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Ecotranslation: A Metaphorical Comparison Between Ecology and Social Systems Theory

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Abstract

Translation has been examined from diverse perspectives, including linguistic, cultural, and sociological viewpoints. Across these fields of study, human involvement has remained central to all translational activity—whether as translators, publishers, editors, or in other roles. Even when the primary focus has shifted to aspects like the text itself, human influence invariably surfaces. In other words, certain facets of translation have remained unexplored, overshadowed by the dominance of human agency. With the advent of ecotranslation, which merges ecology with translation studies, these hidden dimensions of translation can now be uncovered, opening up new avenues for research. This paper explores Luhmann's social systems theory in comparison with ecology, drawing on a parallel approach to that used by Beebee, Childress, and Weidman (2017) in *Translation Ecologies: A Beginner's Guide*. However, whereas their work contrasts ecology with polysystem theory, this paper instead examines the relationship between ecology and social systems theory within the context of translation studies.

Keywords: Ecotranslation, Ecology, Translation, Social System Theory

Introduction

In translation studies, we typically consider various elements, such as different genres of translation, the factors influencing the final translation product, and the roles of the agents and parties involved, as well as the translators' work environment and status. While other examples could certainly be added, these topics have long been discussed within translation studies and are not entirely new concepts. However, if this conversation had taken place years ago, it's unlikely anyone would have envisioned a concept like "eco-translation". Merging ecology and translation might seem unusual, but this concept marks a new direction: "Ecotranslation is not a task; it's a new form of life. Ecotranslation starts by challenging our intellectual capacity and emotional resilience, and then calls on a collective exchange – again, more importantly, a listening posture" (Shread, 2023, pp. 115-116).

Eco-translation challenges traditional perspectives and reveals the need to expand beyond conventional understandings of translation. This transformation, however, requires more than simply introducing a new concept and expecting readers to interpret it independently. It calls for collaborative research from experts across fields to keep pace with these contemporary ideas. As Hu and Tao (2016) argue, "based upon the knowledge of the deficiency of contemporary translation theories, scholars in translation academia have studied and, in particular, provided their remarks, which suggest that the contemporary translation theories need improvement" (p. 122).

> Clearly, the imperative for a radical rethinking is incumbent upon us, one that starts by acknowledging the power of all those excluded from the very realm of translation through the human exceptionalism that may lead ultimately to the demise of the human. The empowerment of human translators is thus qualified by reckoning with vast forces of translation beyond humankind. (Shread, 2023, pp. 113-114)

In translation studies, the central figure in the translation process – beyond the text itself, whether written or oral – is the "human". The translator, publisher, editor, and other participants each play distinct yet interconnected roles in producing the final translated product. Ecotranslation has emerged to reveal previously overlooked aspects of translation that were obscured by the prominence of human involvement. As noted, scholars and researchers in translation and related fields bear the responsibility of illuminating these hidden dimensions. "Due to different countries, cultures, languages, educational and training backgrounds, researchers have different interests which lead to different focuses among the existing translation theories" (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 121).

Translation has been approached from many perspectives, leading to a variety of theories. "Various scholars have studied translation from the perspective of linguistics. Roman Jakobson, a linguist of the Prague School, was among the first" (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 116). Ecotranslation, in turn, offers a fresh lens for examining translation, addressing areas that traditional approaches may not fully encompass.

> Linguistic approaches to studying translation theories are mainly limited to the bilingual (language-pair) transference, form and context … Literary translation is the earliest and the most important translation activity in the history of translation, which is influenced by philological theories (namely, the theories of Literature and Art). (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 117)

The basic concept of translation as an "ABC act" refers to the straightforward act of translating from Language A to Language B (or vice versa). In this view, translation is primarily approached from a linguistic perspective, focusing on language itself. Moving beyond this purely linguistic approach, however, translation can be studied from a cultural perspective as well. "Cultural factors are deeply integrated into the language system, reflecting the social, historical, cultural and psychological characteristics of a nation, including ways of thinking, values, social customs, religious beliefs, psychological states, cultural background, etc." (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 118). Considering these cultural

dimensions in translation involves examining the cultural features and nuances conveyed in the source text that may be implied or inferred within its context.

