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## TERMS IN MULTIMODAL DISCOURSE: “TRANSLATOR” & “INTERPRETER”

**Summary.** The present paper is a semasiological investigation of two lexemes *transtator* and *interpreter* sharing a common component “one who turns a language unit from one language into the other”. It is stressed that the component actualization of the semantic structure of the lexeme depends upon the author’s intentional meaning, word distribution, and discourse register. Our research is focused on the lexemes with the common component “one whose job is to change what someone else is saying into another language” leaving aside the lexemes actualizing other “professional” components.

**Key words:** translator, interpreter, semantics, professional discourse, intentional meaning, distribution.

**Introduction.** The problem of translating or interpreting or hermeneutics has been under close scrutiny since the exegesis of the Homeric. “Hermeneutics as the methodology of interpretation is concerned with problems that arise when dealing with meaningful human actions and the products of such actions, most importantly texts” [13; see: 5, p. 7]. Linguistics and hermeneutics are often regarded as two mutually exclusive scholarly disciplines. Recent decades, however, have witnessed the rise of linguistic approaches that take meaning back to the heart of their inquiry and can be fruitful for textual interpretation [5, p. 5]. On the surface, the difference between interpreting and translation is just the difference in the medium: the interpreter translates orally, while a translator interprets written text. Both interpreting and translation presuppose a certain love of language and deep knowledge of more than one language. Ian Mason in his *Dictionary of Translation and Interpreting* (online) specifies that once the preferred term, especially for conference interpreting, in the US, Canada and the UK, perhaps, “interpretation” is now less used than “interpreting” [see: 9]. In continental Europe, under the influence of French, “interpretation” has been quite commonly used. Accordingly, we are planning to decompose the meaning of the terms *interpreter* and *translator* to reveal their common features making them synonymous (see one term for the both professionals in German, Ukrainian, and Russian have the advantage of explicitly including both written translation and spoken interpreting been quite commonly used (see English which differentiates between the two terms).

There are two lexemes selected for the study *translator* and *interpreter* which seem to be describing similar subjects, but differ in specification that causes some confusion. Diachronically, semasiology studies the change in meaning which words undergo in the process of their historical development [see: 1, p. 107–111]. Synchronically, semasiology approaches semantic structures typical of the given language instead of studying the meanings of individual words.

The objective of the present paper is a semasiological investigation of the referred lexemes to differentiate their componential

structures and outline their development. It is a case of interest for lexicography, historical semasiology, and translatology.

Definitions of the referred words were retrieved from Free Dictionary, Webster’s New World, College Dictionary, Collins English Dictionary, Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary & Thesaurus, Macmillan Dictionary, and Webster’s Advanced Learner’s Dictionary to consider the changes in their lexical meaning when in use in various registers of professional discourse [7, p. 110].

**Discussion.** The discipline termed “professional discourse” develops side by side with the related fields of organizational discourse, workplace discourse, institutional discourse, and more recently, corporate discourse, all related to specific forms of communication. We understand professional discourse as capturing any kind of communication, including spoken, written and multimodal, that occurs in a professional context. The fundamental basis of Nicholas Asher’s theory is that word meanings are lexically simple, but the combination of word meanings involves interesting and complex ways for the types associated with the words to interact in different discourse modes [10, p. 135]. By “professional” we mean traditional “white-collar” workplaces but also “blue-collar”, “pink-collar” as well as medical, educational, legal, and many other kinds of work settings. In contrast to discourse, in general, professional discourse has been investigated less systematically and less thoroughly in relation to society and social practices and/or social change [see: 1; 3]. The research oriented towards social practices and society has been grounded on social constructionist theories and less applied to specialized texts and genres representing professional discourse [7, p. 113]. Karen Lewis attempts to answer what it means for a static semantics to incorporate the notion of context change potential in a dynamic pragmatics and denies that this conception of static semantics requires that all updates to the context be eliminative and distributive. By using the notion of a context change potential, the semantics accounts for both novelty and licensing with a single explanation [8, p. 56; see also: 10, p. 134; 12.].

