

The translation field in Serbia 1960-1990: Organizational-theoretical aspects

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ABSTRACT

The paper presents a chronological overview of diverse translation related activity in Serbia between 1960 and 1990 that led to a successful interplay of four types of perspectives on translation enquiry: Policy, Public, Scientific and Critical (Koskinen 2010). It is based on the data available in periodicals, conference proceedings and other publications issued by two major translator associations and book-length publications on translation theory in Serbia during this period. The analysis presents the events, topics, participants and publications on translation as well as the role of state ideology in the promotion of translation activities. Finally, it is argued that the continuous dialogue between practitioners and scholars on numerous pragmatic questions (translator training, development of terminologies, the status of the profession and others), as well as on theoretical ones (on the nature of translation theory) led to the emergence of theoretical discourse on translation in Serbia.

Keywords: translator associations, Policy Translation Studies, Public Translation Studies, Serbian discourse on translation, translation theory

Prevodoslovna misel v Srbiji med letoma 1960 in 1990: organizacijsko-teoretični vidiki

IZVLEČEK

Članek predstavlja kronološki pregled različnih prevajalskih dejavnosti v Srbiji med letoma 1960 in 1990, ki so pripeljale do uspešnega prepleta štirih pogledov na raziskave prevajanja in jih lahko umestimo v družbenopolitično, javno, znanstveno in kritično prevodoslovje (Koskinen 2010). Pregled temelji na podatkih iz periodičnih publikacij, konferenčnih zbornikov in drugih objav dveh največjih prevajalskih društev in knjižnih objav na temo teorije prevajanja v Srbiji v omenjenem obdobju. Analiza predstavlja dogodke, teme, akterje in objave, ki se navezujejo na prevajanje, pa tudi vlogo državne ideologije pri promociji prevajalskih dejavnosti. Na koncu argumentiramo, da je trajni dialog med prevajalci iz prakse in prevodoslovci, ki se je osredotočal na številna pragmatična vprašanja (izobraževanje prevajalcev, razvoj tehnologij, status poklica in druga), pa tudi na teoretična vprašanja (v zvezi z naravo teorije prevajanja), pripeljal do izoblikovanja teorije prevajanja v Srbiji.

Ključne besede: prevajalska društva, družbenopolitično prevodoslovje, javno prevodoslovje, srbski diskurz o prevajanju, teorija prevajanja

1. Introduction

A growing interest in the study of translation in Eastern Europe and the USSR has recently resulted in a number of publications dealing with their contributions to early Translation Studies (Baer 2019, Dmitrienko 2019, Baer and Witt 2018, Pym and Ayvazyan 2015, Ceccherelli, Constantino and Diddi 2015, Špirk 2009, Jettmarová 2008). To the best of our knowledge, the only presentation of the achievements of translation theory in the former Yugoslavia in English¹ can be found in the compilation of essays on translation theory in Slavic countries edited by Ceccherelli, Constantino and Diddi (2015). Two of the fourteen chapters in this volume describe several studies in Croatia and Serbia (Badurina 2015) and the role of translation in the development of culture in Slovenia (Ožbot 2015). The section on Serbia in Badurina's chapter centres on one of the representative publications from this period, edited by Ljubiša Rajić (1981), which is a collection of articles by scholars (university professors), writers and literary translators. These articles cover a range of topics: the nature of translation theory, its relevance for translation activity, current linguistic or literary approaches to literary translation, types of equivalence, translation criticism, history of translation, indirect translation, machine translation and reflections on the processes in literary translation. They are illustrative of the diversity that characterized the discourse on translation in Serbia in those years. It is however, important to note that while research topics and applied methodologies in the discourse on translation in Serbia reflected some of the developments in Western, Eastern European and Soviet traditions, it was also characterized by a sustained dialogue between scholars and the practitioners embodied by the two major translator associations, The Association of Literary Translators (ALTS) and the Association of Scientific and Technical Translators (ASTTS). The chronological overview offered in this paper will therefore shed light on the translation activity that created the conditions for a burgeoning discourse on translation in Serbia, especially after 1975. The overview mostly follows the activities initiated and organized by the ALTS and ASTTS that are documented in their periodicals and book-length publications by Serbian scholars during this period.

We believe that the developments in the field of translation in Serbia during these three decades closely resemble what Koskinen (2010), drawing on Buroway (2005), describes as a successful interplay between the four branches of Translation Studies: Policy, Public, Scientific and Critical. While Policy TS provides research-based solutions for the problems defined by the community, the Public TS “brings the instrumental knowledge generated by scientific TS to the professional field” (2010:22). Koskinen suggests that a dialogue between clients, practitioners and scholars can lead to the generation of new

1 Janićijević 1999 provides a wealth of data on this period in Serbian.

knowledge, by which Policy TS grows into Public TS (2010, 24). The two other types, Scientific TS (rigorous studies) and Critical TS (reflexive examination of research agendas and values) address academic audiences alone; in order to remain relevant, they need the first two branches.

Some publications from this period also point to another significant factor for the development of the discourse on translation in Serbia – the state. Introductory sections to the proceedings of the first translation conferences held in Yugoslavia/Serbia after WWII contain indications that theorizing on translation was in part motivated by ideological reasons. Yugoslavia, a multicultural country with its self-management socialism (cf. Liotta 2001) was a unique case, but there are some similarities in the way ideology influenced translation practices across former socialist countries. Baer (2019) and Dmitrienko (2019), for example, independently note that in the Soviet context translation (expectedly) aided modernization, but also served to create a “supranational Soviet identity” (Dmitrienko 2019, 205) or to “construct Soviet society as cosmopolitan” (Baer 2019, 300). As we shall see, the role of translation was similarly understood in some Yugoslav/Serbian contexts. In presenting this overview, we are therefore also interested in finding relations between the ideology of the socialist Yugoslavia and the way some translational practices supported the emerging translation theory.

