up considerable scope for further work.

Firstly, in the immediate term, tagging should be finished for the 6094 words of sour-side text for which 227 issues have already been identified but not tagged. This would increase the corpus size by 50%.

There is room for more granular statistical analysis, for example analysis of the data by individual weight band.

There is the intriguing question of what cognitive mechanisms contribute to the relational cluster. Am I correct in thinking that this is a failure of world-building rather than morphosyntactic parsing?

TRISST itself needs to be continuously reviewed in the light of incoming data. The questions of issues cause and assessor confidence, which were set aside for this project, need to be properly explored.

Beyond that, there is the obvious need for replication studies using larger corpora, different language pairs, multiple annotators etc.

One exceptionally important area of research for which the methodologies developed in this project may be well-suited is human-machine interaction. MT-generated TTs were generated for one of the STs in this study using several popular online MT engines. At a glance there was significant overlap between student

and MT-generated texts, including quite a few similar errors. My intent was to compare the errors in these texts to the ones in the texts submitted by the students, with a view to later later conducting interviews where patterns of MT use could be explored. Unfortunately, this became one of the aspects of the project that had to be abandoned because of limitations of time. This particular line of enquiry would certainly be worth revisiting.

5.6 Final reflections

At the start of this thesis, I said that this project was motivated by two concerns: first, a desire to go some way towards addressing the paucity of quantitative data regarding the distribution of learner translator errors for the Ru-En pair, which should be informing our teaching practice; second, a desire to extend the metalanguage for discussing translation problems in class.

I have, in a small way, succeeded with respect to my first goal. Whether I have succeeded at all with respect to the second, only time will tell. Any language, including a metalanguage, must become collective property to continue existing. Whether the community at large will find any part of what I offer useful enough for it to enter common currency is, at present, impossible to tell.

I leave the reader with this caveat:

In our discipline, we engage with texts not as mensuration devices but as Subjects of Reason, and my intent is not to eliminate subjectivity but to help people apply it with greater awareness and consistency, understanding what the accepted community standards are and, where necessary, renegotiating them.

At the outset, I called translation an ‘engineering discipline’. I was careful not to say ‘scientific’. Science lays claim to an Archimedean perspective. Engineering does not. It is a practice that requires a significant amount of domain knowledge, but where it is also ultimately meaningless on its own. The fundamental question for an engineer is not ‘What is out there?’ but ‘What do people want?’. I have attempted to put together a framework the purpose of which is to help teachers and students of translation discuss this question while keeping an eye on the affordances of the material they work with — language.

Appendices

Appendix A

Some existing issue typologies

In this appendix you will find short descriptions of the sixteen typologies talked about in Chapter 2, section 2.4. These are:

- Industry QA tools
 - SICAL
 - SAE J2450
 - MQM Core/Full
- Marking schemes for professional accreditation exams
 -
 - ATA
 - ITI
- Annotation schemes for learner translator corpora
 -
 - MeLLANGE
 - AWEv
 - RusLTC
- Other typologies in the academic literature
 -

- Gouadec (1981)
- Bensoussan & Reosenhouse (1990)
- Williams (2001)
- Karoubi (2016)
- Garbovsky (2004)
- Latyshev (2005)
- Buzadzhi (2009)
- Shevnin (2003,2009)

A.1 Industry QA tools

A.1.1 SICAL

SICAL (Système canadien d'appréciation de la qualité linguistique) was a framework developed in the 1980s by the Canadian government's translation Bureau for the purpose of vetting freelance translators and monitoring the quality of translations produced. The framework consisted of an issue typology accompanied by a scheme for judging the severity of issues and calculating an overall quality score. To my knowledge, SICAL was the first such framework to see genuinely widespread use, thanks to the prodigious output of the Bureau; however, it appears to have fallen out of use and detailed information about its structure has proven difficult to obtain. That said, a good deal of information about SICAL and its various antecedents can be found in Williams' publications (1989; 2001; 2009). It is reasonably clear that SICAL had two broad top-level issue categories, *meaning transfer* and *TL quality*, and two severity bands, *minor* and *major*.

A.1.2 SAE J2450

This is the name of a framework developed by the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) for appraising the quality of translations of automotive service information (SAE International 2023). Like SICAL, it consists of an issue typology accompanied

by a severity scale, and a set of protocols and a formula for calculating an overall quality score. The framework is proprietary; however, a reasonably detailed description of the typology was found on the website of the language service provider EC Innovations (EC Innovations 2023). The typology is hierarchically arranged with seven top level categories, some of which branch into subcategories. The total number of assignable tags is fourteen. The typology appears to be designed so that only one tag is assigned to each error. There are two severity bands (minor, major); however, the numerical score attached to major and minor issues varies depending on issue type.

Interestingly, SAE J2450 has a rather broad definition of ‘wrong term’ that includes not only expected issues like inconsistency with client glossary and departures from established domain-bound usage but also cases where the translator has used a term denoting ‘a concept that is different from the concept denoted by the source language term’. The latter is a matter of unambiguous content level mistranslation; the former, however, can be interpreted as a matter of either content or form. We must make an uncertain call about whether the reader is likely to guess the intended term from context.

Summary of structure:

- Wrong term (weighting: serious 5, minor 2)
 - Violates client term glossary
 - Inconsistent with conventional or professional usage
 - Inconsistent with other translations of source language term
 - Denotes a concept that is different from the concept denoted by the source language term
- Syntactic error (weighting: serious 4, minor 2)
 - Wrong part of speech
 - Wrong phrase structure
 - Wrong order of words
- Omission & Addition (weighting: serious 4, minor 2)

- Word structure (weighting: serious 4, minor 2)
- Misspelling (weighting: serious 3, minor 1)
 - Violating the spelling as stated in a client glossary
 - Violating the accepted norms of spelling in the target language
 - Being written in an incorrect or inappropriate writing system
- Punctuation error (weighting: serious 2, minor 1)
- Miscellaneous error (weighting: serious 3, minor 2)

An error is classed as *serious* if it leads directly or indirectly to any of:

- Harm to the user, operator, patient or consumer
- Damage to the product, or equipment used with the product
- Major misinterpretation of the author's intent, or the client's product or services
- Damage to the reputation of the client

Otherwise, it is classed as *minor*.

A.1.3 MQM Core/Full

This framework was developed by three think-tanks (TAUS, DFTI and LTAC Global), which have a shared interest in translation technology and especially MT. According to the MQM website, the framework is 'widely used in translation tools and research and implemented in quality processes' (MQM Council 2023b). There are two versions of the MQM issue typology: MQM Core (a hierarchy with 8 top-level categories and a total of 38 terminal assignable tags; MQM Council 2023c) and MQM Full (a hierarchy with 10 top-level categories and over 100 assignable tags — possibly the biggest established translation issue tagset in existence; Lommel, Burchardt et al. 2015). The MQM website recommends that, for most translation projects, neither taxonomy should be used in its entirety and

the number of issue categories available to assessors should be limited to 12–15 (MQM Council 2023a). The full range of issues covered by MQM leans heavily towards formatting and localisation (issues readily detectable by machines). There are four severity bands (neutral, minor, major, critical). Once again, the typology is designed so that only one tag is assigned per error.

