

1-2007

## Philosophy of Language, Translation Theory and a Third Way in Semantics

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### Recommended Citation

Ranganathan, Shyam (2007) "Philosophy of Language, Translation Theory and a Third Way in Semantics," *Essays in Philosophy*: Vol. 8: Iss. 1, Article 1.

# Essays in Philosophy

A Biannual Journal

Vol. 8, No. 1, January 2007

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## Philosophy of Language, Translation Theory and a Third Way in Semantics

**Abstract.** In this paper I address anew the problem of determinacy in translation by examining the Western philosophical and translation theoretic traditions of the last century. Translation theory and the philosophy of language have largely gone their separate ways (the former opting to rebrand itself as “translation studies” to emphasize its empirical and anti-theoretical underpinnings). Yet translation theory and the philosophy of language predominantly share a common assumption that stands in the way of determinate translation. It is that languages, not texts, are the objects of translation and the subjects of semantics. The way to overcome the theoretical problems surrounding the possibility and determinacy of translation is to marry the philosopher of language’s concern for determinacy and semantic accuracy in translation with the notion of a “text-type” from the translation theory literature. The resulting theory capable of explaining determinacy in translation is what I call the text-type conception of semantics (TTS). It is a novel alternative to the salient positions of Contextualism and Semantic Minimalism in the contemporary philosophy of language.

### Introduction.

The philosophy of language for much of the twentieth century, particularly in the Analytic tradition, had a troubled relationship with translation. Translation in this tradition was initially regarded as a test case for meaningfulness, and later as an irritation that philosophers would sooner disavow as a practical problem with little philosophical importance. Translation theory in the mid-twentieth century was very sensitive to the history of the philosophy of language—particularly in the Analytic tradition. However, translation theorists came to regard philosophy in general, and normative questions of how to translate in particular, as red herrings, removed from the actual practice of professional translators who define norms in translation through their work. Translation theory was quickly rebranded in the 1970s as “translation studies”, to emphasize the empirical basis of the discipline. In short, philosophers and translation theorists, once kindred spirits, came to regard their respective projects as distinct. I believe that this is a mistake. The literature in translation studies displays many myopic claims about meaning and language that philosophers of language are well trained to recognize and improve upon. To the extent that Analytic philosophers of language have ignored translation, they have deprived themselves of likely the most important test of the adequacy of a semantic theory—rendering much philosophy of language an arm chair exercise, constrained at most by subjective intuitions about meaning.

In this paper, the philosophy of language and translation studies will mutually inform each other and participate in a joint project, namely answering the question of what makes a translation determinate. In answering this question, our two fated lovers give birth to a novel theory of both

translation and semantics. This novel theory, informed as it is by some dominant trends in the translation studies literature, charts a distinct course beyond the two major positions in semantics today, namely Contextualism and Semantic Minimalism. The estrangement of the philosophy of language and translation theory/studies is reversible, and the sooner the better.

## What is Translation?

Before much can be said on the topic of translation, it would be useful to have a preliminary account of the phenomenon of concern, and set in place some basic terminology. I shall argue for a specific conception of translation later, but as a starting point I will defer to the famous, tripartite conception of translation outlined by Roman Jakobson. According to him, translation might consist of a process of rewording, which involves conversions of signs into other signs within the same language—*intralingual* translation; it may consist in a process of linguistic replacement of signs for signs across languages—*interlingual* translation; or it may consist in a process of symbolic replacement across symbolic systems, such as in the case of translation from a full language into a narrow system of icons—*intersemiotic* translation (Jakobson [1959] 1992). Jakobson insists that only interlingual conversions count as genuine instances of translation. I believe that all three are genuine forms of translation for the principle objective is the same in all three cases: to replace sign for sign, while maintaining something critical. But for the sake of simplicity, and for the sake of argument, I shall restrict my examples to cases of interlingual conversion and formulate my argument to meet the requirements of interlingual translation (though, the theory I shall present applies to all three types).

I will also rely upon a distinction between a source text (henceforth ST), which is commonly known as the *original*, and a target text (henceforth TT), which is the intended translation. Analogously, I shall distinguish between a source language (henceforth SL) in which the ST is written, and a target language (henceforth TL) in which a TT is written. As I mentioned, I shall usually assume that the SL and TL are distinct, but I don't believe this in principle is a necessary assumption.

## Translation Theory and the Philosophy of Language in the Twentieth Century, or the Romance that Almost Was.

In the twentieth century, giants in the (Analytic) philosophy of language such as Rudolph Carnap, W.V.O. Quine and (to some extent) Donald Davidson variously displayed an interest in translation as the test case for meaning, or as a way of elucidating the meaningfulness of language.

At first in this period, translation played second fiddle to the Logical Positivist's project of constructing an ideal, empirically reducible language, into which ordinary language could be translated. Translation, it was thought, would allow philosophers such as Carnap to test the meaningfulness (and the meaning) of claims of ordinary language, on the presumption that the ideal language was exhaustively meaningful. Those sentences of ordinary language that could not be translated into the ideal language would be demonstrably nonsensical.<sup>1</sup> The various empiricistic conceptions of meaning that Carnap experimented with—first phenomenalism (Carnap [1928] 1967), and later physicalism (Carnap [1936] 1954; 1937)—gave way to problems that prompted Carnap to change his approach (cf. Carnap 1956). Despite such changes on the specifics of semantics, the hope that translation could clarify meaning had already been planted and thus began to warrant attention in its own right.

Quine appeared to embrace the prominence given to translation by his mentor, Carnap, as a test of meaning, in constructing the thought experiment of “radical translation”. Ironically, the result of Quine’s investigation was that not only translation, but meaning itself, is suspect, lacking full objectivity. Quine concludes his radical translation thought experiment in *Word and Object* by arguing that translation is a problematic project according to a thoroughgoing empiricism because the totality of all possible empirical evidence cannot always determine whether a given translation—to the exclusion of other contrary translations—is right or wrong, even though the translations in question are incompatible and perhaps even contradictory (Quine 1960 27). On Quine’s account, we may be left with a set of equally acceptable but mutually incompatible manuals of translations that each yield divergent translations, none of which we are inclined to think is objectively correct. This is so because there is nothing for a translation to be right or wrong *about* (Quine 1960 73). This is Quine’s indeterminacy of translation thesis.<sup>2</sup> Its chief implication for semantics is that meaning, which *prima facie* guides translation, is not objective in any empirically respectable sense.

