

“Dethroning” The Source Text: A “Skopos” Theoretical Perspective in Sesotho Translation

Edwin Joseph Mohatlane

*University of the Free State, Department of African Languages, P. O. Box 339,
Bloemfontein, 9300, South Africa
E-mail: mohatlaneej@ufs.ac.za*

KEYWORDS Skopos. Functional. Coherent. Fidelity. Equivalence. Adequacy

ABSTRACT The paper challenges the traditional view that the source text serves as the norm against which the target text is modelled. The aim is to present the *skopos* theory in the place of the equivalence paradigm. The researcher moves from the premise that the dominant element in Sesotho translation is no longer the source text but the purpose. Taken from that perspective, this work presents an argument that the purpose of the source text does not necessarily have to determine the purpose of the target text. There is even no guarantee that the purpose in one culture will necessarily be the same in another culture. A change of purpose is also construed to suggest a reformulation of the translation. The result of this work is summarised in the view that the target text is the second original text. The paper recommends that prior any translation process, the translator should establish the purpose and be faithful to express it in translation so that ultimately a meaningful, culturally acceptable and purposeful translation can be produced.

INTRODUCTION

In many of the English-Sesotho translations, translators often engage in the translation process without being given a clear and comprehensive translation brief. This commonly causes the translators to simply translate in such a manner that the source text aspects are retained in the target text. The objective of this study is, firstly, to argue that the source text may not be the determining factor in terms of how the target text should be translated.

Secondly, the purpose of translation as reflected in the translation brief will determine the method within which the translation should be made. Thirdly, Sesotho translations should be informed by the given translation brief to achieve the intended purpose for the target readership. It therefore implies that if the purpose has been clearly outlined in the translation brief, there would be no ways in which the translation cannot be meaningfully translated to yield culturally acceptable and linguistically accessible translations. In other words, the basis of argument in this study is that the purpose of translation is not dependent on the source text. The source text is merely “*an offer of information*” to be processed and transformed in producing the target text.

Seeing that the basic tenet underlying the *skopos* theory is profoundly levelled against the equivalence paradigm, the study intends to de-

throned the supremacy of the source text in terms of the purpose of translation. The functionalist theorists maintain that it does not really matter whether the target text has an equivalent relationship with its source text. What matters is whether the produced target text has a specific function in the real world. In this sense, the target text is expected to be viable, sensitive and generally functional to the needs, the expectations and the cultural aspects of its intended readership.

It is important to establish the extent at which the target text “talks” to the target readership in terms of their linguistic competence as well as cultural inclinations. At the end of it all, the ultimate and optimal translation has to appeal to the cognitive, the emotional and the social behaviour of its readers, depending on its intended purpose. The *skopos* theory therefore presupposes a violation of the equivalence theory on the basis of its emphasis of the source text. The source text is geared to be *dethroned* as the norm that determines the qualitative translation.

The purpose of translation is now elevated to the status of being the dominant feature in every translation process within the *skopos* theoretical paradigm. The very purpose of translation is not determined on the basis of the source text readers, but, of importance, on the basis of the intended target readers. The underlying reason for this venture is to demolish or deconstruct the hierarchy that had been built by the

equivalence theoretical tenets and introduce a new paradigm where there would be a change of focus towards the sociolinguistic as well as the sociocultural needs of the target readers.

Within the parameters of the *skopos* theory that would serve as the framework of operation in this work, it should be clear that the target text is perceived not as an isolated verbal construct, but, as an attempt at communication that functions in a certain way, in a certain situation or culture. With this information as backdrop, readers should understand that the formulated target text may not operate in the same degree of success in another situation or culture.

It is important also to realise that this work will presumably illuminate the fact that the source text is not static but liable to change, depending on the cultural situations within which it should be articulated. In other words, there is no fixed relationship between the source text and the target text as the target text may come up with a different form and function that is different to the source text with which it forms a language combination.

The target readers are also expected to know their culture in order to realise the significance of the introduction of the functional dimension of the language group they are being translated for. Presumably, it is for this reason that Baker (1992: 259) defined the term “presupposition” as a pragmatic inference relating to linguistic and extra-linguistic knowledge that a sender assumes the receivers to have or which is necessary to retrieve the sender’s message.