2. Methodology and sources

Up until the conflicts of the 1990s, Serbia was a republic of the second Yugoslavia (1945-1992). The Yugoslav discourse on translation cannot easily be segmented into separate geographical/national traditions, because scholars from all former republics (Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia) participated in its creation. Some of the most notable conferences from this period were in the capital, Belgrade. The delineation of Serbian discourse on translation during the 1960s-1990s period is therefore, out of necessity, based on a geographical criterion, i.e. the place where a journal or a book was published and the location of the institutions to which the most prominent scholars were associated at the time. The attribute ‘Serbian’ in this paper denotes that a book, periodical or an article was published in Serbia (noting that some contributors to these volumes were often from other Yugoslav republics), and/or that it is authored by scholars affiliated with a Serbian institution (a university or journal). In addition, some relevant data are only available for Yugoslavia, and are indirectly reflective of the situation in Serbia, as is the case, for example, with the data obtained from the *Index Translationum*.

This overview has been constructed from the perspective of someone who was not educated in this tradition, but who first came across it in the faculty library accidentally,

searching for references while working on a thesis. The list of publications on translation was established on the basis of a subject search of electronic catalogues of the libraries of Matica Srpska² and the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Novi Sad. The main sources of data about translator associations were Z. Jovanović (2000) and Janićijević (1999). The timeline of major events and activities initiated by the translator associations, the range of topics and the participants in the discourse on translation were also identified through the tables of contents in the periodicals *Mostovi* (78 volumes, 1970-1990) and *Prevodilac* (29 volumes, 1982-1991), conference proceedings *Prevodna književnost* (nine volumes of proceedings from the Belgrade Meeting of Translators 1976-1989) and *Kopča* (four volumes of proceedings from Novi Sad conferences Translational Connections [Prevodilačke spona], 1983-1984). A selection of 136 texts (910 pages) from these periodicals and conference proceedings was then consulted for more in-depth analysis. The main criteria for the selection were the text type (introductions, afterwords, book reviews, chronicles), subject matter (theory, training, profession) and authorship. The selected texts were written by:

- a) scholars who are prominent names in Serbian linguistics and literature studies (Universities of Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš), who authored book-length publications, book reviews, texts on translation theory and translator and interpreter education (Babić, Bugarski, Hlebec, Ignjačević, M. Jovanović, Koljević, Marojević, Rajić, Sibinović and Stojnić)
- b) non-academic authors (freelance and in-house translators, prominent members of translator associations and editors-in-chief in the publishing houses) whose names repeatedly appeared in the tables of contents in *Mostovi* and *Prevodilac*, who wrote on the topics of translator education, the profession, the activities of translator associations and chronicles of major events (Z. Jovanović, Janićijević, Bertolino, Stakić, Hajdin and others).

In constructing this overview, we searched for explicit statements on the motivations for the study of translation in the forewords and afterwords in the consulted publications. In addition to scholarly texts, we were interested in the range of texts on translation contributed by non-academics, especially if they were published in the same volumes or periodicals alongside the theoretical contributions, because they shed light on the general climate in the society that surrounded the discourse on translation.

In the following section, we first present the historical context in which the theoretical discourse on translation began. The next three sections present the events, topics, participants, and publications on translation for each of the three decades – the 1960s,

2 The Library of Matica Srpska keeps a sample copy of all publications in Serbia.

1970, and 1980s. The last section gives some examples where ideology might have created conditions for the occurrence of some topics in the discourse on translation during these three decades.

3. The background

According to the chronicles of translator associations of Serbia (Z. Jovanović 2000, 8) and the information that can be found on their websites, the first translator association, the Association of Translators of Serbia (ATS) was founded in 1951. In 1953, ATS initiated the creation of the Alliance of Literary Translators of Yugoslavia (ALTY, or Savez književnih prevodilaca Jugoslavije, SKPJ), as a state-level representative of the seven Associations of Literary Translators from Yugoslav republics and autonomous provinces (Janićijević 1999, 161). Through the ALTY, Yugoslav translators became members of the International Federation of Translators (FIT) from its beginnings. The ALTY was also the organizer of major translational events in the 1960s: the Fourth FIT Congress in Dubrovnik, 1963³ (Z. Jovanović 2000, 45), and the first publications on translation in Belgrade (SKPJ 1963a, 1963b, 1967).

In 1960, a group of technical translators from the ATS founded the Association of Scientific and Technical Translators of Serbia (ASTTS), whereas the ATS became ALTS, i.e. the Association of Literary Translators. The foundation of the ASTTS was closely related to the economic development of Yugoslavia and its international politics at the time. After WWII, one significant consequence of the membership of Yugoslavia in the UN and the Non-Aligned Movement from 1961 onwards was that Belgrade became a busy centre of translation and interpreting activity: it hosted numerous diplomatic meetings, international events and conferences. According to the chronicle of the ASTTS (Z. Jovanović 2000), such a situation created a demand for translation from Serbian into a number of languages, which was largely met by the Translation Centre of the ASTTS. In addition to this, economic relations were established with the countries from Western and Eastern political blocs, and with the ‘Third World’. Historians record that exports to the Soviet bloc rose from the 1950s, and that a long sought commercial agreement was signed with the European Economic Community in 1967 (Lampe 1996: 265, 268, Liotta 2001). This was also the time of the key investment projects in Serbia, such as the building of one of the greatest hydroelectric power stations in Europe at the time, “Đerdap I” and “Đerdap II”, the steel mill “Smederevo”, and the mining and smelting combine “Bor”. In all these projects, the Translation Centre of the ASTTS was the preferred provider of translation services for the state, so the economic benefit of these projects created the conditions for the growth and

3 The ASTTS will repeat this feat in 1990, with the organization of the XII FIT in Belgrade.

development of the ASTTS (Z. Jovanović 2000, 54). The ASTTS thus became a profitable organization, capable of financing various initiatives and publications.