When encountering a translation issue, one common source of difficulty lies in "cultural-specific items" – words, phrases, or expressions that are "culture-bound" in the source text. Resolving such issues requires the translator to find either an appropriate equivalent (if available) or to create an alternative solution that conveys the intended meaning.

To many, especially laypersons, the primary function of translation is to enable communication between two parties, individuals, or texts. In this context, the translator acts as a "mediator" between two languages. "Eugene Nida … has studied translation from the perspectives of communication and information theory. He believes that translation is a communicative activity and also a way for the exchanging of information and ideas between two languages" (Hu & Tao, 2016, pp. 118-119). Thus, within the communicative aspect of translation, there are at least two key parties – the speakers of Language A and Language B – with the translator serving as a bridge to facilitate effective communication between them.

> Communication is the unity of the difference between three selections: utterance, information, and understanding. Communication is always communication on something, as it always includes information. Information is a selection, in that the choice of any topic excludes other topics. Information is always uttered. Communication includes utterance, showing intentions, motives, reasons, knowledge; utterance is a selection, as it is designed in a way instead of others. Understanding is a crucial selection to realise and differentiate utterance and information: through understanding. Understanding makes it possible for further communication. (Luhmann, 2017, pp. 16-17)

Communication consists of three main components: utterance, information, and understanding. In a communicative exchange between speakers of two languages, A and B, Speaker A (of Language A) may "intend" to convey a message containing certain "information". However, if Speaker A does not know Language B, and Speaker B does not know Language A, a translator is needed to mediate so that "understanding" (communication) can occur. In this process, the translator's role serves as the communicative link enabling the exchange.

Taking this a step further, translation can also be viewed from a societal perspective that combines cultural and communicative elements. In this expanded view, society encompasses the cultural, social, political, and other contextual factors embedded in the source text. These elements come together to influence both the content and approach of the translation, creating a richer and more informed translational act.

> The principles of "socio-translation studies" originated from James Holmes. He advocates that the functionally orientated descriptive translation is not interested in the description of translation itself, but in the role of translation in the social culture of the target language, emphasizing the context rather than the text. (Yan, 2022, p. 16)

The scope of translation is continually expanding. No longer limited to the linguistic exchange between two languages, translation now encompasses a broad range of concepts, addressing cultural, social, and contextual elements that influence both written and oral translation acts.

> When more focus is placed on function and context, "Translation Sociology" will take shape. While Holmes also pointed out that name as "Socio-Translation Studies" is more accurate because this new discipline is both the research field of translation and sociology. (Yan, 2022, p. 16)

In summary, "translation sociology" or "socio-translation studies" refers to an approach where the sociological context of the source and/or target text is carefully considered during the translation

process. This involves being mindful of the sociological norms and restrictions embedded in the source text, as well as those of the target culture, which may influence text selection or impact the translation approach itself. In other words, certain texts may be preferred or restricted based on the cultural and societal norms of the target language.

A key concept that specifically addresses the purpose and constraints of the target language in translation is "skopos theory":

> Skopos Theory, a component of the theory of translational action, is first proposed by Hans J. Vermeer, a German scholar. It regards translation as a type of transition action, which is distinctive as it is based on its original text. Skopos Theory believes that translation is an action, and since every action has a purpose, translation is conditioned by its purpose. (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 119)

According to "skopos theory", the target language and culture guide the selection and approach to translating a source text. This means that if a source text contains language or themes that are considered taboo in the target culture, these elements may need to be modified or omitted to align with cultural norms and regulations before the text is published and shared within that society.