The purpose or function of the target text is dependent on the social and the cultural needs of the target readership. Holz-Mänttari (2010) therefore adds more meaning to the functional element of the *skopos* theory against the precedence of the source text over the target text by alluding to the fact that:

“translation is viewed as a human activity having purposes and involving intercultural transfer.” Mänttari refers to a professional translator as an intercultural mediator” (Holz-Mänttari 2010).

Linked with the information given in the previous paragraph, it gives more meaning that culture serves as the crucial and central element that stabilises and reinforces the meaning or message communicated. Nord (1997) concurs with this view as she states that:

“In translation, senders and receivers belong to different cultural groups in that they speak different languages.”

The paper recommends that prior any translation process, the translator should establish the purpose and be faithful to express it in translation so that ultimately a meaningful, culturally acceptable and purposeful translation can be produced. For this particular reason, the translator would require the translation brief in order to be faithful to the target readership in terms of the intended purpose.

Aim of the Study

The aim of this study is to nullify the source text as the determining factor in translation and to present the purpose of translation as the alternative prime principle that determines the translation process. As we hinted in the introduction, the *skopos* theory was actually a violation of some of the principles of the equivalence paradigm, a new paradigm or way of thinking is presented that challenges the dominant role of the source text. The aim in this study is therefore initiated by the fact that many Sesotho translators still operates under the conviction that the purpose of the source text should necessarily be informed by the one of the target text. In this way, some of these translators still seem to regard the source text as the norm or the yardstick that determines the quality of the target text.

It is against the information given in the above paragraph as background that the researcher intends to demonstrate in this study that the embedded culture, within which the target text is contextualised, warrants a change of purpose. Culture plays a major role to determine the change of purpose from source text to target text depending also on the translation brief given to the translator by the initiator. As a matter of necessity, this study aims also to show that a radical change of purpose suggests a radical change of the target text in terms of method, strategies and structure.

It will also not suffice if the role of the translation brief cannot be demonstrated. The brief is assumed to be significant in the discussion of the functional dimension of the analysis of the translation process from the source to the target text. In this way, the study is intended to show that translating through the brief within the *sko-*

pos theory represents the functionality of the target text within its sociocultural community. The brief will be necessary to reflect on the social needs of the target group. Reiss (1987) also confirms this view in contending that real life presents situations where equivalence is not possible and sometimes not even desired.

The target texts cannot be expected to be equivalent at all times with the source text within the natural human world. Translation *skopoi* (plural of *skopos*) are as many as there are target readers. Therefore the aim in this study is to reflect that the source text cannot always assume the upper hand over the target text or, perhaps, always be the norm to establish the nature of the target text to be produced.

Literature Review

The "*skopos*" theory is one of the theories that were intended to liberate translators from the servitude of the source text. The idea advocated had been to express translation as a new communicative act that must be purposeful with respect to the translator's client and readership. However, translation critics differed in terms of their perception of the equivalence between the source text and the target text.

House (1981: 29-30) expresses the view that the target text has to be equivalent to the source text in order to be of quality. In other words, House (1981) is of the opinion that a good translation is judged on the basis of the degree in which it is equivalent to the source text. She goes further to propose a source text oriented approach in translation. In this way, House (1981) maintains that the source text must serve as the norm against which the quality of translation should be measured. The source text is enthroned to be quality criterion of a meaningful translation.

As House (1981) raised the issue of equivalence as significant within the relationship of the source text and the target text, equivalence posed a serious criticism from other translation theorists. Van Leuven-Zwart (1992: 57) is one of the functionalist critics who stood firm against the source text being the determining factor towards the verification of the quality of translation. It is in his opinion that readers understand that the function of the translation should not be the same as the one of the source text. In this way, Van Leuven-Zwart (1992) did much to "de-

throne" the source text as the norm as well as the whole issue of equivalence principle.