Such historical circumstances are reflected in the foreword to the first collection of papers on theory and literary translation (SKPJ 1963b) by Živojin Simić, one of the founders of the ATS back in 1951. Commenting on the number of translations in socialist Yugoslavia, Simić expresses a belief that more has been published in the short period after WWII (i.e. 1945-1963), than in all the time up to the war (SKPJ 1963b: 4)⁴. This remark is not accompanied by any supporting data, but available data on Yugoslavia from the *Index Translationum* (Šajkevič 1992) confirm a constant and considerable rise in the number of published translations in Serbo-Croatian, even when comparing the period 1955-1959 to 1965-1969: the average number of translated books in the latter period almost doubled (from 820 to 1500).

4. Discourse on translation in Serbia

4.1 Periodization

One of the chroniclers of the field of translation in Serbia and its active participant from the 1970s⁵, Jovan Janićijević, looking back on what had been achieved prior to 1982, identifies three post-war periods (1995/1991⁶, 149–50):

- (1) 1945-1962 – preliminary phase, a period of intense translation activity when the first associations were formed;
- (2) 1963-1969 – the period of consolidation of the translation scene, the beginning of an organized study of translation in Yugoslavia and the appearance of the first theoretical publications;
- (3) 1970-1982 – the period of rapid development of the study of translation.

4 All texts on translation theory from this period are in Serbian, and the citations are translated by the author.

5 Janićijević, a translator and a writer, was the president of ALTS (1974-1978) and of the Alliance of Literary Translators of Yugoslavia (1974-1978), a member of the editorial board of *Mostovi* since 1970 and its editor-in-chief for seven years (1984-1991), one of the initiators of the Belgrade Meetings of Translators (BEPS) in 1975 and one of the editors of several books of proceedings *Prevodna književnost* from the BEPS annual conferences.

6 Janićijević's 1991 book is a collection of texts he previously published in *Mostovi* and other periodicals or presented at various conferences, so the first of the two years denotes the time of previous publication.

Our periodization is slightly modified, rounded to the decades: the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. Although we agree with Janićijević's view of how the field progressed, we see the first volumes of journals *Mostovi* (1970-) and *Prevodilac* (1982-) as landmarks of qualitative changes and new directions in the discourse on translation in Serbia. In this overview, we also skip the preliminary phase (1945-1960) because there were no book-length publications on translation theory during this period.

4.2 The 1960s: How to translate and interpret?

The first publications on translation-related issues in the 1960s were the *Bibliography of Published Translations in Yugoslavia from 1944-1959* (SKPJ 1963a), two collections of papers on theory and literary translation (SKPJ 1963b, SKPJ 1966) and the first textbook on consecutive interpreting (Kordić 1967).

In the foreword to the first collection of papers on translation theory (SKPJ 1963b), Živojin Simić, the first president of the ALTY, states that the purpose of the publication is to contribute to the development of literary translation and to answer the question of how to translate (SKPJ 1963b: 3,5). The essays in the SKPJ 1963b compilation deal with the theory, practice and history of translation. The authors were translators, who were also university professors, writers and members of other professions, from almost all Yugoslav republics. This form of collaboration between translator associations, practitioners and scholars will characterize the majority of publications on translation in the next two decades as well.

The first textbook on consecutive interpreting was authored by Mara Kordić (1967), who was also one of the first simultaneous interpreters for French in Serbia. The book was published by the Institute of Foreign Languages in Belgrade, a higher education institution. In line with the state politics to keep the communication open with 'the West' and 'the East', scholars interested in translation theory were aware of the major developments in translation studies on both sides of the Berlin Wall (cf. Baer 2020). This is evident in the afterword to Kordić's textbook – she cites Nida (1945), Vinay and Darbelnet (1958), Fedorov (1958), Mounin (1963), and Catford (1965). The afterword also reflects the ongoing debate on whether translation is predominantly a linguistic or literary activity. Kordić's own view is interdisciplinary, and she defines translation as a dominantly linguistic activity that includes psycholinguistic, sociological, stylistic, and ethnological considerations, as well as theory of communication (1967, 42), which is a view that will be shared by some of the leading Serbian translation scholars in the next two decades (Bugarski 1981; Rajić 1989; Hlebec 1989 and others).

4.3 The 1970s: Discourse on literary translation

4.3.1 *The call of Mostovi*

The ALTS journal *Mostovi* [*Bridges*] was started in 1970. In addition to the theory, history and criticism of translation, *Mostovi* included chronicles of recent events, bibliographies of publications on translation and portraits of distinguished translators. Occasionally, *Mostovi* also published translations of articles authored by some of the leading foreign translation scholars or a recent literature survey on particular translation topics in British, French, German, Russian, Polish, Czech and Slovakian, but also Belgian, Japanese and other less familiar traditions. The journal was therefore open to current thinking on translation in various cultures.

