A typology of translation solutions

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ABSTRACT

An eight-term pedagogical typology of translation solutions has been compiled and taught in two Masters classes, one in the United States and the other in South Africa. The results suggest that the typology is robust enough to be pedagogically effective in the two situations if and when the teaching stresses a series of points: 1) the nature of its "problem-solving" premises has to be explained carefully, 2) the typology should be presented as a list of ways to address problems that cannot be solved using the norms of standard languages or "cruise" mode translation procedures, 3) it should be presented as being open-ended, inviting new solutions and new combinations of the main solution types, 4) its theorisation should be kept as simple as possible, in the interests of pedagogical clarity, and 5) the application of the typology should emphasise its status as a discourse of resistance to the tradition of "either-or" approaches to translation decisions.

KEYWORDS

Translation solutions, translation pedagogy, translation procedures, theorisation of translation, non-binarism.

1. Introduction

The naming of different ways of solving translation problems constitutes a small European tradition that has spawned versions for languages beyond Europe. A Romance-language strand can be traced from the work of the Swiss linguist Charles Bally (1905) through Vinay and Darbelnet (1972[1958]) and Vázquez-Ayora (1977). A Russian tradition might run from somewhere around Fedorov (1927) through Retsker (1950, 2007[1974]), Shveytser (1973), and Barkhudarov (1975), with Fedorov (2002[1953]) then feeding into Loh (1958) at the beginning of a Chinese tradition. In Central Europe we find typologies by Levý (2011[1963]) and Popovič (1968, 1975), with Kade (1968) introducing concepts into German. Yet the most influential categorisation undoubtedly remains Vinay and Darbelnet (1972[1958]), not just in Romance languages but also in Japanese (for example in Hasegawa 2011) and elsewhere. The many more recent typologies include significant attempts at systematisation by Delisle *et al*. (1999) and Schreiber (1998), whose approach I partly draw on here. As a result of all this, we now find numerous ways of identifying solution types, and we find them in virtually all the major languages in which translators are trained. What we do not find, though, is significant consensus on what these types are, how they should be named, and whether they should concern more than one language pair.

In my study of that tradition (Pym 2016a), I opt for the general term 'translation solutions' (after Zabalbeascoa 2000) rather than 'procedures,' 'techniques,' or 'strategies.' This is because the typologies I have just named are all based on comparisons of texts, on the *solutions adopted*, rather than on analysis of the cognitive processes involved. That minor point of clarification does little to reduce confusion, however. I have sought to discover (again in Pym 2016a) *why* there are so many different typologies, and the answer seems to concern more than specific language pairs. The plurality is partly due to different cultural conceptions of what translation is and what relations between languages should be. I have also asked why so much intellectual energy has been invested in these typologies, which have constantly been modified without any significant input from cognitive research. My premise here is that the typologies continue to be useful *pedagogically*, specifically for making trainee translators aware of the range of options available to them. From that perspective, the key way to improve a typology is to see how well it opens options in the classroom.

In my 2016 book I try to synthesise the various pedagogical virtues of the previous categorisations in a way that might be suitable for teaching translation between many languages, including between European and Asian languages. Table 1 presents the synthesis, incorporating a few subsequent modifications. The synthesis tries to reduce contradictions, to explain things in a clear and memorable way, and to invite students to think beyond their initial or default solution types.

Here I report on how that typology has fared in Masters seminars given in two very different contexts: Monterey (United States) and Stellenbosch (South Africa). Both these contexts had been used for previous classes using the more classical typologies and earlier versions of my model (on the Monterey classes, see Pym and Torres-Simón 2015)[1].

So my mission here is to identify the pedagogical strengths and weaknesses of the resulting typology. If the typology is to fulfil its basic aim of making novice translators extend their repertoire of available solutions, then we would hope to find students engaging in discussion of that repertoire. In qualitative terms, failure here is to be measured in terms of puzzled looks and expressed misunderstandings, while success would be a reduction in the puzzled looks and an increase in the students' willingness to discuss and extend the typology. Further, if the typology is to be applicable to many languages, the seminars should be successful in both contexts.

I first present and explain the typology, then the results of the two seminars.

2. A typology explained

The typology to be tried out here has one default category: 'cruise mode' translating, as when an airplane is cruising at altitude; all goes well until there is a 'bump,' attention is required, and something needs to be done. To handle instances of 'bump mode' there are then eight main solution types (the middle column in Table 1) that can be used for conscious problem solving. The eight types are more or less in the tradition of Vinay and Darbelnet (1972[1958]), going from simple to complex, from low-effort to high-effort, from close-to-the-text to greater translatorial intervention. Here I use initial capitals for the names of the types to indicate their status as technical terms.

- **Copying Words**: 'Transcription' in the broadest sense, where items from one language are brought across to another. This may be on the phonetic level (e.g. Sp. *fútbol*), morphology (e.g. Sp. *balompié*, literally 'ball-foot') or script (e.g. *McDonald's* in all languages, alongside Rus. *Макдоналдс* or Ar. ماكدونالدز, for example).

- **Copying Structure**: Syntactic or compositional structures are brought across from one language into another, as in *Open mouth and lend voice to tongue* (from the television series Spartacus), where Latin syntactic and metaphorical structures are used in English. This would be Calque in Vinay and Darbelnet (1972[1958]).

