Registerial Expertise in Traditional Chinese Medical Translation

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3 Translation as registerial interaction in cross-cultural communication

The development of translation theory to gain recognition as a distinct and independent discipline has been arduous. Historically, translation has been viewed more as a practical skill rather than a scholarly pursuit. Over time, scholars and practitioners began to recognize its complexity and significance, trying to establish translation as a field deserving of academic study. It wasn't until the 20th century that translation studies began to emerge as a formal discipline, owing debts to scholars like Eugene Nida, Roman Jakobson, Holmes, among others. Holmes' (2000) or Toury's (1995) metaphorical "map" marked a significant milestone in the recognition of translation studies as an independent discipline. However, translation studies have never been able to stand on its own, always intersected with other disciplines (mainly linguistics, literary studies, cultural studies, and philosophy). The pursuit of achieving a fully autonomous status for translation studies is bound to be difficult.

Linguistics played the most paramount and indispensable role. The relationship between translation theory and linguistics has been complex, characterized by a blend of cooperation and tension, akin to a "love-hate" dynamic relation. On one hand, linguistics has provided translation theory with invaluable tools and concepts for understanding the structure and function of languages. Early translation theorists, such as Vinay and Darbelnet, heavily relied on linguistic principles to develop their theories of equivalence and translation techniques. The structuralist and later generative linguistics movements greatly influenced translation studies, with scholars like Roman Jakobson emphasizing the importance of linguistic structures in translation.

The reliance on linguistics, however, has led to criticisms and tensions within translation theory. Some scholars argue that linguistics, particularly in its early stages, focused primarily on the formal aspects of language and syntax, often overlooking the cultural and communicative dimensions involved in translation. This narrow focus may not adequately address the complexities in the cross-cultural communicative dynamics in the translating process.

The endeavour to establish translation studies as an independent discipline then become a prominent theme. While translation was initially considered a subset of linguistics, gradually scholars within the field sought to assert

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its autonomy during the "cultural turn" (Bassnett 1998: 123) in the late 20th century. This shift challenged the dominance of linguistic theories and encouraged scholars to explore the socio-cultural dimensions of translation at a deeper level. By foregrounding issues such as power dynamics, ideology, and identity in translation, the cultural turn broadened the scope of translation studies beyond purely linguistic concerns. But it also means opening another theoretical gap: there has always been a lack of systemic or consistent theoretical framework for translation analysis, and methodological issues as to how to effectively analyze cultural factors have never been adequately or persuadably addressed; many concepts (e.g. equivalence) are just illusory.

Since the 1980s there has been a notable "return" to linguistics in approaching translation studies, particularly in the late 20th and early 21st centuries (Vandeweghe et al. 2007: 1; Snell-Hornby 2006: 152). The argument for the linguistic "return" posits that at its core, translation is fundamentally a linguistic operation involving the transfer of meaning between two languages. The linguistic return emphasizes the importance of linguistic structures, features, and systems in understanding and modelling translation processes. Scholars advocating for this approach argue by focusing on linguistic aspects such as syntax, semantics, and discourse, we can gain deeper insights into how translation functions and how meaning is conveyed across languages, and this return does not necessarily negate the insights gained from cultural aspects. Instead, it seeks to complement and balance those perspectives by grounding them in a solid linguistic foundation and the overall cultural contexts.

Fawcett's (1997/2014) delineation of the relationship between translation and linguistics into two main aspects provides a clear framework: the relationship between translation and linguistics is twofold: the first is the formulation of a linguistic theory of translation; and the second is the application of linguistic findings to the practice of translation. This twofold approach acknowledges the reciprocal relationship between translation and linguistics, where theoretical insights and empirical observations contribute to the refinement of the linguistic theory of translation studies.

Approaching translation from a linguistic perspective involves two main angles: firstly, it can be viewed as a product, where the focus lies on the translated text; secondly, it can be seen as a process, emphasizing the act of translating (Munday 2016: 8). The two perspectives of translation, often referred to as the "static" social viewpoint and the "dynamic" cognitive one, offer distinct vantage points. The "static" perspective considers the macro- and micro-contextual constraints that influence the translator, while the "dynamic" perspective delves into the internal cognitive processes involved in the act of translating (House 2014: 5; Shreve and Lacruz 2017). Hatim and Munday's (2004/2019) summary of translation studies encapsulates this dual approach by delineating the ambit of translation studies into three key aspects: the process of transferring a written text from source to target language within a specific socio-cultural context, the resulting translated text or target text, and the cognitive, linguistic, cultural, and ideological elements intertwined within

both the process and the product. These approaches underscore the interconnectedness of these two aspects with cognitive, linguistic, cultural, and ideological phenomena, acknowledging that these factors are shaping both the translating process and the resulting product, therefore highlighting the importance of their inseparable relationship in translation theorization (Luo 2003; Shreve and Lacruz 2017).

Just as Bell (1991: 26) indicated, having both perspectives integrated is a challenging task and a long-term goal. In the realm of SFL, the "static" social and "dynamic" cognitive perspectives can be re-evaluated through two complementary lenses: the "relational" model of translation, focusing on the assignment of meaning; and the "material" model of translation, emphasizing the act of doing, i.e. transformation or communication (Matthiessen 2001: 47). To conceptualize translation as an assignment of meaning entails viewing it as a form of re-contextualization; and to approach translation as cross-cultural communication requires a thorough exploration of the communication process itself. This chapter is a humble attempt to theorize translation via an integrated approach of both the relational/static and material/dynamic models from the SFL perspective.

3.1 Translation as re-contextualization

Translation is a meaning-making activity (Larson 1984: 1–4; Halliday 1992:15). Meaning is produced in context. Translation thus is a phenomenon essentially concerning the relationship between texts and contexts (Steiner 2001: 186). The nature of translation, therefore, is re-contextualization (see House 2001: 247; 2006: 343–349; 2010: 25; 2009). For a theory of translation as re-contextualization to be workable, House (2006: 344) argued that it has to fulfil at least three criteria regarding text, context, and their relationship: 1) it must explicitly take into account the fact that source and translation texts relate to different contexts; 2) it must explain and describe the changes resulting from the act of re-contextualization with appropriate metalanguage; and 3) the target text must explicitly relate to the features of the source text. These criteria necessitate a theoretical description of the dimensions of the language system in which the key terms texts, context, and their relation must be characterized.

3.1.1 Text as a semantic entity and social exchange of meaning

The notion and use of "text" have often been taken for granted in translation studies without being clarified what a text really is. A few suggestions have characterized a text with textuality and communicative action. A text brought to the presence of the translator is not just a piece to be gone through and translated as happens in many translation classes. It is, by nature, a "product" and a "process", "static" and "dynamic" at the same time (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 10).

A text as a product presupposes that the translated text is a "static" object. This "object" is not an extension of grammatical forms or structures. As a meaning-bearing object, it is a "semantic entity", "a certain construction that can be represented in systemic terms" (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 10). The word "static" is not treated as if semantics of a text is a self-existing property inside of language that a translator can discover; it is regarded as a social ***exchange of meaning*** in a particular context of situation (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 11). This is the way to see a text as both a "product" and a "process".

In translation, what is first brought to the presence of a translator is a "static" text, an instance. Then the ST enters into the interaction with the translator in which the translator predicts the meaning potential in a social relation of various kinds (e.g. the author, translator, reader, commissioner under various social ideological powers). A translated text involves an interactive nature of translating event in which participants are exchanging meanings. Such exchange happens in a special context of situation, which in turn, is encapsulated in the translated text. The uniqueness of the context of situation in translation is: both ST and TT cultures almost simultaneously are involved in a constant interaction with the translator who seeks to re-construct the meaning that is assumed, negotiated, and exchanged. Texts in translation in this sense are "static" and "dynamic" at the same time.

The dual nature of a text poses a question about the ST–TT relationship: whether the real task of the translator is to seek equivalence between two languages, as argued by Catford (1965/1978: 21): "the central problem of translation-practice is that of finding TL (target language) equivalents." If we must talk about equivalence, for a work of re-contextualizing, equivalence may mean to be sought out in terms of contextual equivalence between two cultures (Steiner 2021a), for it is the context that primarily determine a translator's linguistic choice and strategies. Such contextual equivalence has been referred to as "pragmatic" equivalence in House's re-contextualization model (2006) in which translation is described as "the replacement of a text in a source language by a semantically and pragmatically equivalent text in a target language" (House 2006: 343–347).