The first editorial of *Mostovi* gives an indication of what is meant by translation theory: “the periodical will inform about foreign literary texts of high quality, but also about the theoretical issues that became apparent during their translation” (*Mostovi* 1 (1), 4). Here we also learn that the main contributors would be the translators themselves, because “they are highly interested in theoretical issues and want to share what they have discovered, thought about, understood and solved with a wider circle of cultural experts” (*Mostovi* 1(1), 4). Many of these translators were also university professors at language and literature departments, but quite a number of them were not – some were editors in publishing houses, lawyers, librarians and members of other professions.

4.3.2 *The relevance of indirect translation*

The first annual translation conference, the Belgrade Meeting of Translators (BEPS), which also resulted in books of proceedings titled *Prevodna književnost* [*Translated Literature*], started in 1975 (Janićijević 1990, 150). The policy of supporting a cosmopolitan outlook among Yugoslav citizens is directly observable in some of the topics covered in these conferences. Translation from and into languages of limited diffusion (such as the languages of the non-aligned nations) recurs both in conference proceedings (BEPS 1978 – *Prevodna književnost* 1980) and as a topic in individual papers (Janićijević 1979/1999, 183–191; Janković 1987, 447–448 and others). This ambition to present literature from all over the world led to the indirect translation of literary works from languages that at the time were either not taught at philological departments or had few proficient translators (often languages from India, China, and sometimes Arab countries, but also Scandinavia). Indirect translation was generally done through English or German, a practice that was considered undesirable but unavoidable (Rajić 1981b, 201; Janićijević 1979/1999, 198–9). The majority of papers

published in the proceedings from The Belgrade Meeting of Translators (*Prevodna književnost* 1980) address pragmatic issues. Examples include the questions of criteria for the selection of works for translation from more distant languages and cultures, or the analysis of possible strategies in the translation of “strange formulations” that reflect unique cultural perspectives (Koljević 1980, 33).

The topic of indirect translation was also relevant for the translation of Scandinavian literature, and it was further discussed by Ljubiša Rajić, the founder of the department for Scandinavian languages at the University of Belgrade. Rajić (1981b, 206–207) brings the issue of the role of the intermediary culture into the discussion of indirect translation. In his view on the translation of Scandinavian authors from English, German, French and Russian in Yugoslavia, Rajić stresses that the intermediary culture’s prior selection of works for translation can be based on particular publishing policies, commercial reasons, translator affinities, genre preferences and other reasons. These factors, as well as the time span between the first and indirect translations, led to a skewed representation of Scandinavian literature in Yugoslavia. For this reason, he proposes that any study of indirect translation also needs to include an analysis of the factors that influenced translation of a particular work in the intermediary culture (Rajić 1981b, 205).

4.3.3 *The beginnings of T&I education in Serbia*

Considering the role of translation in the economic development of the country, the training of highly skilled translators and interpreters was one of the common topics in the ASTTS. It is not surprising then, that the first steps toward creating training programs for translators and interpreters were made by the president of the ASTTS, who organized the Terminological School that enrolled the first trainees in 1961 for English (40), German (25), French (16) and Russian (14). Six years later, this school became an official training centre of the ASTTS, and for the next decade, it was the only facility that trained language graduates in non-literary translation (*Prevodilac* 1 (3) 1982, 82–5). The ASTTS continually revised their curriculum to fit the market needs, which they were aware of through their translation centre (*Prevodilac* 1 (3) 1982, 84). By the time various types of translation courses entered secondary schools and universities (late 1970s), the ASTTS was the most experienced participant in the conference on translator education, which they also organized (*Prevodilac* 2(3) 1983).

Following numerous discussions on the necessity to educate translators and interpreters, towards the end of the 1970s translation courses were introduced into philological secondary school programs and undergraduate programs of language and literature at various universities (Sibinović 1983a, 8–15; M. Jovanović 1983, 73; 1986, 22). Toward the end of this decade, a postgraduate vocational course in translation started at

the University of Niš (M. Jovanović 1986, 22) and translation theory was introduced into the curricula of philological secondary schools and at the Philological Faculty, University of Belgrade. This resulted in three textbooks, the first of which was written by the Croatian translation scholar, Vladimir Ivir (*Teorija i tehnika prevođenja* [Translation Theory and Procedures]) for the Secondary School for Translation in Sremski Karlovci (Ivir 1978). Although intended for secondary schools, its scope and structure is quite comprehensive. The first part of the book summarizes translation as a field and touches upon the nature of translation and translation theory, social functions and history of translation in Europe and Yugoslavia, as well as more practical issues related to the various types of translation and interpreting, the status of translators and interpreters in society, and the translation tools that are available. The second part of Ivir's textbook was seen as an example of a general theory of translation that is complementary to the other two publications by Sibinović (1979) and Stojnić (1980) that soon followed (Rajić 1980, 240). Ivir discussed translation within the framework of contrastive analysis and a communicative model of translation, whereas the outlook of Sibinović and Stojnić, who wrote their textbooks for students of philological studies, was more based on literary theory. The first section of Sibinović's book *Introduction to the History and Theory of Translation* (1979) is an overview of the translation theory in Europe and Serbia up to the 20th century. Regarding Serbia, he traces the first explicit theoretical considerations of translation back to the second half of the 18th century, and this is the first diachronic presentation of how translation was understood by some of the leading cultural figures in Serbian history. Sibinović identifies free translations and *posrbas* (similar to today's localization) as common in the 18th century, and suggests that their main role was to make the best literary achievements of foreign cultures integral parts of Serbian culture. The second part of the book is a presentation of "the main currents in the contemporary science of translation", which Sibinović understands as "an open theoretical system, flexible enough to include diverse problems of translation as a process and as a product" (1979, 3). The third part of the book is of pragmatic nature, and offers analyses of some issues in literary translation: the role of temporal distance between the source text and its translation, translator's individual style, and the translation of poetry. The topic of how to train translators will remain a burning one in the next decades as well, and, again, the translator associations will create opportunities and invite contributions on this issue. Stojnić, alongside Sibinović, was a professor at the University of Belgrade (Russian Department) and her book, published in 1980 in Sarajevo, *O prevođenju književnog teksta* [On the Translation of Literary Texts], is primarily a university textbook, in which she describes typical translation problems as they appear in numerous examples from Russian literature and explains the analytical process in solving them. Stojnić describes the task of a