Asher emphasises his idea that the meanings of words, or more properly the results of the semantic interactions between words, will shift depending on the other elements in the predication or in the larger discourse context in some sense obvious if you look at dictionary entries or think about how words combine with other words in different contexts [2, p. 4]. However, we would like to add two more features which can cause a shift in the word lexical meaning: first, the author’s intentional meaning, second, word distribution, and the professional discourse which oriented towards social practices, i.e. the meaning of the word is anchored in these units [7, p. 109; see also: 3; p. 98]. Then Asher’s interpreting the word lexical meaning as “simple” needs some specifications – the meaning is “simple” only when it is used as

a term in the professional discourse. And the dictionary definitions reveal a word complex meaning which actualizes one of its components due to the referred conditions.

**Data analysis.** The first problem is the definition of meaning which is a complex of images and emotive elements, associated with a word first used in discourse and registered in dictionary [2, p. 107–111]. Meanings are accessible to scientific investigation only through the words which serve to express them, and they are linked up with these words in a manner that brings them into the province of linguistics, and makes their study an indispensable complement to the study of speech sounds and forms [see: 10].

We shall start with the term: from the etymological aspect the lexeme *translator* was borrowed into Middle English in the 14-th c. as *translatour*; from Old French *translater* or directly from Ecclesiastical Late Latin *translatus*; it came from Classical Latin “one who transfers”; see: *translate* (v.) early 14c., “to remove from one place to another”, also “to turn from one language to another”, and directly from Latin “carried over”, serving as past participle of *transfere* “to bring over, carry over” (see: *transfer*), from *trans-* (see *trans-*) + *latus* “borne, carried” (see: *oblatus*, n.).

A similar notion is behind the Old English word it replaced, *wendan*, from *wendan* “to turn, direct” (see: *wend*). The Old English verb lexeme *wendan*: *to turn*. (1) *trans.* (a) *To cause to move, alter the direction or position of something* (lit. or fig.): - Ic áwyrge fram mé wende and cyrde, Ps. Th. 100, 4; *Wendap min heafod ofdúne*, Blickl. Homl. 191, 2; (b) *to turn round or over*. Cf. *wending*: - *Ðæt wérige mód wendap ða gyltas swíde mid sorgum*; (2). reflexive, (1) *to move one's self, take one's way, go, proceed*, *wend* (lit. or fig.): - *hé hine under wolcnum, wígsteall séceþ*, 207; Sal. 103; *Se cyning hine west wende*, Chr. 894; Erl. 92, 5; *Hé wende hine ðanon*, Cd. Th. 3; (3). *intrans.* *Him eal worold wendeþ on wilan all the world goes well with him*, Beo. Th. 3482; B. 1739; *Se here eft hámweward wende*, Chr. 895; Erl. 93, 25.

Thus the French borrowing *translate* ousted the Old English native *wendan* in the 14-th c. and develops on into the XXI-st c. alongside with the lexeme *interpret* (v) which also came into Late Middle English in the 14-th c. from Old French *interpréter* (13c.) borrowed directly from Latin *interpretari* “explain, expound, understand”, from *interpretis* “agent, translator”, from *inter-* (see *inter-*) + second element of uncertain origin, perhaps related to Sanskrit *prath-* “to spread abroad”, from Proto-Indo-European *\*per-* (5) “to traffic in, sell”.

The definitional analysis of the lexeme *translator* differentiates the following components:

1. One that translates, especially;
2. One employed to render written works into another language;
3. A computer program or application that renders one language or data format into another (Free Dictionary).
4. The definition of the lexeme *translator* is a person who helps people who speak different languages to communicate or who take something (such as a speech or a book) in one language and who puts it into a different language for people to understand (Webster's New World College Dictionary).
5. A person or machine that translates speech or writing;
6. (Radio) A relay transmitter that retransmits a signal on a carrier frequency different from that on which it was received;
7. (Computing) A computer program that converts a program from one language to another (Collins English Dictionary).

