

**On Meaning in Interlinguistic Translation**

Senior Essay in Philosophy

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**Abstract.** Philosophy of language frequently encounters the problem of locating meaning – arguably nowhere more obstreperously than in interlinguistic translation. Theorists of translation, on the other hand, rarely address the issue of identifying meaning. In this paper, I introduce three theories of translation (those of d’Ablancourt, Schleiermacher, and Jakobson). I then discuss two preexisting theories of meaning, put forth by Jacques Derrida and John Searle, no strangers to the problem of locating meaning, who each have developed their own theories of meaning within a text, and put those theories into dialogue. I then examine these two theories of meaning and apply the theories to the three theories of translation (those of d’Ablancourt, Schleiermacher, and Jakobson, respectively) in order to foreground the theories of meaning implicit in the three theories. I conduct an analysis based on each application. I find that though neither Derrida’s theory nor Searle’s aligns exactly with any one theory of translation, they do align to some extent. Thus, the project of bringing out the features of the theories of meaning implicit in the theories of translation is successful. I find, ultimately, that no two theories seem to agree entirely on what meaning is, thus resulting in different aims of translation – this is the robust problem of differing accounts of translation. Based on the discussion in this paper, it seems that theories of translation necessarily contain some implicit understanding of the nature of meaning, which should be brought to the foreground in order to comprehend the deeper features of the theory.

*“A translation theory always rests on particular assumptions about language use, even if they are no more than fragmentary hypotheses that remain implicit or unacknowledged.”*

Lawrence Venuti

## **Introduction.**

There exists an astonishing number of theories of translation that have been written, published, discussed, discarded, promulgated, lauded (and any combination of these) over the history of mankind. At first blush, all of these theories seem to be little more than differing technical accounts of the methodology of interlinguistic translation. Any discordance between theories appears to be reducible to differences in technique. This conceptualization of differences between translation theories deals only with what I will refer to as the shallow problem of interlinguistic translation (namely that of dissimilar methodologies). In fact, underneath this shallow problem lies a far more robust one that is often neglected or overlooked. This robust account of the differences in theories of translation leads us to an understanding of the differences between these theories as being grounded in conflicting accounts of meaning (rather than simply in conflicting accounts of technical methodology, as the shallow account would have us believe). In this paper, I argue for the robust account of the differences in theories of translation through the foregrounding of notions about meaning implicit in three different technical theories of translation.

While it is relatively common to find thinkers in the field of philosophy of language who have, at one time or another, wrestled with the issue of where it is that we find meaning in a text – or, even more basically, what meaning is in a text – the same, surprisingly, cannot be said of translation theorists. Those who concern themselves with

the technical details of the act of translation are those who, it seems, are also the least interested in an inquiry as to the implications of their recommendations. As a matter of course, however, it is not possible to advance a theory of translation (which aims to identify the best translation and guide the reader toward it) without also making a claim about meaning.

In order to do examine this notion, I will introduce two theories of meaning put forth by two philosophers of language, and use them to compare against several theories of translation, with the intention of discerning the latter's implicit ideas with regard to the nature of meaning. It is crucial to emphasize that this paper deals with theories of translation proper (in other words, written translation) as opposed to interpretation (or oral translation); additionally, we are dealing here with classical translation (between two known languages) as opposed to radical translation (between one known language and one totally unknown language).

Between the years of 1971 and 1977, philosophers Jacques Derrida and John Searle wrote a series of papers, each of which rebutted the other's position on language – specifically with regard to meaning.<sup>1</sup> The closer one looks at their arguments, however, the more one realizes that what at first look like foundational differences turn out to be differences on the scale of fascinating nuances. I will compare their theories of meaning individually in order to bring out the primary tenets (respectively) before applying them

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<sup>1</sup> These essays were sparked by Derrida's 1971 response to J.L. Austin's work on speech acts. In this paper, we will not touch on speech acts, or other forms of spoken language; therefore, we will not deal with this aspect of the works of either Derrida or Searle in this debate. Of course, Derrida and Searle both have arguments with regard to written speech acts which are very much on the subject of meaning. These will not be in line with our angle of approach in this paper, however.

both to three theories of translation (in order to bring out, in turn, their underlying assumptions about meaning).

Thus, in this paper, I will 1) conduct a brief overview of the three discrete theories of translation (d'Ablancourt's, Schleiermacher's, and Jakobson's) with which we will be working; 2) turn to a discussion of where it is that we are supposed to find meaning in a text, according to great philosophers of language who have written on the topic in seeming opposition to one another – namely, Derrida and Searle; 3) apply these theories of meaning to the three theories of translation in order to 4) foreground the implicit claims about the nature of meaning within those theories of translation; and, finally 5) discuss what is revealed about (the shallow and robust accounts of the problem of) translation theory, including possibilities and restrictions, from the aforementioned discussions.

## **I. Theories of Translation.**

In translation theory,<sup>2</sup> there are three primary styles or ideals of translation: paraphrase, metaphrase, and imitation.<sup>3</sup> In the words of English translator John Dryden, paraphrase is “[the Authour's words] are not so strictly followed as his sense, and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not altered.” (Dryden, 1680; 38) In another words, paraphrase is what is known as a ‘sense-for-sense’ translation. Metaphrase is “turning an Authour word by word,” or ‘word-for-word’ translation. (Ibid., 38) Imitation, by contrast,

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<sup>2</sup> Particularly in more antiquated translation theory.

<sup>3</sup> Though there are, of course, many alternative classificatory schemes, considerations of this particular scheme – with attention to imitative, paraphrastic, and metaphrastic ideals – will be the most fruitful for us in our discussion.

is that style wherein “the Translator...assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and [sense], but to forsake them both as he sees occasion.” (Ibid., 38) Thus, in ascending order to strict adherence of translated text to original text, we have briefly explicated the imitative, paraphrastic, and metaphrastic styles of translation. We will see examples of each style (though not one will be purely any style) in our examination.

### *D’Ablancourt, “Les Belles Infidèles,” and Translation*

Nicolas Perrot d’Ablancourt, a French translator who wrote primarily in the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, set up a standard of translation which follows the general sense of a text, but cuts it up and sugarcoats the pieces to make them more delectable to the audience reading the translation, based on their historical and cultural circumstance. D’Ablancourt’s ideal of translation falls somewhere between paraphrase and imitation.