Summary of MQM Core structure:

- Terminology
 - Inconsistent with terminology resource
 - Inconsistent use of terminology
 - Wrong Term
- Accuracy
 - Mistranslation
 - Over-translation
 - Under-translation
 - Addition
 - Do not translate (DNT)
 - Untranslated
- Linguistic conventions
 - Grammar
 - Punctuation
 - Spelling
 - Unintelligible
 - Character encoding
- Style
 - Organisational style
 - Third-party style

- Inconsistent with external reference
- Register
- Awkward style
- Unidiomatic style
- Inconsistent style
- Locale conventions
 - Number format
 - Currency format
 - Measurement format
 - Time format
 - Date format
 - Address format
 - Telephone format
 - Shortcut key
- Audience appropriateness
 - Culture-specific reference
- Design and Markup
 - Character formatting
 - Layout
 - Markup tag
 - Truncation/text expansion
 - Missing text
 - Link/cross-reference
- Custom

For a description of MQM Full, see the MQM website (MQM Council 2023a; MQM Council 2025b).

A.2 Marking schemes for professional accreditation exams

A.2.1 ATA

An issue typology has been developed by the American Translators Association (ATA) for grading translations submitted for their Certification Exam. A description of the typology and some guidelines concerning its application are available on the ATA website (American Translators Association 2023). The typology is hierarchically arranged with three top-level and a total of 25 assignable tags.

Summary of structure:

- Target language mechanics
 - Grammar
 - * Syntax
 - * Word form / Part of speech
 - Spelling
 - * Capitalisation
 - * Diacritical marks / Accents
 - Punctuation
 - Other errors
- Meaning transfer
 - Addition
 - Omission
 - Terminology
 - * *Faux ami*
 - Verb form
 - Transfer errors that can apply at various levels
 - * Ambiguity

- * Cohesion
 - * Faithfulness
 - * Literalness
 - * Misunderstanding
 - * Indecision
 - * Unfinished
 - * Other meaning transfer errors
- Writing ability
 - Usage
 - Text type
 - * Register
 - * Style
 - Illegibility

The penalty point system can be summarised as follows:

Mechanics/style (issues identifiable without reference to ST):

- 1 point: error apparent to any attentive reader
- 2 points: error apparent to a typical target reader (text still intelligible)
- 4 points: error disruptive to a typical target reader (effort required for understanding)

Transfer/strategy (issues identifiable by comparing to ST):

- 1 point: slight effect on understanding/use/content
- 2 points: marked difference in meaning but effect limited in scope
- 4 points: glaring difference in meaning but effect limited to immediate context
- 16 points: text as a whole unusable

A.2.2 ITI

Another typology is used by the British counterpart of the ATA, the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI), and for a similar purpose, i.e. marking translations submitted for a professional accreditation exam. A descriptions of the scheme, along with example issues, can be found in the MITI Applicant Handbook (Institute of Translation and Interpreting 2021), which can be downloaded from the ITI website. The ITI typology consists of a flat list of just seven broad categories: six negative and one positive. In terms of grading by severity, there exists a special category of ‘Grave Errors’ that always result in an automatic fail. All other errors carry the same penalty (two points). Cases of ‘excellent rendering’ can be rewarded with either one or two bonus points.

It should be pointed out that simpler (less granular) typologies similar to the ITI scheme are often embedded in *qualitative* approaches to translation evaluation. One example is Sager’s typological grid (Sager 1989) endorsed by Hatim & Mason within their influential discourse-analytical framework (Hatim and Mason 2005, p. 168). In practice, despite the lower granularity, there is a considerable degree of similarity in the basic organisation of these smaller typologies and the larger more overtly data-generating ones. Certain structural motifs, like the ‘transfer’/‘language’ dichotomy, often recur in both.

Summary of structure:

- Accurate transfer of content
- Appropriate terminology, register and collocation
- Grammar, syntax and rewording
- Spelling, punctuation and presentation
- Omissions and additions
- Miscellaneous: e.g. consistency, tense usage and tautology
- Excellent renderings

A.3 Annotation schemes for learner translator corpora

A.3.1 MeLLANGE

MeLLANGE learner translator corpus is a multilingual parallel corpus made up of ST-TT pairs where the TTs were produced by a trainee translators from various European institutions. A number of different language pairs are represented. As of 2011, the database contained 152 translation into Italian, 74 into French, 62 into English, 49 into Catalan, 22 into Spanish, 15 into German, 2 into Romanian, and 1 into Slovak, covering a range of text types (Castagnoli et al. 2011). Average ST length was around 350 words (typical homework/exam length). An issue typology was developed specifically for annotating this corpus. The typology was purely analytical/pedagogic in purpose and was not intended for use in any kind of formal assessment. There is no mechanism for quantifying the severity of issues. There are two top-level and a total of 38 assignable tags. The MeLLANGE interface allowed the user to assign multiple tags to a single issue, although this does not appear to have been common practice (see examples in Kübler 2008; Castagnoli et al. 2011).

Summary of structure:

- Content transfer
 - Omission
 - Addition
 - Distortion
 - Indecision
 - SL intrusion
 - * Untranslated translatable
 - * Too literal
 - * Units or weight/measurement, dates, numbers
 - * User-definted

- TL intrusion
 - * Translated DNT¹
 - * Too free
 - * User-definted
- User-defined
- Language
 - Syntax
 - Wrong preposition
 - Inflection and agreement
 - * Tense, aspect, voice
 - * Gender
 - * Number
 - * User-defined
 - Terminology and lexis
 - * Incorrect
 - * Inappropriate collocation
 - * False cognate
 - * Term translated by non-term
 - * Inconsistent with glossary
 - * Inconsistent within TT
 - * User-defined
 - Hygiene
 - * Spelling
 - * Accents and diacritics
 - * Incorrect case (lower/upper)
 - * Punctuation
 - * User-defined

¹DNT = 'Do not translate.'

- Register
 - * Inconsistent with ST
 - * Inappropriate for TT text type
 - * Inconsistent within TT
 - * User-defined
- Style
 - * Awkward
 - * Tautology
 - * User-defined
- User-defined

A.3.2 AWE_v

Andrea Wurm's Evaluation scheme (AWE_v) is the name of an issue typology developed for annotating the KOPTÉ corpus, a corpus of Fr>De student translations assembled at Universität des Saarlandes. According to Kutuzov and Kunilovskaya (2014), as of 2014, the corpus contained at least 77 STs and at least 971 TTs. The issues covered by AWE_v lean towards the usual translation pedagogy concerns: coherence, cohesion, text function, and specific types of translation problem (Wurm 2016). The AWE_v typology has 8 top level and a total of 50 assignable tags. It is not clear whether assignment of multiple tags to the same segment of the text is permitted. Severity appears to be graded on a sliding scale from 1 point (minor) to 8 points (major).