Without any shadow of doubt, Vermeer (2013) has contributed a lot to conscientise translators about the discrepancy in the role of the source text in the translation process. He actually "dethroned" both the source text and the whole concept of equivalence by accepting the unique and independent nature of the target text as the second origin. It is worth to mention that Vermeer (2013) distinguished himself from other translation critics by maintaining a rigid stance that the source text is not the norm to determine the production of the target text. He even gave the target text a special focus as a text that operates within its specified target culture and context.

As Vermeer (2013) emphasised on the target culture, he therefore opines that the very target culture determines the aspects of the source text that need to be transferred to the target text tradition and culture. As a functionalist, it must be taken into consideration that Vermeer (1989) argues that the purpose or function is of paramount significance for the production of the target text but not necessarily the purpose of the source text.

Newmark (2014) indicated and associated the use of the term equivalence as "*a dead duck*". This implies that Newmark (2014) suggested that the term should no longer be used as it unnecessarily gives the source text the dominance over the target text. Going back to history, many translations (including Sesotho translations) were frequently associated with word-for-word fidelity to the source text, even though the result may not be considered appropriate for the intended purpose.

One of the most important factors that prompted the undertaking of this research task, is that many Bible translators have felt that the process of translating procedures do not favour dominance of the source text over the target text. The Bible translation procedures involve a faithful reproduction of formal source-text qualities in one situation, and an adjustment to the target audience in another. Within this framework of operation, it may be possible to reflect on the need for a change of attitude to the domination of the source text.

Nida (1982) presented perspectives on the equivalence principle regarding the domination of the source text over the target text. As a matter of necessity, Nida (1982) distinguished be-

tween the formal and dynamic equivalence. The formal equivalence refers to a faithful reproduction of source-text form elements whereas the dynamic equivalence denotes equivalence of extra-linguistic communicative effect.

Vermeer (2013) defines translating as “to produce a text in a target setting for a target purpose and target addressees in target circumstances.” The status of the source text is clearly much lower in the *skopos* theory than in equivalence-based theories. Reiss declares that the source text is the measure of all things in translation (Reiss 1988:70). The various translation critics do not agree that the source text dominates over the target text in terms of the purpose. Vermeer (2013) regards the source text as “an offer of information” that is partly or wholly turned into an “offer of information” for the target audience.” In the same vein, Mänttari (2010) avoids at all costs to use the concept “source text” and “translation” and rather defines translation as “a complex action designed to achieve a particular purpose” (Mänttari and Vermeer 2013).

METHODOLOGY

This work will be based on Vermeer’s (2013) “*skopos*” theory. The idea is to show that a target text operates within a different socio-cultural framework and therefore may not be subservient to the source text. The basic principle underlying this particular theory is that the target text should conform to the target text culture. It should at least be meaningful to the target text readership in terms of language, norms, values and culture as a result of which it would be regarded as culturally acceptable and linguistically accessible.

In order to successfully reach the goal, the following principles underlying the *skopos* theory will be applied:

The source texts will be randomly selected from the various fields and translated from English to Sesotho. The Sesotho target text will be discussed to verify whether it maintains the “intra-textual coherence” as reflected in Vermeer (2013:109). This implies that the reader should be able to comprehend the translation within the communicative situation and culture within which it is based.

While the Sesotho translation is expected to be coherent to the source text, it should display

a particular relationship with the corresponding source text in terms of the “inter-textual coherence” or fidelity. This implies that at least the translation should maintain a particular relationship and be somewhat faithful to the source text though it is still relevant to the target socio-cultural situation. By being coherent to the source text, the researcher implies that it should be regarded by the target readership as culturally acceptable and relevant to their language situation.

The various translation options will be discussed within the framework of the *skopos* theory. In relation with the aim of study and the observations, the general conclusions will be drawn as to whether the source text is “dethroned” in Sesotho translation within the *skopos* theory.

Operationalisation

The source text (ST) as well as the target text (TT) in each example are discussed with a view to explain the status of the source text in relation to the target text.

Example 1 (Literary text)

ST: Long long time ago, there was a man called Umhlanga. He was brave though people always challenged him that he was too anxious to dethrone the king.