Phrased differently, for d’Ablancourt a translated text,  $T_T$ , must not follow the original text  $T_O$  too carefully, lest this metaphrase ruin the effect of the text; “correctness is the enemy of grandeur,” after all.<sup>4</sup> (d’Ablancourt, 1640; 32) On d’Ablancourt’s picture, it is better to preserve the beauty of  $T_O$  in  $T_T$  than to preserve the fidelity of  $T_T$  to  $T_O$ . What “beauty” means, at least in  $T_T$ , is entirely dependent on the culture of the target language; one should adjust one’s translation accordingly. The upshot of this is that the translator and the audience of  $T_T$  are the decision makers about the aesthetic and morality of the text  $T_O$  itself, since what is not liked is simply omitted. The act of rephrasing, recapitulating, or omitting parts of the text  $T_O$  altogether is done in order to preserve the greater sense of the work at large – at least ostensibly. “[One] must take heed that an

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<sup>4</sup> I will continue to use the terminology of  $T_O$  and  $T_T$  throughout this paper.

Author's grace not be lost through too much scrupulousness, and that the fear of being unfaithful to him in some one thing not result in infidelity to the whole..." (d'Ablancourt, 1640; 32) Thus, we find (on d'Ablancourt's scheme) that the standard for translation should be aesthetic, as judged from the vantage point of the recipient audience of  $T_T$ . This comes often at the price of textual accuracy in  $T_T$  with respect to  $T_O$ . D'Ablancourt concludes that "the best translations seem to be the least faithful." (d'Ablancourt, 1640; 32)

This concept gave rise to an entire tradition of translation based on the ideal that translations could either be beautiful, or faithful, and that beauty was the better option of the two. The famous quote, "*[les] traductions sont comme les femmes: lorsqu'elles sont belles, elles ne sont pas fidèles; et lorsqu'elles sont fidèles, elles ne sont pas belles,*"<sup>5</sup> commonly attributed to Thomas Mann, exemplifies the core value of the tradition initiated by d'Ablancourt in France, which spread to England.

### ***Schleiermacher, the German Tradition, and Translation***

Freidrich Schleiermacher, in a 1813 speech, endorses a standard of translation radically different than that endorsed by d'Ablancourt and the so-called 'school of les belles infidèles'. The German philosopher promotes a theory of translation that bows in acknowledgment to the author and the language in which he writes more than d'Ablancourt's theory permits. However, this requirement of acknowledgement is not meant to be applied universally: Schleiermacher saliently advocates for a differentiation

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<sup>5</sup> "Translations are like women: when they are beautiful, they are not faithful; and when they are faithful, they are not beautiful." (Translation my own.)

between types of texts, and a differentiation between method of translation based on the type of text. Business texts and scientific or mathematical texts are to be held to this requirement to a significantly lesser degree than philosophical or literary texts:

“The less obvious the author’s presence was in the original, and the more he served merely as an organ of apperception guided by his object’s spatial and temporal organization, the more the translation will be a matter of mere interpreting...[the] more, however, the author’s own particular way of seeing and drawing connections has determined the character of the work...the more...the translator must ...be familiar with his author and the author’s tongue in a different sense than the interpreter.” (Schleiermacher, 1813; 44)

In this paper, we will deal exclusively with his theory as it pertains to humanities texts, or, in other words, to texts where the author’s role is that of translator and not that of interpreter.<sup>6</sup>

Schleiermacher believes, in direct contrast with d’Ablecourt, that his own language can benefit from the influence of foreign languages, and his theory of translation reflects this.<sup>7</sup> Schleiermacher writes that “[the] language system subsumes the wisdom of all individuals...the translator of...[an] author...[should] bend the language of his translation to accord to the greatest possible extent with the language of the original so as to give as full a sense as possible of the system of ideas inherent in this other language”. (Schleiermacher, 1813; 60) Thus by absorbing the structure of some language into its translation, the system of ideas is also carried over, to an extent, into the new

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<sup>6</sup> A condition we have already outlined in the introduction to this paper.

<sup>7</sup> As pointed out beautifully by Venuti, from whom I also took great inspiration in the selection of the theories of translation used in this paper. See *Foundational Statements* in Venuti, 2000.

language. For instance, if we are translating some text from Russian into English, we should (even at the risk of awkwardness in the target language), do our best to convey the grammatical structure which differs so greatly from our own. This must be balanced with a communication of the sense of  $T_O$ , as well. The “all but impossible art of making the spirits of different tongues intermingle” is, as we begin to see, even harder in practice than it seems in theory.

He writes that foreign texts may only truly be appreciated (at least as the texts they are, in a recognizable sense) if  $T_T$  acknowledges the foreignness of  $T_O$ . This cannot be accomplished without the transmission of two important facets of  $T_O$ ; namely, the *language* of  $T_O$ , and the *voice* speaking in the language of  $T_O$ . Schleiermacher (in a certain sense) champions the cause of metaphrase. He pushes the ideal of translation closer to metaphrase, rejecting both the paraphrastic and imitative styles: “[the legitimacy of translation] is founded on two...conditions: that the understanding of foreign texts be...desirable...and that...flexibility be granted to our native tongue.” (Schleiermacher, 1813; 55) Schleiermacher maintains that “[the true historical goal of translation as a whole is that] everyone will be able to enjoy all the beautiful things that the most different ages have given us as perfectly as possible for one who is foreign to them.” (Schleiermacher, 1813; 62) The foreignness of a text thus must remain evident if the translation is to be a good one, and  $T_T$  must above all remain faithful to  $T_O$ .

### ***Jakobson, a Linguist's Take, and Translation***

Roman Jakobson, a famous Russian linguist of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, develops a set of guidelines for interlinguistic translation in his 1959 technical essay, “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation.” He advocates for a paraphrastic style of translation, wherein “translation from one language into another substitutes messages in one language not for separate code-units ([or words]) but for entire messages in some other language.” (Jakobson, 1959; 139) Metaphrase, for Jakobson, makes little sense because various aspects of words take on (respectively) different meanings in different languages, and it is important to parse out the meaning(s) which make(s) the most sense contextually, while still conveying the sense of T<sub>O</sub> to the fullest possible extent.<sup>8</sup>

Jakobson’s ideal lies somewhere between metaphrase and paraphrase, though, because while the precise lexicon of a language does not need to be considered so much as the grammar; this is what determines which aspect of the meaning of the words used should be conveyed in translation. “As Boas neatly observed, the grammatical pattern of a language (as opposed to its lexical stock) determines those aspects of each experience that must be expressed in the given language: ‘We have to choose between these aspects, and one or the other must be chosen.’” (Jakobson, 1959; 141)

Jakobson provides finer, more specific guidelines for translation than either Schleiermacher or d’Ablancourt did. We are given three specific instances of possible problems, and the recommended resolutions to each one: lexical gaps (for which we may simply borrow words or instead use many words to get at the ‘untranslatable’ concept),

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<sup>8</sup> The imitative style of translation is not, the reader will notice, even addressed; this fell largely out of favor in the translating community after the German objections of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, which marked a milestone in translation.