Summary of structure:

- Form
 - Paragraphs
 - Formatting
 - Macrostructural hints
 - Punctuation
 - Layout

- Editing
- Orthography
- Typography
- Text amount

- Structure
 - Logical structure / “thematic progression”
 - Illustrations
 - Coherence construction
 - Macrostructure
 - Sequencing
 - development of theme

- Cohesion
 - Reference
 - Connection
 - Structuring

- Stylistics / register
 - Rhetorical figures
 - Norm
 - Register / genre
 - Style

- Grammar
 - Determiners
 - Gender
 - Construction (inflections etc.)
 - Modality

- Syntax / word order
- Morphology
- Lexis / semantics
 - Semantic relations
 - Text semantics / meaning
 - Idioms
 - Quantities
 - Perspective
 - Terminology
 - Non-sense
 - Word semantics
- Translational problems
 - Defectious (sic.) source text
 - Proper names / culture-specific items
 - Special function of a textual element
 - Ideology
 - Localisation
 - Weights, measures etc.
 - Standards, laws etc.
 - Pragmatics
 - Documentation
 - Explicit postulations of the translation brief
 - Citations / allusions
- Function
 - Types of function
 - Goal dependence

A.3.3 RusLTC

RusLTC (Russian Learner Translator Corpus) is another parallel corpus containing student translations (both Ru > En and En > Ru), in this case collected from students at several Russian universities. RusLTC is large for a learner translator corpus, 2.3 million tokens in total as of October 2018. A total of 765 ST-TT pairs has been annotated for translation issues, 166 Ru > En and 599 En > Ru. The median ST length for the En > Ru direction is 380 words (RusLTC Team 2023). Detailed descriptions of the RusLTC translation issue annotation scheme have been published by Kunilovskaya (2013; 2015; 2016). The framework is loosely Hallidaian in spirit and places emphasis on pragmatics and textuality. There are two top-level categories (transfer/language) and a total of 25 assignable tags. Tags must be assigned uniquely, one per issue. There are three severity bands (minor, major, critical). Issues may be optionally annotated for likely cause (lack of background information, poor SL proficiency, excessive literalism etc.; flat list of eight tags).

Summary of structure:

CONTENT:

- content_reference
 - omission
 - distortion
 - nonsense
 - inexact
 - unclear
- content_cohesion
 - theme-rheme
 - logic
- content_pragmatics
 - tenor

- field

LANGUAGE:

- language_lexical
 - choice-of-word
 - combinability
- language_morphology
 - wrong_wordform
- language_syntax
 - incomplete_structure
 - ungrammatical
 - word_order
 - preposition
- language_spelling
 - capitals
 - typo

ERROR WEIGHT:

- minor
- major
- critical

CAUSES:

- background_info (low extralinguistic competence)
- SL (flaws in linguistic competence, associated with comprehension)
- TL (poor command of the TL as regards productive skills)

- *too_literal* (insufficient level of transfer competence/strategic competence/knowledge of translation – inability to detect a problem)
- *too_free* (inability to find appropriate ways to solve problems)
- *proper_name* (lack of understanding of respective translation norms; it is included due to the number of such mistakes)
- *inconsistency* (self-explanatory – inability to stick to the same strategy throughout the text)

A.4 Other typologies in anglo and francophone academic literature

A.4.1 Gouadec 1981

In total, there are 17 lexical and 18 syntactic tags; however, these are arranged not as a tree but as two separate grids, each with four dimensions.²

Lexical grid:

Nature — this dimension pertains to the overall direction and magnitude of the change. There are five possible values along this axis: > < — inversion of an explicit/implicit meaning;³ ϕ : unjustified omission of explicit/implicit meaning; +: unjustified addition of explicit/implicit meaning; \neq : distortion of explicit/implicit meaning (without exiting the relevant semantic/experiential field); -: partial transfer of explicit/implicit meaning.

Rank — the kind of meaning being affected: P — explicit/reference (*pertinence*); C — implicit/situational (*contingence contextuelle*); T — textual (*contingence textuelle*).

Role — this dimension pertains to the role played by the word/expression directly affected within the argument structure of the utterance where it occurs. There are four possible values: R — explicit/implicit reference to things and situations (*relais*); M — creation of illocutionary forces (*motrice*); S — supporting

²Translations of Gouadec's French terms are my own.

³Both explicit and implicit meanings are assumed to be context-bound.

Nature	Rank	Role	Purpose
> <	P	R	C ^t
ϕ	C	M	S ^o
+	T	S	D
≠		In	I
-			Pa

Table A.1: Summary of dimensions for lexical issues.

of R and M (*soutien*); In — inert; the element is necessitated by grammar and does not directly contribute to the message (*inerte*).

Purpose — this dimension pertains to the function played by the segment in question within the text as a whole. There are five possible values: C^t — phatic segment (*contact*); S^o — thesis⁴ paragraph (*source*); D — direct supporting argumentation (definitions, explications, expansion, restriction etc.; *direct*); I — indirect support; support of support (mostly supporting examples, citations, illustrations, data etc.; *indirect*); Pa — aside (parenthèses).

The framework of lexical issues dimensions is summarised in Table A.1.

Syntactic grid:

Three out of the four dimensions (*nature, rank purpose*) are very similar. The divisions are the same but defined with respect to relational rather than ostensive meanings.

The third dimension is different. In place of *role*, we have *level*. This pertains specifically to the linguistic nature of the directly affected relationship within the utterance:

V — verb group to verb group relationships N — verb group to subject and/or verb group to object/patient relationships. C — adverbial to verb relationships A — attribute to noun relationships R — modifier to attribute relationships

Table A.2 summarises the framework of syntactic issues.

The system is combinatoric. Most issues will be assigned a combination of tags, e.g. L> <PMS^o (lexical / inversion / implicit / illocutionary / thesis). Gouadec's two grids can, in principle, generate at least 300 and 375 combinations (lexical and syntactic respectively) or a total 675.

⁴Here, by 'thesis' I mean a short statement of the central argument being made in the text.

Nature	Rank	Role	Purpose
> <	P	V	C ^t
ϕ	C	N	S ^o
+	T	C	D
≠		A	I
-		R	Pa

Table A.2: Summary of dimensions for syntactic issues.

A.4.2 Bensoussan 1990

This typology, developed for pedagogic use, more specifically, for using translation as a measure of foreign language comprehension. Like Gouadec's typology, Bensoussan & Rosenhouse's can be regarded as a grid, since it allows for multiple tags: a single issue can be marked as having multiple causes. For example, the same textual feature can signal both poor understanding of certain SL constructions lack of familiarity with a common narrative pattern that should have helped the student to guess the correct meaning from context. That said, the tags are still presented as a hierarchical tree.

