

Session Plan: Debating Schleiermacher

Learning outcomes

Theoretical: 4

Stage (I, II, III)

The stage depends on students' familiarity with Schleiermacher's text. If it has been discussed on other courses, this can be stage I or II, but if not, then III.

Preparation needed

Lecture on Schleiermacher on a previous meeting of the class may be advisory if the students are not already familiar with the text and its role in the history of translation theory.

If the teacher is not familiar with using debate as a pedagogical tool, accessible tips can be found e.g. at <http://busyteacher.org/7245-conducting-class-debate-essential-tips.html>.

Home assignments:

Reading Friedrich Schleiermacher (1813), *Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens*. German original is available at:

<http://users.unimi.it/dililefi/costazza/programmi/2006-07/Schleiermacher.pdf> In English e.g. in André Lefevere (ed & trans) (1977) *Translating Literature: The German Tradition from Luther to Rosenzweig*. Rodopi (the essay exists in numerous translations into several languages).

Preparation for a debate pro **and** contra foreignising and domesticating methods in contemporary translation practice. Because of the distance in time, the task will require the students to think outside the essay text, linking the points raised there to the contemporary scene. The bibliography (below) can be given to students in advance to make preparation easier, and the students can be encouraged to run their own internet searches.

Groups

Two teams of 3; others participate as viewers and assessors. Everyone prepares for the debate, and participants and the views they are asked to defend are drawn. Rotating team is also a option: the class is divided into two, and each team brings in new debaters until everyone has participated.

Time (total suggested time)

60-90 minutes

Background for lecturer

German Romanticism is often considered as a source of many modern views on translation strategies (see e.g. Snell-Hornby 2006). The essay by Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens* (1813) enjoys a status of a key text in the history of translation theory. In the essay Schleiermacher brings together numerous ideas on translation developed by him and others, and he posits that in crossing the cultural divide translators have to choose between two opposing strategies, either leaving the author in

peace and taking the reader to him (the foreignizing method) or leaving the reader in peace and making the author travel (the domesticating method). Schleiermacher makes it clear that he favors the former.

Schleiermacher's dichotomy has been critically discussed by many translation scholars. One common misperception is to assume Lawrence Venuti's approach to be identical with it. If one wants to prepare a lecture on the legacy of Schleiermacher in Translation Studies (or assign an essay on the topic), there are, in addition to Venuti's many publications (e.g., 1995, 1998, 2013), a number of excellent sources, e.g.:

Berman, Antoine (1995) *L'Épreuve de l'étranger. Culture et traduction dans l'Allemagne romantique. Herder, Goethe, Schlegel, Novalis, Humboldt, Schleiermacher, Hölderlin.* Gallimard.

Paloposki, Outi (2012) Domestication and Foreignization, *Handbook of Translation Studies* Vol 2. Benjamins.

Pym, Anthony (2012) *On Translator Ethics.* Benjamins, Ch. 1 (on Blendlinge see also: <http://usuaris.tinet.cat/apym/on-line/intercultures/blendlinge.pdf>)

Snell-Hornby, Mary (2006) *The Turns of Translation Studies,* Benjamins.

Activities

1. Lead-in: brief summary of Schleiermacher's main arguments and his historical context, teacher-led, time: 5 -15 minutes

2. Debate, time: 45 minutes

Two teams argue for either domesticating or foreignizing strategies. The aim is to bring in as many view points as possible, rather than just winning the argument. The audience can count points for both new supporting arguments and effective counter-arguments and/or vote for winner. It is also possible to turn the tables mid-way, making the teams defend the argument they just opposed.

3. Follow-up, time 15-30 minutes

Either as a teacher-led lecture or as a group discussion: Pym's rereading of Schleiermacher, focusing on the concept of *Blendlinge* and on the interculturality of translators' profession (see ref. above).

Adaptations for an integrated approach

This material is well suited for a translation theory course as such. Alternatively, a more individualized task is to ask the students to write an essay based on Schleiermacher's text and its readings in Translation Studies (see: assessment materials for more details).