grammatical gaps (for which we are to turn to lexicon), and mismatched grammatical patterns (for which we are to turn to context for indications as to translations). These guidelines make it significantly easier to understand how it is that we are supposed to translate, how we are supposed to navigate between paraphrase and metaphrase, steering always closer to paraphrase. Importantly, Jakobson cites form as the greatest determinant of translatability; while he maintains that “[all] cognitive experience and its classification is conveyable in any existing language,” there is nevertheless a limit to what sorts of texts may be translated – and the limit is drawn at poetry. (Jakobson, 1959; 140) “[Poetry] by definition is untranslatable...[only] creative transposition is possible.”<sup>9</sup> (Jakobson, 1959; 143) Let us therefore bracket any consideration of poetry in our analysis.<sup>10</sup>

Jakobson’s theory, though more specific in its recommendations than either of the two theories of translation we have previously considered, is also open to a broader practical interpretation. There is a standard for  $T_T$  which does not provide an allowance for the untranslatability of words or grammars, since, after all, “experience...is conveyable in any existing language”. Since we look to the contextuality of  $T_T$  for indicators about the best possible translation of any given  $T_O$ , we also concern ourselves primarily with aligning the language of  $T_T$  with the messages in the language of  $T_O$  (as opposed to the language of  $T_O$  itself).

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<sup>9</sup> It seems that, in consideration of d’Ablancourt, Schleiermacher, and Jakobson, (particularly the latter two) a sort of hierarchy of translatability is established among different kinds of texts. From highest to lowest with regard to translatability, we have: scientific, mathematical, or business texts, humanities texts (prose), and, finally, poetry.

<sup>10</sup> One might ask what sort of texts we *do* intend to deal with in this paper, since we have already categorically dismissed non-humanities texts, as well as poetry. My answer is that we intend to deal with any and all texts which are prose-based humanities texts, and leave the precise delineation to the discretion of the reader. (Thanks to Ben Allen for calling attention to this concern.)

We have seen that where d'Ablancourt's theory of translation places great value on aesthetic judgment by the standards of the recipient culture of  $T_T$ , leading to recommendations for a translation which does not necessarily hug very closely the text or language of  $T_O$ , Schleiermacher's theory conversely places utmost value on faithfulness to the language and precise text of  $T_O$  in  $T_T$ , and Jakobson's theory places value on both the languages of  $T_O$  and  $T_T$ . Let us now proceed to examine two theories of meaning, which we will then apply to these three theories of translation in order to tease out their implicit notions about the nature of meaning.

## **II. Theories of Meaning.**

### ***Jacques Derrida on Meaning***

For Derrida, any discussion of [written] meaning must take into account context and the lack thereof, (and perhaps symptomatically) the complexity of language, specifically the polysemic nature of language, and the problem of alterity in repetition and representation. These components are all central, at least, to Derrida's own thinking on the subject of meaning.

Context plays a very particular role in meaning, especially of the written word (or *grapheme*, to use Derrida's term and scale). Context is unfixed and, moreover, unfixable. However, text should – at least theoretically – be able to stand alone, apart from even from its author, its audience, its referents, and beyond. Authorial intentionality factors into meaning, but meaning is by no means reducible to authorial intentionality alone. (We will return to this point later in our discussion.) “To be what it is, all writing must,

therefore, be capable of functioning in the radical absence of every empirically determined receiver [sender, and producer] in general.” (Derrida, 1977, 8) Derrida proposes an easy way to break a text apart from this productive context, and that is simply to cite it. Meaning can stand apart from the context of its author, audience, and referents; rather, meaning lies primarily in a kind of context that I will refer to as ‘interpretive frame’. This encompasses all of the possible (productive and nonproductive) contextual factors to which meaning is singularly irreducible.

Any word, not unlike full texts, does not (in practice) stand on its own. Language is by its very nature polysemic; there is a multiplicity of meanings implied both explicitly and implicitly in the use of any given word. Derrida writes in “Plato’s Pharmacy” that there is no

“text, closed upon itself, complete with its inside and its outside. Not that one must then consider that it is leaking on all sides and can be drowned confusedly in the undifferentiated generality of its element. Rather, provided the articulations are rigorously and prudently recognized, one should simply be able to untangle the hidden forces of attraction linking a present word with an absent word in the text...Some such force, given the system of the language, cannot not have acted upon the writing and the reading of this text.” (Derrida, 1981; 130)

The upshot of this is that a sign can never be used in total isolation – it always gestures toward other signs. Derrida is careful to qualify this, though: the sign does not gesture toward all other signs within a language, but rather to certain specific – connected – signs. (This is why a text does not “[leak] on all sides” or “drown” in an infinite sea of implications and insinuations.)

In a different sense, as well, does no word (written or otherwise) stand on its own in practice for Derrida. Namely, any word exists already as a representation and, further, a repetition. A word is necessarily a representation in accordance with the basic (Fregean) schema of a sign and its nominatum.<sup>11</sup> It may be a representation of an abstraction, something with no concrete linkage to the perceptual (perceptible) world, (and, in fact, this is a sort of breakage with context in its own right) but it is a representation nevertheless.<sup>12</sup> Any word is also always already a repetition; no word springs up from nowhere. It is necessarily positioned within the complex (social, in the Saussurian understanding) system of language, wherein a language “is never complete in any single individual, but exists perfectly only in the collectivity.” (Saussure, 1913; 13) In other words, any word is inherently a repetition by virtue of belonging to a language, which is itself a social repository, in a sense (apart from perhaps a neologism, which in turn itself relies on repetition in order to gain credibility as a word within a language). “A sign which would take place but ‘once’ would not be a sign.” (Derrida, 1967; 10) For Derrida, a word changes with every repetition; alterity is a requisite condition of repetition.

We have seen thusfar the following key tenets to a Derridean theory of meaning in language: 1) meaning is highly contextual and lies within an ‘interpretive frame,’ but is not reducible to any one element within the frame; 2) meaning lies within the text proper, which itself is not constrained simply by a set of words on the page, but rather 3) extends

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<sup>11</sup> This explicit allusion to Frege should not be taken to have of any deeper application or implication than a simple invocation of his pivotal sign/nominatum schema.

<sup>12</sup> What’s more, the written word is a sort of derivative representation, as it is a representation of the spoken word, which in turn is a representation of some nominatum.

beyond the words present on the page to those pointedly excluded; 4) even further, words (and, by extension, texts) are polysemic; their meaning is also 5) historical, 6) social, and 7) in flux.<sup>13</sup> A slightly different theory of meaning can be seen in the work of the analytic philosopher, John Searle.