There are two top-level categories: micro-level structures, macro-level structures. Macro-level structures pertain to recognition of frames and schemas, frames, in this case, being small-scale narrative structures identifiable on the scale of a few sentences (e.g. boast, challenge, acceptance), and a schema being the conventional progression of such frames within some bigger narrative (roughly equivalent to Neubert & Shreve's scenarios (Neubert and Shreve 1992)). The category has no further divisions.

Micro-level structures pertain to the function of identifiable elements of text. This category has two further divisions (utterance level structures, word level structures), both of which have further subdivisions. The total number of terminal categories (i.e. categories that cannot be subdivided further) is eight.

There are two levels of severity. Bensoussan & Rosenhouse's typology clearly attempts to shift the focus away from propositional content and towards pragmatics.

- Macro-Level Structures (Frames, Schema)
- Micro-Level Structures

- Utterance Level Structures
 - * Propositional Content
 - * Communicative Function (Explicit and Implicit)
- Word Level Structures
 - * Vocabulary/Expressions
 - * Parts of Speech/Verb Tense
 - * Pronoun Agreement
 - * Cohesion
 - * Acceptability and Register

A.4.3 Williams 2001

Williams has developed a TQA framework based on argument structure theory. This system is concerned solely with the transfer of identifiable propositional information and attempts to gauge to what extent specific facets of the message are affected. Its obvious weakness is lack of attention to register and textuality, although such issues could come under *rhetorical topology*.

Summary of structure:

- Argument macrostructure
 - Claim: a central proposition or call to action
 - Grounds: various supporting information (facts, testimonies, data, legal precedent...)
 - Warrant: logical connection between grounds and claim
 - Backing: overarching principle or axiomatic assumption (values, laws, standards...).
 - Qualifier/modaliser: strengthening or weakening commitment ('certainly', 'maybe', 'clearly'...)
 - Rebuttal/exception: contradictions, cases outside the limits of applicability

- Rhetorical topology
 - Organisational schemas
 - Conjunctives
 - Types of argument
 - Figures
 - Narrative strategy

Levels of severity are defined as follows (Williams 2009):

- Critical: defects impairing translation of the argument macrostructure
- Major: other transfer defects conventionally considered serious (contresens, charubia etc.)
- Minor: other transfer defects

A.4.4 Karoubi 2016

Karoubi 2016b; 2016a designed a translation quality assessment framework centred on the concept of assessor expectations. Like MeLLANGE, Karoubi's framework aims to be completely product-oriented and to assess translation as 'a product independent of the process through which it is produced or the translator(s) who had produced it' (Karoubi 2016a, p. 82). Karoubi provides a hierarchical 'linguistic' issue classification, which spans a gamut of issues, ranging from orthography and punctuation to Beaugrande & Dressler's standards of textuality (De Beaugrande and Dressler 1981). The linguistic levels classification has three top-level categories: structural, lexical & stylistic and other. Lexical & stylistic issues are further split into micro-level and macro-level. It should be pointed out that Karoubi uses these terms differently to Bensoussan & Reosenhouse (1990). In his case, micro and macro approximately corresponds to semantics and pragmatics, the latter being parsed using the aforementioned Beaugrande & Dressler standards of textuality (unusual, given the Hallidaian slant of so much work in the translation studies). There is then further branching. The total number of terminal (assignable) linguistic tags is 20. To the best of my

understanding, multiple linguistic tags are not permitted. Separately to this, Karoubi also asks the assessors to assign to each problematic feature a 'frustrated expectation' tag describing the type of general frame or schema involved. There is a list of nine such tags: ideological, socio-cultural, religious, economic, political, ethical, historical, logical, and aesthetic. There is a four tier severity scale, ranging from 'not serious at all' to 'very serious'.

Summary of structure:

- Lexical
 - Micro-level
 - * Referential meaning
 - * Associative meaning
 - * Collocative meaning
 - * Other
 - Macro level
 - * Logical/pragmatic coherence
 - * Literal meaning of the sentence
 - * Pragmatic meaning of the sentence
 - * Information quantity
 - * Subject matter
 - * Style of writing
 - * Other
- Structural
 - Order of textual materials
 - Grammatical function
 - Grammatical and lexical cohesion
 - Grammatical complexity of sentence
 - Spelling
 - Punctuation

- Formatting and layout
- Other
- Other

A.5 Other typologies in russophone academic literature

There are numerous error classification frameworks to be found in russophone translation studies literature. For some existing overviews (in Russian), see Shevnin (2007), Teterleva & Popova (2009), Korshunova(2012), Gu & Huang (2016) and Komalova (2017). The work of Russian scholars seems mostly didactic and process-focused in its thrust. I will not attempt anything like an exhaustive survey. Below I list four frameworks that have interesting features.

A.5.1 Garbovskiy 2004

Garbovsky (2004) offers a basic three-category typology (ST comprehension, TL re-expression, style), with one potentially very useful aspect: ST comprehension issues are further categorised according to the level at which misunderstanding is thought to have happened. The typology has no further formal subdivisions and no formal framework for quantifying issue severity.

Summary of structure:

- comprehension,
 - simple concept errors,
 - complex concept errors,
 - errors of judgement, and
 - situational errors.
 - * omission
 - * ‘mechanical’ calquing
 - * frame substitution

- re-expression and
- style.

A.5.2 Latyshev 2005

Latyshev (2005) has published an excellent textbook for trainee translators. He gives a very basic error typology. The three top-level categories are similar in spirit to the ones we find in Garbovsky (2004) and also in the ATA framework: TL norm/usage, function/style and content transfer. Of these only the last has three further subdivision: distortion, imprecision and ambiguity. There are no further subdivisions and no formal framework for quantifying issue severity. The most interesting aspect of Latyshev's handling of translation issues is that, apart from the essentially product-oriented typology just described, he also gives us a small process-oriented nomenclature of lexical 'traps', classes of lexemes that cause translators to go wrong in specific ways.

Summary of typology structure:

- norm/usage
- function/style
- content transfer
 - distortion
 - imprecision
 - ambiguity

Lexical traps:

- false friends
- derivational traps
- forgotten meanings
- figurative lexemes
- significantly different toponyms

A.5.3 Buzadzi 2009

Buzadzi et al. (2009) published a book on TQA with particular focus on translation of 'specialist' texts, i.e. texts thematically bound to some relatively narrow field of human activity. The authors provide a survey of existing approaches and offer their own theory of translation quality, including an error typology. In 2012, the typology developed by Buzadzi et al. was officially recommended for use by Russia's National League of Translators (Duplenski 2012).

I could not secure access to a copy of the book. The outline of the structure given below is based on a summaries given by Rarenko (2009), Duplenski (2012) and Boguslavskaya (2014).