The "***replacement***" idea may also be problematic. First, there is no total equivalence between two cultures, especially when one deals with archaic texts in which the contextual gap is difficult, usually impossible to be closed. Second, translation may not be a "replacement", as if it is something new replacing the old ST, which may imply to discard ST. It is a new text that still has the ST norms "shining through" (Matthiessen 2001: 69) the new text. The core of re-contextualization may not to be understood as a translator *seeking* linguistic equivalents, but a re-creation of a context out of a new text, which maximally reflects *the conditions* in which the ST is produced. The maximal reflection may be more realistically described as ***approximation*** by the translator, rather than equivalence.

It is, therefore, the translator's subjectivity that is central to understanding why a text is translated in certain ways. The centrality of translators' role may

mean a change of focus in theorizing translation as re-contextualization. It is no longer the ST-oriented prescriptive approach working on the rules or norms that a translator must faithfully follow to evaluate a good translation, as it is in House's (2006, 2014) approach. Such an approach tends to lose sight of what really happens in translation. A descriptive approach of translation as re-contextualization is needed – to describe and explain how a translation is produced and why a certain translation appears the way it is.

3.1.2 Context of culture

All use of language depends on context (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 45). When viewing translation as a cross-cultural act, it is often the context of culture that has been brought to the fore. Culture is a complex phenomenon and has been widely discussed in TS since the "culture turn" (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990; Bassnett 1998; Lefevere 2002). But it has never come to us as something we can fully model despite functional definitions having been provided (e.g. Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952/1967: 77–80). No such thing as a linguistic model of context of culture "yet exists, although there are useful ideas around", as pointed out by Halliday and Hasan (1989: 47). Nevertheless, culture can be defined as the results of "the *values* attached to the things people do on specific occasions" (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 46). It is a naturally dynamic phenomenon, evolving in the flux of human activities and events that constantly renew the meanings of a linguistic act. The dynamicity of the context of culture, however, might not be useful for theorizing translation as re-contextualization (House 2006: 343; 2010: 27). This idea stems from the belief that the texts must be perceived as a finished or "static" text in theorizing translation as re-contextualization. For House, the view of context as ongoing and dynamic is a methodological obstacle that must be discarded:

> However, I would insist that such a dynamic conception of culture is in the ***last analysis not useful for translation***[1], because it cannot be operationalized, just as a view of context as unfolding, negotiable and dynamic is inadequate for a theory of translation… ***one cannot but adopt a static***, necessarily reified viewpoint of text and culture…
>
> …the task of re-contextualizing consists of "enacting a discourse out of the written text, i.e. the translator must create a living, but not essentially dynamic…contextual connections…From this it follows that context cannot be regarded in translation as dynamic…and ***views of context as ongoing and changeable*** in emergent stretches of discourse ***must…be discarded***.
>
> House (2006: 343, 350)

Such a view needs to be examined. House chooses the "static" viewpoint and discards the "dynamic" aspect of context "for methodological reasons" (House 2006: 350). The choice of "static" as "the existing accounts of cultures" (House 2006: 350) may be explained as the need for a point of

reference at which we can talk about culture. But this does not necessarily mean we need to deny its dynamicity. For House whose primary purpose is to find criteria for translation evaluation, it is important to make such a choice. Arguing what the ST context *ought to be* automatically suggests there *is* a "static" ST context that the translator should seek to re-construct. But in translation practice, trying to determine *the* original context and press the translator to re-construct an equivalent one may be unrealistic.

The dynamic aspect of context may be a good viewpoint for the understanding of the nature of translation: it provides a reasonable explanation for why a text has the potential to be translated into many versions, or why texts (especially the highly valued texts) are constantly re-translated, like *Neijing* in TCM. It is precisely because of cultural dynamics that a translation can be "alive", i.e. having an opportunity to be alive. Re-translation is inevitable as cultures change. This makes a comparative study of different translations valuable, not in the sense of evaluating which translation is the best or better, but in the sense of exploring what makes one translation different from another and how can we take advantage of the differences for our specific needs.

How then do we operationalize the dynamicity of context of culture for a descriptive theory of translation as re-contextualization? A "dynamic" context concerns how context *changes* throughout an interaction and how such changes can be incorporated into a text. It is used to model the "process" aspect of a text which takes place as a *social exchange of meaning* in a special *context of situation* – or processes and patterns of life in the environment (Butt 2001: 203), being the environments of a translation here (Matthissen 2018a, 2018b).

This is the place where the notion of "context of situation" (Malinowski 1923: 306) comes into play. It was introduced to linguistics as a theoretical construct for explaining "how a text relates to social process" on a particular occasion (Halliday 1999: 10). The context of situation is discussed under three major components: social activity which asks the question what's going on; the persons or "voices" involved in that activity, i.e. who are participating; and the particular functions according to the text, i.e. where the language comes in. Re-contextualizing/translating a text means breaking down the situational dimensions in which the text is embedded. Such situation dimensions set up expectations about how texts evolve (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 46), building up the environments of translation under which the translators' choice is conditioned, and therefore, explained.

3.2 Translation as cross-cultural communication

How does a translator make decisions in a given environment of translation? Translation has the primary purpose of creating an intermediary communication between two cultures. A translator, as argued in Gutt (2010/2014: 22) and Hatim and Mason (1997/2005: 1), is a communicator. If re-contextualization is a "relational" process of modelling translation, then translation as communication is, from a "dynamic" cognitive perspective, a

"material" process of modelling of translation, looking into how a translator interprets the meaning in context and conveys it to the TT reader. According to Hatim and Munday (2004: 77), translation as cross-cultural communication involves answering three fundamental questions: 1) who is communicating with whom in translation? 2) what is being communicated? and 3) how is it being communicated (that is, the mechanism of communication).

3.2.1 Voices in translation

The question of who is communicating with whom in translation has been extensively explored under the topic of the voices in translation (Alvstad 2013; Hermans 2014; Pekkanen 2007). Voices in translation refer to the idea that a translated text is not merely a straightforward rendition of the original, but a complex interplay of various influences and agents involved in the translation process, including the original creator of the text, whose voice should ideally be the primary one conveyed in the translation, the publisher who often influences the text through editorial choices and market considerations, the commissioners (person or organization) that commissions the translation, possibly imposing specific requirements or values, and of course the translator who translates the text, bringing his/her own interpretations, biases, and cultural understandings into the translated texts.

Translation therefore is often compared to a battlefield where different parties with conflicting interests, positions, tensions, and ideologies wage war against each other in order to achieve a dominant position to utter a certain voice through the translator's choice. Translated texts are thus like a mix of voices from the author, translator, publisher, commissioner, etc. A translator should ideally elicit the voice of the author, acting merely as a mediator (Bassnett 2011: 5). The reality is, however, that the translator is often functioning as a cultural negotiator (Croitoru 2008: 2; Sareen and Gupta 2000: 1). This role involves making decisions that navigate cultural differences, making the text relatable to the new audience while maintaining its original essence as a way of showing fidelity.

Negotiating is a process whereby, in order to obtain something, each party renounces something else (Eco 2013: 5). Compromise has to be made. Translators often have to sacrifice one party's voice in order to emphasize the voices that they believe should be prominent. This involves making deliberate choices and sacrifices. For instance, if the target audience values cultural authenticity, the translator might prioritize the author's original voice and cultural references, even if it means sacrificing some accessibility or clarity for the new audience. Conversely, if the translation aims to reach a broader, more general audience, the translator might adapt or simplify cultural nuances, thereby emphasizing the target culture's expectations over the source text's authenticity.

In this battling process, faithful or trustworthy translators are expected to position themselves as someone who continues the life of the ST in a different

language. But such an ideal might only be realized when the translator has a close contact with the ST author. But in the real-life scenarios, authors often have a distinctive way of expressing ideas, characterized by specific vocabulary, sentence structure, and rhetorical styles, which quite often cannot find equivalence in another language system due to typological differences. The authors often embed their texts with cultural references, historical contexts, and social nuances that might not be immediately apparent to the translator. A close relationship with the author may allow translators to gain a deeper understanding of these contextual elements, but they have to utilize a different set of linguistic resources to create the similar situational effects. In such sense, the translator functions more like a re-writer (Lefevere 2016: xi–xii), and the translation then becomes a product of manipulation (Kramina 2004: 37). Translators choose between different voices based solely on their own judgement of their values (even if they decide that the most important value is the maximal faithfulness to the ST author).