The superficial objective of the “radical translation” thought experiment is to determine whether linguists dropped into a linguistic community that they have no formal introduction to could come to provide translations of the language they encounter in this radical context. According to the thought experiment, the only data that the linguist can go on “are the forces that he sees impinging on the native’s surfaces and the observable behaviour, vocal and otherwise, of the native” (Quine 1960 28). With such constraints the closest thing to the meaning of observed linguistic behaviour is what Quine calls *stimulus meaning*, which is the ordered pair of stimuli that respectively causes assent and dissent to a sentence (Quine 1960 31). Varying types of sentences can be discerned for taxonomical purposes, on the basis of what Quine calls *analytic hypotheses*. These pair up observation sentences in the SL and TL, and what Quine calls *stimulus analytic* and *stimulus contradictory* sentences—sentences whose assent and dissent are tied exclusively to a certain stimulus. Included amongst analytic hypotheses are some insights into intrasubjective synonymy of expressions that appear to have the same reference but different senses (in Frege’s sense); however, nothing like firm rules of translation can be offered for such cases, for the information is at best idiolectal (Quine 1960 68). The problem with the analytic hypotheses is that the data they are founded upon—stimulus meaning—“must woefully under-determine the analytical hypotheses” (Quine 1960 72). The result of this underdetermination of rule by data is that many mutually exclusive manuals of translation between a given SL and TL are possible, and moreover some of these manuals may be logically incompatible yet both empirically adequate in light of the totality of all possible empirical evidence. The absence of *any* possible empirical evidence to decide this type of controversy is the indeterminacy, that on Quine’s account, troubles translation.

After Quine’s treatment of the topic, translation continued to be of some interest to Analytic philosophers. Donald Davidson took up Quine’s scenario of radical translation and retooled it into “radical interpretation”—the process by which we may come to understand and interpret the linguistic behavior of others with whom we do not share the same language or idiolect (Davidson [1973] 2001). Other philosophers continued to work fervently on the problem of radical translation as Quine conceived it, with the aim of proving Quine wrong, either by taking aim at Quine’s thesis directly (cf. Føllesdal 2001; Kirk 1986), or by working on problems of translation piecemeal (cf. Guenther and Guenther-Reutter 1978). While some continue to attempt to refute the argument (cf. Soames 1999), no definitive refutation of Quine’s indeterminacy of translation thesis is to be

found in the literature, suggesting that translation as Quine conceived it is susceptible to the types of problems that he envisioned.<sup>3</sup> Analytic philosophers of language thus generally began to ignore the problem of translation.<sup>4</sup>

While Quine's *Word and Object* (1960) began to close translation's chapter in twentieth century Analytic philosophy, translation theory as an autonomous subject began to come into its own. The leading theorists at this time in the English speaking tradition, such as C. J. Catford (1965) and Eugene Nida (1964), based their work (if only implicitly as in the case of Nida) on the Functional Linguistics of J.R. Firth and his students, such as M. A. K. Halliday. According to this theory of language, "words mean... what they do." "When used at their best they are both affecting and effective" (Firth [1930] 1964 110). This account of meaning presented by the Functionalists resembles the view put forward by such philosophers as Bertrand Russell in his *Analysis of Mind* (1921), C. K. Ogden and I.A. Richards in their *The Meaning of Meaning* (1923) and much later by C.L. Stevenson (1944 54-55). Though the philosophical tradition largely left this approach to meaning behind as crude and unrigorous, this account of meaning suited many translation theorists, as it provided a way to overcome linguistic differences that would normally appear to be a barrier to natural language translation. If a certain TL lacked a syntactic or analogous terminological resource of an SL, this lack of symmetry would pose no problem for translation if some equivalent effect or affect could be elicited by a completely different syntax and terminological resource in the TL.

Eugene Nida's magnum opus *Toward a Science of Translating, with Special Reference to Principles and Procedures Involved in Bible Translating* (1964) makes exemplary use of this functionalist thrust. On the face of it, Nida appears to be something of a pluralist. On the one hand, he thinks a translator may endeavor for what he calls "*formal equivalence*" in translation, preserving the syntactic and terminological character of the ST in the TT, or a translator may opt for what Nida calls "*dynamic equivalence*," which attempts to preserve the affect and effect of the ST in translation. Nida appears to even provide a nuanced account of these two strategies, as opposite poles of a continuum, with many "intervening grades". However, the ultimate justification for any translation, on his account, is Functionalist:

But all translating, whether of poetry or prose, must be concerned also with the response of the receptor; hence the ultimate purpose of the translation, in terms of its impact upon its intended audience, is a fundamental factor in any evaluation of translations. This reason underlies Leonard Forster's definition... of a good translation as "one which fulfills the same purpose in the new language as the original did in the language in which it was written." (Nida 1964 162)

Formal equivalence must always give way to Functional considerations for Nida.

The influence of Nida's work on translation theory cannot be underestimated. His views on dynamic and formal equivalence remain a mainstay of introductory works in what is now called "translation studies". Part of the strength of the work is that it builds upon strength, drawing freely from the work of linguists and philosophers alike. Analytic philosophers including J.L. Austin, Ogden and Richards, Quine, Hilary Putnam, Nelson Goodman, Russell and Wittgenstein are cited for their views on various topics from logic to semantics. However, Nida refers to works largely predating

Quine's *Word and Object*, which signaled the beginnings of troubles for the very idea of translation and meaning in the Analytic tradition. Thus, while Nida's work was very influential on theorizing upon and practicing translation, he looks to an idyllic, earlier time in the philosophical tradition for support.

As the Functionalist tradition continued to be a dominant trend in translation studies in the English speaking world (cf. Bassnett 2002), and very influential in the German speaking tradition, albeit in a more radical form of *Skopos Theory*,<sup>5</sup> translation theorists generally had little use for Analytic philosophy from Quine on.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, the semantic and translational skepticism that Quine engendered in the Analytic tradition was incongruous with the practical, real-world approach to translation that characterizes the translator's interest in the philosophy of language. Thus, no sooner had translation theory begun to take shape in the English speaking tradition than it became estranged from the philosophical interest in translation and language.

This estrangement of translation theory from the greater philosophical tradition was not restricted to the Analytic tradition alone. Jacques Derrida, not too long after Quine, delivered an analogous criticism of translation, which I shall call the *lost in translation* thesis. Just as Quine's criticism of translation is a comment on Carnap's project, Derrida's project can be read as a criticism of Heidegger's early work. Heidegger took an interest in translation as a means of recovering what he thought to be the original outlook of the Pre-Socratics, unsullied by the metaphysical outlook of Plato and Aristotle, which he thinks the Western tradition has been saddled with ever since. Translation, for him, was a near spiritual or metaphysical conversion, where he endeavored to "translate" himself into the worldview of the ancient Greeks, which he thought was most clearly revealed in the poetry of Homer. Methodologically, this was achieved by translating the Pre-Socratics, and particularly the fragments of Anaximander, paratactically, without concern for syntax or propositional analysis (Heidegger [1946] 1984). This, in his view, was the way to recover the original open-ended universe of the Pre-Socratics.