### *John Searle on Meaning*

Searle's philosophical work (well beyond those works within philosophy of language) is thoroughly permeated by the notion of intentionality. This, inarguably, applies to his theory of meaning as well. Intentionality, for Searle, is always necessarily an experience from the first-person vantage point; no objectivity is gained with perspectival distance.<sup>14</sup> In other words, the author's meaning is, theoretically, best understood by the author herself. Her readers can get her right, of course – if they get the same meaning out of the text that the author vested in it, they are understanding her intention. No one, however, can purport to know the author's intention better than the author herself. A text always stands, then, in authorial context. Consequentially, there is

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<sup>13</sup> Based on this theory of meaning, incidentally, we might be able to anticipate a possible preferred theory of translation. Since D1, we can assume that the Derridean ideal for translation would look more to the language of  $T_T$  (since through translation the interpretive frame shifts) than the language of  $T_O$ , which could result in either an imitative or paraphrastic style. Nevertheless, D4 requires careful attention to  $T_O$ , lest certain invaluable meanings be overlooked entirely (also related to D2-D3), thus seeming to negate an imitative style of translation as a possibility. D5-D7 seem to suggest also that the more accurate translations will always be the more modern ones, since languages are necessarily temporally mutable. Thus, we might infer that, on a Derridean picture of meaning, the best translation will be that which leans towards the paraphrastic style, and that which is most recent.

<sup>14</sup> In other words, the third person perspective should not be, for Searle, any more objective a perspective than the first person.

an objective “right” and “wrong” with regard to meaning (which, to reiterate, is determined against a background of authorial intention). “Whether [the audience is] right about my...meaning or...they are wrong, there is a plain fact of the matter to be right or wrong about.” (Searle, 1987; 602) Indeed, intentionality can and does serve as a meter-stick against which to measure the correctness of any given interpretation. Still, meaning is openly available to any reader who is willing to dig (actively or incidentally) for an understanding of the author’s intention, which simply entails an understanding of the text. Meaning lies within the text itself insofar as it corresponds with authorial intention: there is some implicit understanding that the author will say what she means, and mean what she says.<sup>15</sup>

Any word that has meaning exists as already within a language, and has meaning within that language. However, a word does not derive its meaning only from its position within the framework of that language. In other words, for Searle, meaning exists as something of a moveable entity; the meaning *of a word* undoubtedly depends on its meaning in language *x*, but the *meaning* of that word in language *x* does not exist only in language *x*, but can be found (at least theoretically) in *any* language. In Searle’s own words:

“[We] can detach a specific meaning from a specific linguistic system and find an expression that has that very meaning in another linguistic system. Of course, a word means what it does only relative to a language of which it

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<sup>15</sup> “To the extent that the author says what he means the text is the expression of his intentions.” (Searle, 1977; 202) For instance, if I believe my friend Y to be perfectly and doubtlessly innocent of some crime *x* and I write, “I believe Y to be innocent of *x*,” the text is the expression of my intention. If I believe my friend Y to be perfectly and doubtlessly innocent of some crime *x* and I write, “I am ambivalent as to the innocence of Y of *x*,” or even “I believe Y to be guilty of *x*,” the text is NOT an expression of my intention. Something has gone awry.

is a part, but the very relativity of the possession of meaning presupposes the nonrelativity of the meaning possessed.” (Searle, 1987, 603)

Searle subscribes to a Saussurian picture of language, insofar as he views language as a pre-existing public body into which we are initiated even before our first words in babyhood. The meaning of a word, phrase, sentence, or text does not correspond to the public nature of language itself, though; our understanding of the meaning of a text is incontrovertibly aided – permitted, even – by our membership in the particular linguistic community to which the text belongs, but since meaning lies in an understanding of authorial intention and not simply of language, the meaning of a text is to be more narrowly defined than the meaning of the words therein. It is important to note that as a result of this, a text is only contextual insofar as the author is a historically, socially, and linguistically contextual being herself.

We may thus summarize Searle’s theory of meaning in language as encompassing the following principles: 1) meaning is not contextual: it relies on authorial intention and is publicly available to anyone willing to look for it; 2) meaning lies in authorial intention, regardless of whether it is accurately presented in the text proper; 3) words are situated within the framework of the language, but 4) their meaning is ‘detachable’ from the language within which they are situated; 5) the meaning of words is historical insofar as the author is historically situated, 6) social insofar as the author is socially situated, and 7) relatively fixed (in the sense that intentionality brackets off polysemy).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> From this Searlean picture of meaning, let us attempt to adumbrate a prospective preferred theory of translation. Since S1, we can assume that the Searlean ideal for translation would look more to the language of  $T_o$  than the language of  $T_T$  (in perfect contrast with the Derridean ideal we sketched out earlier) which would likely result in a metaphrastic style of translation. S2 and S3 serve to underscore this point. Also in

*Points of Accord/Discord Between Derrida and Searle*

The pith of the great “debate” between Jacques Derrida and John Searle may be best grasped through a comparison of the main points of either theory of meaning as we have recapitulated them earlier in this paper. (As in the previous section, I will refer to Derridean points with his first initial, and Searlean with his, respectively.)

D1: meaning is highly contextual, and lies within an ‘interpretive frame,’ but is not reducible to any one element within the frame; S1: meaning is not contextual: it relies on authorial intention and is publicly available to anyone willing to look for it. We can already see an enormous discrepancy between the two theories of meaning. For Derrida, meaning is dependent on context above all; for Searle, it has very little to do with context at all. Meaning is simply, for Searle, in the text (so long as the text is an accurate representation of authorial intention). The result of this difference is that while for Searle, there is a sort of “absolute” referent against which to determine correctness of interpretation, there exists no such referent for Derrida. Therefore, there is no way to determine correctness of interpretation, nor is it clear that we should even be trying to determine this in the first place.

D2: meaning lies within the text proper, which itself is not constrained simply by a set of words on the page; S2: meaning lies in authorial intention, regardless of whether it is accurately presented in the text proper. For Derrida, the text, once produced, is (more

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contradistinction to the Derridean picture are the implications of S5-S7: namely, that the best translation will not necessarily be the more modern one. Thus, we see that based on a Searlean theory of meaning, the best translation will be that which leans towards the metaphrastic style, and not necessarily that which is most modern.

or less) independent from its author. For Searle, the author is always necessarily implied in any reading of the text, because the author's intention is located therein. Interestingly enough, in both cases, it is possible for the author to misstate herself, for the text to be an inaccurate reflection of what the author *intended* to say.<sup>17</sup> For Searle, notwithstanding, this is an issue with the text (see footnote 5); for Derrida, this is an issue for the author, who regardless is helpless to defend her text against "misreadings" (though it is not clear that these can even exist categorically under a Derridean conception of meaning), and, moreover, has nothing to do with her text once it is produced.

D3: meaning extends beyond the words present on the page to those pointedly excluded; S3: words are situated within the framework of a language. At first blush, these points appear to be different articulations of the same general concept. The first deals with the interconnectedness of the parts of a language, as does the second. However, when taken in conjunction with the following pair of premises, we see that premises D3 and S3 serve as a sort of common ground from which the two theories of meaning radically diverge.

