Dynamic Equivalence: Nida's Perspective and Beyond

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Translation is an interlingual and intercultural communication, in which correspondence at the level of formal and meaningful structures does not necessarily lead to a successful communication: a secondary communication or even a communication breakdown may occur due to distinct historical-cultural contexts. Such recognition led Nida to put forward Dynamic Equivalence, which brings the receptor to the centre of the communication. The concept triggered the focus shift from the form of the message to the response of the receptor. Further, its theoretical basis went beyond applying the research results of linguistics to the practice of translation; it founded a linguistic theory of translation for researchers and provided a practical manual of translation for translators. While Nida's claims on the priority of Dynamic Equivalence over Formal Correspondence have been widely accepted and cited by translation researchers and practitioners, the mechanism and validity of Nida's theoretical construct of the translation process have been neither addressed nor updated sufficiently. Hence, this paper sets out to revisit Nida and explain in detail what his theoretical background was, and how it led him to Formal Correspondence and Dynamic Equivalence.

Keywords: *deep structure, dynamic equivalence, kernel, receptor response, translation model*

> We must analyze the transmission of a message in terms of a dynamic dimension. This analysis is especially important for translating, since the production of equivalent messages is a process, not merely of matching the parts of the utterances, but also of reproducing the total dynamic characters of communication. (Nida 1964: 120)

1. Introduction

The concept of Dynamic Equivalence, put forward by Eugene Nida in *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964) and *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969), changed the landscape of the translation practice and theory.[1] For decades, it has played a major role in moving translation studies into the realm of science and in demonstrating the value of linguistics as a potential tool for translation practice and research (Stine 2004: 135).

The average person unacquainted with Hebrew will take the Biblical phrase *heap coals of fire on his head* (Rom. 12: 20) as a brutal torture, rather than meaning *make a person ashamed of his behavior* (Nida 1969: 2). Such concern with intelligibility and reader response led Nida (1969: 22) to declare "Intelligibility is not to be measured merely in terms of whether the words are understandable and the sentences grammatically constructed, but in terms of the total impact the message has on the one who receives it." Simply put, the translator should find the unknown M2 from the equation *E (M1) = E (M2)*, where M1 = M2

is not necessarily valid.[2] Besides his unyielding—or proselytizing—statements, which triggered denunciation rather than just criticism from conservative Christians who believes that even the word order embodies the holy mystery, Nida founded a linguistically-solid translation theory to defend his ideas and to illustrate the procedure to reproduce the total dynamic characters of communication.

Although Nida's works are centered upon the translation of Bible, his ideas and approach have been applied to the translation of almost all genres (Nida indeed aspired to have his rules and theory applied to translating in general, as he mentioned in the prefaces of the 1964 and 1969 publications). In fact, Nida's statements under the heading of Dynamic Equivalence have been widely accepted and cited by translation scholars and practitioners regardless of their religious faith or academic/practical interests. Meanwhile, Nida's theoretical construct of the translation process, which leads to Dynamic Equivalence, has received relatively little attention. This calls for the need to revisit Nida's theory of Dynamic Equivalence and explore its basic principles, contributions, and pitfalls.

2. Focus Shift from Form of Message to Response of Receptor

"Translating consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style" (Nida 1969: 12), and "there should be a high degree of equivalence of response, or the translation will have failed to accomplish its purpose" (Nida 1969: 24).

As such, Nida believes that a translated text should have an immediate meaning—intelligibility—for the target text readers and that an equivalent receptor response must be elicited. In his words, "intelligibility is not to be measured merely in terms of whether the words are understandable and the sentences grammatically constructed, but in terms of the total impact the message has on the one who receives it" (Nida 1969: 22). For Nida, meaning is context-dependent, and receptors from disparate historical-cultural contexts may arrive at different meanings and will probably display non-equivalent responses. Based on such observation, Nida stresses the priority of Dynamic Equivalence over Formal Correspondence and claims that the focus of translation should shift from the form of the message to the response of the receptor.

