

انکشاف مبانی معرفتی مطالعات تاریخی ترجمه^۱

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چکیده

انباشت دانش در زمینه تاریخ/تاریخ‌نگاری ترجمه منجر به شکل‌گیری یک حوزه مطالعاتی متمایز و روبه‌رشد شده که می‌توان از آن با عنوان «مطالعات تاریخی ترجمه» یاد کرد. این حوزه جدید از حیث مبانی معرفتی نیازمند بررسی و تأمل معرفت‌شناختی است. مقاله حاضر می‌کوشد با نظر به حیطه موضوعی، اهمیت یا غایت و مسئله بینارشتگی، به‌عنوان سه معیار قوام‌بخش رشته‌های دانشگاهی، مبانی معرفتی مطالعات تاریخی ترجمه را شناسایی و بررسی نماید. در این راستا، ابتدا آثار و ادبیات مرتبط با نظر به سه معیار فوق و در قالب رویکرد مرور سریع مورد بررسی قرار گرفت. سپس، مجموعه‌ای از پیشنهادات و ادعاهای نظری درباره هر یک از معیارهای فوق استخراج شد که در جهت طرح مبانی معرفتی به کار گرفته شد. درباره حیطه موضوعی، هفت مقوله اصلی و چندین مقوله فرعی شناسایی شد. در مبحث اهمیت و غایت، مطالعات تاریخی ترجمه در ارتباط با جنبه‌های نهادی، نظری، عملی، آموزشی و حرفه‌ای ترجمه، و همچنین حوزه‌های غیرترجمه‌ای مانند فرهنگ و تاریخ سودمند تشخیص داده شد. مسئله بینارشتگی نیز با توجه به سه وجه مخاطب، گفتمان و روش بررسی گردید. این سه وجه به پژوهش‌های تاریخی جهت داده و این تحقیقات را به دو مسیر متفاوت ولی مکمل رهنمون می‌سازند که عبارتند از ترجمه در تاریخ و تاریخ ترجمه. در نهایت، نتایج و یافته‌های پژوهش در قالب پیشنهادی اولیه برای مبانی معرفتی مطالعات تاریخی ترجمه مطرح شد که خود می‌تواند منجر به تقویت و توسعه بیشتر این حوزه از دانش به‌عنوان یکی از زیرشاخه‌های مطالعات ترجمه شود.

واژه‌های راهنما: اهمیت، بینارشتگی، تاریخ ترجمه، تاریخ‌نگاری، معرفت‌شناسی، موضوع

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Unveiling the Epistemic Foundations of Historical Translation Studies¹

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Abstract

The accumulation of knowledge on translation history/historiography has given rise to a distinct and burgeoning area of study known as historical translation studies (HTS), which necessitates an epistemological analysis. With this in mind, the present article aimed to identify the epistemic foundations of HTS, with a focus on three key criteria that are constitutive of academic fields: subject matter, relevance and aims, and interdisciplinarity. To achieve the objective, the research conducted a rapid review of the epistemic writings on translation historiography, thematically scrutinizing the relevant works through the prism of the aforementioned criteria. The analysis led to the identification and synthesis of a set of theoretical proposals and claims regarding each criterion, which in turn helped delineate the epistemic foundations of HTS. Regarding subject matter, seven principles of categorization were identified along with the corresponding subcategories. Turning attention to relevance and aims, it became clear that HTS substantially contributes to institutional, theoretical, practical, pedagogical, and professional aspects of translation, as well as non-translation domains such as culture and history. The question of interdisciplinarity was also addressed, with three aspects of audience, discourse, and method orienting historical research into two different, though complementary, directions: translation in history and history of translation. The results and findings of the study were presented as a tentative proposal for the epistemic foundations of HTS, which could lead to the further development of this field of knowledge as a subdiscipline of translation studies.