Summary of general structure (Rarenko 2009; Duplenski 2012):

- Group 1 — transfer of denotative content
 - Category 1 — not coherent with the ST
 - * omission
 - * addition
 - * distortion
 - Category 2 — usually mostly coherent with the ST
 - * imprecise transfer
- Group 2 — transfer of ST style
 - transfer of ST genre/style
 - calquing
 - TL usage errors
- Group 3 — transfer of authorial evaluation
 - attenuation/magnification
 - distortion (including complete neutralisation or creation where none was present in ST)
- Group 4 — obvious TL norm/usage errors

- spelling and punctuation
- handling of proper names
- TL stylistic conventions (obvious infringements)
- handling of numerical data
- target-side conventions re. document appearance/organisation

Typical severity:

Group 1 | cat. 1 > Group 1 | cat. 2 > Group 2,3 > Group 4

Summary of categorisation of coherence errors (Boguslavskaya 2014):

- subject logic
 - general
 - field-specific
 - situational
- concept logic

A.5.4 Shevnin 2003/2009

Shevnin (2003; 2007; 2009b; 2009a; 2010) has developed a granular hierarchical typology focused on isolating the cognitive causes of error. Unfortunately, I could not secure access to his monograph (2003), so my description of his typology is based primarily on the summary by Yugova (2011) and Shevnin's own partial descriptions in other publications (Shevnin 2009b; Shevnin 2009a). There are two top-level categories: ST comprehension and TL production respectively. According to Shevnin (2009a), 75% of the errors are TL production errors. The exact number of terminal categories is difficult to judge without accessing the definitive description of the typology. Yugova's description of the typology has at least 16 terminal categories; however, her description does not fully match Shevnin's own partial descriptions. To my knowledge, there is no scale for grading severity. Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Shevnin's typology is that he specifically raises the problem of paronymy: confusion between words that look or sound

similar, e.g. 'effect'/'affect'. The most significant apparent weakness is lack of attention to textuality and cohesion, although this may be addressed in the book (Shevnin 2003).

Summaries of structure:

Shevnin's (partial) description (2009b; 2009a):

- agnonyms
 - lingua-cognitive
 - * ?
 - * ?
 - * ?
 - lingua-cultural
 - * ?
 - * ?
 - * ?
 - langue/parole
 - * ?
 - * ?
 - * ?
- paranormatives
 - lingua-cognitive
 - * Type 1: combinability issues
 - lexical
 - morphosyntactic
 - * Type 2: paronymy issues
 - lingua-cultural (situational appropriateness)
 - langue/parole
 - * false friends

- * tense/aspect/mood issues
- * case/number/gender coordination issues
- * tautology
- * spelling
- * punctuation

Yugova's description (2011):

- agnonyms
 - lexico-semantic — errors resulting from poor understanding of content words
 - * autologism — use of a literal equivalents to the detriment of the meaning carried by the corresponding SL word within the context of the utterance or the text.
 - * atopon or lacunae — errors arising from incorrect understanding of culture and domain-specific lexis
 - * alogism — logical contradictions with actual states of affairs in the world (presumably, the implied world of the ST which can resemble the real world to varying extents)
 - * omission — leaving out information that should have been retained
 - grammatical — errors resulting from incorrect parsing of morphosyntax
 - * attributive constructions
 - * impersonal verb constructions
 - * prepositional constructions
 - * domain-specific morphosyntax
 - * etc...
- paranormatives
 - ingress of SL word order
 - infringement of TL combinability restrictions

- paronymy-related errors (confusion between different TL lexemes that sound similar)
- poor observance of TL style and register conventions (failure to adequately appreciate ST style and register)
- other (grammaticality)
 - * tense/aspect/mood
 - * case/number/gender coordination
 - * spelling
 - * punctuation

Appendix B

TRISST structure summaries

B.1 Issue types: typology structure and sub-terminal features

The items with a plus correspond to observed features and divisions *within* terminal categories, i.e. divisions below the current resolution of TRISST.

- Reference
 - Distorted
 - * + false cognates
 - * + over-specification
 - * + under-specification (vagueness)
 - * + illusion of semantic similarity
 - Lost
 - * + qualification
 - * + independent component
 - Unclear
 - * + semantic content
 - * + contextualisation
 - * + register control
 - * + opacity
 - * + ambiguity
- Relation
 - Conjunction
 - * + new discourse marker or connector
 - * + omitted adjective or adverb
 - Temporal-modal variables
 - * Temporality
 - + tense

- + lexical aspect
- + order of predicates
- * Commitment / attribution
 - + loss (return to default)
 - + distortion (change in qualification)
 - + quotation marks
 - + other
- Scalar-structural variables
- Role
 - * + content word semantics
 - * + argument structure
 - * + locus difficult to identify
- Constituency
 - * Distorted
 - * Unclear
 - + noun
 - + past participle
- Restrictiveness
- Textuality
 - Co-reference
 - * Distorted
 - * Lost
 - * Unclear
 - Information structure
 - * + thematisation / dethematisation
 - * + change of focus
 - * + delayed topic reveal
 - * + change in co-referential scope because of adjacency changes

- * + change in co-referential scope because of sentence-breaking
- * + topic/focus-marker issues
- Missing component
 - * + complements
 - * + conjunctions
- Confusing repetition
 - * + complete content word
 - * + word stem
 - * + structural features and patterns
 - + nested *of*
 - + repeating *and*
 - + nested *-ing* + direct object
- Disparallelism
 1. + elision
 - + of content words
 - + of function words
 2. + class inconsistency
- Sentence/paragraph breaks
- General readability
 - Combinability
 - * Semantic
 - * Structural
 - Nominalisation
 - Verbose
 - * + too literal
 - * + bulky rephrase
 - * + unnecessary addition 3–34
 - * + resolvable by trimming alone

- * + requires rephrase
- Register
 - Aptness
 - * + phrase/sentence form
 - * + lexical choice
 - * + explicit informativity
 - Affect
- SL features
 - proper names and titles
 - * + unwanted translation
 - * + handling of possessives
 - * + enquotation
 - * + non-capitalisation
 - * + unconventional spelling/wording
 - transliteration
 - loan / untranslated
- Terminology
 - Inconsistent
 - Non-standard / uncommon
 - Wrong term
 - Wrong TL convention
- Hygiene
 - Capitalisation, punctuation, typology
 - * + commas after introductory phrases specifying time
 - * + run-on sentences
 - * + superfluous quotation marks

- Layout
- Localisation
 - * + names of people in academic texts
 - * + numbering of centuries
 - * + alphabetical lists 3–60
- Spelling and diacritics
- Numbers

B.2 Issue causes: a rough sketch

1. Too literal
 - 1.1. Morphological calque
 - 1.2. Lexicogrammatic calque
2. Lexical miscue
 - 2.1. False friend
 - 2.2. SL paronymy
 - 2.3. TL paronymy
 - 2.4. SL collocational miscue
 - 2.5. TL collocational miscue
 - 2.6. TL phrasal hybrid
 - 2.7. Semantic morphSeme miscue
 - 2.7.1. Root
 - 2.7.2. Affix
 - 2.8. Semantic morpheme not parsed / parsed wrongly
 - 2.8.1. Root
 - 2.8.2. Affix
 - 2.9. Wrong meaning of SL lexeme
 - 2.10. Wrong meaning of TL lexeme
3. Syntactic miscue
 - 3.1. Incorrectly resolved constituent relationship
 - 3.2. Incorrectly resolved syntactic ambiguity
 - 3.3. Incorrectly resolved PoS
 - 3.4. Incorrectly resolved anaphora / cataphora
4. Error in ST