Derrida's entire project can be read as a sustained criticism of the notion that there is an original meaning that can be recovered through some type of phenomenological or hermeneutic process. In the context of translation, Derrida argues that languages are natural, animated systems of signification that contain several "tongues", and that any process of translation violates this similitude of multiple and self-referential significance (Derrida and McDonald 1985 100). The result is that no translation can ever preserve the totality of signification, and every process of translation involves loss of content despite the fact that the very process of translation is the mandate of transferring and preserving meaning. Derrida calls this paradox of translation the "double bind" (Derrida and McDonald 1985 102). Derrida in *Plato's Pharmacy* makes his case for the lost in translation thesis by reviewing problems in translating Plato's dialogues, and in particular the multiple and self-referential significances of the Greek "*pharmakon*". He notes that it stands for both POISON and MEDICINE and that Plato relies upon this ambiguity at many points to advance the plot. Derrida calls this simultaneous use of the term in an ambiguous fashion that takes on one meaning in the present context, while also referring to itself as an ambiguous symbol, and to multiple meanings from the perspective of the various characters in a plot, *anagrammatic writing*—a feature of writing that he thinks cannot survive translation, if one chooses any one of the component significations to render it (Derrida [1967] 1981 98). A similar point was later made by W.D. Hart in his observation that one cannot preserve self-reference, reference and truth-value



simultaneously in a translation. Hence, if the sentence “The first word of this very sentence has three letters” were translated metaphrastically into French, it would be false, for the first word of the sentence would have two letters (Hart 1970).

Derrida’s lost in translation thesis is similar to Quine’s indeterminacy of translation thesis, in so far as both indict translation as incapable of preserving meaning. However, Quine’s thesis holds that the problem is that we are at a loss to even make sense that there is an objective question as to what competing but incompatible translation is correct. Despite Derrida’s association with a semantic subjectivism in the popular consciousness, (and despite his very real tendencies towards semantic nihilism) Derrida’s criticism of translation noted here does not explicitly cast doubt on the objectivity of the meaning of an ST, but with the possibility that it could be preserved in translation.<sup>7</sup> Either way, the prognosis is not happy for translation. It is thus not surprising that translation theorists have in general moved away from philosophy, opted for descriptive or empirical accounts of translation, or pursued what seems to be positive grounding in Functional Linguistics. This very aversion to the philosophy of language no doubt motivates the choice of most authors in the field to describe their subject as “translation studies” as opposed to “translation theory.”

## A Point of Contact.

While the main currents of the philosophy of language in the broad Western tradition and translation studies have diverged (the philosophical tradition opting for a skeptical conclusion, the translation studies literature opting for an applied and practical approach to translation), there is an important current running through both of them: skepticism about equivalence in translation.

Translation, recall, is minimally a process of linguistic conversion, replacing linguistic sign for sign. However, there are normative constraints on what we count as a translation. Marx’s *Communist Manifesto* in any language cannot count as a translation of the Bible. Most reflective people would be hard pressed to call the *Communist Manifesto* a translation of the Bible even if a translator set out with the Bible as the ST and ended up with the Manifesto as the TT because these texts are not *equivalent* in any important way. Certainly, they are equivalent in the sense of both being books, widely read, of great influence in European history, but this is not the relevant type of equivalence. I submit the relevant type of equivalence between STs and TTs that would allow us to regard a TT as a translation of an ST is *semantic equivalence*. That semantic equivalence is an important condition of us regarding a text as a translation underwrites our scholarly and pedagogical practice of regarding a translation as *the* text written by an author, even though (except in the rare case when an author translates their own work) this is not literally or linguistically true. Failures in semantic equivalence between texts can be grounds for us to reduce the status of a TT to that of an adaptation, to criticize it as a translation or to refuse it as a translation.

Despite the practical link between translation and semantic equivalence, the very idea of equivalence has been the object of criticism in the translation studies literature. Mary Snell-Hornby in her introductory book entitled *Translation Studies: an Integrated Approach* provides the following argument against semantic equivalence in translation:

...it presupposes a degree of symmetry between languages which makes the postulated Equivalence possible. Nowhere is the fallacy in such thinking better illustrated than in

the term *equivalence* itself. From... selections of definitions one has the impression that the German term *Äquivalenz* and the English term *Equivalence* are identical and themselves exemplify the linguistic relationship they set out to denote.... In fact the opposite is true: on closer investigation subtle but crucial differences emerge between the two terms, so that they should rather be considered as warning examples of the treacherous *illusion* of equivalence that typifies interlingual relationships (Snell-Hornby 1988 16-17).

Snell-Hornby's criticism is by no means peculiar to her. James S. Holmes, who has been described as the founder of "translation studies" (as opposed to "translation theory") similarly expresses doubts over achieving equivalence in translation (Holmes [1969] 1988 10; [1972] 1988 53). Dorte Masden notes that while in specialized areas of translation theorists are comfortable with the idea of equivalence, it has "otherwise become something of a four-letter word" (Madsen 1997). Lamenting this trend, the translation theorist Anthony Pym writes, "the concept of translational equivalence deserves rather more respect than it is currently accorded" (Pym 2004 51).

This skepticism with respect to equivalence is what some in the translation studies literature share with the received philosophical tradition. Derrida's *lost in translation thesis* is a criticism of the ability of translation to preserve meaning, and hence it is a criticism of the possibility that STs and TTs can be equivalent. Quine, for his part, rather explicitly calls into doubt the possibility that translation could meet the ideal of equivalence in one of his formulations of the *indeterminacy of translation* thesis. He writes:

[M]anuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways, all compatible with the totality of speech dispositions, yet incompatible with one another. In countless places they will diverge in giving, as their respective translations of a sentence of the one language, sentences of the other language which stand to each other in no plausible sort of equivalence however loose. (Quine 1960 27)

## **Functionalism and Equivalence.**

In the previous section it was observed that though translation studies has charted a relatively nontheoretical direction away from philosophy, many authors in this tradition hold a view about the problem of translation that coincides with the criticism of the enterprise we find in the received philosophical tradition. The criticism, in short, is that there is no plausible way in which translations could ever be semantically equivalent.

