

## SKOPOS THEORY AND TRANSLATION EQUIVALENCE ISSUES

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### *Анотація*

*В роботі розглянуто основні положення скопос-теорії та її революційний вплив на перекладознавство та всю сучасну лінгвістику, описано процес перекладу відповідно до комісійного завдання, яке визначає скопос цільового тексту, порівнюються поняття еквівалентності та адекватності перекладу. Автор також розглядає перекладознавчий аспект викладання англійської для спеціальних цілей у технічних університетах.*

**Ключові слова:** скопос, цільовий текст, текст оригіналу, еквівалентність перекладу, адекватність перекладу.

### *Abstract*

*The paper highlights the basic postulates and revolutionary effect of Skopos Theory on Translation Studied and modern Linguistics in general. It describes the translation process in accordance with the translation brief, which defined the skopos of the target text. Concepts of equivalence and adequacy are elucidated. The author considers the translation aspect of ESP teaching at technical universities.*

**Keywords:** skopos, target text, source text, translation equivalence, translation adequacy.

Skopos theory has been recognized as a fundamental concept in Translation Studies as well as in modern Linguistics in general. The very idea originates in 1980s in Germany. It was developed and given rise to with publishing 'Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie' by Katherina Reiss and Hans Vermeer in 1984 [ 2 ]. The theory got much publicity all over the world once published

The authors of the Skopos theory claimed at creating and founding a general theory of translation based on pragmatic, linguistic and cultural aspects. The word skopos was borrowed from Greek, where it means 'purpose or goal of any activity'. The main postulate of Skopos theory reads, that translating as a process has its goal and is aimed at specific audience, i.e. has its client (or commissioner) who informs the translator about their requirements and preferences, that is skopos. In accordance with the given task and client's wishes ( or according to the translation brief, as it is called) the translator states the skopos and is free to choose the methods, strategies and means of translation modifying or sometimes even neglecting the original text. Thus, the source text (ST) and the target text (TT) get the same status. According to K.Reiss and H.Vermeer, to translate means to create a target text for target audience to hit the given target under the given circumstances [2, 121].

This approach affected the concept of translation equivalence to a great extend. In fact, it has been replaced by adequacy notion. Though very close, equivalence and adequacy differ substantially. As far as text interpretation is concerned, traditional equivalence theory prescribes the same understanding of the text by the author and the translator. Skopos theory treats it as compatible with the author's pragmalinguistic intention and the reader's situation. According to the traditional approach the target text is supposed to play in its culture the same role as the original text performs within its culture, and the TT reader is to understand the 'world of the text', the discourse in the same way as the ST reader. The Skopos theory states that the TT function is to be compatible primarily with the author's intention and the TT 'world' is constructed in accordance with the reader's perception and cultural background. The quintessential idea of Skopos theory is that the translator's task is to achieve the effect of TT on the reader, which corresponds its function and not the effect produced by ST on the original reader audience.

Another aspect of Skopos theory affecting modern translating practices is text typology worked out by K.Reiss and summarized by P.Newmark [1]. Four types of text were distinguished: informative, emotional, pragmatic and audio-medial. Though disputable today because of overlapping characteristics, this classification still embodies the idea that a text type is a pattern of linguistic functions, cultural background concepts and cognitive models. Thus, different text types call for different transfer methods. Today, when advertising,

science, technology texts are so abundant, efforts to state standards of correlation are being made by translation scholars.

When it goes about the part of translation within ESP framework at Technical universities, it should be noted that doing translation of specialized texts from textbooks, scientific and technological journals is rather a way of testing content comprehension. So choosing the right model of equivalence, taking into account the necessary transformations corresponding the norms of target language is preferable. But modern scientific discourse has become more idiomatic and semantically complicated structures need special attention. Besides, quite a number of scientific and technological sources contain advertising materials which create particular problems for understanding and translating. Such new kind of text as web-sites of industrial and R&D firms, companies, agencies etc. are also strongly marked linguistically according to pragmatic intention. And here some fundamental principles of Skopos theory can prove handy and should be taught at ESP classes to develop students' creativity and critical thinking.

### **Conclusion**

The Skopos theory has contributed significantly to the general Theory of Translation having attracted special attention to the functional pragmalinguistic aspect of the process. K.Reiss and H.Vermeer broke the limits in choosing methods of translation, putting the accent on the skopos, or the purpose, the intention of the text itself. With emergence of new kinds of texts and changes in discourse characteristics it proves even more applicable and important.

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