Translation then can be rightfully viewed as an original text on its own right or "in a new habitation" (Sareen and Gupta 2000: 17). Translation decisions essentially depend on how the translators make their (judgements of) voices heard. Therefore, although ethically, translators should be as invisible as possible so the authors' voice can be delivered to the audience, it is in fact the translators who are communicating to the TT reader about what they think is important to achieve certain communicative purpose. This is particularly true in the translations of classics, as most of the time the ST authorship is unknown, like *Neijing*. There are often a great deal of indeterminacies involved in ST.

3.2.2 Meaning in translation

A translation theory as cross-cultural communication must also be able to identify and describe what is communicated. If we see language as a system of meaning-giving signs, then in linguistic communication, it is not just the symbols that are communicated, but the values they represent, or the range of meanings they represent (Fawcett 1997/2014: 6). The basis of any translation theory needs to be a theory of meaning (Catford 1965/1978: 35); otherwise, certain important aspects (such as equivalence or approximation) of the translation process cannot be discussed. We know, based on our experience, that despite cultural differences, cross-cultural communication is possible. This implies that there is something universal within all languages that enables cross-cultural communication, and this "something" is considered to be the semantic universal in this book, in the sense that universality exists at "the deep metafunctional level" of all languages (House 2015: 55).

3.2.2.1 Universal semantics

Language universals have long been of interest to linguists. Medieval speculative grammarians and Renaissance Port Royal grammarians held that there

existed only one grammar – the "grammar of the human mind" (cited in House 2018: 70). The concept of "mental grammar" was considered to be fundamentally the same for every human. Certain schools of European and North American structuralism have pushed claims of a universal grammar to a new level in language acquisition and natural language processing (White 1990: 121–133; Nivre 2015: 3–16; Hawkins 2001: 345; Yang et al. 2017: 103–105). Biologically, humans may have many mental features in common; but there is little evidence showing that one of these universal features has to be the existence of some "innate structural rules" specifically for syntax, as in Chomsky (2008). It seems not appropriate to assume grammatical rules are universal to all human languages, even in the more abstract claims of Chomsky, viz. concerning recursion and merge (Chomsky 1995, 2008, 2014).

From a communication perspective, language is "the set of conventions" for carrying out the task of communication, and the rules of language use are evolved sets of social conventions that collectively evolved as culture (De Busser and LaPolla 2015: 36). LaPolla (1998), for example, argues that grammatical structures are simply the product of increasingly differentiated inferences, based on liner distinctions of situations within a culture. From this ground, cognitive ability, we may say, is the result of culture. Language, first of all, is a classification and arrangement of the stream of human experience (Whorf 2012: 55). Language theory, to be relevant to translation, thus must be understood as a theory of meaning, the construal of which is the semantic system in the language (Halliday and Matthiesson 1999: 1).

Now, we need to bear in mind the notion of equivalence. It may be an illusion, no matter whether it is grammatical, semantic, or contextual equivalence. There can be no total translation of one culture to another (Catford 1965/1978: 35), nor equivalence between two language systems. Semantically, human beings may experience certain things in a similar way and to a certain extent; but the arrangements of culture put a different value on aspects of experience. The idea of establishing equivalent relation between ST and TT is problematic (Yallop 2001: 230). It seems to be more appropriate to describe the ST–TT relationship with terms such as "approximation" or "correspondence" (Steiner 2001: 185; Yallop 2001: 239). A translator can maximally seek correspondent meanings to the ST. Such correspondence cannot be a total equivalence, but a cline of approximation.

3.2.2.2 Meaning as experience and relations

Theorists of translation, following theories of linguistics, have approached meaning in a number of different ways. If equivalence (or technically "approximation") of meaning is a fundamental requirement of translation, then different theories of meanings will likely represent a significant obstacle to evaluating translation. This problem seems to me to be largely attributed to a lack of understanding of the relation between language and human experience and the overall architecture of language in general in translation studies.

Language, from a systemic functional perspective, is a resource for construing human experience (see Halliday and Matthiesson 1999). It plays a central role not just in storing and exchanging experience but also in construing it through a process by text construction (Halliday and Matthiesson 1999: 1–3). The language system is itself our experience of the world and of the people living in various social relations. We use language to make sense of our inner and outside world and to carry out our interactions with other people. Therefore, linguistic meaning, or semantics then, is a transformation of human experience and interpersonal relationships fabricated in particular occasions (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 43). Language is relational (O'Keeffe 2007), in a way that "every act of meaning is at once a construing of experience and an enacting of interpersonal relationships" through text construction (Halliday 2009: 1).

According to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014), a natural language can be regarded as functionally diverse, extending a spectrum of three distinct modes of meaning, ideational, interpersonal, and textual, often referred to as the three basic metafunctions (meanings) of language. The ideational meaning is concerned with construing our experience of the world around and inside us. It functions to reflect the reality of the world and is distinguished by experiential and logical meaning (i.e. the sequence of the experiential meaning). Our experience as units of meaning can be ranked into hierarchies and organized into networks of semantic types in different orders of complexity: elementary (a single element), configurational (configuration of elements as figures), and complex (complex of figures) (Halliday and Matthiesson 1999: 7–11, 48).

It is helpful to understand this hierarchy of hierarchies and orders in translation studies as a systemic whole, since it encompasses most of the meaning typologies proposed by the major translation scholars. For instance, propositional meaning, proposed by Baker (1993/2019: 14), can be located in the ideational meaning base as a figure where the truth-condition of a proposition is described. Additionally, referential meaning, described as the symbols and the referents (Nida and Taber 1982: 35), can also be located in the elementary order, working on the specific meaning of a single element (e.g. word, morpheme); logical relations as pointed out by Larson (1984), can be approached in terms of logical meaning.

If the ideational meaning is "language as reflection", then the interpersonal meaning is "language as action" (Halliday and Hasan 1989). Language simultaneously functions to enact social relations and enable us to participate in communicative acts and take roles to express our feelings, attitudes, judgements, personal stance, etc. Interpersonal meanings tend to be scattered prosodically throughout a text, residing in "the deictic features associated with finiteness, primary tense or modality and polarity together with any attitudinal coloring" (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 397). The idea of meaning as an interpersonal relationship has often been narrowly referred to as emotive or connotative meaning in translation studies (Nida and Taber 1982: 35). Interpersonal meaning, although most translation scholars do not use this terminology, has

been gaining attention in recent years, even if in disguised forms. For instance, the study of translators' stance-taking (Yue and Wu 2021), and of ideology in translation (Munday 2008/2013; Li 2017).

Translating interpersonal meaning is perhaps the most difficult part of the process since it is often very difficult to discern the complicated relationship involved in an act of translation. One of the most controversial arguments in this regard is the idea of the intended meaning of the original author, which is deeply influenced by relevance theoreticians who advocate that communication is supposed to have the communicator's intention recognized and understood by the audience (Sperber and Wilson 1986/1995: 9–10; Gutt 2010/2014: 75). The intentionalists hold that an ethical translator should seek to invest massive efforts in knowing the sophisticated authorial intentions and to communicate them to the TT reader:

> ...understanding a translation means arriving at an interpretation that is compatible with the communicative intention of the author...to a degree sufficient for a given purpose...an ethical translator's primary loyalty, on this view, is to make cross-cultural communication possible, rather than to ST culture or TT readers or culture.
>
> Chesterman (2001: 141)

The intention of ST represents the ST writer's attitude toward the subject matter and directly determines how a translation should be organized. Therefore, the intentionalists argue the translator should try to identify and enforce the subjective intent of the ST author to the TT reader, which also seems to provide a base for the translator to claim the maximum authority of the translation as the continuity, or "afterlife", of the source text (Benjamin 1992:73). The principle of intentional meaning has set the extreme standard for what qualifies a translation as "faithful". A faithful translation, so to speak, is one that reproduces the "precise contextual meaning of the original", in the sense that it is "completely faithful to the intentions and textual realization of the ST writer" (Newmark 1988: 46).