Keywords: Epistemology, translation history, historiography, subject matter, relevance, interdisciplinarity

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1. Introduction

As academic fields evolve, they often generate subfields with specific epistemological characteristics. This has implications for scholars and practitioners, necessitating a reflection on epistemological ramifications stemming from bifurcation and diversification. Translation studies (TS) is now recognized as an independent discipline, but its epistemological status remains debated with the debate extending to its subfields such as historical translation studies. The term *historical translation studies* (HTS) is used here to refer to the academic field of study that encompasses research on translation history and historiography. As noted by D'hulst (2010), there is an increasing need for historical research to have an independent position, preferably within TS, or if necessary outside it. This call requires epistemological analysis of HTS, which has not been investigated seriously in TS. The epistemological analysis and its findings can solidify the academic status of HTS and shed light on its identity in the disciplinary landscape. In this line, the present research aims to identify and analyze the epistemic characteristics of HTS through a rapid review of epistemic writings on translation history and historiography with an eye to the three epistemic criteria: subject matter, relevance and aims, and interdisciplinarity. The research question guiding this investigation is: What are the epistemic characteristics of HTS in terms of subject matter, relevance and aims, and interdisciplinarity?

2. Review of the Related Literature

The analysis of academic fields and disciplines can be approached from various perspectives, including their underlying worldviews and more visible dimensions of professionalism and social relations (Becher & Trowler, 2001), prevailing cognitive styles (Donald, 2002), and their definitions of disciplinarity (Krishnan, 2009), to name but a few.

Given previous attempts, it is reasonable to regard HTS as a viable candidate for epistemological analysis. The topic has been sporadically addressed in various reference works and entries (e.g., Rundle, 2020; St. André, 2009; Woodsworth, 1998), which have attempted to outline some of the epistemological aspects of the field. However, the first focused article on the topic was Apak's (2003), which provided a critical review of the monographs, reference entries, and journal articles about translation history in an

attempt to discuss their epistemological viewpoints. Apak's article dates back to the time when the field was still at its embryonic stage with only limited literature.

More recently, Ordóñez-López (2020) has provided a more refined review of writings on translation history and historiography. The study could not capture the wide breadth of literature produced in the recent decades. There is thus a need to adopt a more integrative perspective. While these studies are limited and do not qualify as a systematic treatment of the topic, Ordóñez-López's article stands out due to its use of epistemic criteria as the acid test for epistemological analysis. This aspect sets the groundwork for the analytical framework employed in the current study which tries to include more sources and focus on distinct epistemic criteria to yield deeper insight on the topic.

3. Analytical Framework

There are different sets of criteria appropriate for epistemological analysis of academic fields. For example, Dressel and Marcus (as cited in Lattuca, 2002) propose five components necessary for a legitimate discipline: substantive (assumptions, variables, concepts, principles, etc.), linguistic (the language used to organize scholarly activities), syntactical (organizing processes of the discipline), value (what is worth study and how), and conjunctive (relations to other disciplines). The five components have been echoed to varying degrees in other studies. For instance, Krishnan (2009) identifies six characteristics, including the object of inquiry, body of specialist knowledge, theories and concepts, technical terminology, specific research methods, and institutional status. Concerned with TS, Mayoral-Asensio (as cited in Ordóñez-López, 2020) enumerates various conditions: defining the object of inquiry, standardizing concepts and terminologies, constructing explanatory models, determining appropriate observations and descriptions, and developing proper research protocols.

Based on the synthesis of various criteria discussed above, an inclusive list of epistemic criteria was prepared and used to conduct the epistemological analysis. The list consists of six epistemic criteria:

- Subject matter: What does the field study?

- Relevance and aims: What is the significance of studying the subject matter? How can it contribute to theoretical and practical areas?
- Type of data: What are appropriate kinds of data and materials for analysis?
- Scholarly discourse: What are the common concepts and terminologies used in intra- and interdisciplinary knowledge domains?
- Approaches: What are the procedures, methodologies, and methods for analyzing and interpreting data and results?
- Interdisciplinarity: How does the field relate to other scholarly areas? How is this relationship shaped epistemologically?

The six criteria offer a robust framework for examining the epistemic underpinnings of scholarly disciplines. However, due to space limitations, this research specifically concentrated on subject matter, relevance and aims, and interdisciplinarity. It is important to note that these three criteria are fundamental as they substantially influence the other epistemic criteria.