There are exceptions to this general distrust of equivalence in the translation studies literature. Those hailing from the Functionalist tradition are rather comfortable with translations being semantically equivalent to each other, so long as semantic equivalence is defined functionally. However, the Functionalist account of semantics is far too crude. Wittgenstein had identified a problem with this tradition early on in his unpublished notes. Responding to Russell's view in the *Analysis of Mind* that identified meaning with the causal laws bound up with term usage, he observed that on such a Functionalist account, "If I wanted to eat an apple, and someone punched me in the stomach, taking away my appetite, then it was this punch that I originally wanted" (quoted in Monk 1990 291). Wittgenstein's lesson here for us is that meaning as such is something far more fine-grained than the function that items serve. However, if the Functionalist view were



correct, a punch in the stomach and a desire for an apple to alleviate hunger would always be translationally and semantically equivalent, but this is obviously not so. On the Functionalist account of translation from exponents such as Susan Bassnett, the meaning of a portion of text is to be assessed functionally, not in terms of its cognitive content. Thus, we need to identify as part of the meaning the psychological and aesthetic reaction of readers to a text. If a text, say a work on science or religion, speaking about the existence of some entity *E* with certain properties, elicits a favorable response in the readers of the ST in the SL, then the translation must achieve the same type of favorable response in the readers of the TT in the TL, even if this means constructing a TT that does not talk about *E*, if *E* should be disapproved of by readers of the TT or if the TL should lack facilities to talk about *E*. Thus, Bassnett concludes that "Shakespeare's Sonnet 'Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?'" cannot formally (*à la* Nida) be translated into "a language where summers are unpleasant" and "the concept of *GOD THE FATHER* cannot be translated into a language where the deity is female." She continues,

To attempt to impose the value system of the SL culture onto the TL culture is dangerous ground, and the translator should not be tempted by the school that pretends to determine the original intentions of an author on the basis of a self-contained text. The translator cannot be the author of the SL text, but as the author of the TL text has a clear moral responsibility to the TL readers. (Bassnett 2002 30)

Bassnett's conclusion is unacceptable for at least two reasons. First, she confuses the issue of discerning authorial intention with that of translating texts formally, and this is a confusion because one might be a sceptic about intentions but yet be clear about the formal, semantic features of a text—features that Bassnett believes should not be *imposed* upon the TT reader. Second, Bassnett's prescription is a recipe for ethnocentrism and ignorance of the worst form. If all translation must conform to the target culture's own worldview, a target culture could never learn about the thought of foreign cultures. Likewise, we would never be able to properly translate the works of contemporary physics or higher mathematics into the language of linguistic communities for whom physics and higher mathematics are novel. But we clearly manage some degree of success in translating alien ideas into foreign languages. This is not only a regular occurrence, but a major force in the shared history of humanity. Finally, on Bassnett's account, if we were to translate a work on moral philosophy that holds the thesis *T* that is well regarded in the culture of the SL, we would have to change the thesis to something consonant with *not T*, if *T* is generally ill thought of in the target culture. This is patently absurd.

What has gone wrong here? Snell-Hornby notes that the "phenomenon, whereby a theorist makes global observations on translation in general, but actually means only one, often narrow area of it, still characterizes translation studies today—to the detriment of a general theory of translation" (Snell-Hornby 1988 14). I think this is a charitable diagnosis of Bassnett's error. Functionalists have been very good at demonstrating in the literature that in the case of literary and poetic translation, the aesthetic function of a passage in a text is often the most important aspect of the passage and the overall text. And thus, in such cases, translating a text with a view to conserving the aesthetic features of the text is appropriate even if it means sacrificing what might be called the "literal" meaning of the original (cf. Vermeer 1989 186-189). But this functionalist approach cannot sensibly be generalized to all cases of translation.

### **Text-Type Conception of Semantics.**

While Functionalism as a semantics that underwrites all translation is implausible, an error of Functionalism points to a very interesting fact of translation, recognized by some in the translation studies literature. The error is the assumption that all texts, regardless of type, are to be translated in the same fashion, with a view to conserving the affect and effect of the ST in the TT. To avoid such an error, we must admit that not all texts can be translated in the same way, but rather that each text must be translated in a manner that is in keeping with its type.

The idea of “text-types” arises out of the translation studies literature (cf. Holmes [1972] 1988 74-76; Laviosa-Braithwaite 2001 277-278). A text-type is like a genre, except it has widespread institutional recognition. Examples of text-types include the philosophical text, the novel, and a laboratory report, and text-types can include among them sub text-types. While the semantic significance of text-types has been unnoticed generally in the literature, I believe it provides us with a way out of the morass that the tradition has left us in.

The trouble with the received philosophical and translation-theoretic traditions’ view on translation is that they adopt a *linguistic* conception of meaning and translation, according to which languages are the primary bearers of meaning. Quine appears to recognize the linguistic assumption when he argues that the general problem with translation, and its search for synonymous sentences across languages, is that it raises a “conflict of parts [i.e. sentences] seen without the wholes [i.e. a given language]” (Quine 1960 78-9). Likewise, the Derridian criticism of translation as incapable of preserving the particular natural histories of a language—or what he calls “tongues”—explicitly assumes a linguistic conception of meaning and translation (Derrida and McDonald 1985 100). If languages are bearers of meaning, then the translator’s task is to build a TT out of TL words and sentences that are each equivalent to SL words and sentences that comprise the ST. But this is a prescription for failure. Languages have natural histories shaped by many factors, far beyond the control of the translator. A translator will never be able to construct a TT that is equivalent to an ST on such a linguistic criterion of equivalence. As Snell-Hornby suggests, even the paradigm cases of the English term “equivalence” and the German term “*äquivalenz*” vary in the minutia of their connotations, denotations and customary usage in their respective languages.

In contrast to a linguistic account of meaning and translation, I would like to forward a textual account of meaning and translation. According to this theory, translation is a relationship between texts, not languages, their vocabulary or sentences abstractly conceived. The criteria of equivalence in translation are relative to “text-types.” Each text-type specifies what might be called *text-type features*, which must be preserved in any successful translation. Thus, the type of equivalence sought between originals and translations is not the same in all cases, nor is it a complete equivalence of every feature of the two texts. Rather, equivalence is relativized to the type of text under consideration. If we add the insight that meaning is what is preserved in translation—the insight that justifies the ordinary presumption that genuine translations are semantically equivalent to their originals—we arrive at a text-type conception of semantics (henceforth TTS), according to which the criteria of translational equivalence relative to text-types specify constellations of meanings.