There are, however, several issues regarding intentionalism in translation. Firstly, this idea of using original intention as a guideline is unhelpful from a practical perspective. As lofty as this description may sound, it puts a translator in a very challenging and stressful position that requires the perception of, through various means, the original intention of the author. The original author's intention is unlikely to be identified without being directly told by the ST author. One may not be surprised to hear scholars arguing in opposition to those who maintain that translation does not require the essentialism of recoverable intentions (Pym 2004: 203). Second, intentionalism generates an individualistic impression (e.g. the presuppositions of the assumed ST author and the intended ST audience) and undervalues the impact of culture, just as it does in the statements above (Chesterman 2001: 141). Chesterman's emphasis on cross-cultural communication through translation while downplaying the ST and TT cultures is in

conflict with himself. A text by its nature instantiates cultural potential (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 49–51), and “intention”, a cognitive term, is cultural. Human cognitive development, as argued, is construed as the convergence of cultural and linguistic opportunities (Butt 2006: 217).

This is not meant to disparage the significance of the intended original meaning. If the translator has direct contact with the original author and context (often this is the case in interpreting), we should, by all means, endeavour to convey the original intended meaning as clearly as possible to the TT reader. But the dilemma of a translator is the inaccessibility of the original author and multiple ideological and semantic pressures that stretch the position of the translators, and thus affect their decision-making. Translating often encompasses a fabric of intentions.

What seems more valuable is to try to understand how and why various meanings are construed in the act of translation, and by doing so, we will be able to appreciate the merits and value of each translation/translator for a particular purpose. This point is not only relevant to the translation of archaic texts, but it also sheds light on the controversial topic of textualism that has been hotly debated in the US Supreme Court.

Textualism arises as a judicial method of interpreting a statue or constitution against anything that goes beyond a text such as the intention of a law when passed. It has been in controversies with its judicial rival-intentionalism which is often criticized by the “subjective” intent of the statutory text. Textualists advocate the “objective” sense of meaning interpreted by the plain text, thus not giving weight to legislative history nor the intent of a law. However, the “objectified intent” in textualism is sometimes argued not “purely objective” (Nelson 2005: 358), and tends to neglect the purpose of the author which textualists may deny (see more discussions in Nelson 2005; Manning 2005; Molot 2006; Grove 2020). There is perhaps no equalizing of the so-called objective meaning/interpretation of texts. The original intended meaning of a text also seems to be out of reach. Indeterminacy is an inherent phenomenon of language that is beyond any human’s ability to resolve. Acknowledging this fact means that seeking for an “objective” meaning might be futile.

Moreover, there is another mode of meaning that relates to the construction of a text and functions to enable the first two modes of meanings. Textual meanings, or choices serve to organize the discursive flow and create cohesion and continuity, making a text “hang together”. It is responsible for the way elements are arranged and thus determines the patterns of information structure, i.e. the unit in which pitch contour is mapped onto the grammatical functions of transitivity and mood, and other systems of functional choice. Many translation scholars are unfamiliar with the terminology of textual meaning, but in recent years the concept has been discussed in some studies through such topics as cohesion and coherence (Lotfipour-Saedi 1997; Menzel, Lapshinova-Koltunski, and Kunz 2017; Kunz et al. 2017; Al-Kharabsheh and Hamadeh 2017), thematic progression (Hu 1999; Astuti et al. 2018; Yu 2020), and information structure (Anis et al. 2017).

Human language is thus made up of the three modes, or metafunctions of meaning that are woven into a dense fabric, cutting across language and context, with each contributing to the total interpretation of ST meanings. We can consider each part of metafunction separately, but it is crucial to look at the ensemble from different perspectives (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 23). The three metafunctions/modes of meanings can be mapped against the context of language as in Figure 3.1.

In translation studies, examining meaning through the lens of metafunction network is an important advance for delimiting meaning typologies. As early as the 1970s, Catford (1978) introduced Firthian theory into translation studies, describing meaning as the total network of relations into which a linguistic form enters (Catford 1978: 35). Nida (1982) further outlined the meaning in translation as the relation between grammatical units of opposite ranks (grammatical meaning), between symbols and referents (referential meaning), between participants in the communication (emotive meaning), between contextual relationships (contextual meaning). In general, translation theorists fail to organize all these patterns of meaning. Systemic Functional Theory, with its stratification, has allocated a rational place, or a "semiotic address" (Butt and Meurer 2004: 259), for each system of relevance to the meaning potential of the culture in question. A translator, therefore, need not go to look for some mysterious meaning property inside one language. Rather he or she tries to recreate a similar relationship through a process of re-instantiation in another language.

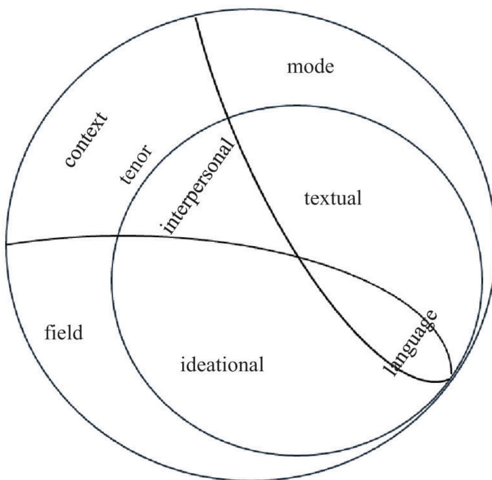

Figure 3.1. A metafunctional diversification of language in context, adapted from Martin (1993: 146)

3.2.3 The nature of communication

Human communication is understood as "one person does something with the intention of causing another to share or respond to some information" (LaPolla 1998: 1). This type of communication may occur without the use of language. For translation, the scope is apparently limited to the strongest form of communication, namely, written texts. According to Georgia Green (1996: 1), "communication is not accomplished by the exchange of symbolic expressions, but rather, is the successful interpretation by an addressee of a speaker's /writer's intent in performing a linguistic act". Interpretation involves more than decoding a signal but also involves the receivers' inference to "transcribe the linguistic form into a fully formed proposition that expresses the explicit content of the utterance" (LaPolla 1998: 2). As such, translation may be viewed as a form of communication, with a text (ST) being first learned, interpreted, then shared for certain purpose to an intended audience through the creation of a target text.

Most of the time, learning is perceived to be a cognitive process. However, I would suggest that there is an inseparable relationship between the cognitive process and the cultural semiotic process of learning. Learning can be conceptualized as a three-perspective "*change*" in meaning potential (Lukin and Williams 2006: 10; Butt 2006: 229), resulting from the up-gradating of instantiation from the instance pole to the overall meaning potential. In addition, learning often involves making accurate predictions (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 46). This can be understood as what is known as an interpretation by inference, i.e. guessing or making assumptions about the ***reasons*** for someone's linguistic action, thus creating a "context of interpretation" to make sense of the text (LaPolla 1998: 3; 2015: 31).

Usually, the inferring process occurs automatically and unconsciously since our inferences are formed based on the knowledge, experiences, and motivations developed in the culture in which we live (LaPolla 2015: 32). The experiences and knowledge accumulated in the culture may be described as "personalized meaning potential" (Matthiessen 2009: 219), reflecting what Gutt (2010/2014: 27) called the "cognitive environment", i.e. the context of interpretation that comprises a potentially huge amount of information from inside and outside of our experience with the physical world and social interaction.

In light of this logic, it can be argued that it is the translator's personalized meaning potentials that influence how a text is understood and interpreted. This explains why translation is said to be a "private affair" (House 2015: 18) because it is the translator's individual repertoires of experience (meaning potential) developed in certain cultures that play a key role in determining how a translation is produced. Since an individual translator can never reach the potential pole of culture, many different translated versions are often produced and, of course, needed to extend the meaning potential of the two cultures.

To further understand the development of a translator's personal meaning potential and how it is realized through his/her linguistic choice, I will incorporate the insights of Halliday's three-time frames of text (discussed in Butt 2006: 228–233; Matthiessen 2009: 212–221): 1) phylogenetic – the evolution of collective meaning potential in the context of culture, 2) ontogenetic – the learning or development of a personalized meaning potential, 3) logogenetic – the time frame of meaning created through a "moment by moment" text unfolding and processing in a linear reading of a text. Phylogenetically, language is a higher order of semiotic system functioning to construe our experience inside and around us as meanings that are constantly evolving over time and culture. Therefore, the growth of semantic options happens along with the complications of socio-semantic history, and these changes are gradually reflected in individual life histories (ontogenesis), accumulated in human brains where the potentials are ever-increasing (Butt 2006: 218). Finally, these changes arise choice by choice, stage by stage, throughout the unfolding of text (logogenesis) (Butt 2006: 218–219).