5. Slip of finger / eye

5.1. Likely typo

5.2. Likely failure to delete

5.3. Likely skipped word(s)

5.4. Likely copy-paste error

6. Context

6.1. Mechanism

6.1.1. Incorrect inference

6.1.2. Poor knowledge

6.1.3. No consistent frame (synthetic incoherence)

6.2. Knowledge scope

6.2.1. General

6.2.2. Field-specific

6.2.3. Situational

6.3. Frame type

6.3.1. Environment

6.3.2. Conceptual framework

6.3.3. Activity script

6.3.4. Institutional framework

6.3.5. Persona

6.3.6. Roles and goals (interpersonal)

6.3.7. Ideology

Appendix C

Issues type frequencies and average weights

C.1 Frequencies and average weights by tag

Table C.1: Tag count and average weight (in brackets) for all issues and non-duplicate issues only.

tag	all	non-dupl.
hygiene capitalisation / punctuation / typography	63 (1.46)	56 (1.41)
terminology non-standard / uncommon	67 (2.13)	51 (2.20)
reference DISTORTED	47 (2.49)	45 (2.51)
reference UNCLEAR	36 (2.56)	30 (2.53)
register aptness	27 (1.67)	26 (1.65)
general readability verbose	27 (1.81)	25 (1.80)
relation constituency DISTORTED	25 (2.64)	25 (2.64)
terminology wrong term	31 (2.48)	23 (2.52)
general readability combinability lexical	23 (1.87)	22 (1.86)
general readability combinability structural	21 (1.95)	21 (1.95)
reference LOST	21 (2.67)	21 (2.67)
textuality confusing repetition	20 (2.30)	20 (2.30)
SL features proper names and titles	25 (2.40)	19 (2.47)
textuality information structure	13 (2.08)	13 (2.08)

tag	all	non-dupl.
textuality disparallelism	13 (1.92)	13 (1.92)
relation constituency UNCLEAR	11 (2.36)	11 (2.36)
general readability nominalisation	10 (1.70)	10 (1.70)
relation temporal-modal temporality WITHIN	9 (2.00)	9 (2.00)
relation temporal-modal commitment / attribution LOST	9 (2.11)	9 (2.11)
terminology inconsistent	8 (2.38)	8 (2.38)
hygiene localisation	10 (1.90)	8 (1.88)
textuality co-reference UNCLEAR	6 (2.50)	6 (2.50)
textuality missing component	6 (2.33)	6 (2.33)
relation restrictiveness	5 (2.80)	5 (2.80)
terminology wrong TL convention	16 (1.00)	5 (1.00)
register affect	5 (2.00)	5 (2.00)
relation role theme FROM	4 (2.50)	4 (2.50)
relation scalar-structural quantity / degree WITHIN	4 (2.25)	4 (2.25)
relation conjunction causative ADDED	4 (2.25)	4 (2.25)
relation role setting FROM	4 (1.75)	4 (1.75)
SL features transliteration	4 (1.75)	4 (1.75)
textuality co-reference DISTORTED	4 (3.50)	4 (3.50)
relation conjunction adversative TO	3 (3.00)	3 (3.00)
relation role theme TO	3 (2.33)	3 (2.33)
relation conjunction additive UNCLEAR	3 (3.00)	3 (3.00)
relation conjunction temporal TO	3 (3.00)	3 (3.00)
textuality sentence / paragraph breaks	3 (2.00)	3 (2.00)
relation scalar-structural quantity / degree FROM	3 (3.00)	3 (3.00)
relation conjunction adversative LOST	3 (1.67)	3 (1.67)
relation role agent FROM	3 (2.00)	3 (2.00)
SL features unwarranted loan / untranslated	4 (3.00)	3 (3.00)
relation scalar-structural quantity / degree LOST	2 (2.00)	2 (2.00)
relation conjunction adversative FROM	2 (2.50)	2 (2.50)
hygiene layout	2 (2.00)	2 (2.00)

tag	all	non-dupl.
relation scalar-structural rate / frequency TO	2 (2.00)	2 (2.00)
relation conjunction continuative WITHIN	2 (2.00)	2 (2.00)
relation role cause TO	2 (3.50)	2 (3.50)
relation role patient FROM	2 (3.50)	2 (3.50)
relation role reasons TO	2 (3.00)	2 (3.00)
relation role initialTime TO	2 (2.00)	2 (2.00)
relation role time FROM	2 (2.00)	2 (2.00)
relation role beneficiary FROM	2 (2.00)	2 (2.00)
relation role time TO	2 (1.50)	2 (1.50)
hygiene numbers	2 (3.50)	2 (3.50)
relation role means FROM	1 (3.00)	1 (3.00)
relation role partner TO	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)
relation conjunction additive TO	1 (3.00)	1 (3.00)
relation role instrument TO	1 (3.00)	1 (3.00)
relation conjunction temporal UNCLEAR	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)
relation role setting TO	1 (1.00)	1 (1.00)
relation role path TO	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)
relation scalar-structural quantity / degree TO	1 (1.00)	1 (1.00)
relation scalar-structural space / parthood FROM	1 (1.00)	1 (1.00)
relation role beneficiary TO	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)
relation scalar-structural order FROM	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)
hygiene spelling and diacritics	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)
relation temporal-modal commitment / attribution WITHIN	1 (3.00)	1 (3.00)
relation role purpose TO	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)
relation conjunction additive WITHIN	1 (3.00)	1 (3.00)
relation conjunction additive ADDED	1 (3.00)	1 (3.00)
textuality co-reference LOST	1 (3.00)	1 (3.00)
relation role patient TO	1 (2.00)	1 (2.00)

Table C.2: FROM/TO relation distortion pairs

FROM	TO	count
conjunction adversative FROM	conjunction additive TO	1
conjunction adversative FROM	scalar-structural rate / frequency TO	1
role agent FROM	role beneficiary TO	1
role agent FROM	role theme TO	2
role beneficiary FROM	role setting TO	1
role beneficiary FROM	role theme TO	1
role means FROM	role reasons TO	1
role patient FROM	role cause TO	2
role setting FROM	role partner TO	1
role setting FROM	role purpose TO	1
role setting FROM	role time TO	2
role theme FROM	role instrument TO	1
role theme FROM	role path TO	1
role theme FROM	role patient TO	1
role theme FROM	role reasons TO	1
role time FROM	role initialTime TO	2