When attention shifts to the translated products themselves, a critical question arises: Do all translated works hold the same value within a particular culture and society? The answer to this lies in the concept of "polysystem theory":

> Polysystem was proposed by Israeli literary theorist Itamar Even-Zohar in the 1970s. It intends to study the relationship between literary system and its social environments. The theory argues that there are always primary and secondary literary systems in a certain culture, with the refined culture taking up an important position. (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 120)

The concept of "polysystem theory" is not limited to translated works; it extends to all "literary products", both translated and original. According to this theory, not all literary products hold the same status within the "literary system" of a particular culture and language.

So far, six different approaches to translation have been explored. Each new approach represents a broader perspective on the translation phenomenon. For example, skopos theory expands beyond a purely linguistic focus to consider the purpose and cultural context of translation, making it a more encompassing view than previous approaches.

While there is general agreement on these established approaches, some hold differing views. One perspective reduces translation to a binary: good or bad, categorizing all translations based solely on quality. However, another view suggests a more nuanced spectrum, where translations are not simply good or bad but may fall somewhere in between. This perspective aligns with the concept of "deconstruction":

> With his deconstruction on translation studies, Jacques Derrida opened up new horizons for translation and infused its studies with new vitality. The term *differance* which means both 'defer' and 'differ', is the cornerstone of his theory. In his opinion, due to the differences between signified and signifier and their uncertainty and variability, the language itself is not harmonious but there exist various kinds of differences, contradictions and ambiguities. (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 120)

This implies that, for instance, translations cannot simply be classified as good or bad; rather, there exists a middle ground that may require revision to achieve an acceptable standard of translation. According to the principle of deconstruction, dichotomous terms like good and bad become inadequate, as this concept serves as a tool to challenge previously established notions and ideas that were widely accepted. Through this new lens, we can examine translations with greater depth,

allowing for the possibility of rejecting outdated concepts or replacing them with entirely novel ideas and frameworks.

Table 1. Summary of Approaches to Translation Studies (Hu & Tao, 2016, pp. 116-121)

Approach	Scholars	Focus
Linguistic	Roman Jacobson	Language pair, equivalence
Cultural	-	Social, historical, cultural and psychological characteristics
Communication	Eugene Nida	Translation as a communicative activity and a way for the exchanging of information and ideas
Socio-Translation Studies	James Holmes	The role of translation in the social culture of the target language
Skopos Theory	Hans J. Vermeer	Translation as a type of action and having a purpose
Polysystem	Itamar Even-Zohar	Primary and secondary literary systems in a certain culture
Deconstruction	Jacques Derrida	Differences between signified and signifier

Discussion

Up to this point, this paper has focused primarily on the concept of translation, with little attention given to the specific nature of "ecotranslation". Before delving into ecotranslation, it is essential to briefly examine the term "ecology". Recently, especially in the context of globalization, ecology has taken on a pivotal role in ensuring the survival and sustainability of human societies, cultures, and languages (Yuliia, 2021, p. 701).

> The ways that the call to eco-translation has been taken in many con-texts in a conventional manner of summoning scholars to a new area of representation and theme of study that understandably garners interest as authors seek to express their disarray and offer narratives of climate disruption, environmental degradation, loss and the desire for conservation. (Shread, 2023)

In the field of translation, research has predominantly focused on traditional human roles, such as the translator, publisher, and editor. Discussions surrounding non-human roles, particularly from an ecological perspective, have been notably scarce. The integration of ecology into translation has given rise to the concept of "ecotranslation", which offers a fresh approach and a new framework for examining aspects of translation that were previously overlooked.

Ecology can be employed in three distinct ways to study various phenomena: as a theme, a metaphor, and as a form of criticism.

Ecology as a Theme

"Alongside the advent of ecocriticism as a newly relevant form of literary criticism, some Translation Studies theorists have recently adopted the theme of ecology as a new research topic. In other words, here ecology is the object of study" (Shread, 2023, p. 117). In this context, ecology serves as the primary subject, allowing researchers to explore it from various related perspectives.

