

# Multilingual and Parallel Corpora Translation Studies (ctd)

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# Linguistic Aspects of Translation

- Jakobson (1959) viewed identity of meaning across languages as impossible or extremely rare:
  - Eng. *cheese*
  - Rus. *syr*
  - Deu. *Käse*
  - ...
- Denial of traditional translation definition?  
(cf. WordNet definition)

# Linguistic Aspects of Translation

- Jakobson (1959) viewed identity of meaning across languages as impossible or extremely rare:
  - Eng. *cheese* (also *cottage cheese*)
  - Rus. *syr* (*cottage cheese* is *tvorog*, not *syr*)
  - Deu. *Käse* (also *Hüttenkäse*=?*cottage cheese*)
  - ...
- Denial of traditional translation definition?  
(cf. WordNet definition)

# Meaning equivalence

...	tvorog
cheese	syr
	...

# Context

- But:  
We would like to say that *syr* is a valid translation of *Käse* or *cheese* in a **particular context**
- How can we distinguish these statements?

# Correspondence and Equivalence

(Koller 1979)

- A similar distinction to Saussure's *Langue* and *Parole*:
  - **Correspondence** of two constructions in different languages (general, systematic)
  - **Equivalence** between source and translation in an individual case (instance)

# Correspondence and Equivalence

1. **Denotative** equivalence – same extension in the worlds
2. **Connotative** equivalence – corresponding choice of words, same stylistic connotations
3. **Text-normative** equivalence – same text type/register, corresponding conventions
4. **Pragmatic** equivalence – same effect on recipient, perceived the same
5. **Formal** equivalence – the same formal relationships between linguistic elements, including word games and linguistic style

# Exercise - which equivalence?

- Schau mal den Hund an  
*look once the dog on*
- Bitte kommen Sie mit  
*please come you with*
- „In Ordnung,“ sagte Viktor  
*in order            said Viktor*
- Wenn schon denn schon  
*if    already then already*
- Eislaufveranstalter kriegen kalte Füße
- look at the dog
- Please come with me, sir.
- “alright,” said Viktor.
- In for a penny, in for a pound
- Ice skating organizers get cold feet



# Functional equivalence

- Content is determined by function; literal translation is irrelevant:

## **Alarm Signal**

To stop train  
pull handle

Penalty £50  
for improper use

## **Notbremse**

Griff nur bei  
Gefahr ziehen

Jeder Mißbrauch  
wird bestraft

[Toury 1995]

# Functional equivalence

- Content is determined by function; literal translation is irrelevant:

## **Emergency Brake    Notbremse**

Pull brake only in    Griff nur bei  
case of emergency    Gefahr ziehen

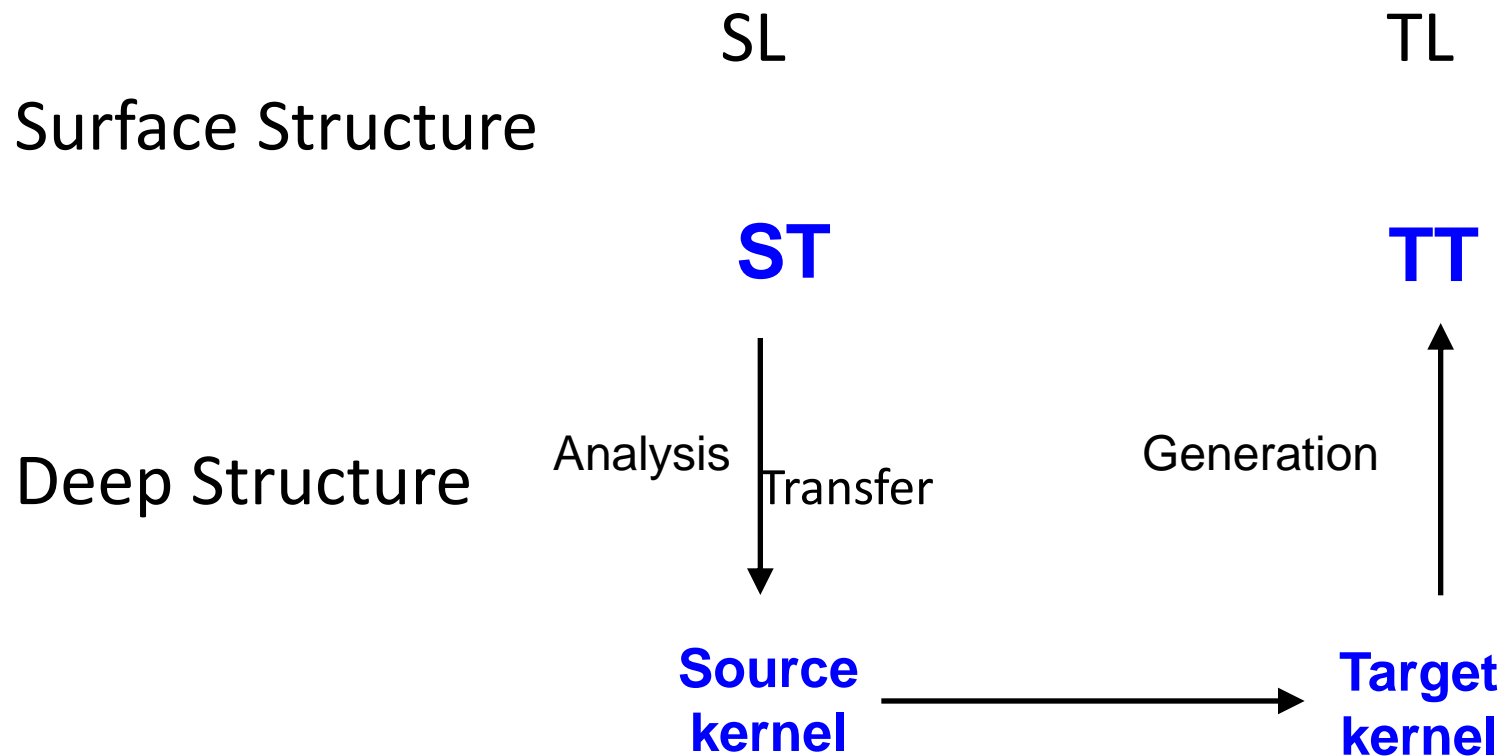
Any misuse will    Jeder Mißbrauch  
be punished    wird bestraft