4. Methodology

As an epistemological analysis of HTS, the present research adopted a rapid review approach to analyze the epistemic literature on translation historiography. Generally, “a rapid review is a type of knowledge synthesis in which components of the systematic review process are simplified or omitted to produce information in a short period of time” (Tricco et al., 2015, p. 2). A rapid review protocol relies on a set of acceleration strategies, including fewer sources, specific inclusion criteria, a single narrow question, limited stakeholder involvement, restricted literature search, a limited type of evidence, simplified coding, and simplified and more practical synthesis methods (Wollscheid & Tripney, 2021). Although the rapid review approach has been developed mostly in the fields with empirical data, its applicability extends to various disciplines and to non-empirical data, such as theoretical literature and conceptual frameworks.

To conduct a rapid review of the epistemic literature in HTS, the present study followed five steps: literature search, selection of studies, thematic analysis, abstraction, and synthesis. First, a literature search was conducted in three databases: Translation

Studies Bibliography (TSB),⁴ Bibliography of Interpreting and Translation (BITRA),⁵ and Taylor and Francis.⁶ The keywords *translation history*, *history of translation*, *translation historiography*, and *historiography of translation* were used as search terms in the fields of TITLE and ABSTRACT to retrieve English-language journal articles, book chapters, monographs, and reference entries related to translation history published until 2022. Additionally, a thorough Google search was performed to include any literature not covered by the databases. After the literature search, the researcher quickly reviewed and filtered the results to include only epistemic-oriented literature, excluding case studies and historical researches of translation and translators. The final collection of sources underwent an extensive thematic analysis, which involved carefully reviewing each source to identify its key statements and claims related to three epistemic criteria: subject matter, relevance and aims, and interdisciplinarity. The thematic analysis was followed by the abstraction process in which the statements and claims were systematically recorded and coded to identify conceptual themes and theoretical currents. Finally, a synthetic aggregation was conducted, organizing the identified statements and claims into thematic categories through successive stages of reviewing, refining, and naming. The data analysis and results are provided below in the form of a narrative which captures the epistemic contours of HTS.

5. Data Analysis

The analysis and synthesis of the data is presented in this section. The focus is on three epistemic criteria: subject matter, relevance and aims, and interdisciplinarity.

5.1. Subject Matter

Every academic field has a specific area of study that gives it an epistemic identity. In the case of HTS, the central element of its subject matter is the phenomenon of translation and interpreting, particularly in relation to historical factors. However, this focus has led to further subdivisions, each with its own unique logic or principle of categorization. The thematic analysis of the literature led to the identification of several

4. <https://benjamins.com/online/tsb/>

5. <https://dti.ua.es/en/bitra/introduction.html>

6. <https://tandfonline.com>

areas of study which were synthesized and amalgamated under seven principles of categorization, along with the relevant subcategories.

5.1.1. Medium

The primary principle of categorization is the *medium* through which translation is performed and understood. It is essential to differentiate between the history of written translation, interpreting, and audiovisual translation. So far, historical research has focused on written translation, but recent literature acknowledges interpreting (Guo, 2020) and audiovisual translation (Keating & O'Sullivan, 2022) as important but neglected topics in HTS.

5.1.2. Domain of Analysis

The second principle of categorization is *domain of analysis*. Woodsworth (1996; 1998) divided the field into history of translation practice, of translation theory, and of practice *plus* theory. Pym (1998) added a fourth dimension, namely translation as theorizing. Another relevant subcategory is the history of translation studies as a discipline, which is considered an important but underappreciated area of inquiry (D'hulst, 2022).

5.1.3. Research Orientation

There have been several attempts at organizing the field according to *research orientation*. Pym distinguishes between three areas: "translation archeology," "historical criticism," and "explanation" (1998, p. 5)—each of which presupposes a distinct subject matter aligned with the larger research orientation. Also guided by *research orientation*, Sales (2019, p. 32) distinguishes between three subcategories, namely "translation *in* history, *of* history, and *as* history" (emphasis in original).

5.1.4. Analytical Issue

The subject matter can also be organized according to the *analytical issue* that is studied vis-à-vis translation. Long (2007) proposes several historical issues that might be of interest. They include language issues, literary issues, religious and philosophical issues, scientific interchange, and exploration and conquest; and one might add, gender issues, political issues, and sociocultural issues.