2.1 *Traditional Focus: Form of Message*

The traditional focus of translation has been placed on the form of the message, an approach which Nida refers to as Formal Correspondence. The translation procedure and focus are diagrammatically represented by Nida (1969: 22) as follows:
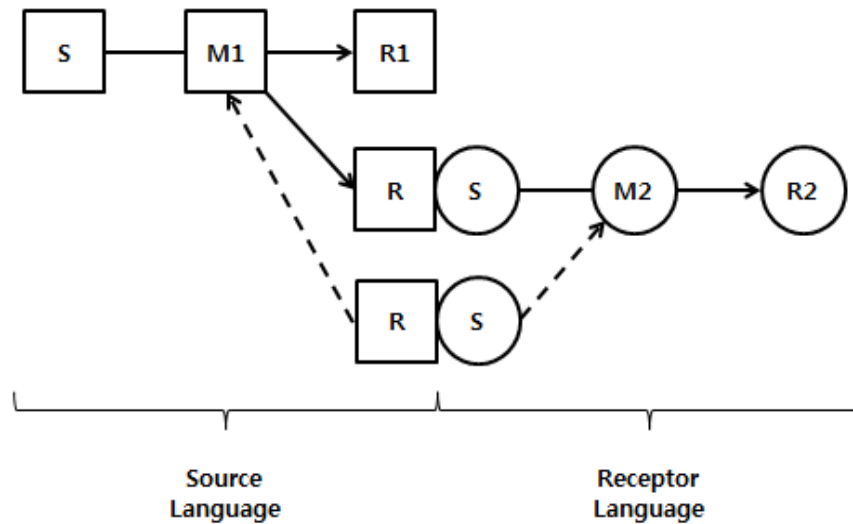
Diagram 1 *Traditional Focus of Translation*

The author, or the source (S), communicates the message (M1) to the source text reader, or the receptor 1 (R1); the translator, who is both the receptor (R) and the source (S), reproduces (translates) the message (M2) for the target text reader, or the receptor 2 (R2); and the translation critic, or the scholarly judge of translation, who is qualified as both the receptor (R) and the source (S), compares the messages (M1 and M2) and judges whether M2 is "faithful" to M1.

The terms *source*, *message* and *receptor* are clear evidences of Nida's assumption that translation is an act of communication (Stine 2004: 130). In any communication, the receptor should be the key element; however, as can be seen in the above diagram, the traditional focus of translation has been on the form of the message rather than the response of the receptor. In other words, the ultimate constituent of the interlingual and intercultural communication is left unattended.

In addition, we must note that the receptor needs adequate non-linguistic information to use the cues in the text to create semantic contents. Indeed, "words only have meaning in terms of the culture of which they are a part" (Nida 2003: 77). This means that even when Formal Correspondence—fidelity at the level of formal and meaningful structures—is achieved between M1 and M2, a secondary communication or even a communication breakdown may occur due to distinct historical-cultural contexts of R1 and R2.

2.2 *New Focus: Response of Receptor*

The aforementioned constraints and limits of Formal Correspondence ushered Nida to proclaim the focus shift to the response of the receptor, an approach which Nida refers to as Dynamic Equivalence. The translation process and focus are diagrammatically represented by Nida (1969: 23) as follows:

S → M1 → R1

R S → M2 → R2
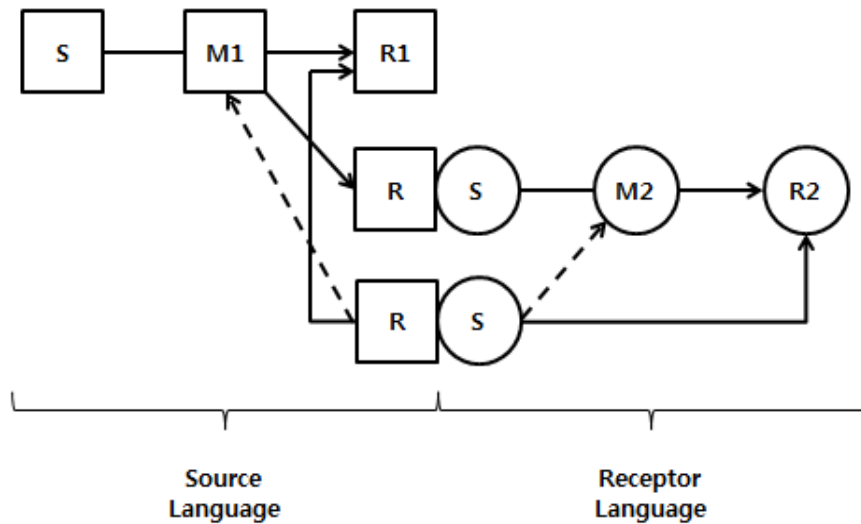
R S

Source Language   Receptor Language

Diagram 2 *New Focus of Translation*

The above diagram illustrates the new focus on the receptors—the responses of R1 and R2, to be precise. The translation critic does not only compare M1 and M2; he is also concerned with the total dynamic characters of communication in which attention should also be paid to the receptors. The essence of the new focus is summarized in the statement below (Nida 1969: 24).

> Dynamic Equivalence is to be defined in terms of the degree to which the receptors of the message in the receptor language respond to it in substantially the same manner as the receptors in the source language.