literary translator by drawing on Vigotsky's (1934, 305) and Vinogradov's (1959, 234) differentiation between meaning and sense (i.e. that artistic words have stable meanings but that their senses change and multiply depending on the context in which they are used). Stojnić further sees literary works as comprising of two complex systems of linguistic and literary structures, from which it is impossible to isolate distinct units of translation that could be replaced by equivalent elements in the target language. The task of a literary translator is therefore not to search for linguistic equivalents, but to decipher the source literary text as a system of artistic features and to construct a corresponding system in the target language (Stojnić 1980, 190).

Toward the end of the 1970s, Sava Babić, a translator and university professor interested in studying the decisions translators make in the process of translation, describes another role of translation theory. According to Babić, translation theory “does not solve concrete problems for translators nor it gives ready paradigms, but tries to examine the phenomena that occur during the “replacement” of one language with another, when [literary] works and languages appear in a new light, so that even unconscious, practical decisions made by translators can be interpreted as conscious theoretical conceptions” (1979, 105). Babić also believes that translation criticism should focus on how successfully the translator has realised an explicit or implicit ‘translation conception’. The way Babić describes this notion, it encompasses the general goal the translator wants to achieve in a translation, his/her general strategy that informs the decision-making process regarding particular translation problems and the selection of original features to be preserved or omitted in the translation. Babić also notes that translations are reflections of the translator's personality and that the choices made are not accidental, regardless of whether the translator is aware of them (Babić 1986, 51). In his view, the sole purpose of any unit-by-unit comparison of the original and the translation should be to determine whether and to which extent specific translation choices are congruent with the overall logic of the translation (Babić 1986, 50). Babić's work on the history of translator conceptions and translation criticism is an important contribution to the present day attempts to understand how translation practices (and norms) changed over time in the Serbian context.

4.4 The 1980s: Education, terminology and scholarship

In 1982 the ASTTS launched *Prevodilac* [*The Translator*], a journal on technical translation, translation as a profession and translator education. Members of its editorial board were translators (7) and university professors (4). Regarding the selection of topics and the general approach, it was complementary to *Mostovi*. The first special issue of *Prevodilac* (2/3, 1983) was devoted to the question of translator and interpreter education.

4.4.1 *Education of translators and interpreters*

One of the striking examples of an engaging dialogue between translation scholars, translators and interpreters was the Conference on T&I education organized by the ASTTS in 1983 (Z. Jovanović 2000, 82). *Prevodilac* (2/3, 1983) published recorded presentations and discussions from this conference, which was conceived as a form of counselling involving the profession, universities and state institutions. In the introductory text, Sibinović (1983a, 5) states that the main motivations for the conference were the insufficient numbers of highly skilled translators that could support the economic development of the country, current “internationalization of the economy and culture” and the introduction of the first courses in translation in the secondary and higher education in Serbia. Sibinović also refers to the UNESCO *Recommendation on the legal protection of translators and the practical means to improve the status of translators* (UNESCO1967), which required that the member states recognize that T&I education could not rely solely on language teaching, and therefore recommended cooperation between translator associations, universities and other educational institutions. As we have seen so far, Serbia followed these recommendations quite closely. The T&I education, however, was more difficult to implement, because in the early days all programs were still experimental. Analysing the curricula for secondary schools for translators in Yugoslav republics and provinces (which differed considerably one from another), Sibinović notes that they reflect a belief that translation skills can emerge on the basis of a comprehensive linguistic knowledge in the areas of native and foreign languages and a range of humanistic or scientific courses, without any linking to the theory, history and practice of translation (1983a, 13). To partly fill this gap, Sibinović published a textbook for students that covered theoretical, historical and practical aspects of translation (Sibinović 1983b). It included sections on the history of translation in Europe and Yugoslavia, contemporary theoretical models of translation and chapters on translation practice. It was positively received, and in 1991 it was complemented by another textbook, with texts for translation, commentaries and practical instructions for various types of assignments by another translator, scholar and university professor, Mladen Jovanović.

One of the conclusions of the editorial board of *Prevodilac* was that T&Is should be educated at university level, and that the number of secondary schools which offered translation courses should be reduced. At the time⁷, third- and fourth-year students at language and literature departments (in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Priština) could opt for a translation orientation, which in practice meant that they had courses on translation theory, contrastive analysis and the translation of literary and general texts.

7 From 1977 until 1987 (*Prevodilac* 8 (4) 1988, 66, 73).

Sibinović also reports on the existing curriculum for a two-year postgraduate specialization in T&I, which was drawn by a team consisting of professors from the Philological Faculty (University of Belgrade) and members of the in-house translation services of the Federal Executive Council (i.e., Yugoslav government) and the Secretariat for Foreign Affairs (the so-called SIP).

