TEXTUAL PRAGMATICS AND EQUVALENCE

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TRANSLARION PROPERLY DEFINED

- Koller: what he takes to be translation:

  Between the resultant text in L2 (the TL text) and the ST in L1 (the SL text) there exists a relationship which can be designated as a translational, or equivalence, relation. (1995:196)

- *translational* (or ‘translatory’) → ‘strictly pertaining to translation’ (as opposed to original writing)
- & by equivalence relation: different from ‘deriving texts’ in summaries or ‘explaining’ in a dictionary entry.
- A great deal to: differences in linguistic code, cultural values, the ‘world’ and how it is perceived, *style* and aesthetics, etc.
LANGUE- ORIENTED VS PAROLE- ORIENTED EQUIVALENCE

- equivalence: the narrowly quantitative approach vs the open-ended text-and-beyond view.

- Koller (1979) maintains a distinction between formal similarity at the level of virtual language systems (*langue*), and *equivalence* relations obtaining between texts in real time at the actual level of *parole*. 
Textual equivalence → not between the languages themselves at the level of the linguistic system but between real texts at the level of text in context.

One way: to define equivalence.

Translation approaches informed by pragmatics: dynamic view of equivalence,

SO the model of equivalence by Koller is variable and for relationships between comparable elements in the SL and TL.
EXAMPLE

I had wanted for years to get Mrs Thatcher in front of my camera. As she got more powerful she got sort of sexier.’
(Newsweek 21 May 2001 [bold in original])

1. the ultimate **formal Equivalence**: where a SL form is strictly replaced by an identical TL form.
   
e.g., *strategy, bureaucracy* $\rightarrow$ Arabic *stratiijiiyya, biiirokratiyya*).

**BUT** in the case of *sexy*, *we have to move up one level in the equivalence hierarchy*,
   
e.g., ‘sex–sexy’ highlighted.
2. THEN, the next level is *referential or denotative equivalence* →
   *SL form* is replaced by a TL form that basically refers to the same ‘thing’

3. A denotative may (in the case of Arabic) convey something like ‘pornographic’.
   → we should seek *equivalence at the next higher level of ‘similarity of association’ →
   connotative equivalence*,
   *sexy* → ‘attractiveness’.
5. ‘attractiveness’: physical term ‘gravity’ that are too ‘direct’ and ‘scientific’ for this context. → we should seek equivalence at the higher level of textual context and aim for so-called text-normative equivalence.

6. Contexts of use and the effect on the TT reader are close to that experienced by the ST reader. To achieve: by pragmatic or dynamic equivalence.
Decision Making

- Jirˇi Levy´ (1967) defined in terms of moves as in a game of chess, and choices to make from several alternatives.
- In doing any kind of translation, there will always be a ‘problem’, and a number of possible ‘solutions’. At every stage of the translation process, choices are made, and these obviously influence subsequent choices.
WHAT MOTIVATES TRANSLATOR DECISION-MAKING

- Aesthetic
- Cognition and knowledge
- Commision
Linguist and translation theorist Robert de Beaugrande sees equivalence relations in terms of the translation generally being ‘a valid representative of the original in the communicative act in question’ (1978:88).

TEXTUAL PRAGMATIC
Example:

NEWSWEEK: It is a bid [sic] odd, isn’t it, that a journalist who was held captive by the Taliban would, several months later, be converting to Islam?

RIDLEY: I know, you couldn’t make it up. It is strange.