Nida insists upon the need to guarantee a substantial degree of equivalent responses between R1 and R2. Consequently, for the sake of the equivalence at the level of the receptor response, Dynamic Equivalence allows the translator to alter idioms, vernaculars, slangs, colloquialism, and onomatopoeic expressions in accordance with the culture of the target language; it also requires the translator to pay attention to contemporary expressions because lexical expressions change as time passes (Venuti 2000: 137-138). Such emphasis on the response of the receptor is based on Nida's insight that translation is a multifunctional communication, which also performs expressive and imperative functions, as well as an informative one. Nida places special emphasis on the expressive function: "one of the most essential, and yet often neglected, elements is the expressive factor, for people must also feel as well as understand what is said" (Nida 1969: 25).

2.3 *Critique & Suggestions*

The concept of Dynamic Equivalence triggered a focus shift: it has become a standard or an ideal for a number of translation researchers and practitioners. While helping us recognize the elements which have been neglected in the past (Constantinescu 2010: 288), it moved away

from the debates over literal translation versus free translation and guided us to the brave new world of receptor-oriented translation.

A great many translators and researchers have adopted it—some with a blind faith. Nonetheless, it does have built-in flaws and gaps that need to be corrected and filled.

First, it is uncertain why the translation critic alone should measure and compare the real or presumed responses of R1 and R2, as is presented in Diagram 2. Without doubt, the translator—the receptor as well as the source—is the only messenger and knowledge broker in this intercultural communication process. For this reason, the translator should also shift his focus to the response of the receptor and be able to judge translation on his own. Even if we accept the idea that the translation critic is an integral part of the translation process (which may be the case in Bible translation), this paper proposes that Diagram 2 be altered as follows:
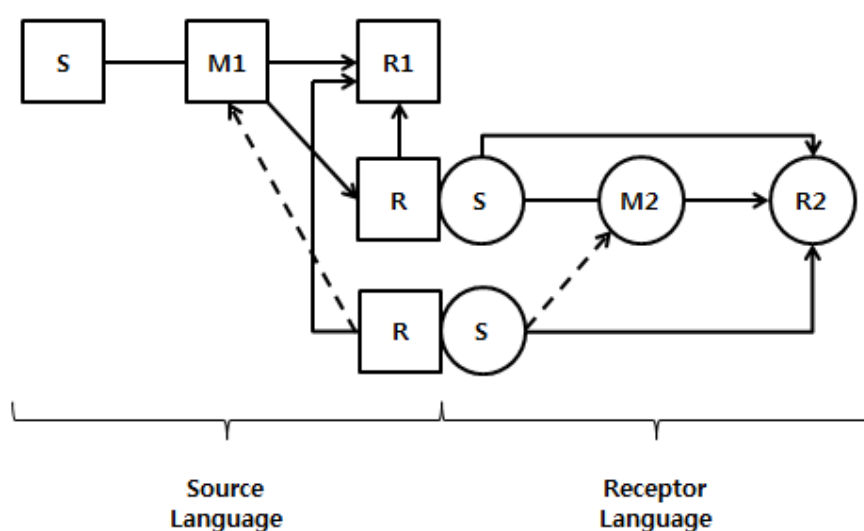
Diagram 3 *Revised New Focus of Translation*

Nevertheless, the role of the translator has become much more central and active (one of the evidences may be the increase of the translator's notes) while the involvement of the translation critic is neither common nor vital in most fields of translation. The profession of translation is a unique ecosystem, evolving successfully from one form into another (Shreve 2000: 217). In fact, the concept of translation competence has evolved to incorporate translation quality assessment and editing/revision skills, besides traditional ones such as linguistic and cultural/intercultural skills (Nord 1991: 235). A number of countries and regions have their translation quality assessment standards (e.g., EN15038 in Europe), with which the practitioners are educated. Thus, if we are to apply Dynamic Equivalence to today's translation in general, beyond Bible, we may "safely" remove the bottom square and circle—the translation critic—from the above diagram. Therefore, the revised new focus of general translation should be as follows:
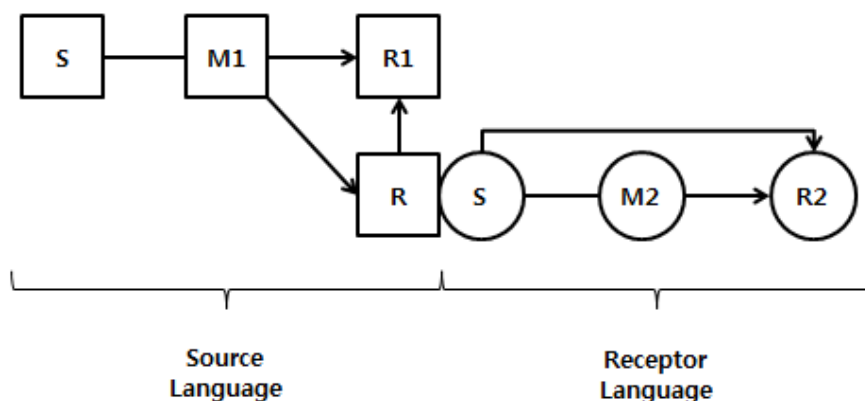
Diagram 4 *Revised New Focus of General Translation*