In the conclusions of the conference, the representatives of the ASTTS also expressed a belief that translation periodicals had an important educational role because they provided a venue for public debates on translational issues and theoretical analyses of translation practice (*Prevodilac* 2(3) 1983, 106). One of the innovative fields covered by *Prevodilac* was the application of computers in lexicography, translation, and translator education. An example is a program created by Mladen Jovanović (on a ZX Spectrum computer), called Trans-1, which was designed as a tool for editing assignments (1985, 91). The program employed gaming elements which motivated students to memorize relevant segments of the source text, and thus also practice useful skills for consecutive interpreting. In his conceptualization of translator education, Jovanović was working within the communicative approach to translation that was very close to the ideas of functionalism (Reiss and Vermeer 1984). He believed that translation should be studied and analysed as an instance of interlingual communication, and that its quality should be measured according to how successful the communication has been in a particular communicative situation, with its particular set of factors, from the sender of the message to the user of a translation (Jovanović 1986, 23).

Another significant contribution to T&I education was the book on decision-making in translation, *Opšta načela prevođenja* [General Principles of Translating], published in 1989, by another university professor, Boris Hlebec. This book is also based on the communicative approach to translation, which draws on the work of Vladimir Ivir, Anton Popovič, Jiřy Levý and Eugene Nida. The references section of the book includes 246 titles by Serbian, Croatian, English, Russian, German, French, Czech, Polish and Slovak authors, reflecting the general awareness of current approaches to Yugoslav and foreign translation theory. In the introductory section of the book, Hlebec states his interdisciplinary and integrated view of translation theory which, as he points out, cannot be approached solely from a linguistic or literary standpoint, but from the standpoint of the source text intentions and functions (1989, 17–18).

4.4.2 *Technical translation and the study of terminology*

In the post-WWII period, the direction of translation often depended on the field concerned – texts related to various technological, economic, industrial issues were translated into Serbian, whereas texts on Yugoslav self-management socialism were

translated from Serbian into a number of languages (Z. Jovanović 1986, 87). As the ASTTS by this time had long-term contracts with the leading “work organizations” and regularly provided services for the high-level socio-political organizations⁸ in the country, terminology was in the focus of the ASTTS since the foundation of their translation centre (Z. Jovanović 1986, 86–89). By the 1980s the financially strong and self-reliant ASTTS had a membership of around 3,000 translators for some 40 languages (Z. Jovanović 2000, 9), and provided translation in the range of 150,000–200,000 pages and several thousand hours of interpretation annually (*Prevodilac* 1(3), 1982, 74). By 1986, it had representatives in the Council of the Faculty of Philology at the University of Belgrade, and in the main Serbian broadcaster, Radio-Television Belgrade (Z. Jovanović 1986, 80). Jovanović explains that the ASTTS financed and published *Prevodilac* because of the general “absence of periodicals dealing with technical translation”. It was intended “to satisfy the needs of philologists in many areas, linguists, terminologists and lexicographers, theorists and historians of translation, students of philological faculties and secondary schools with a translation orientation” (Z. Jovanović 1986, 90).

The ASTTS was very interested in terminological work from the start, so they formed a committee for terminology which cooperated with other institutions. Prior to the 1980s, they issued a number of technical glossaries (such as *Tehnički automobilski rečnik na pet jezika* [Technical Automobile Dictionary in Five Languages], compiled in cooperation with the workers from the automobile factory in Kragujevac), and organized or participated in state-level symposiums on the standardization of terminology (in 1977 and 1978). Finally, in 1988, the ASTTS, together with the Serbian Association of University Professors and Scientists, organized a symposium on terminology. In preparation for this they published the *Terminological Review* (Vinaver 1986), which presented the previous work on terminology by the Yugoslav Academy of Sciences and Arts, governmental and political bodies and companies. The *Review* also included the Bibliography on Yugoslav terminology, the Yugoslav terminological standard, a presentation of international terminological organizations, terminological schools and databases. The proceedings of the symposium (Vinaver 1988) included papers on theoretical considerations in terminological work, the history of terminological work in individual Yugoslav republics, and analyses of certain terminological issues in different fields. As in all previous cases, both volumes contained contributions by scholars and translators.

8 *Work organization* was a socialist term for a company, *sociopolitical organization* was a general term for various governmental bodies and institutions.

4.4.3 *The nature of the discipline*

Serbian writings on translation theory generally reflected the development of the equivalence paradigm, unlike the general approach in Russia and Eastern Europe (cf. Baer 2011:10). Most translation scholars were university professors from language and literature departments: Sibinović, Stojnić and Marojević from Russian, Bugarski, Hlebec, M. Jovanović and Ignjačević from English, Babić from Hungarian, Rajić from Scandinavian, to name just a few. They drew on Western (Nida 1964, 1975a, 1975b; Catford 1965; Jakobson 1966; Nida/Taber 1974; Lefevere 1981, and also Koller 1979; Wilss 1982; Reiss/Vermeer 1984), Eastern European (Levý 1967; Popovič 1975) and Soviet (Fedorov 1958; Kommissarov 1972; Barkhudarov 1975⁹) theories of translation. Some of these foreign publications on translation were integrally available in Serbian translation – Levý (1963) was translated in 1982, Popovič (1975) in 1980, a selection of articles from Jakobson in 1966. *Mostovi* and *Prevodilac* occasionally published translations of individual articles by foreign authors, and Babić edited a special volume of the periodical *Rukoveti* (1979) devoted to translation theory, containing translated articles by Jakobson, Balcerzan, Meschonnic, Wojtasiewicz, Popovič, Mounin and Steiner. In other words, when writing about translation few Serbian scholars cited references only from the language of their major expertise.