Ecology as Metaphor

Shread (2023, pp. 118-119) argued that the thematic and metaphorical understanding of ecology is employed as a "metaphorical analogy" to better introduce or comprehend other concepts. This

metaphorical use can provide insights that enrich our understanding of translation and its broader implications.

Ecotranslation as Radical Practice and Criticism

In discussions of ecotranslation, Cronin frequently underscores the often-overlooked reality that the technological entanglements of the digital age are inherently material. He asserts that "there is nothing virtual about the ecological impact of the virtual". Cronin urges us to consider the consequences of extractivist practices on the material foundations essential for the task of extracting meaning. He highlights "the other 'black box' of translation in a globalized world", emphasizing that it is not only what occurs in the translator's mind but also what transpires when their fingers touch the screen or hit the keyboard, referring to "the long tail of resource extraction" (Shread, 2023, p. 120).

By adopting ecological approaches in translation, the perspective shifts dramatically from traditional views. Research can move beyond established theories and discussions to explore previously overlooked facets, opening new avenues for understanding the interconnectedness of translation and ecological concerns.

> Academically speaking, ecology is a philosophy, a science, an aesthetics and technology; it is a systemic science of studying the relationship between organic bodies, including human beings and environment … To put it simple, ecology is a science studying the environment relations connecting human beings and their peers, things and their background . . . ecology, as a science based on holism, focuses its research methods on the entirety of interrelation and interaction". (Hu & Tao, 2016, pp. 123-124)

In this paper, the aim is to study Luhmann's "social system theory" in translation, drawing parallels with the work *Translation Ecologies: A Beginner's Guide* by Beebee, Childress, & Weidman (2017). Michael Cronin emphasizes the significance of examining translation as a process shaped by socio-cultural forces within political and environmental contexts, as well as understanding it as a "product" (Yuliia, 2021, p. 702). When translation is analyzed from a broader perspective, such as a societal or social aspect, a wider range of factors can be considered, shifting the focus away from merely language pairs or the translator's strategies for resolving translational problems. Although these aspects remain valid subjects for study, they are approached differently than before. For instance, using ecology as a metaphor – consistent with the methodology of this study – enables a more diverse exploration of translation.

As previously mentioned, this paper aims to examine Luhmann's social system theory in translation alongside the insights from Beebee, Childress, & Weidman's (2017) work. By employing ecology as a metaphor, this study seeks to analyze Luhmann's perspective on translation through a sociological lens in an ecotranslational context. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of how translation operates within complex social systems and the ecological factors that influence this dynamic.

> Expanding the category of translators and interpreters (hereafter, translators refers to both) and redistributing power amongst them as we learn to receive new forms of translation, the call to empower translators is, then, far more radical than it even thinks. In the same way … biosemiotics [another new approach to Translation Studies] argue that humans are not the only ones to have language, ecotranslation reminds us that humans are not the only ones to translate. (Shread, 2023, pp. 113-115)

With the help pf ecotranslation, it is learned that human being is no more the only omnipotent factor to be considered in studies. However, there are many more aspects which were previously under the

shadow of human and were not dealt with before the emergence of ecotranslation. Now the time has come to unveil these hidden sides of translation and study each of which from a proper vantage point.

> Different from other approaches to translation studies, Eco-Translatology takes "ecology" as its perspective of argumentation, a comprehensive and holistic study o translation from the ecological perspective. Namely, Eco-Translatology tries to interpret and examine translation from eco-holism, rather than from the perspectives of linguistics, literature, culturology, communication, Skopos, feminism, ideology, etc. (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 123)

Ecotranslation is indicated to study translational subjects on a larger scale than previous methodologies.

