

Review

Descriptive Translation Studies – and Beyond (Revised Edition)

by Gideon Toury (author)

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This book is a revised version of the same title book published in 1995. It reflects an additional step towards ongoing research project on Translation Studies and particularly descriptive approaches signaled since 1970s. Therefore the main objective of G. Toury, yet basically centers round the limitations of using descriptive methods as a tool. He positions Descriptive Translation Studies (DTS) as a branch at the very heart of the discipline of Translation Studies and between its theoretical and the applied branches. What mostly makes special and unique this revised book is a variety of case studies, which not only accelerates the methodological and theoretical discussions for further interpretations and endeavors but also uniquely frames the whole material into the confines and parameters of an enchanting anthology. Although the book consists of four Parts individually entitled in respect to the content encapsulated in each of them and which altogether lace up the 'fabric' of the product as an entity on its own, they certainly project and lapse on the overall intentions and goals of G. Toury who scientifically and in common sense affords his scholar conduit committed in this revised format. In few words, the book obviously actuates cross - and interdisciplinary approaches on the basis of Translation Studies, descriptive-interpretative approaches, Literacy Studies, Literary Studies, Shakespeare's industry, Reception Studies, Media Studies, Cognitive Studies and Linguistics. However I will commence its content analysis and evaluation on part-based orientation nonetheless, as follows:

Briefly inscribed, *Part I - The Pivotal Position of Descriptive Studies and DTS* (pp. 1-15), mainly oscillates and resumes a theoretical framework of position of 166

descriptive studies and particularly of a descriptive-explanatory branch within Translation Studies in general. In addition *Part II - A rationale for Descriptive Translation Studies*'s texture composed of self-contained *Chapters*, transcends and strictly unveils a detailed rationale for that positioning and as such the whole fabric endowed in it presumably relies on an indispensable framework and background to accurately understand the reserved *Part III*. G.Toury in *Translations as facts of a 'target' culture: An assumption and its methodological implications* (*Chapter 1*, pp. 16 – 35) ventures on: *Approaching translation within a target-oriented framework; translations as cultural facts; the need of proper contextualization*; in *Chapter 2 - The notion of 'problem' in Translation Studies* (pp. 35 – 61), he theoretically spins up the discussion to affairs like: *'Problem' and its terminological status* and advances his scholar affects to *Problem 1* and *Problem 2* and *Problem 3* which respectively resort to translatability in terms of potentials, whereas in *Excursus A* (pp. 47 – 61) – he retrieves *pseudotranslations and their significance* as well as their performance in *Translations Studies* to resume his conduit with the discussion of *Papa Hamlet. Chapter III - Being a norm – governed activity* (pp. 61 – 79) that reveals highlights, such as: *Pairing 'translation' and 'norms'*; and *Chapter IV* (pp. 79 – 93) - *Studying translation norms* which resolves *norms in translation* and consequently laces them up as theoretically and comprehensively featuring them as highly disputable kernel issue; in *Chapter IV's 'texture'* we are rather impressively tickled by his methodology *to extract translational norms*. In almost the same venue *Chapter V* (pp. 93-115) - *Constituting a method for Descriptive Studies* amplifies more respectful key issues, like: assumed translations and their translatability and so on; and herein we float in his intellectual *agency* on Descriptive Studies and at the same time discover his postulations accomplished as methodologically as theoretically. *Chapter VI - The coupled pair of replacing + replaced segments*'s material affiliates us affectionately to issues, like: the need for a unit of comparative analysis and so on. In this pursuit, it also demonstrates with certainty that automatic retrieval indeed involves *long – term memory*. *Chapter VII - An exemplary study in Descriptive Studies: Conjoint phrases as translational replacements*'s texture presumes *conjoint phrases of near synonyms* (pp.131-141) in their occurrence in assumed translations in one particular tradition. In this rationale, the author obviously acquaints us with essential key notions, like: *binomials, shifts, translation relationships, first level generalizations, second level generalizations*, and haphazardly swims softly into the first and second level of generalizations, which basically outreach not only beyond the individual translation in one and the same culture, but also beyond the boundaries of that culture as a whole. Furthermore, *Part III - Translation – in - context: An assortment of case studies* (pp. 145 – 161) accurately tops off a rather interesting material, which mostly displays a number of worthy *case studies*. The material organized in *Chapters* indeed stands out for also individual entities (units) and rather likely they could be called even mini-books. But turning back to my concern, the studies