By adopting the three temporal perspectives, translation can be understood as an activity concerned with the relationship between the translator's personal meaning potential and the collective meaning potentials of two cultures, and how these semantic domains are unfolded through his/her linguistic choice in the creation of the target text. In addition, these temporal aspects are of assistance in showing how semiotic passages may be a primary source of evidence for ways of communication and cultural norms of meaning-making (Butt 2006: 221).

Understanding how a person's learning process is developed also provides insight into a translator's cognitive environment, i.e. her/his distinctive repertoire of meaning potential. A person's cognitive environment is built up through learning "text in context" (Matthiessen 2009: 214). Language evolves as an aggregation of registers and is inherently variable. The various patterns can be recorded and observed through the unfolding of a text. Human beings learn through texts of particular registers and expand their own cultural potential by "adding registers to their repertoires of registers" (Matthiessen 2009: 212–213).

This process is an adding of registers in systems and then transforming a protolinguistic system into a higher-order, more complex semiotic system. Gradually, a person becomes able to operate with a semiotic system that is metafunctional rather than macrofunctional. For example, the macrofunctional components in early childhood gradually give rise to metafunctions, with mathetic macrofunction giving rise to ideational metafunction, and the pragmatic macrofunction giving rise to interpersonal metafunction (Halliday 1975: 260–263). They become simultaneous systems of choice through the textual bonding of the cohesion systems. Thus, the textual metafunction emerges (Matthiessen 2009: 214–217). Analogously, later learning of particular registers not only expands meaning but also brings each aspect of language into new relationships. The understanding of a variety of registers

makes the use of any one register more abstract. In this way, a person's leaning path is fundamentally a "registerial progression" (Matthiessen 2009: 220). For a translator, the progression is likely to be even more abstract as the relativity of languages and of cultures is more emphatic in their ontogenetic histories.

An understanding of translators' learning paths is of great use in understanding how they communicate. The translator is simultaneously a receiver and a producer of text. Initially, they read and interpret the ST by first making relevance to their own personal experiences, then provide the "context of interpretation" (LaPolla 1998: 3), i.e. a set of assumptions in translators' mind, to the TT reader. This context of interpretation is intended to assist the TT reader in making sense of the meanings that the translator believes to be the most important. After a thorough consideration through an evaluation involving both ST and TT register variables (possibly the ST author, the TT reader, the commissioner, the publisher's institutional ideology, the cross-cultural difference of the subject area, etc.), then the translators present the most valuable meanings inferred by drawing relevance to their own personalized semantic history accumulated by registerial progression. As a result of this process, translation is always dynamic, in the sense that translator is in a constant "registerial interaction" with ST and TT and the two cultures (Hatim and Mason 2005: 17).

3.3 Translation as registerial interaction

Up to now, the argument for the importance of the concept of "register" in understanding translation both as a social static product and a dynamic process is quite straightforward. Register relates a text to its wider social context (Lukin et al. 2011: 190). Thus it is of vital importance to operationalize translation as re-contextualization in cross-culture communication. Register not only actualizes the relationship between text and context of culture, but also determines translation strategies and methods.

Within the SFL circle, there are two competing views about register: the instantiation model (Halliday and Hasan 1989; Matthiessen 2015) vs. the stratification model of register (Martin 1992, 1993). A clarification of the notion of register is essential for understanding translation as registerial interaction.

3.3.1 Instantiation model of register

The instantiation model sees language as a hybrid system that can be studied from two different angles simultaneously: one is that of language as a system of overall meaning potential; the other is that of language as a text. The overall meaning potential is a collective system, a reservoir of meanings of a given society and culture, and a text relates to the context of culture through a process of instantiation, i.e. a text as an instance to actualize the system of meaning potential and construe culture through a cline of generalization (Butt

1990: 25–28; Halliday 1995: 249–250; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 27–28; Martin 1991: 103–104). See Figure 3.2.

The cline of instantiation sets up text and culture at the two poles of a cline. A cline means that system and text are not different phenomena; they are only different *phases* of one and the same phenomenon, or one phenomenon seen from different standpoints. The usual analogy made is that of weather and climate with different depths of time. The weather is what goes on in our daily lives, recording the atmosphere in a short period of time. A climate is a description of the long-term pattern of weather. They are the same in nature. Both are concerned about the state of the atmosphere. If the weather forecast is not recorded, then climate cannot be measured; and climate, in return, can be used to predict the probability of the weather in a particular area. Analogously, text is the evidence of culture, and culture can be used to predict what's likely to come in a text. Context and text put together, is a reminder that they are two aspects of the same process (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 5,

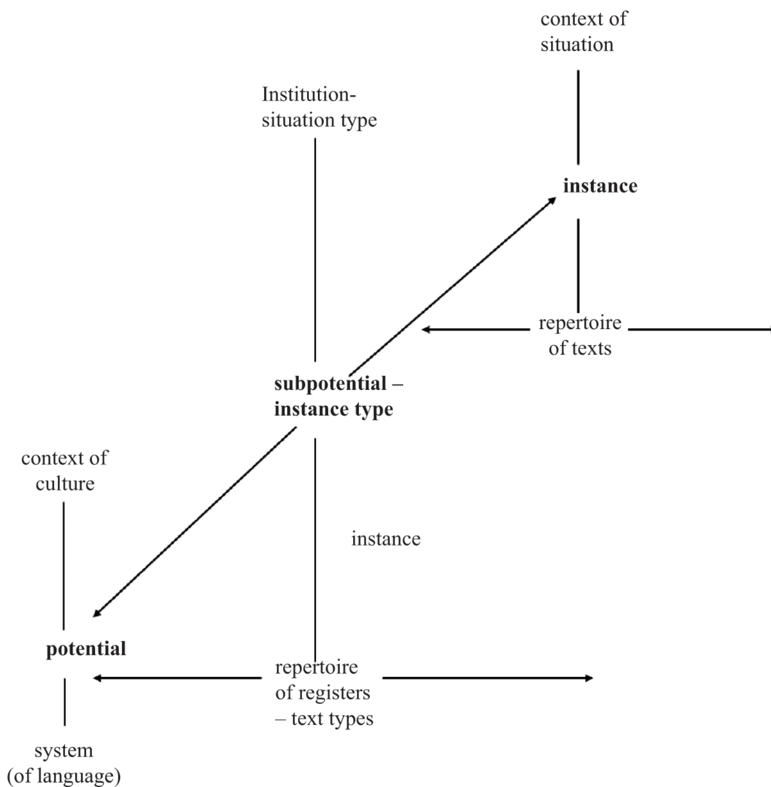

Figure 3.2. The cline of instantiation (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 28)

34), with text instantiating the context of culture (Matthiessen 2002: 242; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 27–28).

The "two poles" of the cline are the two standpoints. One can ask what the long-term pattern of weather is; the question can also be what the weather is tomorrow. An analogous question about text and overall system can be: are a corpus of texts similar to a set of texts? Or are they a representative of the sub-system of the language? (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 29). Both questions are valid. When one starts from the pole of text, i.e. studying a sample of texts, he/she identifies patterns shared by texts; when moving along from the system pole to text pole, innumerable patterns of probabilities can be identified, and they are interpreted as register/situation type, standing at the middle way point on the cline, as indicated in Figure 3.2.

The notion of register thus functions as an intermediate concept breaking down culture into manageable accounts (Halliday and Matthiessen 2004/2014: 27; House 2006: 345; Lukin et al. 2011: 190). It is represented as a particular setting of probabilities configured with field, tenor, and mode (Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 29). Register thus is interpreted as a specialized description of a general system, thus it is at the same level of generality with the context of culture, i.e. a pattern of register patterns. The context of a situation uses register variables to place a group of texts, and the way in which they are being evaluated, on a cline of instantiation.

3.3.2 Stratification model of register

Systemic functional linguistics also views language as a complex semiotic system through a stratification model which has various levels/strata of abstraction: context (extra-linguistic), semantics, lexicogrammar, phonology/graphology. The relationship between each stratum is realization. Martin (1991: 123) relates register to connotative semiotics, i.e. a semiotic that has another semiotic as its expression plane. As a result, he proposes a stratified model of social context, treating register as the "expression form" for genre (Martin 1993: 156). See Figure 3.3.