8. A person whose job is changing words, especially written words, into a different language (Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus).

9. Someone who changes spoken or written words into another language, especially as their job, see also: interpreter (Macmillan Dictionary).

10. A person who translates writing or speech into a different language, especially as a job, cf.: interpreter (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary).

11. A person who translates from one language into another, esp. as a profession.

12. A program that translates from one programming language into another (Webster's Advanced Learner's Dictionary).

13. A piece of equipment that changes a word in one language into another language: *an electronic language translator*.

Cf. Mason's definition of translator as the person who accepts and carries out a translation commission [see: 8, p. 149]. Given the very wide variety of acceptations of the term translation and its corresponding terms in other languages and cultures, a translator may in fact undertake a wide range of activities: editing, summarising, localising, adapting, re-writing, intervening, coordinating and negotiating within a team, and so on.

Hermeneutic translation is based on the “investigation of what it means to “understand” a piece of oral or written speech” within a general theory of meaning [8, p. 55], a term coined by George Steiner [see: 11, p. 254].

In various discourse registers the term “translator” actualizes one in the professional discourses, see in computing: 3, 7, 12; components; Transmission: 6; Translation equipment is related to both human and appliance: 5, 13. The component “a person who employed to render written or oral speech unit into the addressee' language”. Here we can reveal the following components *person* (human being, computer programme), *communication*, (*a foreign language*) *expert*, *competent translation/interpretation*, *employee* among which the component *competent in translation/interpretation* becomes the nucleus in the lexical meaning of the lexeme *translator* with the differentiative feature *written activity*.

Etymologically interpreter is “one who translates spoken languages; a translator of written texts”, late 14c., from Old French *interpréteur*, *entrepreteur*, from Late Latin *interpretator* “an explainer”, agent noun from *interpretare* “explain, expound” (Etymological Dictionary online).

The definitional analysis of the lexeme *interpreter* singled out the following components:

1. One who translates orally from one language into another.
2. One who gives or expounds an interpretation.
3. Computer Science. A program that translates an instruction into a machine language and executes it before proceeding to the next instruction (Free Dictionary).
4. An interpreter is a person.
5. A computer program that translates from one language to another so that people who speak different languages can communicate (Webster's New World College Dictionary).
6. A person who translates orally from one language into another.
7. A person who interprets the work of others.
8. Computing. A program that translates a second program to machine code one statement at a time and causes the execution of the resulting code as soon as the translation is completed.

9. A machine that interprets the holes in a punched card and prints the corresponding characters on that card (Collins English Dictionary).

10. Someone whose job is to change what someone else is saying into another language.

11. Someone whose job is to translate what a speaker is saying in one language into another language so that someone else can understand it.

12. Someone who performs a piece of music, a part in a play, etc. in a way that shows how they understand or feel about it.

13. A person who interprets, especially one who translates speech orally or into sign language.

14. A person who performs a piece of music or a role in a play in a way that clearly shows their ideas about its meaning.

15. One that interprets.

16. One who translates orally for parties conversing in different languages.

17. One who explains or expounds.

18. A machine that prints on punch cards the symbols recorded in them by perforations.

19. A computer program that executes each of a set of high-level instructions before going to the next instruction (Webster's Advanced Learner's Dictionary), c.f. its definition as a person who provides interpreting services for one or more individuals, whether voluntarily, under coercion or for remuneration. Throughout history, interpreters have acted in many diverse roles: as diplomats and politicians in international relations, as advocates on behalf of minority groups, as guides for explorers and colonialists, as witnesses, as interrogators, as co-diagnosticians with doctors, as cultural brokers, and as volunteers in situations where otherwise no communication would be possible [9, p. 60].