Second, preserving the genius of the target language is likely to result in concealing that of the source language and in authorizing cultural adaptation. Nida claims that the translator is authorized to build in redundancy and change the syntactic structure for the sake of intelligibility (1964: 139). Nida goes on to state that the form must be changed to preserve the content of the message (1969: 5). Nida even asserts that denotations can be altered in the course of translation: the Biblical phrase *greet one another with a holy kiss* can be naturally translated as *give one another a hearty handshake all around* (1964: 160). Such statements are based on the key assumptions: every language has its own genius (Nida 1964: 3-4), anything that can be said in one language can be said in another (Nida 1964: 4), and the best translation does not sound like a translation (Nida 1969: 12). The statements and assumptions sound quite reasonable, if not persuasive. Nevertheless, such approach can justify colonizing translation and blur the distinction between translation and adaptation.[3] Venuti (1995: 22) contends that such translation is likely to violate upon the culture and language of the source text. Meanwhile, Meschonnic (1986: 77) compares Nida's approach to automatic behaviorism that authorizes untrammeled manipulation, and protests that translation will turn into adaptation, with Dynamic Equivalence as its good conscience. The concerns would be dispelled if we could make clear when and how the translator can change the form and the denotation. With extreme caution, this paper suggests that the translator should maintain denotation by the use of gloss. Some may oppose to gloss on grounds that it i) undermines intelligibility, ii) precludes the possibility of distinguishing the words of the author from those of the translator, and iii) makes the translator visible. The first concern is legitimate; nonetheless, in many cases, preserving the genius of the source language and culture outvalues full-fledged intelligibility, and intelligibility can be replicated with gloss when the denotation in question is repeated in the text. The second and third concerns are unfounded and outdated: the gloss can be provided through footnotes or endnotes (not within the text), and "the age of the translator's invisibility" is coming to an end.

3. Theoretical Basis of Dynamic Equivalence: Translation Model

The theory of Dynamic Equivalence went beyond applying the research results of linguistics to the practice of translation; it formulated a *linguistic theory of translation* by "recreating"

transformational generative grammar and harnessing all the relevant tools available in linguistics.

Nida removed translation from the purely mental sphere, amenable only to unreliable introspection, and put it in a solid frame that enables scientific observation. Logically, such a frame would facilitate the translator to reproduce the total dynamic characters of communication.

Nida's (1969) model "back-transforms" Chomsky's transformational generative grammar to present a three-phased model of translation.
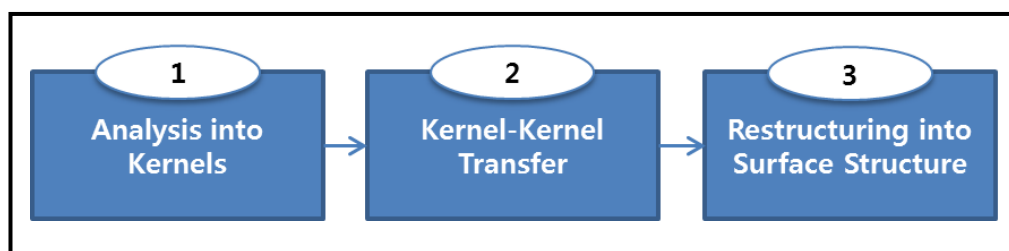

Diagram 5 *Nida's Model of Translation Process*

Unlike previous studies on translation, Nida's model offers a practical and scientific procedure that the translator can follow. Although Nida does not force the translator to follow it step by step, he mentions in the prefaces of his 1964 and 1969 works that his theoretical construct is intended to serve as a practical "handbook" that the translator can follow and that it can be applied to translating in general. In other words, it can serve either as a tool for the study of translation or as a helpmate in the act of translating.

3.1 *Analysis*

The first phase is analysis, in which complex and ambiguous phrases and sentences—surface structures—are back-transformed into simple and structurally clearer ones—kernels. In other words, Nida applies Chomsky's transformational generative grammar, in which deep structure produces surface structure through a transformation process, in a reverse order. Nida stresses the need to draw out kernels, as they are "basic structural elements out of which the language builds its elaborate surface structures" (Nida 1969: 39). Basically, the procedure is as follows.