D4: words...are polysemic; S4: the meaning of words is 'detachable' from the language within which they are situated. These two points are, obviously, at odds. If there is a multiplicity of meanings for every word, it would be hard to imagine detaching this particular "bundle"<sup>18</sup> of meanings from the word and locating an exactly identically

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<sup>17</sup> For even under a Derridean picture, an author can still *have* intentionality; it just doesn't matter too much for the meaning of the text.

<sup>18</sup> Let us imagine that the multiplicity of meanings of a given word is clearly and precisely definable, and let the totality of these meanings be defined as a "bundle" for any word.

constituted “bundle” of meanings in another language.<sup>19</sup> For Searle this detachability is vital to a functional theory of meaning in language. In fact, authorial intentionality as the fount of meaning necessitates, as we have seen, that there be one correct interpretation (as determined by comparison against authorial intention). This precludes polysemy in the Derridean sense, since all possible connections and connotations of any given word *cannot* all be equally “active” at the same time: there is an affianced context-dependent connotation (or intended connotations), which is (or are) the correct connotation(s). As for every other connotation of a given word: though other connections may exist since, as per S3, words are situated in the complex framework of a language, they are to be bracketed in consideration of meaning of the text. (This is premise S7, *en passant*.) Thus, we see how it would be much easier to do a simple translation on a Searlean conception than on a Derridean.

D5: the meaning of words is historical; S5: the meaning of words is historical insofar as the author is historically situated, D6: the meaning of words is social; S6: the meaning of words is social insofar as the author is socially situated. The two theories of meaning diverge on these points, simply because of the two radically different sources of meaning the two thinkers describe. Meaning as wholly contextual for Derrida obviously depends on context (this is almost tautological), but not the author’s context – at least not in any relevant sense, only the text’s; by contrast, for Searle, meaning as solely authorial

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<sup>19</sup> For, while it is the case that one – or sometimes even two or three – meanings of a word can find their overlap in the meaning of the word in translation, this is the exception rather than the rule. See Jakobson’s discussion on translation in “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation,” 1959.

intention necessarily also contextualizes the author in his historical and social moment, but not the text.

D7: the meaning of words is in flux; S7: the meaning of words is relatively fixed. The divergence with regard to these two points is to be found in the (arguably) foremost tenets of each theory of meaning. Derrida is confined to the assignment of a state of not-quite-Heraclitian flux to the meaning of words, because of his deep commitment to an active polysemy in language. Searle is similarly confined to the assignment of a state of relative fixity to the meaning of words, because meaning is fixed by authorial intention. (See D4:S4 just above.)

A brief note before we continue: it is of great importance to differentiate Derrida's understanding of grammatical sense as it relates to meaning from Searle's. For Searle, grammatical sense does *not* necessarily imply meaning in the relevant way. Take for instance the famous speculation about putting a bunch of typewriters in the monkey house of a zoo and having the monkeys pound away at the keys day after day; the speculation goes that, eventually, there exists some probability that one of the monkeys will type out the entirety of some book or play entirely by chance. (Of course, the chances of this are preposterously slim.) Let us, for the sake of simplicity, say that we actually did this experiment, and one day we found a sheaf of paper on which the words "he is innocent" were typed out. Now, this makes perfect grammatical sense, but for Searle the words don't have any *meaning* because there is no authorial intentionality

behind them.<sup>20</sup> Grammaticality ensures one is playing within the rules, so to speak, of a language, but it has nothing to do with meaning. For Derrida, by contrast, grammatical sense *is* meaning. The words “he is innocent” written accidentally by our monkey mean just the same<sup>21</sup> as they would if written as a verdict, with intentionality, by a judge in the courtroom.<sup>22</sup>

Having examined Derrida’s and Searle’s respective theories of meaning, both independently and side-by-side, we begin to see that rather than being wholly oppositional, the differences between the two are rather to be found in nuances and subtle deviations from one another, though the results (to be found in the prognostications made anent the derivative theories of translation) are quite radically opposed. We will apply both of these theories of meaning to three theories of translation. The nontrivial outcome of this application will be a teasing out of the theories of meaning implicit in these theories of translation, stemming from a comparison of several key tenets of all theories discussed.

## **II. Theories of Meaning Overlaid on Theories of Translation.**

### ***Derrida and Searle on D’Ablancourt***

For Derrida, translation should be primarily concerned with the place from which meaning is derived: context. The context of the recipient audience of  $T_T$  matters a good deal to the meaning of the text. The best translation is thus one that takes this into

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<sup>20</sup> Assuming, of course, that the authorial monkey has not learned to communicate via the written English language.

<sup>21</sup> Where this sameness is a necessary condition of meaning, for Derrida.

<sup>22</sup> Credit goes to Jerry Miller for the inspiration of this example and in its formulation.

account. The best translation (or, in his words, most relevant translation) “[inscribes] the most *relevant* equivalent for an original [text], the language that is *the most* right, appropriate, pertinent, adequate, opportune, pointed, univocal, idiomatic, and so on.” (Derrida, 1998; 426) Additionally, though the words that are used in  $T_O$  are of great consequence, it is more important to get the sense of the text. “The operation that consists of converting, turning [i.e., translation]...doesn’t have to take a text at its word or to take the word literally. It suffices to transmit the idea, the figure, the force.” (Derrida, 1998, 428) Moreover, it would be entirely impossible to get the words exactly right, since “[all the connotations that have accumulated in [a] word] remain innumerable in themselves...” and all words are always already situated within the complex framework of a language (à la Saussure). (Derrida, 1998; 443)

We see then that d’Ablancourt’s strategy accords with Derrida’s theory of meaning, so long as it results in a  $T_T$  which “honors its debt and does its job or duty,” these being in relation to the meaning of  $T_O$ . (Derrida, 1998; 426) D’Ablancourt’s strategy, for Derrida, ensures an appropriate contextualization in the recipient culture if it is done well, appropriate meaning not radically breaking from the meaning of  $T_O$  (which we have seen lies within an ‘interpretive frame’). Since the meaning of  $T_O$  is as irreducible to authorial intention as it is to the judgment of the recipient audience, both have a say in the matter of what the meaning of  $T_O$  is; both then are to be considered in the translation of  $T_O$  to  $T_T$ .

This style of translation does not cohere with Searle’s theory of meaning, on the other hand, since it involves far too much free interpretation on the part of the translator.