The components which constitute the lexical meaning of the word *interpreter* have been developed due to the influence of professional discourse registers: interpreting/translating; computing; music; printing; literary studies; hermeneutics; and translation appliances.

In professional discourse for instance, in teleradiocommunication *translator* means:

1. A class of facilities called translators which are designed specifically to re-broadcast another station to provide coverage to an isolated community or two. A "translator" consists of a receiver (basically an FM radio) which is set up to receive another (NCPR in our case) station. This receiver is coupled to a low-power transmitter which then re-broadcasts the (NCPR) signal to the surrounding area. Translators must re-broadcast their "primary" stations 100% of the time. Translators are a "secondary" service... which means that they take second place to "FM Broadcast Stations".

2. FM translators and FM boosters comprise a low power service on the FM broadcast band (88 to 108 MHz) that complements the primary FM service. Translator stations rebroadcasting a commercial AM or FM station (the primary station) may be authorized on Channel 221 through 300 (92.1 MHz to 107.9 MHz), FM translator call signs consist of W (if the transmitter location is east of the Mississippi River) or K (if the transmitter location is west of the Mississippi River), the FM channel number, and a two letter suffix (e.g., W285AD or K220AA). A commercial fill-in translator may receive a primary station's signal via any terrestrial transmission method; If the translator is a fill-in translator, the ERP may be further limited by the need to maintain the translator's service

contour; FM translators have been a source of growth for the radio broadcast industry in recent years; FM translator stations; K-Love has radio stations and translators all across the U.S., meaning you can tune in almost anywhere to hear Christian music and inspirational DJs. (Radio World).

In computing a translator denotes *computer program* that changes instructions in one computer language into another so that a computer can understand and perform them (Macmillan; Cambridge).

We understand that professionals conceive their means of communication, swiftly develop, and, more swiftly make most the lexicon archaic to a new science or a branch of science appearing [6, p. 5–6].

In sign language an interpreter is a person trained in translating between a spoken and a signed language. This usually means someone who interprets what is being said and signs it for someone who can't hear, but understands sign. Of course, the interpreter also will interpret and speak the words which convey the meaning of whatever the signing person signs so hearing people can "hear" what is signed. Since ASL (American Sign Language) is a completely different language from English; it cannot be translated "word for word", so it requires considerable skill to be a sign language interpreter.

Here we can summarize the following components of the lexemes *translator/interpreter*: "a person (human being), communication, (a foreign language) an expert, competent in interpretation, an employee, a computer programme", among which the component "competent" in interpretation becomes the nucleus in the meaning of the lexeme interpreter with the differentiative feature "oral activity". The conceptual meaning of *translator/interpreter* is "an instrument to change a native language unit into a foreign language unit which is represented by lexemes": (1) human, expert in written activity; (2) human expert in oral activity; and (3) non-human; computer programme; (4) re-broadcaster: non-human, facility.

The conceptual meaning means logical, cognitive, or denotative content. It is based on two structural principles, which are contrastiveness and constituent structures. It is usually represented in the definitions we find in dictionaries.

The connotative meaning of the lexeme *translator* is "a person who in translating closely follows the written Source Text". The connotative meaning of the lexeme *interpreter* is "a person who in translating the oral source text may introduce some structural transformations preserving the meaning of the discourse" (cf.: interpreting, just like translation, is fundamentally the art of paraphrasing) – the interpreter listens to a speaker in one language, grasps the content of what is being said, and then paraphrases his or her understanding of the meaning using the tools of the target language. Though the given demarcation line is not watertight, compare the translator's products: a novel, a court claim, a medical diagnosis and the recorded interpreter's products: a football commentary, a science-research report, a speech at the opening ceremony of the abstract art exhibition, and trial proceedings. The differences in skills are arguably greater than their similarities. The key skills of the *translator* are the ability to understand the source language and the culture of the country where the text originated, then using a good library of dictionaries and reference materials, to render that material clearly and accurately into the target language (Language Scientific). In other words, while linguistic and cultural skills are still critical, the most important mark of a good translator is the ability to write well in the target language. The connotative

meaning is the meaning above the conceptual meaning and it may vary according to culture, background or society. Thus, connotative meaning can be subjective or unstable. It depends very much on how an individual or society perceives a word [7, p. 108]. It is the association that we make in our mind of what these lexical items represent.