First, the translator classifies the source text words into four categories: O, E, A, R. They are the basic semantic categories: Object (O) refers to things or entities which normally participate in events; Event (E) refers to actions, processes, and happenings; Abstract (A) refers to expressions which have as their only referents the qualities, quantities, and degrees of objects, events, and the abstracts; and Relation (R) refers to connecting words (Nida 1969: 37-38). These semantic categories match grammatical classes to a certain extent; nevertheless, it should be noted that Nida's categories are purely semantic while grammatical classes of most languages often alter the class membership of terms (e.g., most languages designate events as nouns although they are semantically actions, processes, and happenings, which are treated as "E" in Nida's categories). Unlike grammatical categories, Nida's categories help analyze ambiguous structures and explain that different surface structures may have the same

meaning. For example, the sentence *John ... [preached] a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins* (Mark 1: 4) is analyzed as follows (Nida 1969: 51):

(1)   John … [preached] a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.
      O   E   E   R   E   R   E   R E

The above example consists of multiple kernels, which are combined into semantically-heavy expressions. This is the very problem (e.g., highly nominal and genitive expressions) Nida intends to illustrate. With the four categories of O, E, A, R, which are universal to all languages, the translator can analyze the grammatical relationship and identify the semantic natures of the words at a glance.

Second, the translator uses his world knowledge and intuition to make explicit the implicit. In the above example, two implicit elements must be made explicit: (i) people, which serve as the goal of baptism, the subject of repentance, one of the goals of forgiveness, and the subject of sin; and (ii) God, which is the subject of forgiveness.

Third, the translator is required to produce kernels, such as follows:

(2)   a) John preached X (in which X stands for the entire indirect discourse).

    b) John baptizes the people.

    c) The people repent.

    d) God forgives X.

    e) The people sin.

With the above kernels, the translator is now almost ready for the second phase of translation; however, if necessary (e.g., cases of ambiguity), he carries out a semantic analysis (i.e., analysis of the connotative components) using one of the three techniques. The most useful and systematic technique is componential analysis, which helps the translator analyze and contrast the meanings of related words. The analysis is carried out by i) determining the limits of a closed corpus, ii) defining the terms as precisely as possible, iii) identifying the distinctive features which define the various contrasts in meaning, iv) defining each term by means of the distinctive features, and v) making an overall statement of the relationship between the distinctive features and the total number of symbols classified in the series of words (Nida 1964 : 83). Other techniques are hierarchical structuring and chain analysis: the first helps the translator use a hypernym or the closest hyponym by illustrating hierarchical relationships, while the latter is useful in plotting the relationships existing in certain semantic structures by describing linear relationships (Nida 1964: 72-82).

3.2 Transfer

The second phase is transfer, where the source language kernels are translated to those of the target language. Transfer is "basically" carried out on this level, since the likelihood of a meaning loss is reduced and the semantic ambiguity is resolved on such simple structures. The translator may well be tempted to embark on the kernel-to-kernel transfer right away;

however, a number of tasks await the translator, and attention should be paid to various factors.

First, the translator should avoid translating individual kernels unless they are related by nature. In most cases, the translator must "back up" to the point where they are carefully and properly related to each other (Nida 1969: 104). In other words, the transfer process can only be carried out when the kernels are connected into meaningful structures. Since unrelated kernels may lead to nonsense, the translator should indicate the relationship between the source language kernels and relate them to make sense. The relational indication between kernels may be (i) temporal, (ii) spatial, and (iii) logical: temporal relations arrange the kernels into a time sequence; spatial relations arrange the kernels between object and object or between object and viewer; logical relations arrange kernels based on cause and effect, condition and consequence, and so forth (Nida 1969: 104-105).

Second, the translator is advised to make semantic adjustments. Those falling under the categories of idioms, figurative meanings, pleonastic expressions, etc. should not be translated (they should not have been analyzed into kernels from the beginning); rather, they should be replaced by their functional-equivalents. For example, in English-French translation, an English idiom *to butter somebody up* should not be translated to *beurrer quequ'un*, but be replaced by a French proverb *passer de la pommade á quelqu'un* (literal translation into English: pass an apple to somebody). Despite the discrepancy of the lexical meanings, the replaced target language idiom performs equivalent functions—it maintains the message, and impacts the receptor in substantially the same manner as the source language idiom. This is in line with Catford's textual equivalence in which the source and target items are "interchangeable in a given situation" (1965: 49). Of course, semantic adjustments may not be needed if the lexicons and their meanings are the same by coincidence. Other areas that require attention include shifts in central components of meaning, general and specific meanings, redistribution of semantic components, and so on. In defending his approach, Nida compares translation to packing clothing into two different pieces of luggage in which the clothes remain the same but the shape of the suitcases may vary (Nida 1969: 105).