Given the institutional nature of text-types, translation, on my account, is determinate when provided within the confines of an institution that is charged with conserving and improving a text-type. The various fields in the modern academy are prime examples of such institutions in our

cultures (though, by no means are these the only types of institutions that conserve text-types—traditional societies do and will have their own institutions that are not academic in our sense). The relationship between a text-type and an academic discipline is a close one. A mark of a secure discipline is that it has its own text-type over which it presides, specifying conventions of how such texts ought to be authored, specifying the features of the text-type that are essential (i.e., text-type features) and thus setting the ground work for determinate translation in that field. In Quine's scenario, translators produce translations (and translation manuals) on their own, and their finished products have no common institutional authority over them to decide over controversies. On the account I am urging, it is the institution that presides over a text-type that is in a position to properly adjudicate disputes in translation. It can resolve such controversies by further research, and when that is not decisive, it can resolve the issue by institutional fiat, setting down precedence for future translations. In reality, this is what our academic institutions do, though often in an undisciplined fashion, and thus not always in the most consistent manner. Fully determinate translation, on this account, is thus closely analogous to the principled decisions of a legal system, deferring to precedence and other institutional values in its judgments.

Since TTS rejects that meaning is primarily a linguistic phenomenon, it has no conceptual barrier to introducing translational equivalents for words, sentences or concepts in the TT that are ordinarily lacking in the TL, or in redefining words already in usage in order to achieve equivalence between an ST and a TT. I call this process "*text molding*." It can be accomplished by framing comments, parenthetical in-text comments, and marginalia, informing the readers as to the meaning of a term. Anthropologists have resorted to such devices for decades in the production of ethnographies that contain detailed translations of transcripts and texts in a foreign SL (cf. now classic Messick 1993). Recently, the philosopher Anthony Kwame Appiah made a plea for such an approach to translation in African studies and cultural studies (Appiah [1993] 2004 399). With some effort on the part of the translator and the reader to learn to properly read a text, Derrida's anagrammatic writing can be preserved as well. Metalinguistic texts that attempt to maintain self-reference, reference and truth-value, as Hart brings to our attention, can also be accommodated by such text molding strategies, transforming the TT in such a way that it appropriately mirrors the ST.

That text molding is an established practice in many disciplines may come as a surprise to semanticists of a linguistic persuasion who take the task of translation to be a project of finding equivalents across predefined words and sentences of languages. However, I submit that the traditional, linguistic approach to translation simply gets translation wrong. To conceive of translation's task as restricted to the search for equivalent words and sentences across different languages is to treat languages as the objects to be translated. Translators do not, nor have they ever, endeavored to translate languages. This would be an impossible task because languages lack the requisite equivalence for translation and because there are no boundaries to a language. Linguistic productivity is never ending as the semantic resonance of fragments of a language is unbounded. In contrast, the task of the translator is finite. The *linguistic* conception of meaning and translation, in short, is guilty of a category mistake, of taking languages, and not texts, as the objects to be translated.

TTS, being a version of what might be called *translational semantics*, as opposed to *truth theoretic semantics*, always takes meaning to be a matter of translation. Determinate translations yield what I shall call *determinate meanings* of three sorts: (i) whole texts are determinate meanings, or if one

prefers, determinately meaningful, when they are determinately translatable according to an institutionally recognized text-type—STs and TTs that are genuine translations on this account have the same meaning; (ii) text-type features that must be preserved in a determinate translation are determinate meanings—thus, for instance, if certain concepts are essential to the articulation of a text of a certain type, and the text-type demands that they be preserved in translation, their canonical specification by the relevant institution constitute determinate meanings; (iii) translation units that are preserved in determinate translation as per TTS are determinate meanings—such units can be as small as words, and as large as passages of texts, and there is no text-type independent reason to believe that such units must be the same size, measured in words or sentences, in order to be translational equivalents. In theory, some text-type might allow such units to be translated holophrastically or expansively.

In order to fully appreciate how translation and determinate meaning is possible, we need to recognize the existence of *indeterminate meaning*. Indeterminate meaning, like determinate meaning, is preserved in translation. However, indeterminate meaning is produced by a process of translation that falls outside the constraints of a text-type. I call such translation outside of institutionally sanctioned text-type *translation schemas*. I would hasten to add that we would do well to also call such translations *pseudo-translations*, as they lack the features of a real translation (i.e., they are not translations of texts but text fragments abstractly conceived, apart from text-types). Translation schemas consist of, among other things, a definiendum with its definiens. The definiens is a type of translation of the definiendum. Other examples of translation schemas, or indeterminate meaning, are analyses of ordinary language concepts provided by philosophers. Other translation schemas may consist in the paring of words with objects they are understood as denoting (so called ostensive definitions), and others yet might consist of lengthy, lexicographical explanations of the meaning of a word or expression, which at best constitutes an indeterminate abstraction of the role the definiendum plays in the various text-types of a culture. Indeed, the more authoritative a translation schema is, the more generally it conforms to texts of a culture. The *main reason* that translation schemas yield indeterminate meaning is that they are incapable of authoritatively informing us how to translate the language that they treat. Translation is only determinately possible by taking into account the text-type of a text that will guide its translation: translation schemas say nothing about text-types.

*Reading* a text is an interplay between linguistic knowledge of indeterminate meaning and institutional expertise in the text-type under consideration. The text-type acts like a template that is placed over the language of a text, guiding how we read the text. It may trump linguistic expectations, and frequently does, for reasons specific to the text-type. The type of linguistic knowledge necessary for reading will vary according to text-type. Sometimes, text-types specify the language or languages that they concern. For instance, mathematical texts usually contain a mixture of natural language and formal, mathematical language, and this is specified by the text-type in question. In general, no text is intelligible if abstracted from its text-type, which organizes interpretation and constrains translation. In general, learning to *read* in the full sense (not simply vocalizing an orthography, but understanding its determinate meaning) is primarily a matter of coming to terms with the relevant text-type with some knowledge of the language that the text is written in. This is taught via institutional avenues. The essential role of the text-type in reading is the key to explaining how specialized texts of academic disciplines remain generally inaccessible to the public at large: the lay public has no or insufficient institutional knowledge of the text-type,

knowledge that frequently takes years of formal education to master.

In summary, the received Western traditions' problems with translation are a function of failing to appreciate the text-type bases of both translation and meaning. In failing to recognize the importance of institutionally recognized text-types in translation, Quine deprives himself of the institutional means of rendering translation determinate; Derrida erroneously expects translation to preserve every semantic feature of the language used to comprise a text; Snell-Hornby expects texts to be composed of words in languages that come predesigned with fixed meanings; and Functionalists expect all texts to be translated according to the same causal, affective and aesthetic considerations.