There have been examples of innovative contributions appearing concomitantly with scholarly work abroad and independently of it. In 1984, the editorial board of *Mostovi* launched two new regular sections, *Iz prevodilačke radionice [From the translator's workshop]* and *Razgovor u redakciji [Conversations in the editorial office]*. While the first was devoted to the latest issues in literary translation, the second was reserved for the discussions about theoretical topics. One session of the “Conversations” was devoted to the discussion of what constitutes the field of the study of translation. It was pivoted around Ranko Bugarski's Map of the Science of Translation, which he charted in 1981 (Bugarski 1981a/b) (Figure 1). The question of what constitutes translation theory was also one of the questions the ALTY proposed in the general program of the activities assigned for the so-called *Yugoslav Section for Theory, History and Criticism of Translation* (*Mostovi* 14 (55), 176). The programmatic activities of this section included proposals for further research, conference topics, defining the scope and limits of the field of translation

9 This is a selection of foreign authors cited in Sibinović 1983 (Catford 1965; Newmark 1981; Nida 1964, Nida & Taber 1969; Steiner 1975; Mounin 1976; Meschonnic 1973; Koller 1983; Reiss 1971; Wilss 1977; Barkhudarov 1975; Komissarov 1973), Bugarski 1981a (Barkhudarov 1975; Catford 1965; Fjodorov 1958; Koller 1979; Ljudaskanov 1969; Mounin 1963; Nida 1964; Nida & Taber 1969; Steiner 1975; Wilss 1977) and Hlebec 1989 (all of the above).

theory and its methodology, development of terminologies, writing a survey of contemporary Yugoslav translatology¹⁰, and many others (*Mostovi* 14 (55), 172–177).

Bugarški's map (1981) is one example of an innovative contribution appearing simultaneously with the events in Western translation theory, considering that Holmes' map of Translation Studies (1972, 1987, 1988) remained generally unavailable until 1988, when it was published by Rodopi (cf. Snell-Hornby 2006, 41; Toury 1995, 7–8).

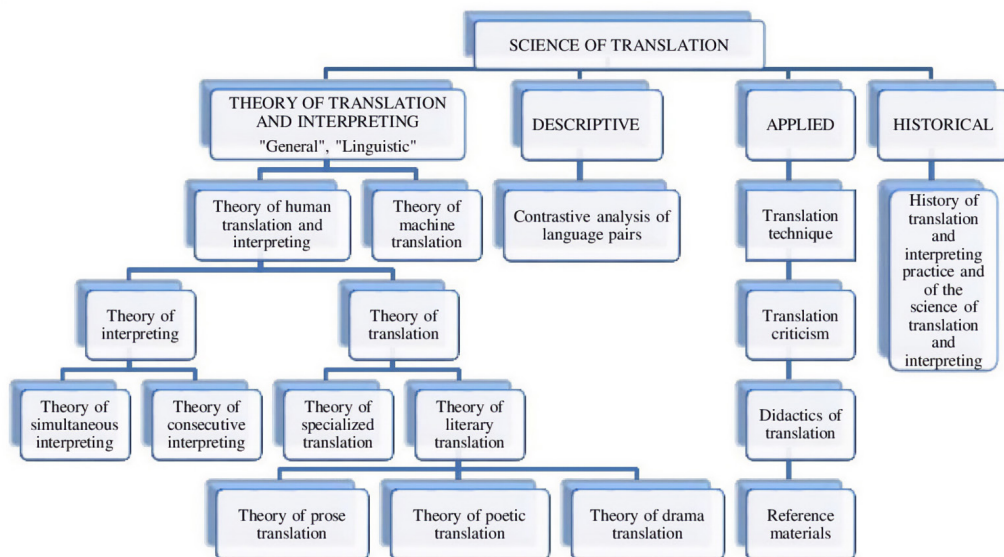


Figure 1. Bugarški's Map of the Science of Translation (Translated from Bugarški 1986, 143).

Bugarški here labels the discipline the 'science of translation', but *traductology*, *translatology* and *translation theory* were also in circulation at the time: the scope and nature of the field were up for debate. This can be seen, for example, in the "Conversations" from 1989, which involved some of the most prominent local translation theorists of the time (Ivir from Croatia, and Bugarški, Ignjačević, Janićijević, Sibinović, Rajić, Stojnić, Hlebec from Serbia) and representatives of the translator associations (Z. Jovanović, Janićijević). Bugarški's map was one of the two models discussed, with the other by Sibinović, who saw the field as consisting of the theory, history and criticism of translation. When compared to Holmes' map, it is noticeable that in Bugarški's mapping the history of translation occupies a special branch, which is missing from

10 The term *translatology* here follows the terminological choice in the cited text (*translatologija*).

the structural representations of the field of translation studies in the ‘West’ (Pym 1998, 1). Translation history has been one of the three foci of the journal *Mostovi* from the beginning, as well as in book-length publications (Sibinović 1979; Babić 1985).

In relation to methodological questions, moving toward the 1990s several authors advocated for an integrated approach, understood as a combination of linguistic, literary, cultural, and any other relevant analyses (Bugarski 1989, 9; Rajić 1989, 23; Hlebec 1989, 66; Marojević 1988, 9). Another branch in both maps was translation criticism: analyses of published translations, studied as exemplary models, or analyses of errors or in search of the general translator’s strategy, were present in almost all publications throughout the 1980s.

5. The role of the state and the ideological underpinning

Discussing the position of translation theory in Soviet Russia, Dmitrienko notes that there was a special reason for the promotion of translation – that it helped replace a nationalist identity with a cosmopolitan one and diminish the threat of nationalist movements, which “would jeopardize the creation and further development of a unified Socialist state” (Dmitrienko 2019, 210). In the Yugoslav context, translation was often seen as a means toward achieving a harmonious society of different nationalities and religions, as can be confirmed by several examples.

