

*Methodology of Play Translator's Score Developing Within the Cross-Cultural Theatre Making Educational Project*

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Abstract

The present article is devoted to the translation score developing in the cross-cultural communication as a special form of Connectedness and Alienation. The examples presented by the authors illustrate the universal character of translation score developing methods under analysis. Personal experience in the international theatre-making projects, opera laboratories, cross-cultural master-classes give more opportunities to single out the conditions, forms, means and principles of translation score developing as well as the translator/interpreter's functions as cultural liaison for multiethnic collaboration.

**Keywords:** methodology of translation score developing, pre-production, analysis, production, post-production, ethnic scene theory, theatre anthropology, laboratory, master-class, educational project, academic project, participant observation, super-objective .

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The Program of the 9<sup>th</sup> International Dance & Theatre Festival at Theatre X, Tokyo, Japan (June'1 – July'4) included about 120 performances based on Chekov works, everyday round-table discussions and two conferences. The first one (June'6, 10) was devoted to ethical questions; the second (June'29-30) gathered theatre translators.

Among them: Noriko Adachi (translator of Chekov, author of books about Russian art), Michiko Anzai (translated Mikhalkov and Dragunski, now working on the play "And Sakura blooms in Siberia"), Masako Innami (works for The Brecht Theatre, translates and comments on Brecht's plays), Ayako Funakawa (researcher of trilingual children Theatre projects); interpreters of Gogol, Dostoyevsky etc. The Conference was initiated by professor Nobuyuki Nakamoto (translator of Stanislavski & Chekhov, Laureate of Pushkin Medal).

The Archives of the Theatre X were added with the audio, video and other materials: "Drama" (DVD and text in Russian, English and Japanese), Poema-Theatre photo review, "Magic flute" Opera laboratory in Vladivostok (2009), and Information on Byzantine music adaptation (2010).

Among the questions discussed there were projects of translation [1] and theatre productions: "Migawari", [2] "All powers necessary and convenient", [3] "Drama" [4].

The participants shared their visions on the theoretical aspects as follows:

- the methodology of translator's score developing within cross-cultural project; [5]
- the value of dramaturgy University training; [6]
- the foundation of The International Theatre Translators Association (ITTA).

The idea of play translation within the international theatre-making was totally supported by all the participants, whose professional experience proves that theatre translators are supposed to have special psychological education and theatre training. The position and status of the theatre translator imply the wider range of activities and functions of many other theatre practitioners.

The multiethnic group of theatre practitioners normally have only three-four weeks to rehearse for a large production. They run this or that scene again and again, or just “push through”. The participants communicate through the translator (translators). When actors rehearse a scene, the director watches, and often asks the translator to show the lines in the text. Translator simultaneously makes so called field notes, which can be put to use to better understand the rehearsal work of professional performers, directors and production teams.

Theatre translator’s daily practice implies to be involved in discussing scenes, shaping bits of dialogue and action, and arranging costume fittings. The practice of participant observation, and the period of analysis and writing that follows, constitute intense work with field notes, interview material, and half-formed commentaries, which become a part of the play translator’s score. [5]

I am a theatre translator, who has become a theatre studies scholar. For about two decades I have been studying the play translation process within cross-cultural theatre-making. As the coordinator for international projects, as well as the dramaturge, producer, and impresario, I develop participant-observation method to study and write about multilingual theatre practices. [7]

Theatre Translation Studies positions itself somewhere between "theatre" and "anthropology", with special interest in ideas of extra linguistic aspect of drama translation process.

Inspired mostly by Performance Studies a discipline that emerged out of the USA in the 1960s, Theatre Translation Studies concerns itself in part with the broad spectrum of performance, from highly framed performance events (opera, Kyogen Noh Theatre, dance) through to everyday performances (Drama Theatre, Puppet Theatre, Literary Theatre etc).

Our recent research, for example, studies the ways in which actors of Asian Pacific Region (APR) communicate with the actors of Europe and the USA within the cross-cultural Performance or Opera laboratory, Festival, Museum, Exhibition or Fair project, and how they come to enact a "re-living" in their verbal and non-verbal behavior.