TT1: *Kgale kgale haholo, ho ne ho na le monna ya neng a bitswa Umhlanga. O ne a le sebetle le hoja batho ba ne ba mo hlasela ka hore o meharo ya ho tlosa morena setulong sa borena.*

TT2: *Kgale kgale, ho ne ho na le monna ya neng a bitswa Moshahla. O ne a le sebetle le hoja batho ba ne ba mo hlasela ka hore o meharo ya ho hapa borena ba morena.*

In the analysis of this example, readers will realise that the researcher decided to discuss two possible translation options in order to show that different translation situations presents different purposes and methods of translation.

In the TT1, the translator seems to follow the word for word method of translation in order to maintain the equivalence between the source text (ST) and the target text (TT). This is reflected by the retention of the same name of character, Umhlanga. The translator decided also to seek for equivalent Sesotho expression for “to

dethrone the king" (*ho tlosa morena setulong-sa borena*). In doing so, it appears that the translator maintains fidelity between the source text and the target text. The translator presents the relevant interpretation of the message for the sake of his target group. This is so, because the text performs an informative function on the part of the target readers. It presupposes that the target text should be the same as the source in terms of language expression. The source text is still on the throne in this case.

In the case of TT2, the translator decided differently and introduced his own way of expression to comply with the purpose of translating in favour of his target readership. Out of experience and knowing the culture of his target group, the translator apparently decided to introduce a new character name, Moshahla in Sesotho translation instead of Umhlanga in the English source text. The expression "*hohapaborena ...*" (to dethrone the king) has been used in order to use the language that would be more common and accessible to the intended Basotho target readers.

In this way, the two translation options reflect that the source text does not necessarily have to be dominant over the target text in terms of the purpose or function. As a matter of necessity, the message has to appear as original to the target readers, though it is retained as informative as possible.

It is also clear that the translator endeavoured to enshrine the message within the Sesotho sociolinguistic and sociocultural context. This point is confirmed by Taft (1981:53) quoted from Katan (2004:17) in defining the translator as:

"a cultural mediator and a person who facilitates communication, understanding, and action between persons or groups who differ with respect to language and culture."

Example 2 (Text based on the bible information)

ST: After dying for our sins on the cross, our Lord Jesus ascended up to Heaven to be enthroned at the right hand of our heavenly Father.

TT1: *Kamora ho shwa ka lebaka la dibe tsa rona, morena wa rona Jesu o ile a nyolohelela lehodimong mme a rweswa moqhaka letsohong le letona la Ntate wa rona ya mahodimong.*

TT2: *Kamora ho re shwella dibe tsa rona, morena wa rona Jesu o ile a orohela lehodi-*

mong mme a behwa boreneng letsohong le letona la Ntate wa rona ya mahodimong.

The two translation options are presented in a manner that marks the autonomy of the target text in relation to the source text. The fact that the two translation options are presented in this example, ensures that the translator could have translated for people in two different situations. In that sense, the translations could not virtually be the same and the difference could not be attributed to the source text. As these target texts are derived from the world of business, it follows that they are functional to the target reader. They are adequately informative as well as persuasive on the part of the reader as the consumer in terms of the intended purpose that they are assigned to communicate.

Example 3 (Text on Advertisement)

ST: *Plantur 39 against hair loss with Phyto-Caffeine Complex*

Now German scientists have developed a substance that protects hair roots from hormone-induced exhaustion: a *phyto-caffeine complex*, incorporated into a unique shampoo and a tonic for daily scalp care.

TT1: *Plantur 39 kgahlano le tahlehelo ya moriri le Phyto-Caffeine Complex*

Jwale ditsebi tsa saense tsa Majeremane ba hlalisitse ntho e baballang metso ya moriri ho kgathala ka lebaka la tshwaetso ya dihomone: phyto-caffeine complex, e kenyeditsweng ho shampu e ikgethang esita le moriana watlhokomelo ya lehata ka letsatsi le letsatsi.