According to Martin (1992: 494), the sociosemantic organization of context needs to be considered from two angles: 1) from the perspective of language, context is interpreted as reflecting metafunctional diversity, thus Halliday's intrinsic metafunctions of language are extrinsically projected onto the context of situation, giving field, tenor, and mode experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings respectively; 2) from the perspective of culture, context is interpreted as a system of social process. This perspective is much influenced by Bakhtin's emphasis of dialogism and heteroglossia in culture diversity. Martin (1992: 495) projects the idea that meaning potential is not evenly distributed across culture, therefore, register alone is said to be not sufficient. This is described as the "tension" between the two perspectives (Martin 1992: 495).

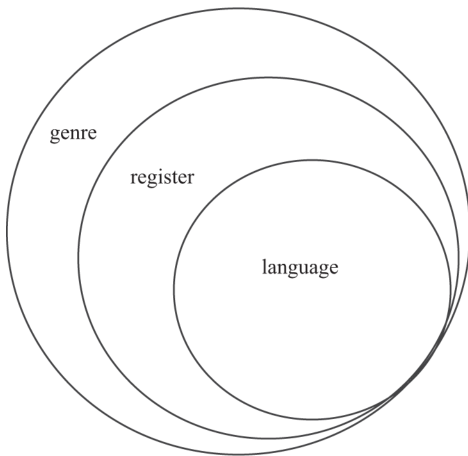

Figure 3.3 Language in relation to its connotative semiotics-register and genre, adapted from Martin (1993: 158)

To resolve the tension, Martin introduced the concept of genre – also defined as "a pattern of register patterns" (Martin and Rose 2003/2007: 308) into the description of the context of culture. As a result, context is organized into two strata, with register realizing genre. Register is still accounted with respect to field, tenor, mode, reflecting the metafunctional diversity; whereas genre is used to concentrate those meanings engendered by register. The main difference is that genre analysis is not metafunctionally organized into field, tenor, and mode. In short, genre is said to have the potentiality to work in a way in which register analysis alone had not been able to work before (Martin 1992: 492; 1993: 156).

Martin's proposal of stratified context as genre and register has provoked debates over various resulted issues, for instance, the relation between schematic structure and field, tenor, mode choices (see more discussions in Martin 1992: 504–505). The common ground between the two conceptualizations of register is that both hold the same basic purpose: to enable the management of contextual variation in language (Halliday 1995/2007: 248). However, the perspectives about the relation between text and context of culture are different, one is realization and the other, instantiation. Martin's genre has been influenced by work in education linguistics where mapping relationships among genres across disciplines has been a central concern, thus it has been found extremely helpful in the educational context. More advantages of gene have been argued in Martin (1991: 131; 1992: 505–508).

There are, however, several theoretical issues of stratification model of genre and register: firstly, genre can sometimes be identified or determined by field, sometimes by mode; it is seen by Halliday (1998) as part of the notion register

(Thompson and Collins 2001: 146). The relationship between genres tends to be a question of the field, tenor, and mode selections that genres do or do not share (cf, Martin 1991: 500; Martin and Rose 2003/2007: 309). Secondly, sometimes, Martin (1999) also refers to genre as something reflecting more or less closely the activity sequences of a field, the degree to which was by and large determined by mode (Martin 1999: 33). It is said by Halliday (1998), that the notion of genre is not necessary and can lead to a circularity in the theoretical reasoning (Thompson and Collins 2001: 144). Thirdly, genre lacks the logical power of the probabilistic conception of register as sub-potential and text-type (Hasan 1995: 184; Thibault 1987). In response to the confusion between genre and register in the stratal model, Halliday (1998) explained:

> The kind of stratal modelling which Jim Martin has introduced involves saying that we have a separate stratum we call genre. First, on a purely terminological view, I think he slightly misunderstood the notion of register as I originally meant to define it. That's as much my fault as his
>
> cf. Thompson and Collins (2001: 144)

In short, the alternative connotative semiotic modelling of genre is thus regarded by Halliday and Hasan as not viable nor necessary. The current study adopts the instantiation model of register to relate text to context of culture (mainly discussed in Halliday 1974/2007, 1977/2002, 1978; Halliday and Hasan 1985; Hasan 1977, 1995, 1996, 1999, 2004, 2008; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014). The following section will provide a critical discussion of how register has been applied in translation, in which my decision of the instantiation perspective of register will be further explained.

House (2006: 344) has highly stressed the importance of register to translation as re-contextualization, acknowledging it as the key to link text and context of culture. However, she also argues that the concept of genre is necessary for translation as re-contextualization. A brief statement has been provided for why genre is necessary:

> Although the category Register refers to the relationship between text and context, register descriptions are basically limited to capturing ***individual features on the linguistic surface***. In order to characterize ***deeper textual structures and patterns***, a different conceptualization, namely Genre, is needed as a category ***superordinate*** to register. While Register captures the connection between texts and their micro-context, Genre connects texts with the macro-context of the linguistic and cultural community in which they are embedded.
>
> House (2006: 346)[2]

It seems, there are a few issues from this passage. Firstly, there is no justification for the adoption of genre as a paradigm of culture. It is pointed out, the term Genre is used to denote the "***deeper textual structures and***

patterns", a vague definition that is left unexplained. Secondly, there is uncertainty regarding the meaning of those deeper textual structures and patterns and how they can be distinguished from the "***linguistic surface features***". Thirdly, register is *not* limited to capturing surface linguistic features. It is a manifestation of a totality of things that typically go together in the culture and captures the patterns of the overall culture potentials, representing a particular setting of systemic probabilities (Halliday and Hasan 1989: 46; Halliday and Matthiessen 2014: 29). This cannot be superficial linguistic features. Lastly, in what way the genre is "***superordinate***" than register is not clear. In short, the relationship between text and context of culture is not adequately explained and described here. It may be that the decision to adopt Genre was motivated by House's (2006) proposal of a new concept called "culture filter" to categorize translation into "covert" and "overt" forms, which seems to me, is a different terminology of the existing categories of translation strategy.

As an ever-evolving system, culture itself has many layers of complexities and potentials. The definitions may never be comprehensive given the continually evolving nature of culture as a whole (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952/1967). This means, any attempt trying capture the overall patterns of culture will always be inadequate. Going back to Firth, from whom the concept context of culture is adopted for theorizing translation as re-contextualization, he insisted that "language and culture need to be studied in a principled way", and culture is studied as a semiotic concept of "the same abstract nature as grammatical categories" (cited in Butt 2001: 1811). This means there may be no "superordinate", or "surficial-to-deeper" relations exist distinctly between language and culture. The term Genre, useful as it is for educational context, may not be necessary for a theory of translation as re-contextualization.

One of the major theoretical views expressed by the cline of instantiation is that there is no fundamental difference between linguistic texts and the underlying system of culture potentials (Williams et al. 2017: 12). Cultural potentials and cultural instances can be viewed as two different perspectives on the same phenomenon (Halliday and Matthiessen 1999: 328). Texts are instances of context (culture), culture is encapsulated in a text. A text is "the primary vehicle by which cultures are transmitted" (Halliday 2009: 56). While creating text, context of culture is created at the same time (Halliday 1999: 14).

The fact that text and context are of the same nature is crucial when we discuss translation as re-contextualization since this explains why context can be re-constructed through text and why translation is a process of re-contextualizing through re-instance. Genre in SFL is modelled against the concept of stratification. The major function of stratification, according to Halliday and Matthiessen (2014: 24), is that it allows us to "talk about language under different headings", e.g. lexicogrammar, semantics, rather than the description of the relationship between text and context (of culture).

As such, this book holds that the relationship between text and context is one of instantiation rather than stratification. Instantiation explains the way we observe metastability in social systems as apparent flux (Halliday and

Matthiessen 1999). It has already been well applied in translation studies (see Chang 2018: 166; Chen 2019: 706; Farias de Souza 2013: 575; Steiner 2021b: 35; Yang 2015: 18). The instantiation model of register entails a practical analytical framework, and one which is ideally suited to the investigation of comparable texts such as different versions of translations.