Karen Lewis underlines the issue that The semantic values of discourses, sentences, and sub-sentential expressions are what they contribute to the current state of the discourse, generally conceived of as *context change potentials* (CCPs), which are functions from context to context, or relations between contexts [see: 8]. The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy defines dynamic semantics as a perspective on natural language semantics that emphasizes the growth of information in time. It is an approach to meaning representation where pieces of text or discourse are viewed as instructions to update an existing context with new information, the result of which is an updated context. In a slogan: meaning is context change potential. Since dynamic semantics focuses on the discourse actions of sender and receiver, it is in a sense close to use-oriented approaches to meaning in philosophy such as the work of Wittgenstein and Dummett [see: 12]. Communities or cultures of professional practice can be interpreted as professional groups that work in paradigmatic frameworks comprising common practices, cultural norms, interests and philosophies [6, p. 5].

**Conclusions.** We focused our research on the lexemes with the common component “one whose job is to change what someone else is saying into another language” leaving aside the lexemes actualizing “professional” components like radio broadcasting, musical performance (a musical performer as an interpreter, mathematics, computer programming (a computer program determines which user program is to be executed next); printing, literary studies and hermeneutics, and appliances for translation. The actualization of a definite component and the cause of its shifting onto the nucleus the semantic structure of the lexeme depend upon the professional type (register) of the discourse, the word distribution, and the author’s intentional meaning. The discourse of professional practice plays a number of key roles in reflecting, documenting, monitoring, critiquing, shaping and extending practice. Neither practice nor its discourse can exist in isolation of each other.

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#### Михайленко В. В. Терміни у мультимодальному дискурсі: письмовий «перекладач» та «усний перекладач»

**Анотація.** Стаття є семасіологічним дослідженням двох термінів «translator» і «interpreter», які мають спільний компонент «той, хто передає зміст мовної одиниці з однієї мови на іншу». Наголошено, що актуалізація компонентів семантичної структури лексеми залежить від інтенціонального значення автора, дистрибуції та регістру дискурсу. Відповідно, ми плануємо розкласти зміст термінів «translator» і «interpreter» (інтерпретатора і перекладача), щоб виявити їхні спільні риси, що роблять їх синонімами (див. один термін для обох виконавців у німецькій, українській і російській мовах, включно з письмовим перекладом і усним перекладом), та їхні особливості, які роблять їх експертами у різних галузях (див. англійську мову, яка розрізняє два терміни).

**Ключові слова:** перекладач, інтерпретатор, семантика, професійний дискурс, інтенціональне значення, дистрибуція.

#### Михайленко В. В. Термины в мультимодальном дискурсе: «письменный переводчик» и «устный переводчик»

Статья является семасиологическим исследованием двух терминов «translator» и «interpreter», которые имеют общий компонент «тот, кто передает содержание языковой единицы с одного языка на другой». Отмечено, что актуализация компонентов семантической структуры лексеми зависит от интенционального значения автора, дистрибуции и регистра дискурса. Соответственно, мы планируем разложить содержание терминов «translator» и «interpreter» чтобы выделить их общие черты, которые делают их синонимами (см. один термин для обоих специалистов в немецком, украинском и русском языках, включая письменный перевод и устный перевод), и их особенности, которые делают их экспертами в различных областях (см. английский язык, различает два термина).

**Ключевые слова:** переводчик письменный, переводчик устный, семантика, профессиональный дискурс, интенциональное значение, дистрибуция.