> Methodologically, ecology is a holism-based science, thus, the research approach of ecology highlights the integrity of correlation and interaction. Due to such interaction between correlated elements of ecological system, the change of any constituent would lead to modification in others. (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 125)

Methodologically, ecology is a holistic science that emphasizes the interconnectedness and interactions among its elements. Any change in one component of an ecological system can lead to modifications in others (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 125). Similarly, both ecology and the sociology of translation share the characteristic of interaction among the various parts of their systems. This interaction is the primary focus of this paper. Each system consists of factors that work harmoniously together, enabling the overall system to function efficiently.

> What's worth mentioning is that, as for translation research, while other various research approaches may possibly pay attention to "holisticism" and "systematic balance" to some degree, however, their focus differs from that of Eco-Translatology … In other words, as long as translation is evaluated from the stand of ecological system, it is natural and a must to consider systematic interaction, balance, coherence and holistic harmony. (Hu & Tao, 2016, pp. 125-126)

Like any other system composed of multiple subsystems, each with its own responsibilities and the need to coordinate with others, translation also functions as a system. Within this system, various internal subsystems work together harmoniously to produce an effective translation.

> Eco-translatology, as has been argued by Chinese scholar Hu Gengshen, approaches translation as a process of the translator's adaptations and selections. It proposes that the focal research concern should be given to translator's subjectivity in both adapting to translating requirements and selecting/choosing translating strategies or concrete linguistic expressions from the translational eco-environment. (Liu, 2011, p. 87)

Each translation begins with the process of selection. First, the translator chooses a work to translate, and throughout the translation process, they continue to engage in selection – whether that involves identifying suitable equivalents (beyond mere mathematical equivalence) or determining the most appropriate solutions for translational challenges. As Liu (2011, p. 88) states, "According to Eco-translatology, translation is 'a selection activity of the translator's adaptation to fit the Translational Eco-environment.'" Another aspect of selection for the translator is ensuring that the translation aligns with the norms and conventions of the target culture and environment, as previously discussed in the section on skopos theory. Beyond selection, various other factors play a role in the translational process. "By analogy with ecological ethics, and in light of translation practice … the following fundamental principles of eco-translation ethics:" (Hu & Tao, 2016, pp. 127-128).

> Firstly, Principle of Balance and Harmony — mainly refers to maintaining the balance and harmony of Source-text Ecology and Target-text Ecology. Specifically, on one hand, through "selective adaptation" and "adaptive selection", translators should try with great effort to

> maintain and transfer the linguistic ecology, cultural ecology and communicative ecology of source text; on the other hand, through "selective adaptation" and "adaptive selection", translators should try with great effort to adapt the target text to the linguistic ecology, cultural ecology and communicative ecology of target text. (Hu & Tao, 2016, pp. 127-128)

One interesting aspect of ecotranslation is how effectively it can describe and study traditional concepts and approaches in translation studies through an ecotranslational lens. The "source and target ecology" can be likened to the norms of the target culture discussed in skopos theory. When it is stated that the translator should adapt and engage in selective adaptation, it can be interpreted in a traditional sense: the translator must consider their purpose and adapt the work to the constraints of the target culture.

> Secondly, Principle of Multiple Eco-Integration — mainly refers to the criteria of translation, which not only requires faithfulness to "source text" and appealingness to "readers", but on the basis of maintaining textual ecology, the Holistic Degree of Adaptation and Selection in order to make the target text "survive/thrive" in the new linguistic ecology, cultural ecology and communicative ecology. (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 128)

"Maintaining textual ecology" offers a fresh perspective on studying translational phenomena within an ecotranslational framework. Textual ecology refers to the need for the translated text to align with the purpose (skopos) of the translation. For instance, it involves deciding whether culturally specific items from the source text should be preserved exactly in the translated version or substituted with appropriate equivalents that facilitate easy reading for the target audience, avoiding odd or difficult phrasing.

Lastly, the "translator's responsibility" is undoubtedly one of the most crucial factors in the translation process.

