



Mary Snell-Hornby. *Translation Studies – An Integrated Approach*, Revised Edition. Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 1995, 170 p.

Cynthia Burry

Volume 9, numéro 2, 2e semestre 1996

Parcours de traduction
Pathways of Translation

URI : <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/037269ar>
DOI : <https://doi.org/10.7202/037269ar>

[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

Éditeur(s)

Association canadienne de traductologie

ISSN

0835-8443 (imprimé)
1708-2188 (numérique)

[Découvrir la revue](#)

Citer ce compte rendu

Burry, C. (1996). Compte rendu de [Mary Snell-Hornby. *Translation Studies – An Integrated Approach*, Revised Edition. Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 1995, 170 p.] *TTR*, 9(2), 232–235. <https://doi.org/10.7202/037269ar>

Mary Snell-Hornby. *Translation studies – An integrated approach*, Revised Edition. Amsterdam, John Benjamins, 1995, 170 p.

Translation Studies is a revised edition of a highly-informative book which appeared seven years ago as an academic thesis by Mary Snell-Hornby at the University of Vienna. The original book's success was overwhelming and prompted the revised edition. The author has added to the original by translating or paraphrasing the German quotations in

-
9. Cf. par exemple les ouvrages de Coulet et May qui demeurent parmi les plus lus sur le roman au XVIII^e s. Coulet mentionne brièvement la traduction du *Joseph Andrews* « en 1750 » et donc avec une erreur de datation (p. 429).

the text so as to make them more transparent for an English-speaking audience. She also revised her *Future perspectives section* on Translation Studies, from a 1995 perspective, added some new selections to the bibliography and included an index of names and key terms for easier reference (compiled by Gudrun Huemer).

The author comments in the preface and in the introduction to *Translation Studies* that it is not a book about literary translation, but it is rather an attempt to bridge the gap between translatology and literary language. She explains that literary language has been 'excluded as being 'deviant,' inaccessible to scientific analysis.' (p. 1) The book is divided into five sections in which the author presents various approaches, methods and concepts from translation theory and linguistics so as to provide more insight into the theory, practice and analysis of literary translation.

The first section, 'Translation as an independent discipline,' discusses the position of translation departments in universities, how they are situated somewhere between linguistics and literature and how it is used merely as a vehicle for language teaching. This prompts an interesting discussion on the concepts and the attitudes towards translation over the years. The author notes various translation theorists and their ideas and comments on those which apply to her integrated approach towards translation studies. One of the interesting aspects discussed in this section is that of equivalence, the term that came to replace the dichotomy of *faithful* or *free*.

The following section in *Translation Studies* is entitled 'Translation as a cross-cultural Event,' and discusses in great detail how translation is not a mere process of transcoding words from one language to another, but that it is a cultural transfer from one culture to another. The authors stresses the importance of being bi-cultural, not just bilingual. She cites different theorists such as Hönig and Kussmaul who view texts as "a verbalized part of a socioculture" (p. 44). One of the translator's task is to decide whether to keep the cultural function of the source text or whether to adapt the text to the needs of the target text. She gives various explicit examples to illustrate her ideas.

In the third section, 'Translation, text and language,' the author discusses the importance of text analysis in the translation process. A text, she says, should not be analyzed in parts, but as a whole, from the 'macro-level' to the 'micro-level.' A text is more than a 'linguistic phenomena,' it has a 'communicative function,' reflecting the culture and society in which it was written. The analysis begins on the macro level with "identifying the text in terms of culture and situation," (p. 69) then it is reduced to the micro level, where the structure of the text (the title, etc.) are analyzed. Afterwards, the translator will have a deeper understanding of the make-up and structure of the text and this has a great influence on the translation process. The author illustrates this analysis with a text by W. Somerset Maugham entitled 'The Pacific' which characterizes the Pacific as 'inconstant' and compares this to the 'soul of man.' Snell-Hornby then compares her textual analysis to the German translation to illustrate a translation's shortcomings if a text is viewed as a string of words and not as a whole. The author continues to explain in greater detail the process of textual analysis with the aid of examples which are very insightful.

The fourth section of the book, 'From special language to literary translation,' examines the relation between situation and status of the source text and the function of the target text with reference to four texts in the appendix, three of a specialized nature and one literary. The author uses these examples to illustrate how translations may need to be altered for the target culture, depending on the information in question and the audience. As Snell-Hornby states, "a text has its own situational relationship to reality" (p 112). She then goes on to discuss style (syntax, semantics and lexis as well as formal text presentation) and the appropriate translation strategies and methods, again with reference to the four above-mentioned texts.

At the end of *Translation Studies*, there is an extensive bibliography as well as the author's 'Future perspectives' from 1988 and an updated version from 1995. In the first edition she expresses how the field of Translation Studies is rapidly growing, but that it is in need of a more 'theoretical basis' to prevent it from being "dismissed as either mechanical [...] or mysterious" (p. 131). She also states that translation is above all a specialized activity to be executed by professionals, and that translation students are lacking the training to live up to such

expectations. Snell-Hornby also points out that a more standardized system of translation critique is needed, in order to "raise and maintain [professional] standards" (p. 133). In her revised edition of 'Future perspectives' the author expresses that the field of Translation Studies, especially regarding research, is developing at an impressive rate, and she lists the various areas that have been investigated recently. The author also comments on the boom of translation training centres and mentions that the older translation schools ("at least in the German-speaking area" (p. 134)) are still in need of new study programmes and to free themselves from traditional language departments. She concludes by saying that with the rapid growth of international development and economics, translators will be required not only to be competent in languages, but also knowledgeable and specialized in other fields. She feels that translators will play an important role in the future, but that it will be the work of researchers and teachers that will prove the success of Translation Studies in the next century.

I cannot do justice to the integrity and the wealth of information provided by *Translation Studies* in this review. Mary Snell-Hornby has written a truly remarkable book which would be of interest to anyone concerned with translation theories, methods and approaches over the years and how they apply to literary translation and translation in general. As the author quotes at the end of her first edition, "It is easy to plough when the field has been cleared" (p. 131). *Translation Studies* has fulfilled the main goal of the author, that is to clear away old concepts, prejudices and ideas and to fill the space with a new integrated approach comprised of various texts and translations with reference to relevant fields. This book is well worth reading for the first and second time.

Cynthia Burry
York University