- **Perspective Change**: An object is seen from a different point of view, as in a hotel being *Complet* ('full') in French and has *No Vacancies* in English. This is Modulation in Vinay and Darbelnet (1972[1958]). Here the category is extended to include changes in footing (e.g. between the formal and informal second person), non-obligatory switches between passive and active structures, as when *I see Mount Fuji* is rendered as 富士が見える [Fuji is visible] (Kanaya 2004), and the giving of a rival name to the one object that does not thereby change position in time or place (e.g. the use of *Danzig* for *Gdańsk*, indicating which side of the border, or indeed of history, you are seeing it from).

- **Density Change**: There is a marked change in the amount of information available in a given textual space. Translators can reduce textual density by using solutions that spread information over a greater textual space, using Explicitation, Generalisation, and Multiple Translation, as when the one word *Gemeinde* is translated as the six words '*Gemeinde*, German unit of local government' (Newmark 1981: 31). Using the inverse solutions can increase density.

- **Resegmentation**: The splitting or joining of sentences; re-paragraphing; generally changing the order of text parts at sentence level or above.

- **Compensation**: A value is rendered with resources different from those of the start text and in a textual position or linguistic level markedly different from that in the start text[2]. A classic example is Fr. *On se tutoie…* ['We can use the intimate second-person pronoun…'] rendered as *My friends call me Bill…* (Vinay and Darbelnet 1972[1958]: 190). Translator's notes and prefaces can be seen as forms of Compensation, since they use a markedly different textual position. The cutting or joining of sentences (Resegmentation) would not be Compensation because mere rearrangement does not exploit different linguistic resources.

- **Cultural Correspondence**: Different elements in different cultures are presented as carrying out similar functions, as in the case of corresponding idioms such as *Give him an inch and he will take a mile* rendered in Chinese as 得寸进尺 ['get inch, take foot'] (Loh 1958: 2.107) or culture-specific items (currency units, measures, etc.). This broadly covers what Vinay and Darbelnet termed *équivalence* and Adaptation (1972[1958]). It applies to all instances where the corresponding referents are held to be in different special or temporal locations, as opposed to cases where the same referent is given different expressions but remains in the one location. So the choice between *Danzig* and *Gdańsk* is Perspective Change, since the referent city is presumed to remain in the *same* place even while the politics vary, whereas *cricket* rendered as *baseball* to express the common value 'popular summer sport' is Cultural Correspondence, since the two referents are held to be operative in different cultural locations.

- **Text Tailoring**: Semantic or performative material in the start text is deleted, updated, or added to on the levels of both form and content. This corresponds to what Schreiber (1998) calls *Interlinguale Bearbeitung* (roughly 'interlingual adaptation').

Scarcely original in themselves, these categories are at least of a number that can be adjusted to fit pedagogical needs. For maximum simplification, there can be just three categories: Copying, Expression Change, Material Change (in the left-hand column in Table 1). For more focused work, there are open-ended lists of sub-types (as in the right-hand column, plus the more detailed columns that could be added to the right of that).

Cruise mode (normal use of language skills, reference resources, parallel texts, intuition — anything prior to bump mode — so no special solutions are needed)		
Copying	Copying Words	Copying sounds Copying morphology Copying script …
	Copying Structure	Copying prosodic features Copying fixed phrases Copying text structure …
Expression Change	Perspective Change	Changing sentence focus Changing semantic focus Changing voice Renaming an object …
	Density Change	Generalisation / Specification Explicitation / Implicitation Multiple Translation…
	Resegmentation	Joining sentences Cutting sentences Re-paragraphing…
	Compensation	New level of expression New place in text (notes, paratexts) …
	Cultural Correspondence	Corresponding idioms Corresponding units of measurement, currency, etc. Relocation of culture-specific referents …
Material Change	Text Tailoring	Correction / censorship / updating Omission of material Addition of material …

Table 1. A typology of translation solution types for many languages (cf. Pym 2016a: 220)

The typology is based on the following principles:

- The names for the types are as common as possible: Given the difficulty students have in remembering the differences between terms like Transposition, Modulation, and Adaptation (see Pym and Torres-Simón 2015), I have used words that are as transparent as possible, even at the expense of being inexact (Copying Words, for example, is very forced when it has to cover various parts of words as well as ideograms —

'copying language' would be more accurate but the students tend to find it too vague, applicable to whole paragraphs or pages, or suggestive of dictation exercises).

- The solutions only concern translators' transformations of text: The typology does not deal with peripheral activities like finding information; it does not cover skills that can be mastered by non-translators, such as writing well; it does not purport to describe the thought processes used to reach a particular solution.

- The typology concerns situations where a significant choice is to be made: It does not deal with the application of obligatory rules or fixed terminology.

- It concerns more than one language pair: The typology has not been derived from a comparison of languages, although it draws on many that have.

- It does not prescribe when particular solutions should be used: In principle, all solution types can be used to solve all problems, with the range limited in each particular case by the degree of effort required and the relative risk of communicative failure (see Pym 2015, 2016a: 236ff.).

- It accepts conceptual overlaps: The typology recognises that the one textual product can embody more than one solution type. For example, Text Tailoring will normally bring about some kind of Density Change, although Density Change in itself need not necessarily involve Text Tailoring (since Explicitation, for example, theoretically does not add actual content).