In the foreword to the proceedings of the *Fourth Belgrade Meeting of Translators* (BEPS in 1978), translation is described as “an ever more important cultural activity for the development of the *unity* of the (Yugoslav) unique social system and *equality* of all of its peoples” (Spasić 1980, 7, our emphasis). Similarly, in the proceedings of the third Novi Sad conference *Translational Connections* (Prevodilačke Spone, 1983), translation is “a means to bring to life the *policy of equality* in a multicultural society” (Babić 1983, 5, our emphasis; cf. also Babić 1984, 203). Babić also states that the Novi Sad conferences were a “joint conscious effort to realize clearly formulated politics of our society to achieve unity, which is dependent on translation and knowing one another” (Babić 1983, 5).

A confirmation that promoting mutual understanding between different ethnic groups in Yugoslavia was more than just a humanistic idea of a few individuals can also be seen in *Mostovi* from 1983. This number included the text of the already mentioned *Agreement* (*Mostovi* 14 (55), 172–177) and the list of events for 1983, which stated where the translation conferences were going to take place during the year and which topics would be discussed. Interestingly, one of the topics envisaged for the conferences in Novi Sad was “*propaganda* of the literatures of the nations and national

minorities¹¹ of Yugoslavia” (*Mostovi* 14(55), 176). The choice of word, *propaganda*, indicates that there was more than just literary value that recommended the choice of literary works.

The state was also very interested in the way self-management socialism was presented to the world, so the terminological work in this area came as a result of the conferences organized under the auspices the Socialist Alliance of the Working People of Yugoslavia (Socijalistički savez radnog naroda Jugoslavije) in 1977. The terminological work in the field of self-management was organized so that “the essence of the socio-political system of the country with all its specific features could be adequately and correctly presented to the foreign public” (Z. Jovanović 1986, 92). Translator associations from all republics participated in this conference, which resulted in 1,000 terms translated into English, German, Russian, French, Italian, Arabian, Spanish and the languages of the peoples of Yugoslavia (Z. Jovanović 1986).

The state had its interests in promoting translation activity, which it did, until 1987, when the unprecedented financial and political crisis¹² expressed itself, among other things, in the withdrawal of financial support for separate translation programs, and consequently the related publications (*Prevodilac* 7 (4), 66, 73; Babić 1989, 140). This change was soon reflected in the significantly reduced number of publications on translation in Serbia, which remains low to this day.

6. Conclusion

The motivation for translation related activities and the development of the discourse on translation in Serbia from 1960 until 1990 seems to have come from a variety of sources: the state and its needs for economic development and geopolitical positioning, the promotion of cosmopolitan ideology to the detriment of conflicting nationalisms, the translator associations’ need for highly skilled membership and the translators’ own interest in the nature of the phenomenon of translation.

Due to space limitations, this overview could present only a fraction of the dialogues and texts that were published in *Mostovi* and *Prevodilac* between 1960 and 1990, and only the most prominent publications. The topics related to translation as a profession have been completely omitted, mostly because they were not reflected in the scholarly publications and because one of the goals of our analysis was to discover relations

11 In Yugoslav political terminology, nations were Serbian, Croatian, Slovenian, Montenegrin, Macedonian, Muslim and Yugoslav, and national minorities were Albanian, Hungarian, Slovak, Ruthenian, Romanian and other.

12 “By 1987, inflation was 150 percent per annum.” (Liotta 2001).

between the rich and diverse translation activities during this period and the developing discourse on translation in Serbia. The wealth of data contained in the portraits of translators, the descriptions of working conditions and translation processes in the industry, and institutions that had large teams of in-house translators, which is available in these periodicals, would therefore still need to be analysed. Moreover, since Serbia was only one of the six republics, this overview gives only a part of the picture which could be uncovered by further research elsewhere in former Yugoslavia.

This analysis is based on the specific statements in the consulted publications, and when comparing the goals stated in conference proceedings by the various actors on the translation scene with the ensuing scholarly publications and the introduction of translator programs at universities, it becomes apparent that they were related. In other words, the most important discussions and recommendations that were initiated by the practitioners were translated into new policies and changed practices. The two most striking examples were in the areas of T&I education and the work on terminology, where such developments included the introduction of T&I training programs and new terminological publications. The initiatives of the translator associations show that they were highly interested in research into the work of distinguished translators (which was reflected in translation criticism), in establishing examples of best practice in all types of translation and interpreting (domestically and abroad), and in a wide range of other topics. It is also noticeable that the growth of translator associations parallels a growing number of publications on translation: while all the major publications from the 1960s have been presented in this overview, the 1970s and 1980s required making a considerable selection of what to present.

Koskinen believes that Public TS needs to identify and create relevant publics by engaging them in dialogue, and she finds such a public in the translation-related professions (2010, 24). The nature of scholarly work today leaves little space for publications that are not considered scientific, but as Koskinen has pointed out, in the today's climate of general marketization of higher education, translation scholars might want to consider "to include more dialogic and engaged forms" of communicating with the relevant publics (2020, 23). Understanding the relation between engaging translator associations and the creation of theoretical discourse on translation in the past might help us reinstate some of these mechanisms of cooperation today, in the neoliberal climate in which the humanities may need a more visible pragmatic outlet in order to survive (cf. Koskinen 2010, 15). Today such initiatives may not come from translator associations, but from social networks of translators on the internet – and it might be a good idea to respond to them.

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