Again, one can get the meaning of  $T_O$  right or wrong, and not transmitting the authorial intention in  $T_O$  to  $T_T$  implies that  $T_T$  will have the entire meaning of  $T_O$  wrong. For Searle's, theory of meaning, the argument that,

“as the most beautiful visages always contain something that one wishes were not there, so the best Authors contain passages that must needs be altered or clarified, particularly when things are done solely to please; for then one cannot permit the slightest flaw; and should there be any want of delicacy, one will not divert, but bore. Hence I do not always cleave to the words or thoughts of [the] Author; whilst keeping in sight his purpose, I fit things to our air and manner...” (d’Ablancourt, 1644; 35)

is simply a misunderstanding of where the meaning of a text comes from, or, worse still, a blatant disregard for it. In order for one to understand a text, one must understand the original authorial intention, as it *was*.<sup>23</sup> It follows that, especially to understand  $T_T$  as (in some sense)  $T_O$ , one must be able to see the intentionality of  $T_O$  in  $T_T$ .<sup>24</sup>

For Searle's theory of meaning, d’Ablancourt has just got it wrong in his theory of translation. Since context has little to do with the meaning of a text, cultural contextualization should have no large role in translation.<sup>25</sup> Since the meaning of  $T_O$  is authorial intention and has nothing to do with the judgment of the recipient audience, only the original authorial intention (as it could best be made understood by the target audience) should be considered in the translation of  $T_O$  to  $T_T$ . Now, one might ask if authorial intention itself might not be recontextualizable – what of translators who rework  $T_O$  as though the author of  $T_O$  were alive in their time and country? Cannot this be called

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<sup>23</sup> See Searle, 1997; 202.

<sup>24</sup> This does not necessarily mean that  $T_T$  must be a word-for-word translation if and only if the text is not equivalent to authorial intentionality; in all cases where the text is equivalent to authorial intentionality,  $T_T$  must, indeed, be a word-for-word translation.

<sup>25</sup> This is not to say, of course, that it should have no role whatsoever.

simply a total recontextualization, which still holds to authorial intention in  $T_0$ , just in translation? It seems to me that what is at work here is a double-translation: there is a meta-translation (of authorial intention from culture to culture) and translation proper (of text from language to language).<sup>26</sup> The meta-translation, however, is an illegal move: the authorial intention is what it is, and any “translation” of it is just a misinterpretation of it. For Searle, the authorial intention is an *objective meter-stick*, and it is stock-still and unmovable. Therefore, any translation that ignores it or tries to change it is just a bad translation.

We have seen that d’Ablancourt’s theory of translation fits with Derrida’s theory of meaning (based primarily on tenet D1) and that it unambiguously does not fit with Searle’s theory of meaning (based primarily on tenets S1-S2), though it seems that the primary differences between the two theories of meaning lie more in nuance than anything else. Let us see if this same pattern holds for other theories of translation as well.

### ***Derrida and Searle on Schleiermacher***

It appears that Derrida would also endorse Schleiermacher’s theory of translation, though Derrida might prefer the ideal to be found closer to the paraphrase side of the paraphrase-metaphrase spectrum, since he is emphatically against metaphrase (or, in his words, “*word-to-word...or word-for-word*” translation). (Derrida, 1998; 428) In fact, at first glance, Schleiermacher’s theory would seem to satisfy all of D1-7, so long as the

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<sup>26</sup> One might here offer a third possibility – that of the translation of intention. In fact, it is hard to see what this might look like independent of the other two possibilities given; thus, I will not address this possibility in this paper.

attention given to the author of  $T_O$  is not greater than any other component of  $T_O$  (since the meaning of  $T_O$  is not reducible to any one component of the interpretive frame more than any other) in  $T_T$ .

The fact that Schleiermacher's theory of translation allows itself be applied variably to different sorts of texts alone suffices to indicate a fulfillment of the contextual aspect of Derrida's theory of meaning. However, a worry soon comes along concerning this same tenet of Derrida's – that perhaps Derrida's theory of meaning would have us forget the foreignness of  $T_O$  altogether. Upon closer examination this seems inevitable, since the meaning of text must not be credited too fully to the author himself, and if we are to take account of the foreignness of the author of  $T_O$  in  $T_T$ , we must let this show in the language we choose to use in  $T_T$ . If, on the other hand, we choose not to take account of the foreignness of the author of  $T_O$  in  $T_T$ , at least in any substantive way, we must not let her foreignness show in  $T_T$ . Though Derrida's theory of meaning may not call for such a strong result, the fact of the matter is that either the foreignness will be allowed to show, or it will not: the author of  $T_O$ 's presence will be felt strongly, or it will not.<sup>27</sup> There is no obvious way to factor it into  $T_T$  in equal proportion to every other factor we are meant to consider on a Derridean picture. There is thus a deep irrevocable break between the Derrida's theory of meaning and Schleiermacher's theory of translation; the two end up on incompatible terms on a consideration of the very first tenet of Derrida's theory alone.

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<sup>27</sup> What allowing the foreignness of the text to show through just a little might look like, I cannot imagine. As when someone speaks with only the very slightest foreign accent, one cannot help but wonder whether there isn't something going wrong with their speech (before one learns of their interlocutor's background and all is put aright, of course).

Searle's theory of meaning, on the other hand, would take Schleiermacher's requirement of acknowledgment of both author-specific idiom and authorial language as an excellent and necessary one, for before one can recontextualize a text in a foreign language, one must recognize the noncontextual nature of the meaning of a text (except insofar as the author is a historical and social being and as a historical and social being, has an intentionality which is to some extent informed by his context). Since we are to be taking the intentionality of  $T_O$  as the meaning of  $T_O$ , we can better get at a better understanding of the meaning of  $T_O$  if we take into account the intentionality of the author of  $T_O$  (which involves the historicity and sociality of the author himself). Schleiermacher's theory allows for this very well (as discussed above). Additionally, Schleiermacher's theory serves as a sort of simplification of translation for Searle through its insistence on differentiation of method by type of text; authorial intention is to be taken as imminently present and fully crystalline in mathematical and scientific texts and so reduces the task to – as Schleiermacher states – simple interpretation. It is only the humanities texts about which we are left to worry and to which we must apply our best efforts.

We have seen that, though at first blush Schleiermacher's theory of translation seems to accord well with Derrida's theory of meaning, it is actually Searle's with which it dovetails more closely. Schleiermacher's theory is not in a position to accord with Derrida's standard, since Derrida's theory insists upon a dilution of source of meaning in  $T_O$  (tenet D1); we are therefore not entitled to any theory of translation where  $T_T$  must

take the foreignness of  $T_O$  into account.<sup>28</sup> On Searle's theory, conversely, we must have a theory in which  $T_T$  takes into account the foreignness of  $T_O$  in order that we may better access the authorial intentionality as it was in  $T_O$  (S2; which should hold across  $T_T$ , though this can only occur if we take  $T_O$ 's meaning – in the Searlean sense – into full account).<sup>29</sup>

### *Derrida and Searle on Jakobson*

One would expect Derrida to fall fully in with Jakobson, since Derrida, as a so-called post-structuralist, is a necessarily an inheritant of some of the concepts of structuralism (of which, in turn, Jakobson was a major early proponent).<sup>30</sup> Let us examine this notion. Derridean notions of polysemy are, to some extent, severed in Jakobsonian translation since, as we have seen, there is an inescapable parsing of meanings – in other words, a rupture of the linguistic web of connotations and connections that is a text. Derrida himself acknowledges this to be one of the primary challenges of translation, but denies that such a thing should be done outright – rather, every effort should be made to translate with the mind that “the unity or identity, the independence of the word remains a

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<sup>28</sup> An objection might here be raised along these lines: there was no foreignness to  $T_O$  (at least, from the author's vantage point), so why should there be foreignness in  $T_T$ ? Schleiermacher's view might thus appear to pose some difficulty for Searle. In fact, though preservation of meaning is, for Searle, the grand objective of interlinguistic translation, the meaning of  $T_O$  can *only* be preserved and communicated in  $T_T$  so long as  $T_T$  looks to  $T_O$  for authorial intentionality, which while not foreign in  $T_O$ , necessarily will be in  $T_T$  (since, of course, the author writes in language  $x$  and not the target language). (Credit goes to Benjamin Allen for this thoughtful objection.)