Third, the translator makes structural adjustments. In transferring the kernels of the source language to those of the target language, the genius of the target language must be respected. In other words, target language kernels must conform to the target language norms and should be preferred by the target language receptors. It should be noted that some linguistic structures are possible, but deemed unusual or unexpected by the language users.

3.3 *Restructuring*

The third phase is restructuring, where the translated kernels, near-kernels, and other elements (e.g., semantically adjusted idioms) are synthesized. To a certain degree, it overlaps with the previous phase in that semantic and structural adjustments are already made in the course of transfer. Theoretically, restructuring is the opposite of analysis: while analysis is aimed at going down to the deep structure—near the deep structure, to be more precise—restructuring is aimed at going up to the surface structure based on the transformational rules of the target language. At a glance, this phase looks simple and easy. With the development of linguistics and information technology, transformational rules of most languages are uncovered, and a number of linguistics softwares are available to facilitate the application of the rules. In other words, finding and applying the transformational rules can now be done in

an almost automatic and easy manner. Nevertheless, this is not the end of restructuring. Nida recommends considering the following three essential elements in order to arrive at Dynamic Equivalence.

First, the translator is advised to consider the varieties of language. It is of noticeable interest that enormous variability exists within a language, not to mention between languages. Devoting more than 10 pages to this topic, Nida elaborates upon the various factors including time, geography, social class, speech mode, and discourse type (1969: 120-133). Indeed, Nida guides the translator to conduct a register analysis in the course of the restructuring phase. It should be noted that all the elements covered by Nida are categorized into two parameters and six sub-parameters in the register analysis. Register has two main parameters: language user and language use, both of which can be described in terms of a set of sub-parameters; and changes in any of these will trigger the language to vary (Fawcett 1997: 75). The sub-parameters of the first are time (temporal dialect), space (regional dialect), and society (social dialect). Meanwhile, the sub-parameters of the latter are tenor (distance between text producer and receiver), mode (choice between spoken and written language), and domain (topic, genre, and text type). House (1977) claims that the translation critic should analyze the individual parameters and sub-parameters of the source and target texts; compare the way they contribute to conveying message and to building relations between text producer and receiver; and detect and address register mismatches (register mistake or "covertly erroneous error" as opposed to semantic-grammatical mistake or "overtly erroneous error"). The only thing different about Nida's discussion is that the translator—not the translation critic— should conduct the analysis. Since register analysis has proven itself to be a useful tool, so is Nida's instruction to consider virtually the same elements.

Second, the translator—or the style analyst—analyzes the stylistic components (style markers) of the source and target texts. Although Nida portrays meaning and style as two distinct elements, he acknowledges the communicative effect and aesthetic value of style. Depending on languages, an almost infinite number of style markers exist: sentence length, transition marker, pro-form, parataxis, subordination, word choice, and so on. Notwithstanding the fuzzy reality, Nida (1969: 145) categorizes the style markers by their roles and features: roles (functions) are divided into (i) those contributing to increase efficiency and (ii) those contributing to create effects; meanwhile, features are divided into (i) formal (arrangement of words) and (ii) lexical (words, morphemes, etc.). The combination of such factors yields a two-way split, with four resulting types. This is diagrammatically represented and explained by Nida (1969: 146-151) as follows:

	Formal	Lexical
Efficiency	A	C
Special Effects	B	D
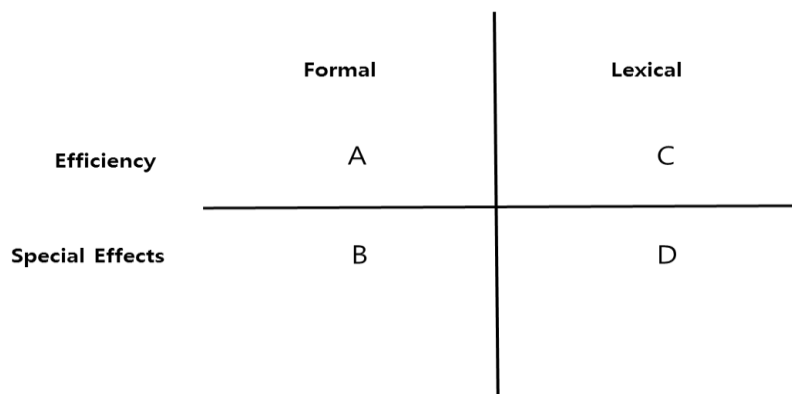
Diagram 6 *Basic Feature-Function Classes*