[Toury 1995]

# How is function carried over?

- A systematic description of all correspondences is impractical:
  - *The following applies to warnings in public transport...*
- Early suggestion:
  - Transfer via “kernel” (Nida/Taber 1969)
  - Strongly influenced by Chomsky’s transformational grammar

# How is function carried over?



# Kernel – Nida & Taber's approach

- Four grammatical classes (cf. UG)
  - Events ( $\sim V$ )
  - Objects ( $\sim N$ )
  - Properties ( $\sim A$ )
  - Relations ( $\sim P$ )
- But: in principle independent of realization via POS categories

# Kernel – Nida & Taber's approach

- **Logical approach**, similar to predicate logic, formal semantics:
  - Creation of the world: *create*(x?, world)
- Transfer and surface structure are separated
- Hypothesis: languages are more similar at the kernel level

# But

- Much remains unclear:
  - Do all languages have the same '**inner form**' (cf. Wilhelm von Humboldt and others)
  - How do the analysis and generation happen?
  - Are they separate, **independent** processeses?
  - What determines **which surface structure** is realized?
  - How does **context** come into play?

# Testing

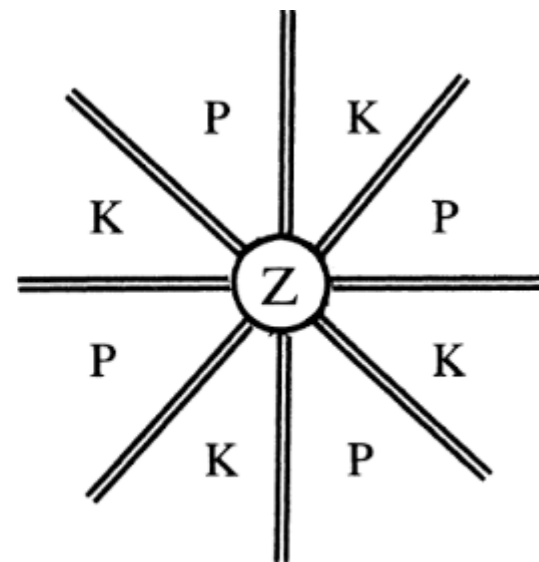
- As a possible control for the generation process, Nida and others suggested using **the cloze test**
  - Omit a word in the translation
  - If TL reader can complete it: the translation allows **reading comprehension**
  - If readers can glean the kernel from retained text, completed text is part of **generation**



# Testing

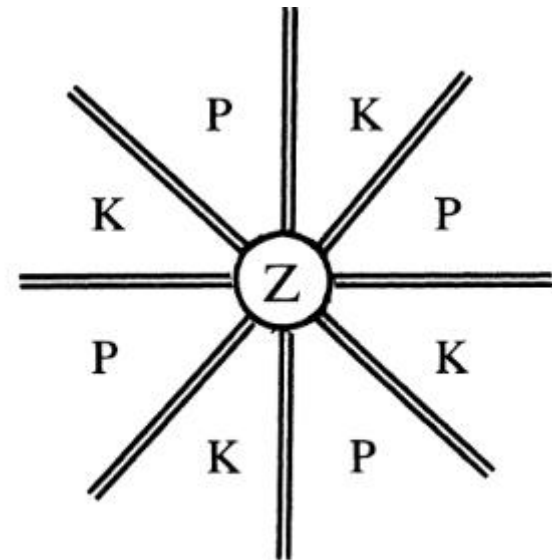
- Experiment: Snell-Hornby (1983)

10    len für Arbeiterwohnungen, jede Zeile identisch  
mit der andern — ein trostloses Meer aus dunkel-  
rotbraunen Ziegelsteinen, aus dem verrusste  
Schlote emporragen. Erst gegen die Hänge der  
umliegenden Hügel hin und weiter gegen die  
Küste zu, wo die Bessergestellten ihre Häuser  
gebaut haben, hellt sich das Stadtbild auf. Die  
15    Hauptstrassen, die    /    vom Zentrum  
ausgehen, teilen die Stadt in Kreissektoren auf,  
die in abwechselnder Folge von Katholiken und  
Protestanten bewohnt sind, so dass jede Gruppe  
sich immer von beiden Seiten her bedroht fühlt.



# Testing

- Experiment: Snell-Hornby (1983)
  - The main streets, which lead from the centre (Z) [**simile**], divide the city into districts alternately inhabited by Catholics (K) and Protestants (P), so that each group always feels threatened from both sides.



## Testing part 2

- Now comes the trick:
  - Suppose translation is really:
    - Surface 1 -> kernel -> surface 2
  - Let's assume comprehension is given
  - Shouldn't the non-cloze version have the same similies?

## Testing part 2

- Given the whole text, English speakers choose:
  - Like the spokes of a wheel
- Native German speakers choose:
  - Like the rays of the sun
  - Like rays of a star
  - ...
- Is this literal translation?
  - NB German **does not** mention the source of the light
- What about the kernel approach?

# Reading for Monday

- Identifying “Translationese”: Bernardini & Baroni 2005 (in Canvas)