<sup>29</sup> It seems, then, that Schleiermacher's theory points to something of a hybrid theory of meaning, falling somewhere between Derrida's and Searle's, or a new theory of meaning altogether. Of course, I do not mean to imply that all theories of translation have a full-fledged, complete theory of meaning implicit to them, only that there are assumptions about the nature of meaning, if fragmentary, on which the theory of translation necessarily rests. Therefore, it is absolutely possible for a theory of translation to have in its implicit understanding of meaning aspects of any given theory of meaning proper – even contradictory ones. Moreover, it may be possible, in some cases, to build up a complete theory of translation based on the fragmentary intuitions apropos of meaning implicit to a given theory of translation.

<sup>30</sup> Though Jacques Derrida, no doubt, would not accept such a clear-cut classification.

mysterious thing” and that moreover “[there] is no such thing as a word in nature.” (Derrida, 1998; 425) This is to counter the Jakobsonian insistence that “[languages] differ essentially in what they *must* convey and not in what they *may* convey.” (Jakobson, 141) For Derrida, in a sense, words must convey all that they may convey (tenet D4) and this all is what they do convey; for example, each present word in a text, as we have seen earlier on in this paper, indicates those words that are pointedly absent (tenet D3). Though a language theoretically may – and does – convey anything, it also must convey everything – and already does – in its historicity. This factor, nonetheless, does not preclude Derrida from an implicit approval of Jakobson’s theory, since it at least does acknowledge and consider seriously the polysemy in language.

Derrida’s theory of meaning does not conform to the paraphrasic approach Jakobson adopts as a direct result of this acknowledgment and consideration, however.

“To make legitimate use of the word ‘translation’, in the rigorous sense conferred on it over several centuries by a long and complex history in a given cultural situation...the translation must be *quantitatively* equivalent to the original, apart from any paraphrase, explication, explicitation, analysis, and the like.” (Derrida, 1998; 427-428)

Compare this with the Jakobsonian suggestion of how to deal with grammatical gaps, here in reference to the translation of an Old Russian dual form word into English with the help of lexicon (numerical add-ons or extra explanatory words, as the case may be): “Again in translating from a language without grammatical number into English one is obliged to select one of two possibilities – ‘brother’ or ‘brothers’ or to confront the receiver or this message with a two-choice situation: ‘She has either one or more than one

brother.’” (Jakobson, 1959; 141) According to Derrida, the first two choices are paraphrastic, while the latter is both an explication and an explicitation; thus, neither would be allowed in a ‘true’ translation. In practice, Derrida might recommend using something along the lines of “brother(s)” in the stead of the three possibilities given by Jakobson in the example above. We see, thus, that both the extension of the meaning of a text to absent words as well as to associated words (premises D3 and D4) are violated on a Jakobsonian picture. Interestingly enough, though, the principle that meaning is highly contextual (D1) is firmly upheld by Jakobson’s theory of translation; the fact that meaning is so highly contextual seems to (theoretically, anyway) allow for an interpretation of meaning – the parsing that Jakobson calls for – in translation. It is not clear what we should make of this contradiction; we will return to this point later on.

Searle is much more willing than Derrida to accept the severance of linguistic polysemy in a text, since it is his view that not every possible meaning of a word is engaged in its every use anyway (tenet S7); rather, the meaning of a word depends its context relative to other words in the text, and this contextual relation of words is from whence we are to derive our understanding of the meaning of the text. Indeed, this is Jakobson’s view on meaning of individual words and even individual sentences within a text, though he adds that “evidently the richer the context of a message, the smaller the loss of information [in translation]”. (Jakobson, 1959; 141)

The Searlean condition that meaning is in some way detachable (S4) is well met in Jakobson’s theory, since it implies a certain ease and, strangely, mechanicality or perfunctoriness in translation. Jakobson on translation, as Searle on meaning, seems to

“[underestimate] the interpretive nature of translation” (as Searle, it seems, tends to underestimate the interpretive nature of meaning).<sup>31</sup> (Venuti, 2000; 113) Just as, for Searle, the meaning of a word or text should be self-evident and any interpretation easily judged to be correct or mistaken, the parsing of meaning that Jakobson insists upon in his theory of translation also seems to him to be a simpler and less ambiguous process than it actually is.  $T_T$ , for both, should – theoretically, at least – always already be visible within  $T_O$ . Thus, in terms of projected simplicity of process, Jakobson’s and Searle’s theories seem to coincide. Undoubtedly, though, it is the Searlean premise S7, that meaning may be parsed at all, which best aligns with Jakobson’s theory.

We see here with Jakobson, as we saw also with Schleiermacher (but, of course, for vastly different reasons), that Derrida’s theory is a mismatch, whereas Searle’s seems to be complementary. The case is a bit more complex with Jakobson, however, because Derrida’s theory is not an unqualified mismatch as it was in the case of Schleiermacher’s theory; there is rather an unrectifiable contradiction in the terms of Derrida’s theory of meaning with regard to Jakobson’s theory of meaning, in the milieu of general disagreement between the heir to the structuralist ideology, and (one could go so far as to say) one of its founding fathers. Searle’s theory, on the other hand, seems to be compatible with Jakobson’s.<sup>32</sup>

In the next section of this paper, I will expound on the current discussion, bringing closer attention to the implicit claims brought to the foreground about the nature of meaning within the three theories of translation through comparison with Searle’s and

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<sup>31</sup> We will return to this seemingly offhand remark about Jakobson and Searle shortly.

<sup>32</sup> Though the grounds upon which the theories agree are themselves questionable.

Derrida's theories of meaning. From this discussion, we will also attempt to draw what derivational conclusions we may on the subject of translation.