- Its purpose is purely pedagogical: The typology should be judged successful when trainee translators and interpreters are able to grasp the terms and use them to extend or refine their previous conception of the translator's task.

- It is open-ended: The degree of detail can be modified in accordance with the pedagogical purpose at hand.

The typology used here is almost the same as the one published in Pym (2016a, 220). The one major difference is the rank of Resegmentation, which comes under Density Change in the book but was a separate high-order category in the classes given (as in Table 1). This change is of some importance because the splitting and joining of sentences is reported as being more common between European and Asian languages than between

European languages (Sakamoto 2014, 184). In theory, the splitting of sentences reduces syntactic load and can thus be seen as modifying text density, which would place Resegmentation as a sub-category of Density Change. Yet I suspected that my theorising on this point was too laboured for the effective training of professional translators. With the theory, Resegmentation is a legitimate part of Density Change. Without the theory, it can be a stand-alone category, pedagogically reminding students that cutting and joining sentences is something they might want to consider.

There were several more general features of the typology that I particularly wanted to gain feedback on:

1. *Can the typology add to the ways students solve problems?* This crucially concerns the top box in Table 1, where the solution types are distinguished from run-of-the-mill 'cruise mode' translating. The explicit purpose of the typology is to help solve conscious problems, not to describe *all* the cognitive activities of translators. In effect, the model says: When you are stuck, when you are cruising along and then something goes 'bump,' here are some things you might want to consider[3]. This rough and ready notion of 'cruise mode' will mean different things for each level of training and indeed for each student, and this variability in turn reduces or expands the kinds of examples that make all the other categories meaningful. For example, if one student is using phrase-level explicitation intuitively, as part of their default translation practice, then they have no need to see this as a specific solution type. Another student, however, whose initial translation concept is highly literalist and shies away from phrase-level explicitation, will find this solution type meaningful, at least as an invitation to try out new ways of solving problems. The concept of 'cruise' mode is thus designed to enable the typology to address students at very different levels. It introduces a pedagogical process-based model into a typology that is otherwise based on product analysis. I wanted to know if this would be understood by students.

2. *Can students remember the main solution types?* As noted, the table has eight main types in the middle column. The number seems about right for quick memorisation. If eight are not enough, the right-hand column is available for the many other things that translators can do in each particular situation, including combinations of the main solution types. So would the students be able to remember the eight terms? Would they be able to extend discussion into the more specific types in the right-hand column?

3. *Can students grasp the difference between Perspective and Density?* Since these were the only partly new terms, it was important to see if anything was really made simpler by distinguishing between the *perspective* from which you see an object (a hotel is *full* in French but has *No Vacancies* in English, so it is a question of perspective) from the *degree of detail* with which you see it (more detail should produce a 'denser' text). This difference could be elaborated with significant theorisation, particularly concerning density (or granularity) as an effect of how near or far one is from an object. But would such explanations really make things clearer?

4. *Will students accept that translation can involve radical changes to the start text?* The typology includes a major category (in the middle column) called Text Tailoring, which involves adding material, omitting material, and changing material (understood as things done or referred to in the text, perhaps in the sense of the German *Stoff*). For some translation concepts, material-changing solutions lie beyond the translator's mandate: one should only reproduce the material that is in the start text. For those closer to *Skopos* theory, such changes are a legitimate part of "translatorial action" (Holz-Mänttäri 1984). So how would the students react? Would they tell me that translators have no right to enter the territory of Text Tailoring?

3. Teaching the typology

I taught the basic typology in two two-hour classes at Masters level, one in Monterey and the other in Stellenbosch. These sessions served to stimulate discussion about the range of options available and the methodological problems of classification. I am not suggesting that this or any other typology should be reduced to just one two-hour session: the learning difficulties revealed in this initial session should ideally be addressed in a series of follow-up classes. To that extent, the classes were experiments in which the students were co-researchers[4].

The two groups were quite different with respect to level of prior studies, language combinations, and language directionalities, and they would be commenting on different texts. So there can be no suggestion that they provided a solid basis for comparing specific group variables. But that is not what was at stake. Since the typology was designed to be as robust as possible, I was interested in pragmatically finding out which items would work in both contexts and which would present specific difficulties. If specific difficulties could be attributed to local factors, all well and good (there is no reason *not* to compare how the groups fared). If not, then new ideas could be necessary — this was never going to be a well-controlled empirical study.

3.1. The Monterey class

The first class was at the Middlebury Institute for International Studies at Monterey (MIIS) on November 18 2015 as part of the translation practice course (called 'Translation Practicum') in the second year of the Masters program. The class had 18 students working with the following languages in addition to English: Chinese (8), Japanese (3), Korean (2), French (4), and German (1). None of the students reported having been taught a typology like this previously, although the Chinese students had been exposed to the similar metalanguage in Ye and Shi (2009).

Prior to the class the students were asked to bring at least two pages of a translation they had completed previously. This could be a professional translation or a translation done in another course.

The class then began with a warm-up exercise in which the students had to suggest solutions for 18 problems (see Appendix 1), almost all of them drawn from the previous literature on translation solutions. Their proposed solutions were then compared and discussed in order to see if there was any kind of common metalanguage already in general use. The phrase-level problems were designed merely to provoke the need for a metalanguage; they should not be misconstrued as a representation of all actual translation problems.