3.3.3 Registerial interaction in translation

Translation as re-contextualization from the instantiation point of view investigates cultural potential as instances, which occurs at the instance pole as one translates texts in one language into texts in another pole. The ST is seen as meaning potential generated by a multitude of subjective "readings" of the translator (Steiner 2021b: 37, 42, 47), and these potentials are re-instantiated into TT. This whole process is actualized through registerial interactions between two cultures. See Figure 3.4.

When translating, the ST text/instance is brought to the translator who is moving from the instance pole to the culture potential pole. Registerial analysis

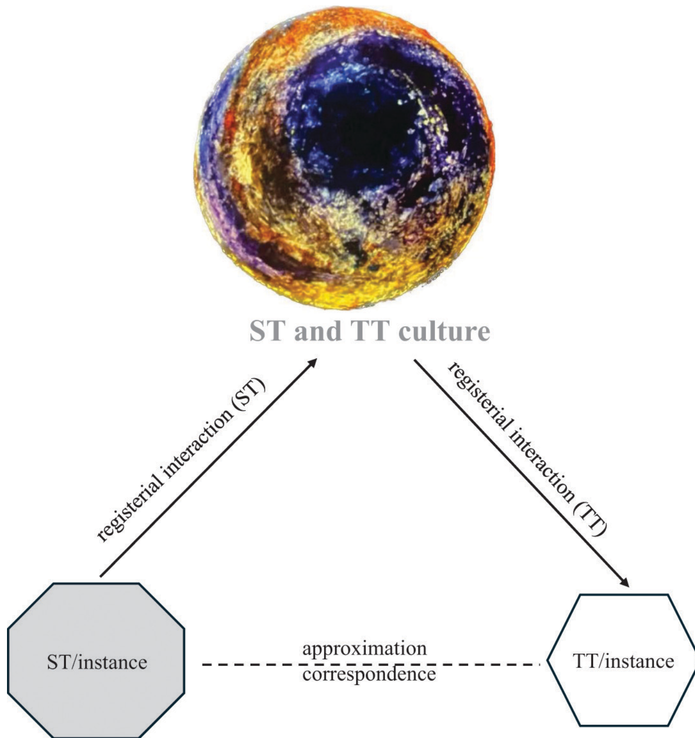

Figure 3.4. Registerial interaction in translation

is the substantial first step through which an initial interpretation about the ST context is analyzed. The translator makes assumption of ST meaning through a registerial interaction by drawing relevance from his/her personal meaning potential to ST register variables. The translator analyzes the conventions, ideologies, values, the author's purpose, social relations, etc. in the ST culture.

At the culture potential pole, the analysis becomes more complicated as the TT cultural considerations are brought in. Together with TT culture, they define the "environment of translation" (Matthiessen 2001: 41) in which the translator negotiates among various probabilities through a registerial interaction with both ST and TT. Translators relate linguistic units to the enveloping context of situation, analyzing common situations and identifying those situations whose distinctive and unfamiliar features are peculiar. Among the related variables field, tenor, and mode, tenor is regarded as the most privileged yet challenging variable for the translator to balance due to the complicated nature of social interactions (Hatim and Munday 2004: 81). Moving down on the right side of Figure 3.4, the translator is the one who knows the cultural potential. S/he has the system already in place, so for the translator, the text s/he produced is the instantiation of the system.

Translation thus becomes a unique place in which translators are brought into a cross-space interaction with situational features of both ST and TT in taking numerous fascinating challenges and determining the registerial profile of the TT. As two cultures are not identical, establishing registerial correspondence will invariably pose many challenges. Usually sacrifice must be made, the registerial profile of TT as indicated in Figure 3.4 is thus a maximal correspondence, rather than equivalence to the ST.

The route of translation is essentially a process of registerial interaction, translation thus is always "register-specific" (Halliday 2013: 40). This implies two points. Firstly, translation is happening in a specific register and the cross-registerial translation is barely possible (Matthiessen 2001: 69). Thus, a translator who is well-trained in one register may not necessarily be good for translating other registers. Different translations of a hybrid text (like *Neijing*) are all needed. Secondly, translation is a task of negotiating the merged generic registerial variables of ST and TT culture. This process involves two steps: first, the translator is to decipher the situatedness of the source text by moving up in a text-to-context direction, and second, to move down to re-instantiate the meaning potentials of ST by a re-construction of the context through the TT. Translators in this process are required to predict both ways, i.e. texts and cultures. One can understand that the work of a translator is marked with lacunae that need to be filled up. Daunting challenges may rise from indeterminacies by the distance between languages, cultures, and time, putting an extremely high demand on the translators' expertise. And for a theory of translation as registerial interaction, translators' expertise can be easily argued as something that is always registerial.

3.3.4 Registerial expertise

The argument for the registerial nature of a translator's expertise starts from the fact that "we are largely programmed by our societies into given ways of doing culture" (Lukin et al. 2011). Translation as a meaning-creating activity is based on a translator's repertoire of personalized meaning potentials learned through register progression in a given culture (Matthiessen et al. 2018; Matthiessen 2009). A translator's registerial expertise is thus viewed as the aggregation of the registerial subsystems of meaning potentials that he/she has learned in the context of a particular situation, including the experiential activities of a particular field, the social interactions in that field, and the meaning potentials connected in certain modes. It is associated with a context-of-situation influenced varieties of language which might be consequential to a translator's choices. Training or preparing a professional translator, therefore, can be achieved through familiarizing the translator with the situationality of translation, including both ST and TT context of situations. A translator is therefore required to interact with register variables, in a sense at least to have an architecture of the goings-on in registerial interaction with both ST and TT contexts. Following Halliday's register concept and Hasan's (1995, 1999, 2004) parametric approach and its descriptive power, a descriptive manual of registerial expertise through registerial interaction in translation can be mapped as in Figure 3.5.

For a translation theory as registerial interaction, the first decision for the translator to make is to locate him/herself in the overall semiotic activity of translation, i.e. to stand at the concept of register – the very core of the cline of instantiation in re-contextualizing process. While bearing in mind the translation purpose – to communicate the metafunctional modes of meaning to the intended audience – the translator will need to be given a manual script that could provide clues of meanings/choices. How much information is available to the translator depends on the situational factors the translator is in. What register does here is provide the translator with such situational factors, from which the translator can access information and formulate choices of meaning potentials. When a translator takes over a text, we could inform him/her with register parameters **field**, **tenor**, and **mode**, from which the ideational, interpersonal, and textual meanings will naturally unfold.

The fact that translation is always "register-specific" (Halliday 2013: 40) echoes in translation studies in a way that a translator has always been called to be an expert of/at least familiar by experience with a certain domain or "genre" as what is often quoted. So when entering into Field, the translator first decides what specific domain it is of the text. For the current study, the field is traditional Chinese medicine. The question we can ask is, should the translator be equipped with training and experience of the domain he/she is translating. This is also where the debate from TCM scholars arises: should we only use the translators who are experientially trained in Chinese medicine? But how to approach in a greater delicacy of field is often left unattended.