C.2 FROM/TO relational pairs

Appendix D

PCA loadings and variances

Variable	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8	PC9	PC10	PC11	PC12	PC13
general_readability	0.322	-0.028	-0.472	-0.152	0.227	0.192	0.181	-0.202	0.419	-0.027	-0.421	0.354	0.095
hygiene	0.099	-0.572	0.141	0.031	-0.129	0.229	0.194	0.009	-0.199	0.201	0.269	0.366	0.500
reference	-0.275	-0.334	-0.387	-0.207	0.227	-0.061	-0.241	0.125	0.106	-0.471	0.189	-0.325	0.341
register	-0.158	0.005	0.232	-0.659	0.320	0.158	-0.143	-0.291	0.068	0.467	0.086	-0.154	-0.009
relation_conjunction	0.448	-0.295	-0.101	0.054	-0.094	0.007	0.106	-0.371	0.186	-0.072	0.496	-0.272	-0.427
relation_constituency	-0.190	0.083	0.038	0.213	-0.126	0.836	-0.023	-0.255	-0.094	-0.191	-0.140	-0.256	0.009
relation_restrictiveness	-0.301	-0.080	-0.321	0.528	0.227	0.042	-0.053	0.118	0.269	0.590	0.134	-0.110	-0.038
relation_role	-0.100	-0.395	0.175	0.288	0.308	-0.308	-0.086	-0.515	-0.262	-0.066	-0.424	-0.050	-0.048
relation_scalar_structural	0.267	-0.200	0.078	0.005	-0.461	-0.014	-0.672	0.058	0.257	0.184	-0.285	-0.135	0.123
relation_temporal_modal	0.398	0.064	-0.413	-0.081	0.064	0.026	0.042	0.135	-0.629	0.265	-0.143	-0.374	0.094
sl_features	-0.258	-0.329	0.008	-0.202	-0.373	-0.088	0.558	0.162	0.169	0.107	-0.351	-0.350	-0.121
terminology	-0.343	-0.189	-0.411	-0.202	-0.277	0.054	-0.235	-0.063	-0.307	0.033	0.024	0.417	-0.477
textuality	0.184	-0.342	0.252	-0.010	0.417	0.274	-0.095	0.571	-0.010	-0.092	-0.137	0.046	-0.416

Table D.1: PCA Loadings

Metric	PC1	PC2	PC3	PC4	PC5	PC6	PC7	PC8	PC9	PC10	PC11	PC12	PC13
Standard deviation	1.7311	1.5352	1.3369	1.1441	1.09391	1.02671	0.9143	0.78770	0.62845	0.40996	0.38392	0.28078	0.23143
Proportion of Variance	0.2305	0.1813	0.1375	0.1007	0.09205	0.08109	0.0643	0.04773	0.03038	0.01293	0.01134	0.00606	0.00412
Cumulative Proportion	0.2305	0.4118	0.5493	0.6500	0.74205	0.82314	0.8874	0.93517	0.96555	0.97848	0.98982	0.99588	1.00000

Table D.2: Standard deviation and variance by principal component.

Appendix E

Assessed translation: grading scheme

Below are the *Criteria / standards for translation* used to mark the assessments discussed in this study. These were issued centrally by the University of Leeds Centre for Translation Studies.

Criteria / standards for translations

These apply equally to translations produced for Specialised Translation and Extended Translations modules.

Criteria

- **Comprehension of ST meaning**
- **Accuracy of rendering of ST meaning**
This includes nuances and register.
- **Evidence of adequate research**
- **Production of an appropriate piece of discourse in the TL in relation to genre and function, target audience and publication outlet**
This includes collocation, idiom, information structure and cohesion as it pertains to genre, function and publication outlet. It also includes conforming to the requirements of the intended TT readership. If these are not stated in the translation specification, they should be presumed broadly similar to those of the assumed ST readership.
- **Accuracy of TL vocabulary (including specialised terminology), grammar, spelling and punctuation**
- **Appropriate presentation of text**
The formatting of the source text should be respected, although the paragraph breaks in the TT may justifiably differ from those in the ST.
- **Effectiveness as a professional translation**

Grades

To achieve 70 marks or higher a translation should meet the criteria for pass and merit grades and in addition:

1. show a very high level of comprehension
2. present a highly accurate rendering of the ST meaning (including nuances and register), with no unexplained omissions
3. show excellent research skills and high command of the subject matter
4. be a fully appropriate piece of discourse in the TL (e.g. fully coherent where the ST was fully coherent in itself)
5. show a very high level of consideration of aspects such as genre and function, publication outlet and requirements of the target audience
6. be almost or totally accurate as regards TL vocabulary (including specialised terminology), grammar, spelling and punctuation
7. show full and appropriate mastery of presentation of text, with almost flawless typing and layout
8. in a professional environment it could be published almost as is, with little editing, and would be regarded as displaying an excellent ability to meet the needs and expectations of target readers.

(To achieve a mark higher than 90 or above, the translation needs to meet all the above criteria and be regarded as displaying an excellent ability to meet the needs and expectation of target readers. In a professional environment it could be published as is with no editing.)

Appendix F

Assessed translation: specifications and STs

F.1 Natural and social sciences

F.1.1 Specifications

48 hour test

Translation Specification

These are the **basic external features** of the **source text** that you have to translate. They are provided to help you plan your translation.

Source text features	
Author	V. M. Alpatov
Title (of whole text)	<i>История лингвистических учений // Istorīia lingvisticheskikh uchenīi</i>
Genre and function	University-level textbook on history of language study
Language variety (e.g. Peruvian Spanish)	Russian (Russia)
Length (in characters or words)	438 word, 2985 character (no spaces)
Publication outlet (e.g. newspaper title)	Monograph, published by <i>Издательство «Языки славянской культуры» // Izdatel'stvo «Iazyki slavianskoī kul'tury»</i>
Readership (e.g. lay, specialist)	Students of linguistics
Date of publication	2005
Place of publication	Moscow

F.1.2 Source text

ВЫКЛЮЧАТЕЛЬ ВАКУУМНЫЙ
ТИПА ВВМ-СЭЩ-3-10

Руководство по эксплуатации
2ГК.256.072 РЭ

Подпись	Дата	Взам.	Инв.№	Подпись	Дата
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Инв.№

					2ГК.256.072 РЭ	Лист
2	Зам.	0409-4926		30.08.18		1
Изм	Лист	№ докум.	Подп.	Дата		

F.2 Business and finance

F.2.1 Specifications

2-hour test

Translation Specification

These are the **basic external features** of the **source text** that you have to translate. They are provided to help you plan your translation.