TT2: *Plantur 39 e nang le Phyto-Caffeine Complex ho thibela tahlehelo ya moriri*

Ditsebi tsa mahlale tsa Majeremane jwale di na le sehlahiswa se baballang me tso ya moriri hore e se ke ya thefulwa ke sekgahla sa tshwaetso ya dihomone: phyto-caffeine complex, e tswakilweng ho sebakamakweba se ikgethileng esita le moriana wa hohlakomela lehata ka letsatsi le letsatsi.

Here readers are confronted with two other translation situations of an advertisement. In TT1 the translator tried to oversimplify the source text though still retaining the form of an advert. The technical and scientific terms are retained in order to be loyal to the basic aspects of the message intended by the client.

In TT2 as well, the scientific terms are not translated into the target language. The reason

is simply to keep to the relevant and accurate information due to the readers. Both the translations eventually appear as exoticising texts because they carry essential information as part of the advertisement. The two translations are eventually autonomous and not source-text dependent. They reflect the difference as they are meant for different readerships, in different situations, and probably for different purposes.

Example 4 (Text Based on Academic Information)

ST: It is one of the university's most consistent publications, always enabling staff and students to express their opinions regarding development and transformation of human life. This time around, the question is about a positive contribution each of us would make, should we have an opportunity to make a difference in someone's life."

TT1: *Ke e nngwe ya diphatlalatso tsa kamehla tsa yunivesithi, tse dumellang basebetsi le baithuti ho hlalisa maikutlo a bona mabapi le ntshetsopele le diphetoho tsa bophelo babatho. Ha jwale potso ke ho re nake seabo sefe seo e mong le e mong wa rona a se etsang, haeba re fumana monyetla wa ho tlisa diphetoho bophelong ba motho e mong.*

TT2: *Ke e nngwe ya diphatlalatso tsa kamehla tse tshaphahalang ka ho fetisisa tsa yunivesithi, tseo kamehla di dumellang basebetsi le baithuti ho hlalisa maikutlo a bona mabapi le ntshetsopele le diphetoho tsa bophelo ba batho. Nakong ya jwale re ka ipotsa hore na ke seabo sefe sa bohlokwa seo e mong le e mong wa rona a se etsang, haeba re ka fumana monyetla wa ho fetola bophelo ba motho e mong.*

This happens to be an educational text that entails academic information to the readers. Based on the nature of the content, it follows that the translator has a purpose to address the target group attached to a university. If the purpose is to talk to university population, such a purpose then influence the method of translation and the standard of language usage itself.

It is not the source text, per se, that controls the translation, but, the content hinted or the information offered in the source text. The two translation options ensure that the two target language groups are, perhaps, different in terms of language competence. That is the reason the

translator's stylistic presentation differs from one group to another. But, the source text is still not accountable for any variation in language usage and the cultural expressions in this example.

Example 5 (Text Based on Formulated Newspaper Information)

ST: Quality a priority – premier

The premier told them that there was no directive from the top that said only emerging companies should be appointed. He said it was important to have quality work done the first time and not have corrections made later, as this cost the government a lot of money.

TT1: *Boleng ke ntho ya pele - tonakgolo*

Tonakgolo o baboleletse hore ha ho na taelo e tswang ho ba ka hodimo e reng ke dikhamphani tse tsebahalang feela tse lokelang ho amohelwa. O ile a re ho molemo hore ho etswe mosebetsi wa boleng pele eseng ho etswe ditokiso hamorao, hobane ntho eo e qosa mmuso tjhelete e ngata.

TT1: *Boleng ke ntho ya pele - tonakgolo*

Tonakgolo o ba boleletse hore ha ho na taelo e tswang ho balaodi e reng ke dikhamphani tse tsebahalang feela tse lokelang ho fuwa mesebetsi. O ile a re ho molemo hore ho etswe mosebetsi wa boleng pele eseng ho etswe ditokiso hamorao, hobane ntho eo e qosa mmuso tjhelete e ngata.

The two translation options based on the newspaper as English source text, signify the latitude of the translator to express the same information in slightly different ways.

The second translation is slightly explicitated than the first one. The reason could be that the translator tries by all means to reach all the target readers. The source text does not have any jurisdiction to speculate, regulate or control how the translation(s) thereof should be made.