Nowadays Theatre Translation Studies is profoundly interdisciplinary, drawing on thinking from areas such as Sociolinguistics, Psycholinguistics, Ethno Psychology and Cultural Psychiatry,<sup>1</sup> through to Physiology, History of Costume etc.

This article, however, focuses on a relatively small and emerging sub-discipline of Theatre translation studies – multiethnic rehearsal studies –and, specifically, what might be involved in conducting *analysis in action*, and developing the *play translator's score* in this area. [8]

Theatre translators fulfill all functions of dramaturges, adopting a *participant-observation approach* to study rehearsals, taking notes about what representatives of the international company say and do, conducting interviews, and collecting supporting material (scripts, audio&video-records, photographs, reviews, set-design-drafts and company histories – material that make up the theatre *translator's commentary* for the play under analysis). [9]

Depending on the scale and type of production – opera, dance, one-actor shows – the rehearsal process involves directors, producers, actors, playwrights, stage managers, designers (set, costume, lighting, sound), composers and instrumentalists, dramaturges, choreographers, puppeteers, voice coaches, and technicians. Practitioners now replace the term "rehearse", with the term "workshop" or "performance-preparation" meaning the practice as opposed to the rehearsing of a pre-existing play script. [10].

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<sup>1</sup> Cross-cultural psychiatry is a branch of psychiatry concerned with the cultural and ethnic context of mental disorders and psychiatric services. It emerged as a coherent field from several strands of work, including surveys of the prevalence and form of disorders in different cultures or countries; the study of migrant populations and ethnic diversity within countries; and analysis of psychiatry itself as a cultural product. The early literature was associated with colonialism and with observations by asylum psychiatrists or anthropologists who tended to assume the universal applicability of Western psychiatric diagnostic categories. A seminal paper by Arthur Kleinman in 1977 followed by a renewed dialogue between anthropology and psychiatry, is seen as having heralded a "new cross-cultural psychiatry". However, Kleinman later pointed out that culture often became incorporated in only superficial ways, and that for example 90% of DSM-IV categories are culture-bound to North America and Western Europe, and yet the "culture-bound syndrome" label is only applied to "exotic" conditions outside Euro-American society.

It is argued that a cultural perspective can help psychiatrists become aware of the hidden assumptions and limitations of current psychiatric theory and practice and can identify new approaches appropriate for treating the increasingly diverse populations seen in psychiatric services around the world.

The field has, ironically, increasingly had to address the process of globalization. It is said every city has a different culture and that the urban environment, and how people adapt or struggle to adapt to it, can play a crucial role in the onset or worsening of mental illness. Cross-cultural psychiatry looks at whether psychiatric classifications of disorders are appropriate to different cultures or ethnic groups.

Intuitive approaches for the Theatre translation studies applied by Osanai Kaoru (in 1900s) and Shiro Mikhara (in 1980-s) proved that the documentation and analysis of a rehearsal process has much in common with the work of the field ethnographer in terms of the model of participant observation. Yet, it is necessary to point out that, unlike ethnographers in the field, theatre translators are let to see not only what is thought appropriate to show an outsider. I explore what the theatre anthropology (to be more accurate, actor anthropology) approach offers theatre translator's studies and how a theatre translator can do the research to develop the *commentary* for the play and the *play translator's score*. My use of the term "actor anthropology research" and "fieldwork" is meant to be analogous. Theatre translator spends normally from three weeks to three months within the multilingual rehearsal process which implies developing a meta-lingual and meta-cultural space. [11] There are shorter and more intensive examples: recent Maud Mitchell's master-class for the Far East State Academy of Arts took only a week (2-9 October, 2010).

While the theatre translator is a newcomer to theatre rehearsal (s)he works hard to perceive new practice, ways of being, and ethics. The flow and the stoppages of rehearsal make actors and director irritable and frustrated. That is why theatre translator is sometimes called *Safari-manager*. What knowledge about theatre translator's activities and functions can be generated by conducting the cross-cultural theatre-making investigation? The methodology and methods of the *play translator's score developing* in the cross-cultural theatre-making is based on the usage of the Stanislavski System as the meta-language of the multilingual theatre communication.