Once it was clear that some basic terminological agreements would be necessary for the discussion to proceed, the typology (Table 1) was presented step by step, using the warm-up examples to explain each type, with whatever discussions arose.

The second hour of the class was an activity to be completed by the students working in pairs. The students had to go through two pages of their previous translation, identifying and counting the types of solutions they had used. They were then asked to give short answers to three questions:

- Is it easy to distinguish between the solution types? If not, why not?
- How do you think these categories could be improved?
- Which of these solutions tend not to be given by MT systems?

This last question followed on from previous classes that had introduced postediting techniques. It will only be dealt with briefly here.

3.2. The Stellenbosch class

The class given in Stellenbosch took place on April 14 2016 and was more or less the same except that the students were in the *first* year of their Masters. There were 11 students, working with the following languages in addition to English: Afrikaans (8), German (2), and isiXhosa (1). Since there were introductory and organisational matters to attend to, the warm-up activity was completed prior to the class and much of the assignment was completed after the class. The warm-up activity did not include problem 18 (an authentic example of censorable racism), on advice from the course coordinator. None of the participants reported having studied similar typologies previously. Some of the teaching process sought to correct shortcomings detected in the Monterey class, especially with respect to the explicit problem-solving status of the solutions.

4. Results

4.1. General questions

The reported difficulty of the solution types was similar for both the student groups, as shown in Figure 1. The question here was, "Is it easy to distinguish between the solution types? If not, why not?". The responses suggest the typology was generally quite difficult to apply, although many students went beyond simple Yes/No answers, indicating that some types were more difficult than others (in which cases their answers have been classified as "Depends"). The numbers suggest that things might have been a little easier at Stellenbosch (since the teaching had possibly been improved), but the number of students is too low for anything to be read into the result. One Stellenbosch student complained that "the lecture we had on it was quite short and we hurried through the slides," while the Monterey students made no similar comment. It is important to note that the relative difficulty here concerns *identifying* the types used in the student's previous translation, not in remembering a series of definitions and fabricated examples. In same cases, the nature of the previous translation made things relatively easy. For example, a Stellenbosch student commented, "I found it relatively easy to distinguish between the solution types, mainly because the text that I have chosen had to be domesticated for a South African reader. Thus my text consists mostly of cultural correspondence."

A repeated comment, in both the Monterey and Stellenbosch groups, was that the categories overlapped. For instance, from Monterey: "Solutions such as density changes, resegmentation, and compensation can all overlap in a translation."

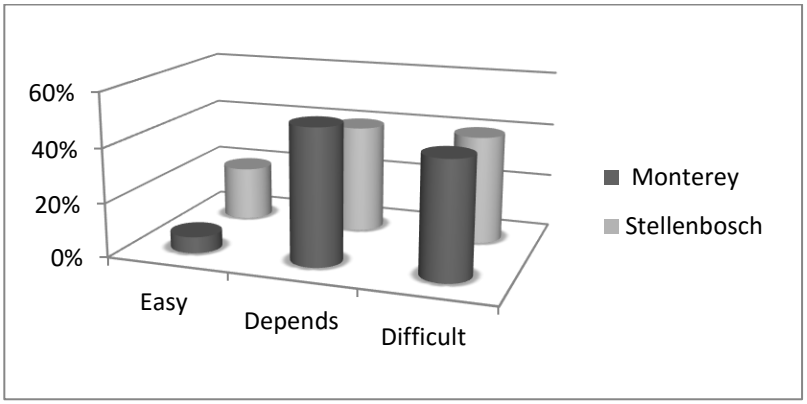

Figure 1. Is it easy to distinguish between the solution types?

As to the reported difficulty of each solution type, the general pattern is partly similar (Figure 2), albeit with some clear differences. The Stellenbosch class reported more difficulties with the concepts of Perspective Change and Density Change, which is of interest because Density Change was hypothesised as being more important in their cultural context (in view of the social need to reach readerships with lower education levels), whereas the Monterey class reported marginally greater difficulty with Copying Words (hypothesised to be a more active category for movements between European and Asian languages).