Source text features	
Author	Совет директоров ПАО «НК «Роснефть»
Title (of whole text)	Extract from: «ПОЛИТИКА КОМПАНИИ: СИСТЕМА УПРАВЛЕНИЯ РИСКАМИ И ВНУТРЕННЕГО КОНТРОЛЯ»
Genre and function	Corporate, company policy, risk management
Language variety (e.g. Peruvian Spanish)	To provide information on the company's risk management policy.
Length (in characters or words)	439 words, 3371 character (no spaces)
Publication outlet (e.g. newspaper title)	Downloadable from <i>Rosneft</i> site. https://www.rosneft.ru/upload/site1/document_file/P4-05_P-01.pdf
Readership (e.g. lay, specialist)	<i>Rosneft</i> management, auditors, shareholders, and members of the public
Date of publication	19/02/2022
Place of publication	Moscow, Russia

F.2.2 Source text

ПОЛИТИКА КОМПАНИИ

**СИСТЕМА УПРАВЛЕНИЯ РИСКАМИ И ВНУТРЕННЕГО
КОНТРОЛЯ**

№ П4-05 П-01

ВЕРСИЯ 3

НАЗНАЧЕНИЕ

Настоящая Политика устанавливает цели, задачи, принципы функционирования системы управления рисками и внутреннего контроля Компании и распределение обязанностей и полномочий субъектов системы управления рисками и внутреннего контроля в рамках данной системы.

4.2. СТРАТЕГИЯ И ПОСТАНОВКА ЦЕЛЕЙ

Постановка целей Компании является предварительным условием для выявления и оценки рисков. Цели и задачи должны соответствовать стратегическим направлениям развития Компании и содействовать их реализации. Цели составляют основу для внедрения и реализации подходов к оценке рисков и последующего определения мероприятий по управлению рисками.

Менеджмент Компании при определении целей учитывает следующее:

- соответствие поставленных целей и задач Стратегии развития ПАО «НК «Роснефть» и Долгосрочной программе развития ПАО «НК «Роснефть»;
- определение риск-аппетита (приемлемого уровня риска);
- соответствие поставленных целей и задач Компании применимому законодательству и требованиям ЛНД;
- формулирование целей с использованием показателей, которые являются однозначно трактуемыми, измеряемыми, достижимыми, актуальными и привязанными ко времени;
- распределение и взаимоувязанность целей ПАО «НК «Роснефть» и ОГ. Риск-аппетит (приемлемый уровень риска) связан с целями Компании, определяется централизованно и ежегодно утверждается на Совете директоров ПАО «НК «Роснефть».

F.3 Natural and social sciences

F.3.1 Specifications

48 hour test

Translation Specification

These are the **basic external features** of the **source text** that you have to translate. They are provided to help you plan your translation.

Source text features	
Author	Ursaeva, Mozgunov, Mochalov, Sazanov, Baev
Title (of whole text)	<i>ВЫКЛЮЧАТЕЛЬ ВАКУУМНЫЙ ТИПА ВВМ-СЭЦ-3-10 / Руководство по эксплуатации</i>
Genre and function	Product documentation
Language variety (e.g. Peruvian Spanish)	Russian (Russia)
Length (in characters or words)	365 word, 2554 character (no spaces)
Publication outlet (e.g. newspaper title)	Manufacturer's website: https://www.electroshield.ru/upload/iblock/5d4/Rukovodstvo-po-ekpluatatsii-VVM_SESHCH_3_10-2GK.256.072-RE.pdf
Readership (e.g. lay, specialist)	Electrical engineers
Date of publication	2018
Place of publication	Samara

F.3.2 Source text

ВЫКЛЮЧАТЕЛЬ ВАКУУМНЫЙ
ТИПА ВВМ-СЭЩ-3-10

Руководство по эксплуатации
2ГК.256.072 РЭ

Подпись	Дата	Взам.	Инв.№	Подпись	Дата
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Инв.№

					2ГК.256.072 РЭ	Лист
2	Зам.	0409-4926		30.08.18		1
Изм	Лист	№ докум.	Подп.	Дата		

Appendix G

Participant information sheet and consent form



INFORMATION SHEET: Study of Ru-En student translation errors

You are invited to take part in a research project aimed at analysing and classifying errors in the Russian-English translations produced by university students. The ultimate purpose of the project is to improve the quality of teaching of Russian and translation.

Translation database:

If you agree, the texts you have submitted for your homework and assessed assignments as part of MODL5138 and MODL5148 will be archived in a custom database created for this project. Passages and features that are in some way problematic will be identified and annotated. You will receive a sheet listing all the problematic passages and features accompanied by my comments.

All contributions are stored in a pseudonymised form. Your name and student number be replaced by a randomly generated alias. No personal information about you will be stored.

Some of the problematic passages and features may be included in future publications and presentations in a pseudonymised form (e.g. "author: Student 1"). Other researchers may be granted access to the database on the condition that, if they are able to identify the author of the text, they agree to preserve your privacy.

Interviews:

You may also be invited to take part in an interview where you will be asked some questions about the translation choices in your recently submitted work. This is **not** part of any assessment, formal or otherwise. We simply want to know how people arrive at various translation decisions. You can expect an exploratory collegial conversation focusing on your working procedures and thought processes.

The interview will last up to 60 minutes and will take the form of a one-on-one conversation with the lead researcher (Pavel Gudoshnikov). It can take place either in person (in MSB 2.02) or online (via Teams). There will be no other people present. Your answers will be written down and may be cited in research publications and presentations in anonymised form.

Participation is wholly voluntary. You may decline to participate or terminate the interview at any point. There will be no adverse consequences.

<i>Project title</i>	<i>Document type</i>	<i>Version #</i>	<i>Date</i>
Analysis of Issues in Ru-En Student Translations	Consent form	1	12.01.2024



Consent to take part in in the Analysis of Issues in Ru-En Student Translations

Add your initials
next to the
statement if you
agree

I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 12.01.2024 explaining the above research project and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the project.	
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In the event of my withdrawal prior to 01 January 2025 (expected date of publication), I may request for information I have provided up to that point not to be used. In addition, should I not wish to answer any particular question or questions, I am free to decline. Lead researcher: Pavel Gudoshnikov (P.Gudoshnikov@leeds.ac.uk)	
I give permission for members of the research team to have access to my pseudonymised responses. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and I will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports that result from the research. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential	
I agree for the data collected from me to be stored and used in relevant future research in an pseudonymised form.	
I understand that other genuine researchers will have access to this data only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	
I understand that other researchers may use my words in publications, reports, web pages, and other research outputs, only if they agree to preserve the confidentiality of the information as requested in this form.	
I understand that relevant sections of the data collected during the study, may be looked at by auditors from the University of Leeds where it is relevant to my taking part in this research. I give permission for these individuals to have access to my records.	
I agree to take part in the above research project and will inform the lead researcher should my contact details change during the project and, if necessary, afterwards.	

Name of participant	
Participant's signature	
Date	
Name of lead researcher	Pavel Gudoshnikov
Signature	
Date*	

*To be signed and dated in the presence of the participant.

Once this has been signed by all parties the participant should receive a copy of the signed and dated participant consent form, the letter/ pre-written script/ information sheet and any other written information provided to the participants. A copy of the signed and dated consent form should be kept with the project's main documents which must be kept in a secure location.

Project title	Document type	Version #	Date
Analysis of Issues in Ru-En Student Translations	Consent form	1	12.01.2024

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