5.1.5. Translation Workflow

Translation workflow is another larger category used to categorize subject matter in HTS. It refers to the multi-stage process of translation, which can be divided into three general stages: pre-translation, translation, and post-translation. Each stage is considered a distinct area of analysis with unique foci. The pre-translation stage focuses on factors that shape the conditions for translation, including linguistic, cultural, social, political, and economic determinants or constraints. The translation stage involves the actual process of writing, editing, and rendering, as well as workplace conditions such as the use of materials, collaboration, communication, and technologies. The post-translation stage involves the final production, printing, publication, and circulation of translations, as well as their impact on the target culture and society. The relevant issues are technologies of production and material culture (O'Sullivan, 2012); reception of translations (Tahir-Gürçağlar, 2013); circulation, canonization, and uses of translations (Wakabayashi, 2013); and the impact of translations.

5.1.6. Object of Analysis

HTS is concerned with analyzing a variety of objects, including people, texts, mechanisms, policies, etc. It is conceivable to identify translation products, translation process, sociocultural context, and agents as objects of analysis in HTS (see Wakabayashi, 2013). Therefore, categorizing subject matter according to *object of analysis* can yield four dominant subcategories of product, process, context, and agents. Translation products encompass a wide range of entities, such as proper translations, pseudo-originals (Wakabayashi, 2013), pseudo-translations and self-translations (Santoyo, 2006), as well as diverse and somehow unconventional genres. The latter can include non-literary texts (Tahir-Gürçağlar, 2013) or atypical formats such as pamphlets (O'Sullivan, 2012). Translation process encompasses a broad range of steps and decisions throughout the entire lifecycle of a translation project, including planning, contracting, producing, editing, disseminating, etc. each of which involves its own unique process. Concerning agents of translation, it is essential to consider not only translators and interpreters, but also readers, clients, publishers, collaborators, commissioners, and others. While it is possible to deal with multiple objects of analysis in a single research project, the increasing specialization in HTS necessitates the distinction between them.

5.1.7. Spatial Scale

Spatial scale represents the last principle of categorization, reflecting the current interest in spatially-conceptualized approaches within the humanities and TS. The spatial scale can be divided into local, national, regional, and global domains. It is reasonable to assign a distinct epistemic identity to each scale as they demand specific analytical foci and offer unique perspectives on the study of translation phenomena. The spatial categorization is a response for the call to study history of translation beyond European frameworks and national histories by focusing on non-Western traditions, smaller languages or cultures, border areas, and civilizational units (Santoyo, 2006; Tahir-Gürçağlar, 2013; Vega & Pulido, 2013). Moreover, the differentiation of spatial scale is needed given the recent attention to the geographically inspired methodologies such as *histoire croisée* or transnational history in TS (Wakabayashi, 2018).

5.2. Relevance and Aims

The relevance/aim is a fundamental criterion shaping the identity and legitimacy of any field of inquiry, including HTS. This criterion explains the rationale behind studying a particular subject matter by showing what theoretical contributions and practical applications it may have. Regarding HTS, the relevance and aim can be said to be multifaceted (D'hulst, 2001; Pérez-Blázquez, 2013).

Prominent scholars in the field have emphasized the importance of translation history for the growth and development of the emerging discipline of TS (e.g., Bandia, 2014; D'hulst, 1994, as cited in Woodsworth, 1996, p. 12). Not only is translation history seen as an important factor in the institutionalization of TS, but also it can significantly contribute to the development of translation theory. As witnessed in the formative years of TS, studying translation history enables scholars to gain a deeper understanding of the underlying mechanisms of translation, which, in turn, allow them to develop, articulate, and formalize different theories of translation. The role of translation history in theorization of translation is highlighted by St. André (2020) and Paloposki (2013); the latter refers to “[translation] history as generator of ideas” (p. 218). Therefore, HTS is relevant to both institutionalization of TS and translation theory.

Additionally, translation history is believed to contribute not only to our understanding of translation phenomenon but also to our knowledge of a wide range of issues associated with it (D'hulst, 2010). Although understanding translation theory and practice seems to be an obvious aim of HTS, its potential contribution to the study of *other* associated phenomena, not translation *per se*, is a novel approach that Paloposki (2013, p. 217) terms as "translations as data for other disciplines." This *other* can refer to the general field of history, the areas of culture, language, and literature in general (Long, 2007), or cultural history (Salama-Carr, 2019) and intercultural studies (Pym, 1998) in particular. Accordingly, HTS plays a pivotal role in enhancing knowledge about history overall and offering valuable perspectives on social sciences (Fernández-Sánchez, 2016). This is why Vega and Pulido (2013) hope that historical research on translation can help scholars in most areas of humanities understand their fields better, which may lead to a greater appreciation for the role of the translator and their economic and professional status.