The production team members suggest their visions of the play script and of the future production, including not only stories, but also music, sounds, set-design, costume etc. Each communicant's commentary becomes the material for the play translator's score. Participant observation has a unique capacity as it guarantees more adequate, objective and sequential analysis and translation, then the translator could perform at the writing table. [12]

Besides the Stanislavski system as the basic creative method, directors and actors whom I translate and consult (and who are my consultants in play translation process), refer to approaches of Jerzy Grotowski, Eugenio Barba, Peter Brook, Joseph

Chaikin, Bertolt Brecht, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Antonin Artaud, Shiro Mikhara, Mutsumi Morii. This fact is taken into consideration as well as many other *given circumstances*: If I am familiar with the play, or not; the performance genre they work in: naturalism or physical theatre or post-dramatic theatre; the country, the city or town we are in; the kind of building and room we are in; the look, the mood, and smell of the space; time of the day when we start; each communicant's native language, country, nationality, age, preferences, ideas, emotions, states, behavior, etc. Whenever I translate or just observe the rehearsal, the performers treat me subconsciously or consciously both as a part of the production team and as a spectator for the production. [13] Dramatuge's jottings of the Theatre translator involve on-the-fly notes, with the time written next to them, bits of dialogues, sketches of the space, blocking, and translation versions. These data and details support the analysis and interpretation, and become a theatre history. [14]

The play translator's score is developing during the whole project time, that includes Pre-production (preparation), Linguistic Analysis, Production, Post-production phases. Questions of each previous period provide a platform for further questions, which makes the cross-cultural communication more effective; on the one hand promotes the translation process, and on the other hand positively influences the production.

## CONCLUSION

To sum up the materials presented, it is necessary to underline that the unity of translators and artists' supertask (super-objective) implies their stable collaboration on the text interpretation within the project developing according to the methodology suggested.

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### *UNIVERSAL METHODOLOGY OF THANSLATOR’S SCORE DEVELOPING IN THE CROSS-CULTURAL (THEATREMAKING) PROCESS*

*By Larissa A. Akhmylovskaya, Andriana Yu. Barysh*

#### *BASIC IDEA*

*Translation of the play is to be translated within theatremaking project*

#### OBJECTIVE

Adequate translation of the play & Optimization of the production

#### METHODOLOGICAL BASIS

Hermeneutics Professional activities Ethnopsycology Ethnoscenology

## MATERIAL

Shakespeare, Williams, Beckett, Turgenev, Chekhov, Gorky, O'Neil, Blum, Shimizu, Ariyoshi, Jenkins, Jackson, Kater, Kadio (about 40 projects since 1992)

## METHODS

Observation Stylistic analysis Comparative analysis Analysis in Action  
Brainstorm Analogy (based on associations) Heuristics (based on experience)

## COMPONENTS OF THE TRANSLATOR'S SCORE DEVELOPING PROCESS

Organization & Technology Creativity Evaluation & Correction Research

## ELEMENTS OF TRANSLATOR'S SCORE

Play+Author's BIO+History of productions+Critics+Video/Audio-archives  
+Commentaries of multiethnic cast members  
+Translator's Commentaries+Synopsis

## FASES

Preparation                      Analysis                      Production                      Post-production

## PRIOR CONDITIONS

Common terminology as the meta-language of the project (Stanislavski)  
Constructive dialogue of translator/interpreter with every participant

## TRANSLATOR'S ADDITIONAL FUNCTIONS

Manager	Analytic	Co-director	Critic
Producer	Archivist	Consultant	Impresario

## CRITERIA OF TRANSLATOR'S SCORE ACCURACY

History (ethno-psychology) Group (ethno-scenology) Personality (bios, psyche, logos)

## PRODUCTS

Academic (methodological)      Artistic      Social      Political      Economical

## PRACTICAL VALUE

Methodological base for: MULTICULTURAL DRAMA (Shakespeare, Williams, Beckett, Kadio), OPERA (Don Juan, Magic Flute), PUPPET (Wilde, Zweig, Korean Fairy tales), BALLET and Non-verbal Theatre (Poema), MUSEUM (E. L. Pray), FAIR, EXHIBITION (M. V. Eydus), LITERARY THEATRE (My Antonia, Migavari, Drama) EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS (Mayakovski, Jenkins, Pushkin)