## Some Observations.

The previous section sets out TTS as an approach to meaning and translation that is sensitive to text-types in semantics and recognizes the importance of human institutions in resolving controversies in translation. Determinate translations of texts are possible, on this account, because language is not the determinate, bedrock of meaning, but rather is a pliable resource that authors and translators can mold into texts. In reality, this is how translation proceeds, I submit, or at least, this is how translation proceeds when it proceeds determinately. Sometimes disciplines relegate their translation work to those who are not sufficiently knowledgeable about the relevant text-type, which results in poor translations and unnecessary confusion. There is certainly room for improvement. However, the highly specialized fields of various disciplines in academia, as well as other text-types important to the modern state, such as legal text-types, are generally translated as TTS conceives it, by experts in the relevant text-types, with great success. Moreover, history does record instances when scholars, expert in a particular text-type, have worked intensely together to solve problems of translation. Often, when this institutional expertise is brought deftly to translate texts, readers of the text marvel that the translations shed light on the STs (Tsering 1995). TTS credits such improvement to the filtering role that text-types play in the process of translating.

TTS has some interesting features as a theory of semantics that set it apart from the main competitors in semantics. Currently, the two salient semantic positions in Analytic philosophy of language are Contextualism and Semantic Minimalism.<sup>8</sup> Contextualism, a tradition that traces its roots to the writings of the latter Wittgenstein and Austin,<sup>9</sup> holds that determinate meaning is *anthropologically linguistic*, and *made determinate by contexts*, consisting, in part, of times, places, and interlocutors. Contextualists hold that sentences do not have determinate meanings abstractly conceived, but take on determinate meanings within contexts. For the Contextualist, all determinate meaning is context-sensitive. Famous recent proponents of this type of view include François Recanatì (2004), Dan Sperber and Deidre Wilson (1981).

Recently, Herman Cappelen and Ernest Lepore have argued that Contextualism makes communication across contexts impossible for meaning on its lights would change as contexts change. Moreover, they charge that Contextualism is guilty of a type of inconsistency when it speculates that meanings of sentences change according to contexts for such a generalization only makes sense if the Contextualist discounts their own context (Cappelen and Lepore 2005 10). In contrast, Cappelen and Lepore advocate what they call Semantic Minimalism, according to which the semantic content of a sentence is the minimal content that all utterances of the sentences share



(Cappelen and Lepore 2005 143-144). Thus, on this view, “Rudolph has a red nose” has the minimal content of *Rudolph has a red nose*.

Any sentence, on their account, can be used in diverse manners to imply a plurality of propositions through speech acts (a position they call “Speech Act Pluralism”) but the purpose of semantics is to provide the bare minimum knowledge that a speaker needs in order to employ sentences to their varied pragmatic ends. Meaning, on this account, is *abstractly* or *theoretically linguistic*, and *context insensitive*. In short, the bulk of what the Contextualist regards as the meaning of a sentence, Semantic Minimalism places in the category of pragmatics. Semantics, on this account, has to do with what I would call very simple translation schemas.

TTS, in contrast, is a context-invariant conception of semantics that is non-minimalist. It rejects the notion that meaning is linguistic and context dependent. In contrast, it holds that determinate meaning is *textual*, and *context insensitive*. Thus, in comparison to Contextualism and Semantic Minimalism, TTS shares a foundation with Semantic Minimalism in rejecting the idea that determinate meaning is context dependent. According to TTS, the three types of determinate meaning (meaning of a whole text qua translations, meaning of text-type features, and meaning of translation units of actual translations) are textual in nature. Texts, in contrast to speech acts, are artifacts that are designed to retain an identity across contexts. (An English language translation of Plato’s *Republic*, according to TTS, retains this identity and its meaning, regardless of where the particular book is found or who is reading it.) While Contextualist accounts render meaning a function of the context of speakers, TTS renders meaning a function of what some early translation theorists called the “co-text” of texts—that is, the textual features of a text that situate textual fragments within a text (Catford 1965 31). Cotextual features are features of a text that travel with the text, regardless of the context it is found in.

One might object that TTS is no different from Contextualism, for on TTS’s account, meaning is determinate within the *context* of text-type institutions. In response, I would argue that the idea of a text-type institution does not comport well with the idea of a context as it is conceived of in the contemporary debate. Text-type institutions span times, places, national boundaries and linguistic communities. With such a diffuse conception of a context, the very idea of context sensitivity of all meaning becomes difficult to make sense of for there is no obvious way to delineate the province of such contexts. Texts travel the world, through various departments at universities, through the possession of different readers and consumers and are abandoned in areas of the world where no one knows how to read them, or where there is no one to read them, and yet they continue to have the same determinate meaning, according to TTS, as long as there is some text-type institution that claims such a text. One might insist that TTS is a form of Contextualism for it holds that meaning is determinate in the context of the activity of cognitively sophisticated beings such as us. But I think this is a rather gratuitous construal of “context” and is far more general than anything of use to the Contextualist: context, so conceived, has no ostensible boundaries.

While TTS eschews standard Contextualism’s model of meaning, TTS shares similarities with the philosophy of the latter Wittgenstein that renders it incompatible with Semantic Minimalism. The idea of an institutionalized text-type as the foundation of determinate meaning does have some concordance with Wittgenstein’s concept of a language game, even though TTS does not regard meaning as a feature of text-type institutions (conceived of as far slimmer than the various texts they translate), but of their artifacts (i.e., texts). While TTS cannot make great use of the



Wittgensteinian slogan that meaning is (often) use (*Philosophical Investigations* I § 43), if “use” is defined contextually (with respect to times and places or linguistic groups), TTS has some sympathy for Wittgenstein’s other often neglected semantic slogan, namely that the “meaning of a word is what is explained by the explanation of the meaning” (*Philosophical Investigations* I §560). If such explanations of word meanings are parts of translation schemas, then TTS can understand Wittgenstein as accounting for the semantics of indeterminate meaning (i.e., of language).

## Some Objections.

The previous two sections outlined the distinguishing features of TTS. The last section illustrated that while TTS is a novel theory of semantics, it overlaps with many positions in the tradition. In general, TTS regards much that the tradition has to say about translation and meaning as correct, if understood as a comment on the semantic possibilities for language, considered independently of texts, but incorrect as a generalization about the full possibilities for meaning and translation. TTS is thus a result of a dialectic that takes the received views on translation and meaning as the problem and presents itself as the solution, sublating Quinean and Derridian views on language, Wittgensteinian views on pluralism in semantics, and even Functionalist intuitions that in some cases functional equivalence is semantic equivalence.