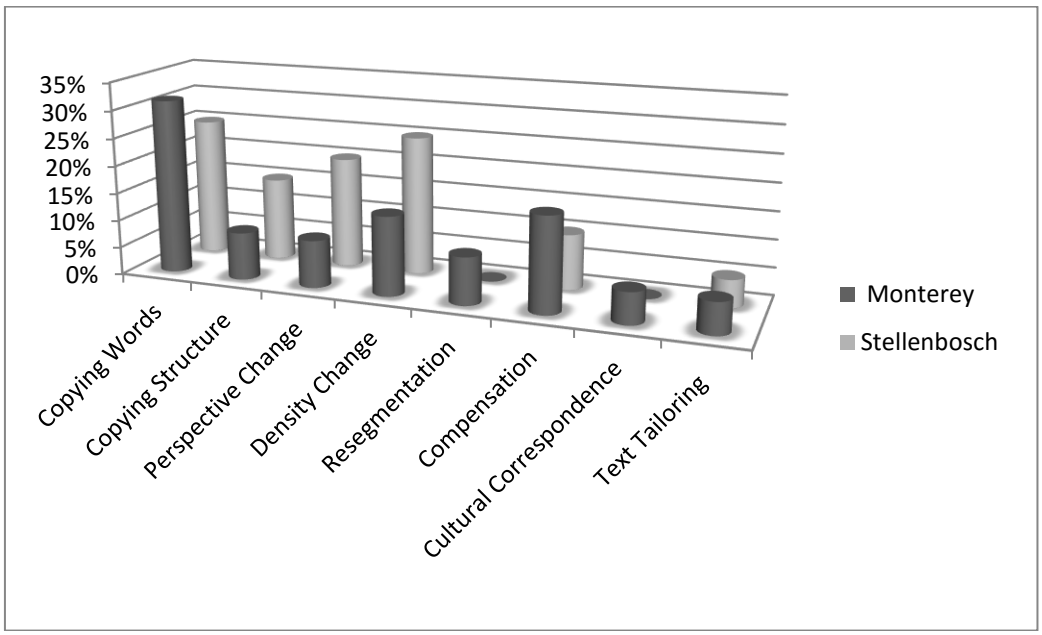

Figure 2. Solution types reported to be difficult (percentages of difficulties mentioned)

The responses were similar enough in the two groups, as might be expected from a simple awareness-raising question. The students thought that machine translation handles the 'copying' solutions well enough, but they generally did not think it applied the rest. That perception of machine translation may be erroneous, of course, since neural systems can come up with some very apt examples of Cultural Correspondence. In general, though, students got the basic message that these are all things that human translators can be particularly good at — and should thus fear little from machines, if and when they know how to apply the fancier solution types.

4.2. Difficulties with specific solution types

The students were asked to say whether it was easy to distinguish between the solution types and how the categories could be improved (see Appendix 2). Their written replies provide much richer information on the various sources of difficulty. Here I look at each major solution type, attempting to gauge what the causes of the complaints might be, whether the complaints can be remedied easily, or whether they constitute grounds for major modifications of the typology or teaching method.

4.2.1. Copying Words

A few comments from Monterey indicate a serious misunderstanding: some students saw the typology as purporting to describe everything in a translation, or everything that translators do, rather than just a set of ways to solve problems that occur in 'bump' mode, when the normal flow of translation activity does not provide a solution. For example, one Monterey student complained that "'copying words' is a little nonsensical for closely related languages like English and French, which have a large number of cognates." The complaint would be entirely justified if the typology had set out to account for all the words in a translation. In this case, the instructor need merely stress that the copying in question strictly concerns words that are not in the standard repertoire of the target language. This is precisely what I did in the Stellenbosch class, where the feedback included no indications of this kind of misunderstanding. As mentioned, the teaching hopefully improved slightly.

A similar complaint, which is repeated for several of the solution types and in both groups, is that the types overlap. This would be problematic if there were two names for exactly the same solution, but in most cases it turns out that more than one solution is being used in the same sentence, which is only to be expected. In some cases the apparent difficulty is that two of the main solution types are being combined to give a particular solution, which is also fine (the "Gemeinde" example from Newmark combines Copying Words

with Density Change, for example). Where the issue of overlap becomes more problematic is in cases like the following, from a Chinese student at Monterey:

> Sometimes in one sentence, several types can be identified. For example, in translation, we often re-segment the original long sentence into several short ones, so basically resegmentation is used. But in those short sentences, we adopt the literal translation, i.e. copying words. So at least two solution types can be identified.

The problem here is that Copying Words is misunderstood as literalism or translating word-for-word — such references to literalism were very problematic among the Chinese students reported on in Pym and Torres-Simón (2015). Once again, greater emphasis has to be placed on the status of the solution types as coming into play when standard language usages and translation procedures fail to solve the problem. For this reason, "literal translation" is not one of the categories here (whereas it is in Vinay and Darbelnet 1972[1958]), although it might return in future versions (as a way of translating irresolvable ambiguity, for example).

A much more astute complaint comes from a student of Japanese at Monterey:

> Japanese copies a lot of English words, and then chops them up so they aren't so long in Japanese (because every consonant is followed by a vowel in Japanese, consonant-heavy English becomes many syllables longer in Japanese), so I wasn't sure if that still counted as copying words as they would be largely unrecognisable to native English-speakers.

The point seems quite valid. The response in this case might be to add 'hybrid word formation' or somesuch to the list of possibilities in the right-hand column. There is no need to exclude language-specific solution types.

4.2.2. Copying Structure

The use of the very broad term 'structure' was mentioned in many of the general comments on the difficulty of the categories, but no specific suggestions were made for improvement. The sense becomes clear enough if one gives examples of things like syntactic calque and reproduction of rhyme schemes. Hopefully the examples will compensate for the imprecision of the name.