The final point in Vega and Pulido's aforementioned statement highlights a more practical aspect of translation history, wherein it is seen as a contributing factor to the professionalization of translation. This practical perspective is also emphasized by Paloposki (2013, p. 217), who recognizes the significance of translation history in promoting "the figure of the translator." Another practical area that benefits from HTS is translation pedagogy. In this respect, historical knowledge can be considered a component of translational sub-competence (Vega & Pulido, 2013), as it increases students' awareness of the historicity of translation and equips them with a deeper understanding of the translator's role and craft. This leads us to the significance of HTS in translation practice. In fact, the insights gained through historical cases can enhance the translator's ability to develop strategies and solve translation problems (D'hulst, 2001; Long, 2007).

In summary, HTS can make significant contributions to various aspects of translation, be they institutional, theoretical, practical, pedagogical, and professional, as well as non-translation domains such as culture and history.

5.3. Interdisciplinarity

In the current academic landscape, it is important for fields of study to establish connections with other fields and take a more integrated approach towards studying a specific subject matter. Interdisciplinarity is a crucial epistemic component of scholarly fields. It generally refers to collaborations between different fields to address challenges that cannot be tackled by a single discipline. The focus is on epistemological, methodological, and methodical issues, emphasizing the importance of developing shared frameworks for interdisciplinary research that facilitate collaboration and enable researchers to work across disciplinary boundaries.

TS has become increasingly intertwined with various disciplines within humanities and social sciences, becoming an interdiscipline while maintaining its institutional autonomy. This is also true for subfields within TS, such as HTS. Interdisciplinary research in translation history has gained momentum due to its close connection with a wide range of fields associated with historical studies.

The relationship between TS and history is complex as scholars from each discipline may be resistant to acknowledging the value of the other (Foz, 2006). However, Bandia (2006) and Malena (2011) argue that translation historians should draw on the achievements of the field of history. Delabastita (2012), while acknowledging the tension between history and TS, suggests that this tension can be beneficial rather than harmful, and underscores the importance of maintaining an ongoing dialogue between the two disciplines. A more nuanced perspective focuses on the potential contribution HTS can make to other disciplines related to historical studies. This argument raises the question of whether and under what conditions translation can serve as a window into objects of study in adjacent fields. A serious proposal comes from Rundle (see below), who has advocated a specific interdisciplinary line between translation history and historical studies.

Rundle (2011; 2012) presents a compelling argument about how translation history can contribute to the field of history. He actually begins by arguing over the question: "is translation the object of our research, or is it the lens through which we research our historical object?" (Rundle, 2011, p. 33). The former view is called "history of translation," and the latter is referred to as "translation in history" (p. 33). Rundle

contends that it is not possible to pursue both lines of research simultaneously because they differ at the fundamental epistemological level. Rundle's whole argument and his individual preference for *translation in history* involve considerations of three important factors, namely audience, discourse and method.

First, the intended audience of research is crucial in this context. Rundle (2011, p. 34) raises an important question: "Should translation historians be branching out and addressing scholars outside of Translation Studies who share the same historical interest?" His rhetorical query leads to the following conclusion: historians who work within the TS framework tend to communicate exclusively with other TS scholars, thereby excluding researchers from other fields who are equally interested in the historical analysis of a given subject (Rundle, 2011). Similarly, Paloposki (2013) believes that any discussion on interdisciplinarity will involve the consideration of audience, with audience covering a variety of stakeholders, such as policymakers, consumers of translations, reading groups, etc. that might find historical research worthy of attention.

Second, discourse and language of the research plays a determining role in interdisciplinary relations. A crucial strategy to expand the audience of research is through the language and discourse employed in formalizing, publishing, and disseminating the research. Hence, the scholarly discourse represents the second constitutive factor of Rundle's argument. Each field employs a unique language to analyze, interpret, and report research data and findings. If researchers in HTS strive to reach a wider audience within historical fields, they must step out of their comfort zone and adopt the discourse prevalent in those fields. Therefore, HTS scholars must frame their research in an appropriate discourse that connects with the interests and concerns of a broader audience, whether they are from the academic community beyond TS or non-academic readers of research reports. By doing so, they can demonstrate the relevance and significance of their work to a wider spectrum of scholars and lay readers. It is worth noting that *scholarly discourse* serves as a distinct epistemic criterion, as previously identified. A separate analysis of this criterion can provide deeper insights into the crucial role of discourse in its own right, as well as its relationship with the challenges of interdisciplinary research.