This could be an example of a specific case of dynamic equivalence between the source text and the target text. The translation options perform the same function or purpose and in the same style or format. The over-simplification of the language and message has nothing to do with the source text as the control determinant variable in this study.

Example 6 (Text Based on Financial Information)

ST: All amounts of the capital together with interest which may from time to time be due and

owing in terms of this bond shall be paid by the Borrower to the Company in monthly instalments of R5,054.89 (five thousand and fifty four rand and eighty nine cents) commencing on the last day of the month during which the final advance of the capital is made or during which this bond is registered, whichever is the earlier.

TT: *Ditjhelete tsohle tsa kapitale hammo-ho le tswala tse ka lokelang holeshwa kapa tse kolot wang ka nako le nako ho ya ka bonto ena di tla leshwa ke Mokadimi ho Khamphani ka ditefoqon wana tsa R5,054.89 (diranta tse dikete tse hlano le mashome a mahlano a metso e mene le disente tse mashome a robedi a metso e robong) hotlo ha ka let satsi la ho qete la la kgwedi e leng nakong eonehelano ya ho qetela ya kapitale e etswang kapa nakong eo bonto e ngodiswang ka yona, ho tswa feela hore e tlang pele keefe.*

This is yet another example of a specific case where the source text and the target text appear to be dynamically equivalent. Seen from a different perspective, the translator retained some of the financial terms in order to retain the originality and the exactitude of the meaning thereof.

However, it is the nature of the financial content as well as the nature of the intended readership that influence the method of translation in this case. It is not necessarily the source text that counts but the technicality and the scientific nature of the concepts involved in this text.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the discussions of the Sesotho translations discussed, the source text is "dethroned". The source text is reduced to the position of being taken as a mere "offer of information" or the translators' raw material. The fact that the significant role of purpose or *skopos* is introduced, it therefore implies a shift of focus and an introduction of a new paradigm (a functional perspective in the analysis of Sesotho translation. The purpose-driven approach in Sesotho translation actually implies the birth of a new way or approach in translation. Of importance, it implies the "dethrone" of the source text as the dominant aspect.

In all the given examples, the study has demonstrated that the dominant factor of each translation is now its purpose. Translations were well expressive of the purpose or function and it is this simple principle that was presented in this

study as a mechanism to "dethrone" the source text. From this perspective, translations are generally seen as fulfilling functions quite different to those of source texts, since they are for a fundamentally different audience, in a new cultural situation.

Dealing with texts from two different language groups does not guarantee equivalence or "equal value" between the source text and the target text. Change of purpose suggests a change of linguistic as well as the socio-cultural structure of the target text. It is for that matter that Nord (1997) maintains that:

"Translating thus involves aiming at a particular communicative purpose that may or may not be identical with the one that other participants have in mind."

The school of thought that claims that if the source text changes, the target could also change, has been refuted in terms of the examples discussed in this study. What regulates change is, in fact, the purpose or function of translations as indicated in the discussion of the translation options.

The same source text could change if translated for a different target group and this proves that it is not the source text that regulates such changes. It is therefore "dethroned" as raw material to be applied by the translator in the production of a meaningful target text.

Nida (1964:159) approaches it from a sociolinguistic point of view as he declares that:

"A translation of dynamic equivalence aims at complete naturalness of expression, and tries to relate the receptor to modes of behaviour relevant within the context of his own culture ..."

It is therefore apparent that the sociocultural as well as the sociolinguistic aspects of the target group are basic factors behind the given translations. Translators enable communication to take place between members of different culture communities. They bridge the gap between situations where there are no possibilities for communication between the sender and the receiver. They would then develop a common ground for the sender and receiver to communicate. The translator must first decide, in consultation with the client, what the purpose is to be, and then act accordingly.

Based on the analysis of translation options in this work, it should be clear that the *skopos*

theory does not reject or abolish the theory of equivalence outrightly, but it simply makes equivalence a special case in an isolated translation situation.

Holz-Mänttari (2010) maintains that even though translators are reckoned to be experts in cross-cultural communication in general, they are no longer the lone figures confronting a foreign document. Both the translator and the client are more important than the source text in determining the purpose of translation.