*Objection 1.* The Quinean may be most eager to offer an objection to TTS, for it seems that TTS attempts to solve the problem of indeterminacy of translation by ignoring what Quine takes to be *the* problem: namely that there is no *empirical* data that settles problematic controversies in translation. The claim that seeming indeterminacy is settled by the quasi legal nature of institutions that preside over text-types is an admission, of sorts, that there is nothing objective at stake in the controversy.

*Response 1.* If by “objective” one means that there is a fact of the matter that individuals can be wrong about and that experts can and do converge upon, then TTS paints a picture of translation that is objective. Controversies of translation, on TTS’s, account, are resolved on the basis of the facts of the individual text considered apart from a text-type, the relevant text-type features, past precedence in translation and institutional decisions that set down conventions in translation to deal with novel controversies. All of these are issues that individuals can be mistaken about and matters that experts that comprise the relevant institutions converge upon. If by “objective” one means “thoroughly divorced from the decisions of persons,” then TTS does not paint a picture of translation that is objective for translation on its account is contingent upon the decisions of experts in text-type institutions. However, it is difficult to understand how such a criterion of objectivity can be relevant to any theory of translation, for translation is a textual process, and texts are our artifacts. Indeed, even scientific knowledge, empirical as it is, will depend upon the decisions of experts, to the extent that expert decisions contribute to the institutional knowledge of science with respect to such issues as scientific methodology and procedure. Decision-independent objectivity may be elusive in general.

*Objection 2.* The objection from the Quinean can be put differently. TTS, on the Quinean account, is simply a socialized version of the problem that Quine envisions, namely that translations are possible relative to a particular manual of translation that the field linguist develops via the process of radical translation. And while according to a translation manual a translation may be right or wrong, there is no common judge between them. TTS must recognize that its institutionalized

translation text-types are much like translation manuals, and that it may be possible that one and the same text may be translatable via two or more distinct text-types. Thus, for instance, TTS must recognize that a text, such as the Upanishads, may be translatable as a text in philosophy or as a text of poetry, and as there is no greater institution that resolves such differences between experts in poetry in literature departments and historians of philosophy in philosophy departments, TTS arrives at the indeterminacy of translation.

*Response 2.* While there is a sense in which an institutionally sanctioned text-type is like a Quinean translation manual, there is a major difference. Text-types, according to TTS, do not set out with the goal of conserving *every* semantic feature of a ST in a TT. Rather, they set out the goal of translating a text *read* as a text of a certain type. Thus, translation on this account is a self-consciously selective process while in the Quinean account it is not. If a text is translated according to contrary text-types, the resulting translations do not run afoul of any norms in translation according to TTS. In other words, the resulting translations are not indeterminate, but merely acceptable alternatives intelligible relative to distinct text-types. It is important to remember that for Quine, the indeterminacy of translation is not simply the possibility of alternative translations. Rather, it is the conundrum of equally acceptable but *incompatible* translations (Quine 1960 73). Quine characterizes the incompatibility of translation in terms of logical incompatibility (i.e., contradiction). However, when we liberate equivalence in translation and understand it relative to text-types, standards for the compatibility of translations are relativized to the text-types. It thus makes no sense to complain of an aesthetic or poetic translation of a certain ST because it fails to maintain the philosophical significance of the ST, any more than it makes sense to criticize the quality of a portrait for failing to be a topographical representation of the same person.

*Objection 3.* TTS offers a wide conception of meaning that violates a relatively traditional distinction between semantics and pragmatics. While there is an ongoing controversy on how to draw the distinction, semantics is often thought to deal with the literal and truth-conditional. All of the other important features of language appear to be pragmatic in nature. While TTS insists on including many non-literal semantic modalities in the category of semantics, it is an empty move that gains nothing. Traditional semanticists can recognize that text-types dictate the preservation of several features of a ST but these features are yet pragmatic. If this is so, we do not need to abandon the traditional approach to semantics and the philosophy of language and embrace TTS instead.

*Response 3.* TTS rejects this “traditional” manner of drawing the semantics-pragmatics distinction for it fails to recognize the important, context invariant and insensitive nature of the preservation of nonliteral or non-truth-conditional modalities in translation. In other words, to insist that the preservation of an aesthetic feature of a ST in a translation amounts to the preservation of its pragmatic features is to play a word game that does nothing to set apart the determinate and principled preservation of such features in translation from the type of contextual guess work that is involved in communicating in discursive contexts. “Pragmatics” is a label that best suits the practical and anthropological nature of linguistic interaction, not the preservation of stable, impersonal text-type features through translation.

*Objection 4.* To retain the traditional semantic-pragmatic distinction is not to engage in a word game, but to recognize that the pragmatic, such as the aesthetic, or other affective or effecting

aspects of texts, are reducible and explainable by the literal and truth-conditional aspects of meaning (cf. Davidson [1978] 1996). In other words, there is a logical priority of the literal in meaning, and thus, it is sensible to keep the category of “semantics” for the study of such features of language: let “pragmatics” be the category for everything else.

*Response 4.* It is an article of faith that there is a semantic priority of the literal—which is proved wrong by the role of text-types in translation. As noted, an institutional text-type not only informs the translator as to what features of an ST should be preserved, it can also sanction the molding of TTs in such a manner that imposes novel meanings on expressions already in usage for considerations that are purely textual, and not linguistic. If a text-type can trump linguistic expectations of what words and sentences mean within a text, then it can trump expectations related to the so called “literal” meaning of an expression. The idea that the literal takes priority in semantics may seem plausible when meaning is understood linguistically, and the challenge of semantics is understood as informing us as to how we can understand interlocutors within contexts. But if semantics is understood as pertaining to what is preserved in translation, the literal loses any such priority.

*Objection 5.* TTS assumes that for every text-type there is a corresponding institution. We can line up many institutions with text-types: poetry and the novel with the academic study of literature, philosophical texts with the discipline of philosophy, legal texts with legal systems and the ancillary academic study of law. What of the text-types that have no ostensive institution to oversee them? Consider the conversation people have at the grocery store with a cashier. Does this even comprise a text governed by a definite institution? If not, TTS says that it cannot be determinately translated. But this seems wrong.

*Response 5.* Not every linguistic practice has a corresponding institution charged with treating such practices as generating specific texts for translation. The social practice of conversations between cashiers and store customers may be of this variety. If so, there is no determinate way, at present, to translate transcripts of such conversations if they are treated as autonomous texts. Ex hypothesi, if such conversations occur within a larger text that is subsumed under another definite type, such as the literary type of the novel, canons of translation specific to that institution will help us translate the embedded conversation. But such canons cannot help us if we attempt to translate conversations as though they were their own type of text. TTS is not an argument to the effect that translation is always determinate, but rather that determinate translation is always possible. If translating conversations at the grocery store with a cashier becomes a very important matter for society on the whole, we will no doubt strengthen our institution of treating transcripts of such conversations as texts of a specific type. Some scholars have given the social practice of conversation a lot of thought, and Ethnomethodologists (or “Conversation Analysts”, according to an alternative nomenclature), have noticed that many ordinary conversations conform to certain patterns (Sacks and Jefferson 1995). This research may constitute the beginnings of an institution devoted to translating conversations as their own text-type.