Third, any discussion on interdisciplinarity in general and Rundle's preferred mode of *translation in history* in particular raise significant methodological concerns. Rundle (2012) notes the fundamental distinction between the two approaches (i.e., *translation in history* and *history of translation*) can be framed as the search for the specific in historical events (historical) and the search for scientifically generalizable, descriptive, and predictive findings (scientific). He criticizes DTS as representative of the scientific approach, which, in his opinion, falls short of meeting the requirements for interdisciplinary research advocated by the idea of *translation in history*.

Therefore, the interdisciplinary nature of HTS is determined by a combination of three factors, including the intended audience of the research, the discourse employed in the analysis, and the methods and techniques used to conduct the research.

6. Results and Discussion

To conduct an epistemological analysis of HTS, the present study examined and synthesized the epistemic literature on translation historiography with an eye to the three epistemic criteria of subject matter, relevance and aims, and interdisciplinarity.

Concerning subject matter, seven principles of categorization and the relevant subcategories were identified and used to develop a thematic categorization (Figure 1).

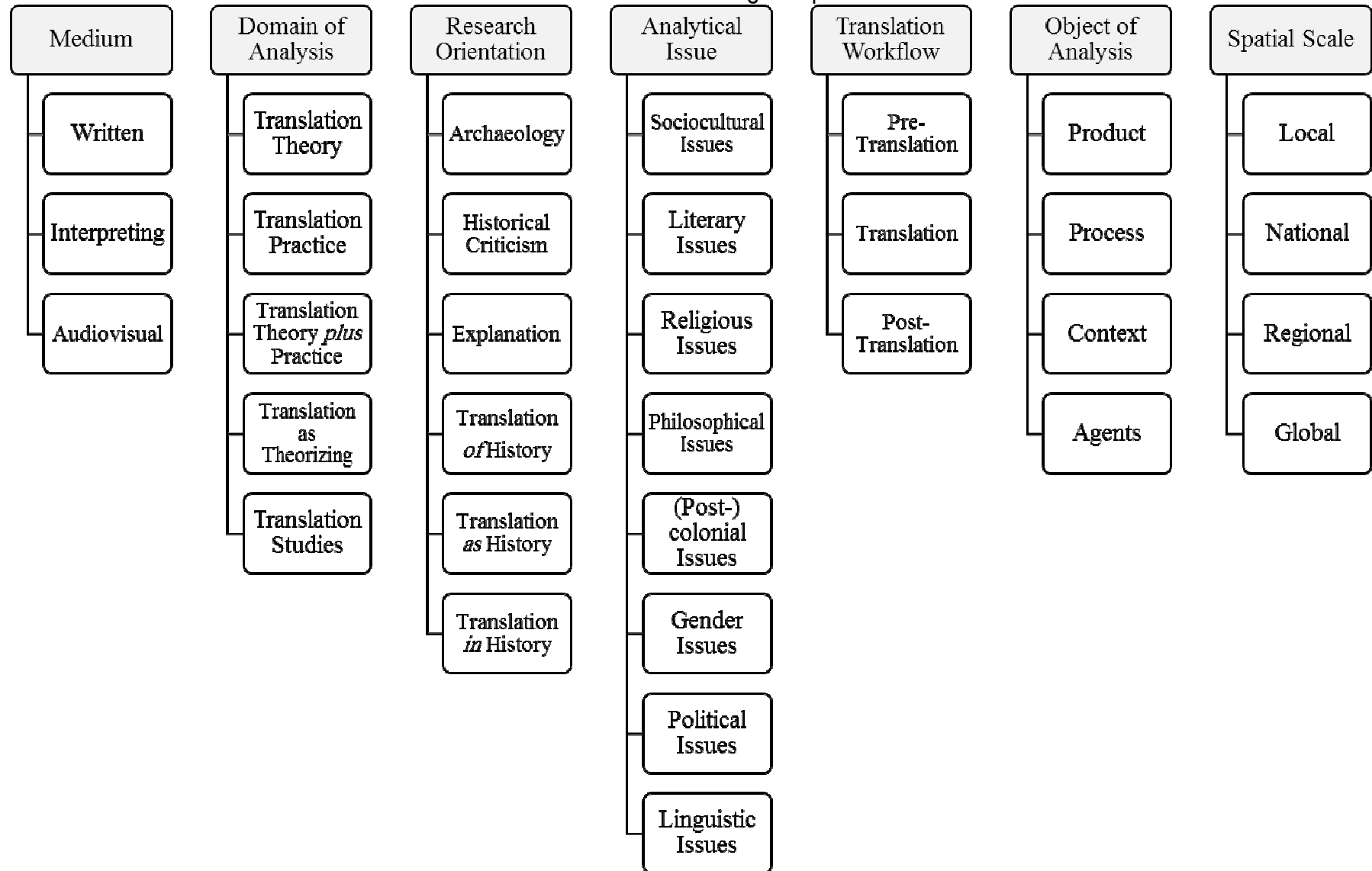


Figure 1. Thematic categorization of subject matter in HTS

Since the subject matter should reflect the dynamic nature of the field, the categorization is dynamic and subject to change and evolution as new areas of research emerge. Moreover, the proposed categorization is not exhaustive, nor are the subcategories mutually exclusive. The subject matter in HTS has several layers that overlap with one another and cover a vast array of phenomena relating to translation.