> Principle of Translator Responsibility — mainly means that the translator should take "full responsibilities" for translation process, translation behavior and the whole translation activity, specifically, coordinating the interrelationship between "translational eco-environment", "translation community", and "source/target text", so as to, through "translator responsibility", embody the associated interaction and the balance and harmony in ecological holism among "environment", "community", and "text" (three phases). (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 128)

In discussing the various factors involved in the translation process, a crucial question arises: Is the translator the only participant in this process? Certainly not. It is well recognized that multiple actors and parties contribute to the successful completion and production of the final translation. As noted by Beebee, Childress, and Weidman (2017), "numerous actors collaborate in order to bring about a published translation: literary agents, translators, publishers, funding agencies, reading publics, distribution channels, and so forth. This system of translation is surrounded by its environment."

When considering translation as a holistic system, each involved actor can be viewed as a subsystem that collaborates to create the translated product. As Wolf (2010) states, "Various entities involved in a translation 'action' constitute a set of interdependent systems in the environment of the overall translation system."

> Eco-translatology focuses on three eco-themes. The so called three eco-themes are "ecology," "life," and "survival." "Ecology" here refers to translation ecology, the ecological system and environment of translation. "Life" here refers to the life of the texts involved in translation process, the vital status and living conditions of the texts. And "survival" here refers to the survival of the translators, the living standards and the future development of the translators. (Hu & Tao, 2016, p. 125)

Here, ecology is once again employed metaphorically and analogously to enhance the understanding of translation as a system, along with its various subsystems.

> In speaking of ecology in the narrow sense, that is, as a science attempting to understand the ways that living creatures interact with each other and with their environments, there is a structure of systems nesting within environments. The largest ecological environment is Gaia, also known as the biosphere or the Earth, which is usually divided into biomes, defined as generalized habitats such as tundra, desert, or tropical forest. Within biomes are ecosystems, within ecosystems communities, within communities' populations, which are in turn made up of individual organisms. (Beebee, Childress, & Weidman, 2017, p. 4)

The term "environment" is also relevant in the field of translation, alongside the concept of a system. Translation is characterized as a system composed of various parts and subsystems. In addition to these subsystems, which are smaller components of the overall system, there are larger entities that exist beyond the system itself and can influence it or interact with it. These larger entities can be referred to as the "environment". As Tyulenev (2013) notes, "Translation has always been implicitly or explicitly associated with structures larger than itself: it was considered a factor in the exchange between languages, cultures, or semiotic domains". These larger structures or environmental factors may include language, culture, and other related elements.

> Sociological approaches to translation have been developed on the basis of the insight that translation is an activity deeply affected by social configurations. The majority of these approaches were elaborated in the wake of the "cultural turn", which anticipated many of the issues developed later in more explicitly social contexts and foregrounded concerns related to power, politics, ideology, ethics, or individual agency. (Wolf, 2010, p. 337)

The cultural turn marked a shift away from focusing solely on linguistic and equivalence-based relationships between source and target languages. Instead, attention shifted to aspects such as power relations, identities, and other sociocultural factors. According to Yan (2022, p. 16), "Niklas Luhmann's social system theory and Bruno Latour's actor-network theory have advanced translation research, promoting a 'sociological turn' in the field".

> The German sociologist Niklas Luhmann's social systems theory (SST) allows translation to be viewed as a social system or a subsystem, part of a larger social system. Luhmann theorised modern society as a system consisting of subsystems with their distinct functions ('function subsystems'), such as religion, politics, education, art, translation. Translation can be described as a social system, because it can be shown to have all the properties of a social system. (Tyulenev, 2013)

Earlier, it was noted that translation can be viewed as a system made up of smaller sub-systems. Additionally, translation exists within larger systems, making it a sub-system of these broader entities. For example, society is a large system of which translation is a component. It was also discussed that society, as this larger system, can be regarded as an environment. According to Luhmann (2017, p. 12), "the basic distinction in Luhmann's theory is between system and environment. Social phenomena are seen as social systems, indicating the system as distinguished by the (undetermined) environment". In this context, translation is recognized as a system (whether large or small), while society serves as the surrounding environment.