As can be seen in Diagram 6, four basic feature-function classes exist: (A) formal features are primarily aimed at enhancing efficiency (intelligibility); (B) formal features are aimed at creating special effects; (C) lexical features are aimed at enhancing efficiency (intelligibility); and (D) lexical features are aimed at creating special effects. Such analysis and subsequent comparison between the source and target texts enable the translator to achieve equivalent stylistic effects. Again, the genius of the target language must be guaranteed: rather than striving to maintain or imitate the stylistic markers of the source language, the translator should use the style markers of the target language and make a comparison based on the basic feature-function classes.

Third, the translator is advised to seek professional help in producing the final translation. This might overlap with the analysis of style; nevertheless, it is one thing to analyze the style and often a quite different thing to work out the means by which a satisfactory style can be produced (Nida 1969: 157). The professional stylist involved in this process should have certain qualifications, such as (i) he must be a good writer and (ii) he should not have too much acquaintance with the typical forms of the genre in question. In other words, the role of the professional stylist is not limited to editing, but extends to revision and creative writing. For this reason, he should not be too familiar with the writing practice of the genre, as the familiarity might oppress his creativity and incapacitate his ability to write at the level of the receptor's eyes.

Now that linguistic varieties and stylistic component are considered, analyzed, and compared, and the target text is polished, the restructuring phase is complete. Finally, we arrive at Dynamic Equivalence. [4]

3.4 Critique & Suggestions

Pursuing a truly scientific and eclectic approach, Nida's translation model took translation studies to a much higher level and offered a practical translation manual.

Nida's goal has been consistent: to come up with a theory that will make our world linguistically and culturally understandable (Nida 2006: 11-14). Indeed, the goal has been accomplished; Byun and Kim (2014: 115-123), among many others, analyze that Nida's translation model fulfills the conditions of a good translation theory proposed by Bell (1991): empiricism, determinism, parsimony, and generality.

Despite such acclamation and contributions, some criticisms—as well as suggestions—can be leveled at Nida's theory.

First, the use of Nida's categories (O, E, A, R) may well be replaced by functional deep structure analysis. Nida avoids deep structure on grounds of its complexity; however, such concern is exaggerated. The functional deep structure of the aforementioned example (1) *John … [preached] a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins* is as follows:
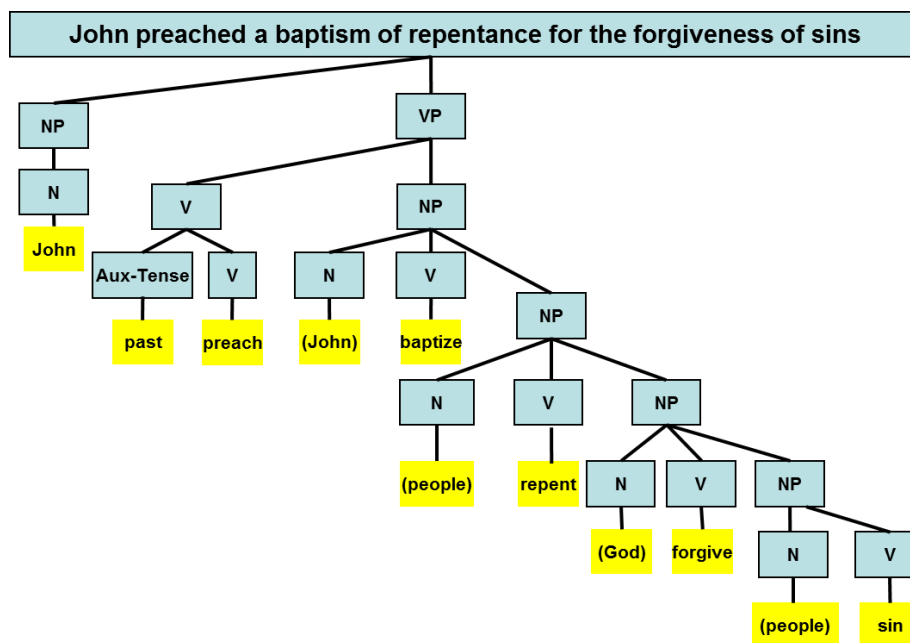
Diagram 7 *Functional Deep Structure Analysis*

Compared with Nida's categories, a finer and more accurate classification is made in the above functional deep structure, and kernels are naturally produced in the process. Besides, except for some exceptionally nominalized and genitivized languages, deep structure analysis is not as complex as one might worry. In addition, Nida's categories lack universality: it cannot be used to analyze agglutinative languages, in which function words, such as verbal endings and particles, play an important role in transforming the base structure. Some argue that Nida avoids deep structure because of the desire to make translation studies an independent discipline, which should not be excessively dependent upon other disciplines (Xiang 2012: 202). Translation studies, however, is interdisciplinary in nature, and should make use of every effective tool available in other disciplines. Therefore, this paper suggests that the translator should actively incorporate the functional deep structure in the analysis phase.