4.2.3. Perspective Change

As indicated, Perspective Change is an alternative name for Vinay and Darbelnet's musical metaphor "modulation" (1972[1958]). It seemed to work

quite well for the standard solutions: conversions of the 'half-full half-empty' kind, transformation of a positive into a negated negative, and switches between active and passive voices — all of these on the semantic and/or syntactic levels. The going becomes more difficult, however, when we try to extend 'voice' beyond the active vs. passive opposition, minimally to include subjectless verbs (particularly in Japanese) and changes in formal/informal persons, but also potentially to see 'voice' at work in any feature changing who speaks to whom in translations (cf. Sakai 1997; Alvstad and Rosa 2015). How far one wants to go down that road is a matter of context. In my classes I have tried to stick to voice shifts that concern the status of first and second persons and that clearly count as "seeing the same thing from a different perspective." The problem is that these days a whole lot of other things can be included under the concept of 'voice,' which is probably why Perspective Change scored highly for difficulty of application, especially in Stellenbosch (Table 2).

This problem of expansive definition was picked up in several general comments, particularly in the following observation from Stellenbosch:

> If for example, a formal text is reworked for a newspaper, then some of the formal expressions used will have to be adapted to suit the audience, which will be your everyday newspaper readers. Even though the content would not be changed, the way the author conveys the information will be changed. Will this then be a perspective change (change of voice) or will it belong to a whole new category?

Good question! I think the actual change of text type is operating on a whole different level (it is a macro-decision about how to write, made between translator and client with respect to purpose); it is not a solution to a single translation problem as such. Once you decide to change text type, though, that decision can give rise to a series of smaller-scale translation solutions, potentially including all eight of our main categories.

4.2.4. Density Change

The concept of Density Change was perhaps the major innovation with respect to previous typologies. It was also one of the most problematic, judging by the numbers in Table 2. There were several requests for further explanation.

I suspect the confusion was due to a basic mistake in my teaching rather than in the category as such. In the interests of making the types easy to remember, I proposed that Perspective Change concerns the *angle* from which you see an object, whereas Density Change concerns *how close* you are to the object. The visual metaphor should make some sense: the closer you are to an object, the more detail you see in your field of vision (there is

greater granularity); as you move further away, your field of vision includes more general things. So the metaphor should help explain solutions like Generalisation/Specification or Explicitation/Implicitation. At the same time, ideally, it could encourage students to consider factors like how far the new reader is from the object. Unfortunately, this turned out to be one of those things that, the more you try to explain it, the more puzzled looks you get from students. There were smart questions along the lines of, "If you are close to something, then you know it well, so you leave a lot of information implicit, and this gives less detail, surely?". Hmm…

I would now suggest *not* mixing a visual metaphor (how close you are to an object) with quantitative analysis (density is technically the cognitive load required to process a stretch of language). Let us simply indicate to students that there are several ways of stretching information over more textual space, and that this is a way of making texts more accessible to new readers or more economical to expert readers.

There were few other suggestions for improvement. A Monterey student added, "I also think it's important to emphasise that density can go both ways, depending on the text and source and target languages." Another Monterey student brought up a further case of overlapping categories:

> For Density Change, if expansion (explicitation) and contraction (implicitation) belong to this category, how about using cultural-specific idioms to condense the original words? Sometimes a long English sentence has a very succinct Chinese idiom equivalence, and when the idiom is used, it's both Density Change and Cultural Correspondence.

Indeed, there can be two good reasons for adopting the one decision.

4.2.5. Resegmentation

There were no suggestions concerning Resegmentation, and it seemed relatively easy to apply (Figure 2). The concept is something the Asian-language students were already familiar with, and there were no doubts about it in Stellenbosch.

This should justify separating Resegmentation from Density Change, since the latter is already a handful without it.

4.2.6. Compensation

Although a standard item in most typologies, Compensation was reported as being one of the more difficult categories to apply (Figure 2). The main source of difficulty seems to be the requirement that the solution be on a

different linguistic level or in a different textual place. The meaning of 'level' probably required some working knowledge of linguistics, while the sense of 'place' has all the problems of any continuous variable: exactly how far away do you have to be if you are in a 'different' place? The basic message nevertheless seems clear enough: feel free to put the solution elsewhere. Perhaps because of that very simple principle, there were no suggestions as to how to improve the category.

4.2.7. Cultural Correspondence

The category of Cultural Correspondence brings together Vinay and Darbelnet's adaptation (*cricket* corresponds to *baseball*) and *équivalence* (corresponding idioms), to which we might add all corresponding realia (monetary systems, weights and measures, date conventions, etc.). Since there are generally few such solutions on the cultural level and the measurement realia are fairly straightforward, the application of the category was reportedly quite easy (Figure 2).

There were just two suggested improvements, both of them indicative of some degree of misunderstanding. A Stellenbosch student commented, "I think cultural correspondence could be divided into more specific categories, like domestication and globalisation." This could indeed be done, and the placing of 'globalisation' alongside or instead of the more traditional 'foreignisation' could even be stimulating: we could suggest that solutions are referentially located in the start culture, in the target culture, or vaguely 'elsewhere' (see Pym 2010[1992]: 64-65). The initial purpose of the whole typology, though, was to provide a mode of thought that could be an alternative to the binarism of 'either/or' solutions. The binarism could be applied, but there are reasons not to. It is equally possible to open up a continuum of locations or an intellectual space in which solutions could be tagged at any point (cf. Hervey and Higgins 1992: 33; Pym 2016a: 235).