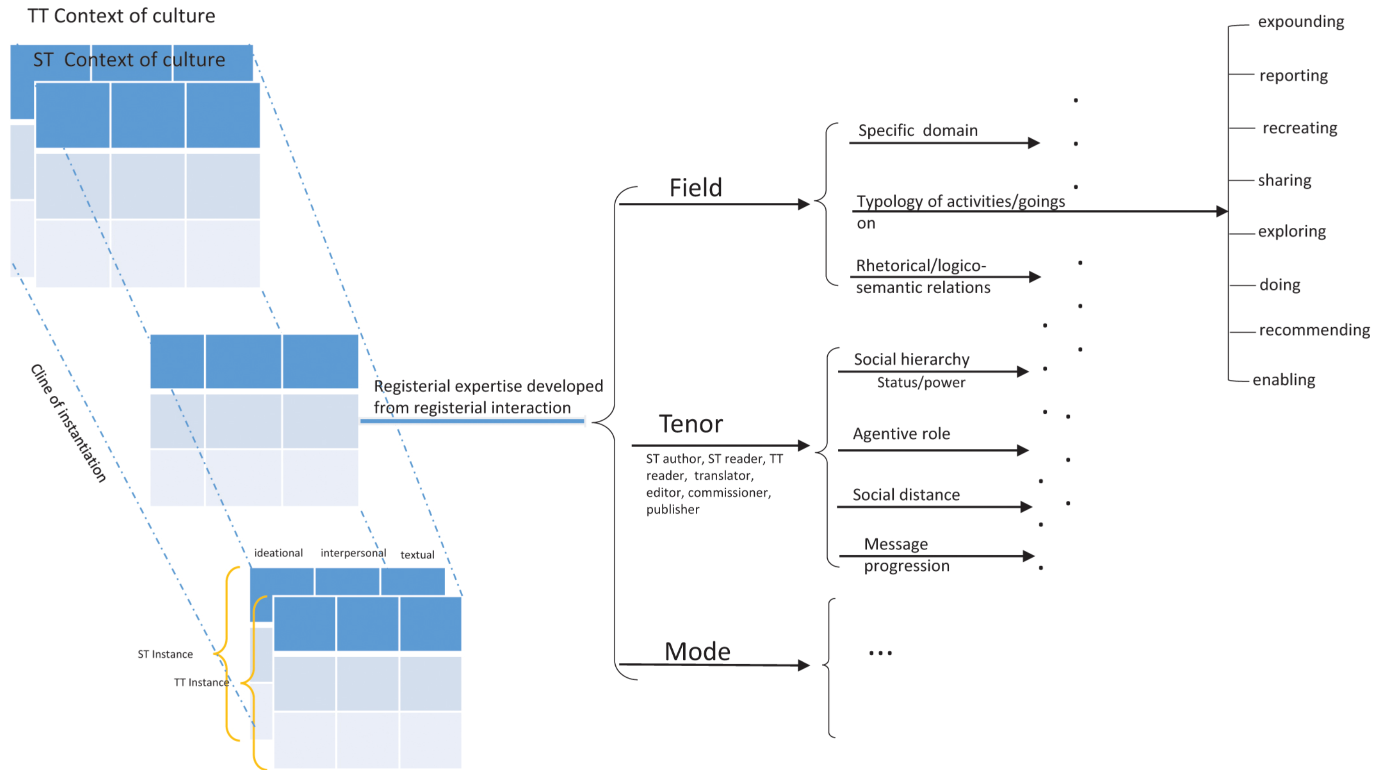

Figure 3.5. Registerial expertise developed from registerial interaction

I adopt the registerial cartography in Matthiessen (2015) and Matthiessen and Teruya (2013) for a further description of field. The Field map is based on a typology of eight fields of activity that characterize different goings-on in a particular domain:

- expounding: contexts where general classes of natural phenomena are explained for the purpose of constructing "knowledge", either in a folk or scientific model. For instance, scientific texts.
- reporting: contexts where the flow of human events on a phenomenon is chronicled to construct or review events, e.g. historical documents, news reports.
- recreating: contexts where human imaginary events or aspects of life are narrated to achieve a certain aesthetic purpose, e.g. fictions, novels, drama, etc.
- sharing: contexts where personal values, views, and experiences are exchanged to establish or maintain interpersonal relationships, e.g. autobiographies, epistolary, interpersonal exchanges in social media.
- exploring: contexts where public values and ideas are discussed or debated, e.g. radio, TV media programmes.
- doing: contexts where people use language to perform or engage in a social activity through direction or collaboration.
- recommending: contexts where a course of action, typically some kind of social process is advised, e.g. exhortation.
- enabling: contexts where action is modelled and made possible through instruction, e.g. regulating, instructing texts.

(Matthiessen and Teruya 2013: 2–4; Matthiessen 2015: 6)

The further exploration of Field activities provides translators with more understandings of certain types of texts. A text thus can be learned not just according to the characteristics of a certain domain/discipline, it can be further attended by understanding the types of activities/goings-on which often have their own patterns and ways of organization. Translators can pick up lexicogrammatical resources to construe such processes and determine their rhetorical/logico-semantic relations according to the patterns and features of that typical field.

For the parameters of tenor, Halliday viewed it as "the cluster of socially meaningful participant relationships…that are specific to the situation, including the speech roles" (Halliday 1978: 143), which later was modelled by Hasan with three distinct features: SOCIAL HIERACHY, AGENTIVE ROLE, SOCIAL DISTANCE (Hasan 1979, 1985/89), among which, the dimensions of AGENTIVE ROLE and SOCIAL HIERACHY were argued as the "hot spots" (Lukin et al. 2011: 200). While this might vary by text types, translators can determine for themselves which dimension(s) may be the most important. When taking over a text interpersonally, a translator is provided with these three general parameters to go into a further delicacy of choice. For instance, based on

the tenor diagrams as mapped out in Lukin et al. (2011), he/she needs to think about whether or not the tenor relation involved in the translating activity is hierarchic. If it is, then is it legally defined, or advisory? Is it repercussive or neutral? Translators can come up with their own terms according to the text features being dealt with at hand, to describe the nature and characteristic of the hierarchy. In terms of the agentive role, translators can ask themselves: is it an acquired or inherent role? Is it civic or familial? If it is civic, is it then by office (supervisory or negotiated) or by status (of rights, expertise, or achievements)? Is it a reciprocating or non-reciprocating role? When it comes to the social distance, the translators can ask: is it formal or causal, distant or intimate, etc.? After a basic analysis of the tenor relationship involved in the act of translating, the translator may need to think about the how message needs to be progressed, which mostly has to do with speech functions. Is it information or goods and services that needs to be conveyed? Is it a relationship of giving or demanding? Questions as such help the translators program the message to enact the relationship with the reader via a way of exchanging information or obligating certain actions.

Again, the delicacy of selection depends on the text feature itself and perhaps primarily the purpose in the situation of translation. Additional delicacy can always be built in by analyzing representative sample texts, so multiple passes through the system are allowed. Translators, by analyzing the tenor parameters, can then decide how to enact these interpersonal relationships through the semiotic meaning-making resources in the lexicogrammatical systems (e.g. mood, modality, person, tense, polarity, etc.).

Choice of mode in the surface seems to mean to choose from channels such as television, film, letter, email correspondence, etc. However, what needs to be considered is to be able to see, as a translator, the potential impact different modes may have on communication, and further on the relationship with the reader. The realization of mode is mostly probabilistic and through textual systems with a focus on deixis, which is broadly interpreted in *tense*, *identification*, and *theme* (Martin 2001: 159). Translators' different choices of tense, personal pronouns, or demonstratives can be a result of different modes of channel choices. For instance, choices of *I* and *you* may be a result of dialogue rather than narrative and applied often in plays or the dialogic components of novels rather than scientific texts. Reversely, the impact of different lexicogrammatical choices may construct different modes of communication.

This is of course a simplified picture of how field, tenor, and mode can be approached in translation. They are, however, not a single dimension but rather each is a set of register parameters. Translators can always, when taking over a text, work out more characteristics of texts. They need to bear in mind that the texts being operated are not just instances but language functioning in a situation. Here this book may provide some insights from the general situational parameters – field, tenor, mode. Each translation case is surely different and bears different expectations, thus the translators need to work out, according to their own judgement of values, the registerial priorities followed by corresponding linguistic choices.

So far with a registerial understanding for translators' expertise, it is obvious that a translator's registerial expertise may have many components or aspects. A single piece of research cannot analyze all aspects. In the current study, the focus is narrowed down to one particular aspect: translators' domain-specific (i.e. clinical training and experience), in light of the TCM translation problems. More specifically, the comparison is made between clinician and non-clinician translators, i.e. translators with and without TCM clinical training and experience.

3.3.5 Chapter summary

Keeping in line with the two main trends in translation theorization, namely static and dynamic translation, this chapter has explored the nature of translation both as a re-contextualization (static product) and cross-cultural communication (dynamic process). It has provided discussion of the essentials for a theory of translation as registerial interaction in cross-culture communication. The importance of register has been placed at the core of understanding what translation is and what a translator does, and eventually how to approach the concept of a translator's expertise – which has been argued as always registerial.

The notion registerial expertise has been put forth and explained, laying a conceptual foundation for the later chapters where the various roles of the specific aspect of registerial expertise – clinical training and experience – can be revealed. But before these, language indeterminacy, traditionally called vagueness, will be argued in the next chapter as the best platform where translator's registerial expertise (as it is essentially a form of subjectivity) can be maximally investigated.

Notes

1 The bold and italic words are my emphasis.
2 The bold and italic words are my emphasis.