## **Conclusion.**

In this paper I have argued for TTS as a means of dialectically resolving the problem of translation in the philosophy of language and translation studies. Translation studies contributes to the notion of TTS the idea of a text-type, essential to the project of determinate translation. The philosophy of

language brings to this marriage a sharpened concern for determinacy and semantic equivalence in translation. While these two subjects have charted distinct courses over the last forty years, a view shared by both is that language, and not texts, is the ultimate bearer of meaning. This linguistic bias is understandable. Our first encounter with meaning is through our social interaction which is predominantly linguistic. However, the philosophical tradition and much theory in translation studies has remained suspended in this game of language, as though it were the highest expression of meaning and meaningfulness, all the while ignoring what has always been in plain sight: texts. These objects remain a stubborn reminder that determinate meaning transcends context and social interaction, and present difficulties to any reductionist theory of meaning, that would attempt to explain all meaningfulness in terms of one type of basic or common meaning, be it Quine's stimulus meaning or Cappelen and Lepore's minimal content.

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## Endnotes

1. Carnap did not invent a concern for ideal languages. It stretches back to Descartes (Descartes [1629] 1970 6) and Leibniz (Leibniz [1666] 1966 11). The latter conceived such an ideal language as an “alphabet of human thought” that would be readily intelligible to all human beings regardless of their spoken language. According to Carnap, in so conceiving of an ideal language in this manner, Leibniz envisioned a Begriffsschrift (‘Concept-writing’) in Frege’s sense (Frege [1879]

1967). Contemporaneous inspiration for this project also came from the international language movements of Carnap's day, particularly Esperanto (Carnap 1963 66-71). The Logical Positivist addition to this project was the demand that all meaning in the canonical language be reducible to empirical data.

2. The exegetical question of what Quine's doctrine of indeterminacy of translation is has been a controversial issue, which I shall not explore in great detail here (cf. Føllesdal 2001). I focus on a reading of the thesis in Kirk's *Translation Determined* (1986) that I find naturally comes off the pages of Quine's *Word and Object*. Informed by this reading, I take it that Quine has two ways of making the argument for the indeterminacy of translation thesis. One way is to argue that sentences in any language can be mapped on to themselves in an infinite number of ways, but yet remain consistent with the totality of linguistic behavior. Another way that he makes the argument is by appeal to the field linguist's task of radical translation, and the conclusion of the thought experiment: that field linguists following the same empirically austere methodology can (and are likely) to arrive at incompatible manuals of translation (Quine 1960 27).

3. Evidence that the philosophical community on the whole started to accept Quine's argument comes in the form of efforts to downplay its severity. Donald Davidson, for instance, argues that we need to worry about the indeterminacy of translation as much as we need to worry about the possibility that temperature can be measured in Centigrade and Fahrenheit. (Davidson 1986 313). Others, such as Richard Rorty and Noam Chomsky, have attempted to recast Quine's indeterminacy thesis as a species of a general worry about underdetermination of empirical theories by observation, and thus nothing particularly troublesome. (Chomsky 1975 182; 1980 258 n.26; Rorty [1972] 2001; cf. Kirk 1986 135).

4. Except for a few exceptions (cf. Lance and O'Leary-Hawthorne 1997), translation has in general not been called upon as a central test for a theory of meaning in much recent works on semantics and the philosophy of language (cf. Recanati 2004; cf. Cappelen and Lepore 2005).

5. Skopos Theory, forwarded by theorists such as Hans J. Vermeer, holds that TT's are best judged in terms of their function, but the function is not predetermined by the ST, but by a contractual negotiation between the translator and the agent commissioning a translation (cf. Vermeer 1989).

6. There are some exceptions. George Steiner in his idiosyncratic *After Babel* praises Quine as one of the originals in the history of translation theory (Steiner 1975 269), but yet criticizes the philosophical and linguistic tradition for failing to provide a useful theory of meaning for translation (Steiner 1975 294). Since Steiner, the translation theorist Anthony Pym has often referred to Quine in his writings (cf. Pym [2002]). Some others have been excited about the possibility of the indeterminacy of translation (Benjamin 1989; Malmkjær 2001), but this is a minority sentiment in the translation studies tradition.

7. Derrida, perhaps sensing that his classic argument in his *Plato's Pharmacy* is very weak, revised his criticism before his death. In one of the last of his writings, he argues that translation is a process that only makes sense within a Christian theological framework that emphasizes being born again. Moreover, the effort of the West to translate is of a piece with its anti-Semitism, best displayed in the forced conversion of Shylock from Judaism to Christianity in the *Merchant of Venice*—an anti-Semitism that forces the Jew to give up both his identity as a Jew, his hard earned

wealth, and to submit to norms that are alien to his world view (Derrida [2001] 2004) . While Derrida presents the reader with a very sophisticated reading of Shakespeare, the argument on translation leaves much to be desired. For instance, he completely leaves aside the possibility that the correct political analogy for translation is not the persecution of Jews in Europe, but the immigration of the foreigner into a pluralistic and open, multicultural society that benefits from and values diversity.

8. Cappelen and Lepore identify a third semantic view that they call “Moderate Contextualism” that they contrast with the view I identified as Contextualism and they identify as “Radical Contextualism”. Moderate Contextualists, on their account, typically regard meaning as context insensitive, but recognize a larger list of context sensitive expressions than Cappelen and Lepore do (Cappelen and Lepore 2005 7-11). For Cappelen and Lepore, context sensitivity is triggered grammatically (Cappelen and Lepore 2005 144), while Moderate Contextualists, on their account, are unprincipled about context sensitivity. I omit discussion of views that fall within Moderate Contextualism for simplicity of explication: it is a type of compromise position that can be derived from some combination of (Radical) Contextualism and Semantic Minimalism. TTS, however, presents itself as an alternative to Moderate Contextualism, along with Contextualism and Semantic Minimalism, as TTS eschews the linguistic account of meaning basic to all three broad categories of theories.

9. In this paper I take it to be an open exegetical question as to whether Contextualism as present in the recent literature can be clearly found in the writings of Wittgenstein and Austin.