The second suggested improvement was from Monterey: "Instances of name adaptation in translation don't seem to really have a place in the current list of categories." As mentioned above, this can be handled by distinguishing between cases where the referent is held to remain in the same position in place and time, when we are thereby concerned with Perspective Change (the city does not move, after all), and cases where there are two different cultural locations involved (cricket and baseball are held to be in different cultures, as indeed would be metric vs. imperial measures, and so on).

This whole issue, though, depends very much on what is considered normal or 'cruise mode' for a particular student or indeed translation culture. Going into Spanish, the default rendition of *London* is *Londres* and *Prince Charles*

quite normally becomes *el príncipe Carlos*, and there is no particular solution type required. At the same time, if a translator chooses to transgress the norm and render *Prince Charles* as a Spanish *Prince Charles*, that special solution is necessary marked and must be considered a case of Perspective Change. Or again, consider *Barcelona*, which savvy English-speaking travellers occasionally like to pronounce with a theta (barθeˈlona), somehow positioning their knowledge of Spanish as being particularly intimate or local. Of course, they get it politically wrong: the Catalan pronunciation is with an /s/ (bərsəˈlonə) rather than a /θ/, which leaves the English-speakers taking a side they probably know little about.

Something has to go bump before a solution type is called for.

4.2.8. Text Tailoring

My main worry about Text Tailoring was that some students would insist that a translator has no right to add to or remove material. That did not happen, remarkably. The reasons for the apparent acquiescence remain mysterious: it may be due to students having misunderstood the radical nature of the concept, or perhaps to their keenness to please the professor by finding all solution types, or even to a historical tendency among younger translators to assume a greater right to intervene.

Whatever the case, the main concerns here were once again with overlap. A Monterey student commented, "When translating from English to Chinese, omitting content may be to change the semantic focus. At the same time, the density of the sentence is also changed. In this way, it is hard to say which method I exactly adopted." This sounds logical: the deletion of material can reduce the density of the translation. Then again, two things are being mixed here: Density Change is supposed to be when no actual content is deleted: information is just spread over more or less textual space. On the other hand, the kind of deletion involved in Text Tailoring is when something is really cut out, both as content and as form. If the deletion is on all levels, then it need not affect density: the remaining material is spread over more or less the same textual space as it had in the start text. So I see no need to concede to overlapping categories on that score. A Stellenbosch student seemed to agree with this conclusion: "I categorised my solutions by making use of these definitions: Explicitation is when you elaborate in the TT on what has been said in the ST, and addition of material is when you add something to the TT which was never mentioned in the ST."

4.2.9. Cruise mode

That discussion effectively underscores what it means to have a variable concept like 'cruise mode,' which necessarily involves quite different things for different people, and indeed for different language pairs. Surely we should go back to typologies that are specific to each language pair? What is the real price being paid for a shot at universalism?

Such concerns are understandable but not insurmountable. Surely love is different for each person and perhaps in each culture, but it is still something worth naming and talking about? In each particular case, for each particular potential lover and in each particular situation, you consider carefully how to act. In the same way, every translation teacher is constantly monitoring the solutions students use by default, and should ideally be pitching their lessons at a level just one or two steps beyond that, in a "zone of proximal development" (Vygotsky 1978: 84ff.). If French students are being too literalist and need to be reminded that Transposition is legitimate and normal, then you elevate that to a main item to be taught. And if Chinese students are unsure of when they should use transliteration or phonetic reconstruction of non-Chinese names, then that is a topic that should be dealt with at length with them. Yet those differences do not mean the French and Chinese students cannot share a common metalanguage for talking about what they do. Just like love, the differences need not stop us talking about it.

Doubts about the cruise concept ensued from an apparent desire to have categories that have the same borders for all users. In the world of translation, that is rarely going to happen. This is due to the way translation performs its borders. Just as the boundaries of cruise mode are wherever cognitive processes go bump, so the borders between languages and between cultures are where translators intervene to mark the two sides of their event. Or again, the border between Perspective Change and Cultural Correspondence lies, in the case of names, in the way the translational act itself positions the references in play, in one place or in several. Since the basic borders are performed anew by each translation event, none can be considered eternal.

5. Conclusions

The negative comments could make our typology look like a complete disaster. There was nevertheless a comforting number of positive comments along the lines of "The categories are well-organised," "Like them as is," "No suggestions for improvement," "Generally clear and applicable," and "It is rather easy to distinguish between the solution types." Further, the students

tended to remember the names of the main solution types reasonably well. There is pressing no need to wipe the slate clean and start again.

Of course, there are still some areas in which the typology needs improvement, or at least careful attention when teaching:

1. It is crucial that the typology not be misconstrued as a description of everything that translators do (see 4.2.1, 4.2.7, 4.2.9 above). When translators are working in 'cruise' mode, there is no need for any elaborate typology of solutions. When, however, a problem appears for which no solution seems available, the typology proposes a set of solution types that the translator might want to consider. Its utility is thus purely pedagogical.

2. The lists that appear to the right of the central terms in Table 1 are open-ended, so new solution types can be added in accordance with the focus of a particular text or lesson (see 4.2.1, 4.2.7). Name Adaptation, for example, is easily slotted in under Cultural Correspondence.

3. The concept of Density Change should be kept as simple as possible (see 4.2.4). Density merely concerns the amount of information in a given textual space. The reduction of density, usually by using more textual space, can make the translation more accessible.