The equivalence theory could not stand the test of time as it is complex in terms of a lot of polarities that fail to account for the nature of equivalence that is required between the source and the target text. The dichotomies give more meaning to the fact that equivalence should not only be attributed to the dominance of source text but can still be related to the target text or translation itself.

Looking at the forms of translation of the various texts given as examples, it is almost clear that the translator is free to apply any translation method depending on the nature of the information given as the source text.

As part of the outline of the researcher's observations, the following can be specified:

The purpose of translation determines the translation method to be applied. In other words, translations differ in terms of method simply because of the embedded purpose or function they are intended for.

Translation is not a one to one transfer between languages and it cannot draw on a linguistic theory alone. It is apparent that translation, in general; and Sesotho translation in particular, needs a theory of culture to explain the specificity of communicative situations. Toury (1995) comments on the translator as the cultural mediator and "adopted the eminently sociological concepts of norms, understood as regularities of behaviour (and hence of human actions, rather than just linguistic structures)." Toury (1995) motivates the view that translation should be all-inclusive. It should include the culture within which it finds its context. In this way, Toury (1995) believes that it would be functional and meaningful and purposeful on the part of the target reader.

One of the most important factors that determine the purpose of a translation is the addressee (the receiver/audience) of the target text with their experience of their culture specific world knowledge, expectations and their communicative needs.

A literary text gives the translator free latitude to express the target text in a new creative manner than a technical text. The translator is a little bit free to explicitate some of the aspects of content presented in a literary text than he would do with a technical text. In other words, the translator is exposed to stricter and more disciplined translation mechanism in a technical text. He would sometimes even apply a word-for-word translation method in order to maintain the fidelity or the inter-textual coherence with the given source text. Be that as it may, the target text is still not dependent on the source text for its change of purpose, if it is necessary to do so.

There are, however, problems related to the *skopos* theory itself. In the first instance, the concept purpose is not clearly defined within the parameters of this theory. Clients essentially do not provide the translators with adequate explanation of the purpose that they yearn for. Instead they emphasise more on quality in translation without coming out clear on what purpose they would like to achieve. In the second instance, clients do not tell the translators how to translate the source texts. This could probably be lack of training or any experience in the actual translation process.

The translator must take account of target readers' background knowledge and decide how to meet the needs of their cultural settings. This is presumably the reason Fawcett (1997) argues that a translator well acquainted with the concept of cultural presupposition has an advantage to apply it freely to successfully achieve goals based on the translation process.

Skopos theory presupposes an urgent need of the use of the translation brief. South African translators, in general, and the Sesotho translators in particular, could be successful in their call if they consider to be provided with the translation brief before they commence with any translation process. Among many aspects in the translation brief, the purpose is of utmost importance. The brief is important as the client instructs the translator to translate for various purposes – depending on the need of the concerned target readership.

CONCLUSION

This work verifies the view that translation is not only a linguistic transference but also a cultural phenomenon. The role that culture plays to determine the change of purpose and the change of translation method from source text

to target text hinges on the aspects of culture that are in action during the translation process.

The translator has the capacity to change the translation *skopos* or purpose in terms of his interpretation of the source text and in terms of his knowledge of the nature of his target readers. Seeing that the translator knows the cultural background of his readership, he tends to apply the same background to translate the source text meaningfully for his readership.

The translator should be in a position to choose an appropriate *skopos* in a given translational situation. The translator should also be able to justify (*begründen*) their choice of a particular translation method.

This work has presented a new philosophy in the translation studies, namely, the change of paradigm from the application of the source text as norm to its reduction as a mere "offer of information" and to be used by the translator as "offer of information".

Translators should be mindful of the fact that the target text may be intended to achieve a purpose or function other than that of the original. Therefore, it may not be in all cases, at all places and at all times that the purpose will be source-text based. In such cases, the functional perspective takes precedence over the normal standards of equivalence.