Second, the role of the translator should be extended. In Nida's translation model, the style analyst and the professional stylist appear in the restructuring phase; however, it is doubtful whether their roles can be separated and whether they are indispensable part of the translation process. Creativity of the translator had often been neglected in the past (at least in the curriculums of many translation schools that focused on technical translation) since most translation models had focused on the analysis phase of translation; however, creativity has moved to the center of today's translation debate (Bastin 2000: 233), as it is not a gift of the select few but a basic feature of the human mind (Kussmaul 1995: 52). Since creativity in translation is indeed "recreativity", which is a crucial component of the translation competence to "re-express" (Delisle 1980: 235), the translator is better positioned to spurt creativity while considering the constraints specific to translation, and to balance freedom with faithfulness and his own knowledge, background and beliefs with those of the author (Holman & Boase-Beier 1999: 13). Also, editing and revision have become important tasks of the translator, whether he is employed or self-employed. Indeed, today's translation

competence encompasses a vast range of skills—linguistic, cultural/intercultural, instrumental, interpersonal, attitudinal, networking, translation quality assessment, creative writing, editing/revision, and so forth. In line with such evolution, a number of translator training institutions have begun to incorporate editing/revision and creative writing into their curricula. Such evolution has contributed to making visible the invisible translator: today's translator, equipped with a vast range of skills, no longer stays out of the limelight; he is visible through diverse means, notably the translator's preface and note in which he explains his translation motives, process, strategies, stylistic considerations, background information, and so forth (Dimitriu 2009: 204). Therefore, instead of relying on the style analyst and the professional stylist, we should focus on enhancing the translator's creative writing and editing/revision skills.

Third, the considerations during the transfer and restructuring phase are anecdotal, rather than systematic. Nida's eclectic approach touches upon a wide range of issues, and are based on a number of disciplines including pragmatics, sociolinguistics, semantics, stylistics, and so forth. Nevertheless, the considerations (e.g., relating kernels, analyzing semantic components, analyzing registers, and considering style) are fragmented, and it is unclear *when* and *how* such elements can be incorporated. If a translation model is to fully function in operative mode—as well as analytic mode—an organic and systematic procedure should be set so that the translator can put together the pieces of the translation puzzle in a more effective manner.

4. Conclusion

Aspiring to have a comprehensive and solid theory that will make translation linguistically and culturally understandable, Nida put forward the concept of Dynamic Equivalence.

Nida's approach contributed to the translation practice and research in two respects. First, it triggered the focus shift from the form of the message to the response of the receptor by insisting upon the need to guarantee a substantial degree of equivalent responses between source and target text receptors. Second, it moved translation studies into the realm of science by formulating a *linguistic theory of translation* for researchers and offering a *practical manual of translation* for translators.

Notwithstanding such contributions, a number of questions can be raised about the concept of Dynamic Equivalence and its theoretical basis. Among the questions and subsequent suggestions addressed herein, two points should be emphasized. First, the use of Nida's semantic categories (O, E, A, R) in the analysis phase of translation may well be replaced by the functional deep structure. Nida avoids the deep structure analysis on grounds of its complexity; however, such concern is exaggerated. Most languages are not as nominalized or genitivized as the ones presented in Nida's works; and the deep structure analysis guarantees a finer classification. Second, the role of the translator should be extended. The translator should be able to replace the style analyst and the professional stylist who appear in Nida's model. To this end, he must be equipped with creative writing and editing skills, which should also be incorporated and strengthened in the curriculums of the translation programmes.

Notes

1 Co-authored with Charles Taber (who rarely gets mentioned), *The Theory and Practice of Translation* is built on *Toward a Science of Translating*.

2 M1=Source Text Meaning; M2=Target Text Meaning; E=Effectiveness Function

3 Nida contrasts a linguistic translation, which is legitimate, and a cultural translation or adaptation, which is not (1969: 134). Nevertheless, the distinction becomes blurred by the examples provided in Nida's works.

4 The testing phase remains; however, it belongs to the domain of translation quality assessment, which is not dealt with herein.

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