4. For the same basic pedagogical simplicity, Resegmentation should be presented as a category separate from Density Change (see 4.2.5).

5. Many of the categories can be combined to produce specific solutions, and some can give two or more good reasons for the same solution (see 4.2.1, 4.2.2, 4.2.4, 4.2.8). In this sense, overlaps need not be seen as shortcomings.

6. Much as binary thought underlies some of the decisions that are possible when translating, the main virtue of the typology is that it presents an alternative to binarism (4.2.7).

Even with these possible improvements and clarifications, the typology should certainly not be considered definitive. It is no more than a suggested teaching aid, open to adaptation to the students' level and languages, and the focus of each particular lesson. Perhaps the most unanticipated point in the above discussion is that effective pedagogy can be hampered by excessive theory (I gave up trying to insist that Resegmentation changes density).

One final parting shot at binarism: Contemporary translation theory has very little time for complex typologies of what translators do. Ever since Cicero opposed "ut interpres" to "ut orator" as two modes of translation, positing that one translate *either* like an oral mediator in a negotiation *or* like a public orator, we have had a slow-grinding discussion of one side against the other, often framed as better against worse. Our all-encompassing cultural theorists love that kind of debate, and a hundred in-class discussions can be initiated by pitting one side against the other, in the firm knowledge that neither side will ever emerge wholly victorious. In such debates, students are learning *about* translation, or *about* thought on translation, but not in a way that is in close contact with actual translation practice. From that perspective, my concern with translation solutions is definitely regressive: I am going back to boring old linguistics; I am working close to actual texts; I am stirring up issues on which virtually no empirical advances have been made.

Sooner or later, though, someone will want to learn how to translate. And a widened repertoire of translation solutions, with more than just two major terms, is one of the most valuable aids we can offer them.

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APPENDICES

1. Warm-up activity

Please translate these into your favourite language other than English, except the ones that are not in English – they should go into English, if you can.

1. Segway
2. Zeitgeist
3. Hoverboard
4. Skyscraper
5. Translation Studies
6. 富士が見える
7. Danger de mort
8. Lebensgefahr
9. No vacancies
10. Gemeinde
11. Real IRA
12. The final whistle (in a soccer game)
13. [Here just indicate the problem and how you would solve it.] The Spanish Government retains the sole property rights to this document without prejudice to rights of the holder and therefore recommends that the holder take the utmost care regarding the custody and use of the passport and requests that whatsoever authority or other person return the passport to the Spanish authorities should it be lost or used in an unjustified way.
14. "You can call me Bill."
15. Pearls before swine.
16. Before you could say Jack Robinson
17. There is a 327-meter freeway between the two cities.
18. The white man has led human progress for two thousand years.

2. Class assignment

Working in pairs if possible, please take two pages of a translation you have done previously and try to identify the main solution types. Say how many instances you found of the following:

Copying Words
Copying Structure
Perspective Change
Density Change
Resegmentation
Compensation
Cultural Correspondence

Text Tailoring

Now briefly answer the following:
- Is it easy to distinguish between the solution types? If not, why not?
- How do you think these categories could be improved?

Biography

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Notes

[1] A further outing was in an Academia session from September 13 to October 13, 2016 (https://www.academia.edu/s/f91e5c89bb/a-typology-of-translation-solution-types). From that session I draw on feedback from Alexander Zaytsev, Sergio Portelli, Felix Larsson, Dorota Guttfeld, Lily Robert-Foley, Douglas Robinson, Yves Gambier, and Nader Albkower, to all of whom my sincere gratitude.
[2] I prefer 'start text' to 'source text' because these days translators work not just from a single text but also from glossaries, translation memories, and machine translation output; any one of those resources could provide the 'source' for a solution. The role of the initial text is thus relativised.
[3] The notion of a 'bump' comes from Mossop: "In normal mode, people who have mastered some skill simply 'see', instantly, how to proceed. In bump mode, however, principles have to be applied" (1995: 4). The idea of a default mode is elaborated at some length in Robinson (1997).
[4] The use of research methods in the hands-on translation class is by no means new (see, for example, House 1986, 2000, Pym 2009, Wallace 2014, Bowker 2016) and should not be confused with empirical pre-testing prior to public release, as if solution typologies were like a new drug or airplane. As with many complex ideological constructs (lists of translation competences would be another example), we should recognise that the distinctions between categories will always be to some extent arbitrary and/or contextually contingent. In these cases there is no absolute truth to be found in empirical testing, and we should renounce that white-coat objective fantasy. Since the function of such typologies is to facilitate discussion, awareness, and learning, their prime testing *is* their teaching, and will always be:

my reports here are meant not to provide transferable truths, but to suggest ways in which further classes, further practical experiments, can be carried out, and the typologies can be modified in accordance with results – all through a series of admittedly "lousy experiments" (Pym 2009). This need not involve, however, any relativist position where all typologies are somehow considered equally valid and no empirical testing is sought, as might be one reading of a "post-method condition" in language teaching (see Stern 1983, Prabhu 1990, Kumaravadivelu 1994). On the contrary, all testing is always of interest, since our classes can always be improved and ideas and innovations are always welcome. The one condition for this very applied kind of empiricism is that we start from an initial veil of ignorance (Pym 2016b): we do not initially know which typology works best, but we are going to try to find out.