### **III. Synthesis and Implications.**

As we have seen throughout this paper, three different theories of translation, when placed respectively against two theories of meaning that differed not foundationally but only subtly, give results which are vastly different. Briefly, to review: none of the three theories of translation we have examined fell entirely in line with either theory of meaning. D'Ablancourt's proposed strategy for translation acquiesced nicely to Derrida's theory of meaning, while it did not with Searle's theory of meaning; the reverse happened with regard to Schleiermacher's theory. Jakobson's theory of translation was left in an ambiguous light, apropos Derrida's theory of meaning, though upon further examination it seemed that it concurred to a certain extent with Searle's. All of these conclusions were reached on the basis of different tenets of Derrida's and Searle's respective theories of meaning; thus, we see that laid against Derrida and Searle, these three theories of translation seem to reveal quite disparate adjudications with respect to meaning, though their respective theories do not reveal, at first blush, such radical deviations in understanding of meaning.

In the case of d'Ablancourt, the primary reason for the difference between the conclusion regarding Derrida's and Searle's respective theories can be attributed to the difference in the two philosophers' emphases on authorial intentionality as the site of meaning in a text. While Derrida and Searle do not take altogether antithetical stances

with regard to authorial intentionality (as Derrida does not dismiss it altogether from consideration), the palpable but seemingly not immense difference in emphasis is enough to result in such opposing results. We see then that d'Ablancourt's theory of translation, which appears to place one goal of the translation of translation of  $T_O$  at the translation also of the *aesthetic* of  $T_O$ , seems to implicitly contain the notion that the primary site of meaning in a text is *not* authorial intentionality (especially given that the aesthetic of any  $T_O$  is bound up with the intentionality of the author as a social, cultural, and historical being). Rather, the meaning of a text comes, for d'Ablancourt, in greater part from the fixed body of the text itself, and in smaller part from the aesthetic preferences (another goal of translation, in this theory).

It is again this same difference in emphasis on authorial intentionality – though in a slightly different form – which results in discrepant alignments with Derrida's and Searle's theories of meaning. Schleiermacher's theory is not in a position to accord with Derrida's theory of meaning, as a result of its insistence upon a dilution of source of meaning in  $T_O$ ; we are therefore not entitled to this theory of meaning under a theory of translation like Schleiermacher's, where  $T_T$  must take the foreignness of  $T_O$  into account.<sup>33</sup> Such a theory of translation, in which  $T_T$  takes into account the foreignness of  $T_O$ , on Searle's theory, allows for better access to the authorial intentionality as it was in  $T_O$ . We can see that one goal of translation under Schleiermacher's picture is the

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<sup>33</sup> An objection might here be raised along these lines: there was no foreignness to  $T_O$  (at least, from the author's vantage point), so why should there be foreignness in  $T_T$ ? Schleiermacher's view might thus appear to pose some difficulty for Searle. In fact, though preservation of meaning is, for Searle, the grand objective of interlinguistic translation, the meaning of  $T_O$  can *only* be preserved and communicated in  $T_T$  so long as  $T_T$  looks to  $T_O$  for authorial intentionality, which while not foreign in  $T_O$ , necessarily will be in  $T_T$  (since, of course, the author writes in language  $x$  and not the target language). (Credit goes to Benjamin Allen for this thoughtful objection.)

transmission of the grammatical and linguistic structure of the language of  $T_O$  through  $T_T$ . Thus, the primary source of meaning in a text, for Schleiermacher, must be authorial intentionality (insofar, naturally, as it is conveyed in the text). The meaning of a text comes, for Schleiermacher, in greater part from the fixed body of the text itself, and in smaller part from the language of the text  $T_O$  (another goal of translation, in this theory).

The outcome of the application of Derrida's and Searle's theories of meaning in the Jakobson case can be attributed to differences in ideas about the nature of language itself (albeit within the frame of reference of a text) with Searle's attachment to the concept that meaning is a moveable entity allowing for an alignment with Jakobson's parsing. We saw, in the case of Derrida's theory of meaning that Jakobson's picture of translation appeared to violate the Derridean tenets of the extension of the meaning of a text to absent words as well as that of associated words. On the other hand, the Derridean location of meaning in contextuality is allowed for in Jakobson's theory of translation. It seems, then, that Jakobson's theory of translation includes an underlying understanding of meaning, wherein meaning is contained in the fixed body of the text, but also in the syntax and lexicon of the language of  $T_O$ ; nonetheless, this meaning is communicable across any given languages, thus calling for some balance to be found between the languages of  $T_O$  and  $T_T$  in  $T_T$ . One goal of translation for Jakobson, then, is a fusion (in a certain sense) between the (grammatical and lexical components of) the languages of  $T_O$  and  $T_T$ .

What we see, then, is that there are unequivocally theories of meaning (or, at the very least, notions about the nature of meaning) embedded in the theories of translation

we have examined; moreover, these theories of meaning differ quite significantly from one another. It follows that the notion that interlinguistic translation is purely a process involving exclusively the language of  $T_O$  and that of  $T_T$  is a misguided one. Rather, something is involved in interlinguistic translation that at once has everything to do with the language of  $T_O$  and that of  $T_T$ , but that also stands beyond the bare-bones semantic and syntactic components of those languages – viz. meaning. It is important, therefore, to carefully examine notions of meaning that are ineluctably embedded, though often obscured, in any theory of translation (since this examination is what allows us to get at the robust problem of discordant theories of translation). This can be done through a determination of the particular aims of any particular theory of translation, as any claims made about what the best translation might be inevitably also make a claim about the nature of meaning. This, then, is what the robust account of the problem of theories of translation reveals, and what the shallow account neglects altogether.

## **VI. Concluding Remarks.**

We began this paper with a concern about the misunderstanding of the fount of differences between theories of translation, and the symptomatic lack of discussion in theories of translation in connection with the nature of meaning. Since we claimed that inherent to every theory of translation was a set of intuitions about meaning in language, we turned to philosophy of language for two preexisting major theories of meaning. We laid these theories side-by-side with three theories of translation in order to bring out features of the theories of translation regarding implicit notions of meaning. After a

comparison of all the major tenets of these theories of meaning and their applications across three different theories of translations, we found that Derrida's and Searle's respective theories of meaning were successful in revealing the different accounts of meaning in the theories of translation. Though the three translators were not directly at odds in their respective understandings of the location of meaning in a text, the difference was sufficient to result in quintessentially incompatible recommendations for translation on d'Ablancourt's, Schleiermacher's, and Jakobson's parts. We have seen, in other words, how theories of translation make latent assumptions about the nature of meaning, which are subsequently neglected in the accounts themselves.

We have seen that the question of interlinguistic translation might not be reducible to a question of the rules for how to best move between languages, at all, as the shallow account of translation would have us assume; instead, the question of interlinguistic translation might be located in the question of what it is that we move between languages, as revealed by the robust account of translation. The attempt to foreground the theories of meaning implicit in all theories of translation is coterminous with the attempt to appreciate the profound nuances in differences between theories, and it is only through these attempts that one can hope to come to a true understanding of interlinguistic translation.

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