labeled as *Chapters* eventually display a number of extraordinary exemplary issues analyzed and contextualized as well. In addition texts and modes of translational behavior are positioned in their cultural setting and textual components annotatively are aligned to their texts and also to the cultural *habitats* they are embedded in. In this *Part*, the author's 'fabric' progresses from the general to specific concern beginning with historical moves to end up with the application of rich experimental methods to the study of translation. The historical moves are well described in two Chapters: *Chapter VIII - Between 'Golden Poems' and Shakespearean sonnets* (pp. 145 – 161), where he provides ontologically a detailed overview on emergence, development and consolidation of Shakespeare's industry and Shakespeare's Studies in the Hebrew literature; and *Chapter IX - A lesson from indirect translation* (pp.161 – 177), where he methodologically provides the fact that the (in)directness with which the act of translation is performed, can be norm-governed too and then amazingly continues to argue on the essence of symptomatic status of indirect translation to approach us finally towards the *Revival Period*, which brought Hebrew literature in contact with various European literatures. *Chapter X - Literary organization and translation strategies: A text is sifted through a mediating model* (pp. 179 – 196) displays considerable details on a short German tale for children *Das Sclaraffenland* translated in Hebrew *Eden ha-taxton = Lower Paradise* in early 1920s (both texts are included in the *Appendix* to this *Chapter*) and *Excursus B - 'Translation of literary texts' vs. 'literary translation'* (pp. 197 – 211) establishes again a functional qualification of 'literary translation' distinguishing it from any other mode of translating a literary text. *Chapter XI - Studying interim solutions: Possibilities and implications* (pp. 213 – 226) mainly investigates the closely decision-making process in all its phases elucidating the importance of decision articulated in language and also committed in paper. In the same venue, *Chapter XII' - A translation comes into being: Hamlet's monologue in Hebrew* (pp. 227 – 239) basically unfolds up progressively the concept of revision accomplished in the process of translating an independent textual segment. *Chapter XIII -Translation – specific lexical items and their lexicographical treatment* (pp. 242 – 256) directly argues on the assumption that texts are made of *lower-level elements* and granted so they undergo substantially lexicological and lexicographical treatment in translations. *Chapter XIV's Experimentation in Translation studies: Achievements, prospects and some pitfalls* (pp. 257 – 275) spells out the need of adequate contextualization in the critical presentation of the application of experimental methods to the study of translation. Hence, the overview presumably proceeds with the conception of the experiment, as an empirical procedure to the assumption that inquiry is a set of hypothesis, and in translation doubtlessly the whole process should be characterized by a degree of *uncertainty*. Its *Excursus C* (pp. 277-295) - *A bilingual speaker becomes a translator: A sketch of a development model* carefully endows the 'fabric' to expose the gradual emergence of a translator within a socio – cultural set - up. And finally

Part IV - Beyond Descriptive Studies: Towards some laws of translational behavior (pp. 295 – 317) remarkably accustoms us with the indispensable role of laws in *Translation Studies*. Because of this cognitive level, the laws are folded up also as non-lawlike generalizations and the question how to deal with ‘*translation of metaphors*’ rationally necessitates the assumption that theoretical statements do not make up laws (pp. 300 - 303).

Concluding I could emphasize fiercely what distinguishes mostly this revised edition collocates round the easily and comprehensively overlap from expository part (*Part I*) to a dense series of methodological discussions (*Part II*) and sound assumptions, which indisputably constitute a rationale for descriptive studies in translation and which eventually establish altogether a framework and a necessary background and solid ligature for postulations in *Part III* qualified particularly for assortment of case studies contained in chapters and sequentially developed as autonomously self- contained units. As such, the chapters could be read in and for themselves and consequently rather be conceived as ‘mini – books’. And finally in *Part IV* crucial questions once encountered in expository part speed up the scientific and rationale thought and discussion to postulating too far. Despite this, nonetheless the book consists of four parts. They certainly stand out as complementary as indispensable wholeness in terms to each other, which predominantly insinuate and inscribe the dominant voice of the author acknowledged and recognized in a certain ‘fabric’ and sketch achieved by him uniquely. This book is easily accessible in content and style although it is based on *Part* approaches to the main prevailing concern, which is *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. This feature categorizes the book for specialized and accrued readers and experts of the field as well, who encourage the advances, and also indexes it in the category of anthologies. In terms of content, the book appropriates a digestible variety of approaches and methods presenting material, which offer insights into questions related to Translation Studies and its branches and phenomena pertaining to its object level, which constitute the main goal of such a discipline. The author also provides a well-organized bibliography section, which provides wide information on further reading. At this point, the book can be recommended also for young researchers without excluding even students, who privilege themselves on abiding interest to gain in-depth information on the possibilities for research topics, methodological investigations and theoretical postulating empowerment.

These features give credit to G. Toury who has developed and procured his revised product in its entity with so much caution and respect as well as deep appreciation to John Benjamin’s Publishing Company.