The situation where the ST determines equivalence and takes the upper hand over the target text, is in this study perceived to be a specific case. Equivalence-based linguistic approaches focused on the source text, the features of which had to be preserved in the target text. Within the limits of the *skopos* theory, the general trend is that any translation can have its own purpose depending on the needs of the target group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This work is supposedly going to have an immense contribution in the promotion of quality translations among both the budding and professional translators. It will also empower Sesotho translators to translate without fear of restrictions. Translators would henceforth acknowledge that through translation, they "talk" to people of their own language and culture.

"*Skopos theory*" presents a new perspective in the production of a target text. It proposes that a target text should be raised within its particular cultural context. The Sesotho target

text readers will make no sense whatsoever of the translation reflected in all the examples if they do not share the same cultural knowledge presupposed by the English author.

This study affords translators to be cognisant of the fact that they represent the aspirations and needs of the target situation. They should therefore try by all means to translate in such a manner that the information they provide should be loyal and acceptable to the target situation in its socio-cultural, socio-linguistic and socio-political context.

If translators are yearning for professionalism in their work, they should remember that a target text is unique. It is different to the source text from which it is derived in terms of language structure and cultural content.

This study suggests a paradigm shift in the sense that the source text and equivalence principle are "*dethroned*" through "*skopos*" theory and other functionalist perspectives.

The main issue that eventually result in this work is to realise that translation and translating cannot be divorced from its cultural background. It is for this reason that the study determines that translation is not only a linguistic transference, but, of importance, a cultural transference from the source to the target text situation.

Through this work, the researcher is convinced that it will effectively contribute to the translator training. It will also present a new perspective on the part of translators to be freed from the servitude of the source text. Future professional translators must be trained not only to produce functional translations satisfying their customers' needs, but also to find good arguments to defend their products against unjustified criticism from clients and users.

While the equivalence paradigm (of which the supremacy of the source text is part) is not totally rejected, it is reflected in this work as having some shortcomings and tends to be too limited to produce a culturally acceptable and linguistically accessible product.

REFERENCES

- Baker M 1992. *In Other Words: A Coursebook on Translation*. London: Routledge.
- Bassnett S Lefevere A 1988. *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Fawcett P 1997. *Translating and Language*. Manchester: St Jerome Publishing.

- Holz-Mänttari J 2010. *Translatorisches Handeln. Theorie und Methode*. Helsinki.
- House J 2009. *A Model for Translation Quality Assessment*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr.
- Kruger A 2002. Corpus-based translation research: Its development and implications for general, literary and Bible translation. *ActaTheologica, Supplement: Contemporary Translation Studies and Bible Translation*, 70-106.
- Lefevere A 2014. *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Munday J 2012. *Introducing Translation Studies: Theories and Applications*. London: Routledge.
- Newmark P 2014. *A Textbook of Translation*. Hertfordshire: Prentice Hall.
- Nida E, Taber C 1974. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. New York: American Bible Society.
- Nida EA, Charles RT 1982. *The Theory and Practice of Translation*. Leiden: E.J.Brill.
- Nord C 1991. Skopos, loyalty and translational conventions. *Target*, 3(1): 1-16.
- Nord C 1997. *Translating as a Purposeful Activity: Functional Approaches Explained*. Manchester: St Jerome.
- Nord C 2002. Manipulation and loyalty in functional translation. *Current Writing*, 14(2): 32-44.
- Reiss K 1987. Pragmatic aspects of translation. *Indian Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 13(2): 47-59.
- Reiss K 2000. *Translation Criticism: Potential and Limitations*. Manchester: St Jerome and American Bible Society.
- Snell-Hornby M 1995. *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Taft R 1981. *The Role and Personality of the Memdiator*. Boston: G K Hall and Company.
- Toury G 1995. *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Van Leuven-Zwart KM 1992. Vertaalwetenschap: Ontwikkelingen en perspectieven. *Muiderberg: Coutinho*, 67-157.
- Venuti L 1995. *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation*. London: Routledge.
- Vermeer HJ 2013. Skopos and commission in translational action. In: Andrew Chesterman (Ed.): *Readings in Translation*. Helsinki: Oy Finn Lectoria Ab, pp. 173-187.