> Social systems are defined as systems, which produce themselves *qua* systems. This circular self-reproduction is called *autopoiesis* (from Greek *auto*—self, and *poiein*—to produce) . . . autopoietic systems produce their elements themselves out of themselves and thereby constitute operational closures because no outside operation can penetrate them. Autopoietic

systems are however interactionally open. They utilize energy and information of their environment. (Tyulenev, 2014, p. 350)

Translation, as an "autopoietic" system, enables its sub-systems to operate independently while interacting to produce the translated product. As mentioned earlier, translational systems are influenced by external factors. For example, if a work is being translated, any economic changes in society (the environment), such as inflation, may affect the payments and prices associated with the translator's work. According to Seidl and Becker (2010, p. 8), "the contact with the environment, however, is regulated by the autopoietic system itself; the system determines when, what, and through which channels energy or matter is exchanged with the environment". This implies that each system allows for specific mechanisms, elements, and actors to be involved. For instance, if we consider literary translation as a distinct system, only those works classified as literary translations are permitted to enter this system from the environment. In contrast, texts related to tourism would not be deemed appropriate for this literary translation system, and thus would be excluded.

As previously stated, the primary aim of this paper is to compare Luhmann's social system theory in translation with the ecological sub-systems discussed in Beebee, Childress, & Weidman's (2017) work. While their book compares ecology with polysystem theory, the current paper replicates this approach by instead focusing on Luhmann's social system theory. Consequently, the ecological categories and sub-systems are identical to those in the aforementioned book. The only modification made in this paper regarding the ecological side of the table is the merging of the "population" and "individual" components into a single sub-system.

Table 2. A parallel comparison between ecology and Luhmann's social system theory in translation (based on Beebee, Childress, & Weidman, 2017)

Ecologies	Social System Theory in Translation
Gaia	Society
Biomes	Translation
Ecosystems	Different genres and types of translation
Communities	Publishers and financial agencies
Population and individuals	Translators and editors

According to Beebee, Childress, and Weidman (2017, p. 4), terms like "Gaia" and "biomes" originate from scientific descriptions of ecological systems and their sub-systems. They explain that "the largest ecological environment is Gaia, also known as the biosphere or the Earth, which is usually divided into biomes" (Beebee, Childress, & Weidman, 2017, p. 4). In this paper's comparison between ecology and social system theory in translation, Gaia is considered the largest ecological system, while society is seen as the largest system within social system theory, with its respective sub-systems. Following this analogy, after identifying Gaia as the largest system, its sub-systems include biomes, ecosystems, communities, populations, and individuals. Similarly, society's sub-systems encompass translation, various genres and types of translation, publishers and funding agencies, as well as translators and editors. All these sub-systems in both ecology and social system theory work in coordination to support their larger systems, ensuring they function in an organized and efficient manner. In this comparison, ecology serves as a metaphor to enhance our understanding of the classification of social systems theory in translation. In other words, ecological systems and sub-systems provide a framework for comparing and understanding social system theory in translation.

Conclusion

For many years, translation studies primarily focused on foundational levels, such as linguistic considerations, emphasizing the appropriateness of equivalences and the quality of translations. However, the introduction of new approaches like skopos theory, polysystem theory, and deconstructionist views shifted attention to more complex translational issues and dimensions. Despite these advancements, certain aspects and layers of translation remained obscured, particularly those involving the human element. The emphasis on human beings as the central actors in translation has often left other areas underexplored in research. Fortunately, the emergence of ecotranslation has gradually unveiled these hidden aspects, paving the way for new perspectives in the field of translation studies.

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