Relevance and aim is an important epistemic criterion that can provide a justification for the existence and necessity of HTS. As observed in the literature, knowledge on translation history can make extensive contributions to various theoretical and applied aspects of the field, thus paving the way for further institutionalization, promotion, and recognition of HTS as a legitimate field of inquiry. Figure 2 presents seven areas that can receive the benefits offered by HTS.

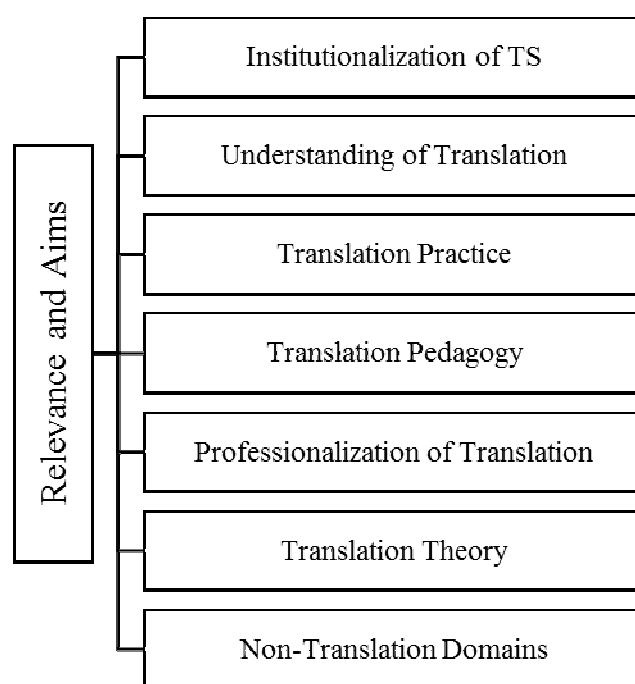


Figure 2. Relevance and aims of HTS

The relevance of HTS for a wide spectrum of stakeholders proves a justification for the existence and necessity of HTS. Interestingly, the benefits HTS can bring about for non-translation domains reflect its expansive reach and might improve the status of TS as a donator not just a borrower. Yet it leads to the thorny question of interdisciplinarity, which is discussed below.

The views on interdisciplinarity of HTS were articulated more seriously by Rundle (see above) whose standpoint sparked off ensuing discussions. The whole discussion prominently figures within the general concern over the status of TS and its relation with other fields. Regarding HTS, both Rundle's reflections and the reactions triggered afterwards seem to have emphasized three determining factors in conceptualization of interdisciplinarity of HTS. The three factors are audience, method, and scholarly discourse, which are diagrammatically shown as three aspects of the prism of interdisciplinarity (Figure 3). They actually operate as filters which shape the object of analysis and the point of focus in research on translation history, leading to two conceivable outcomes borrowed from Rundle (see above).

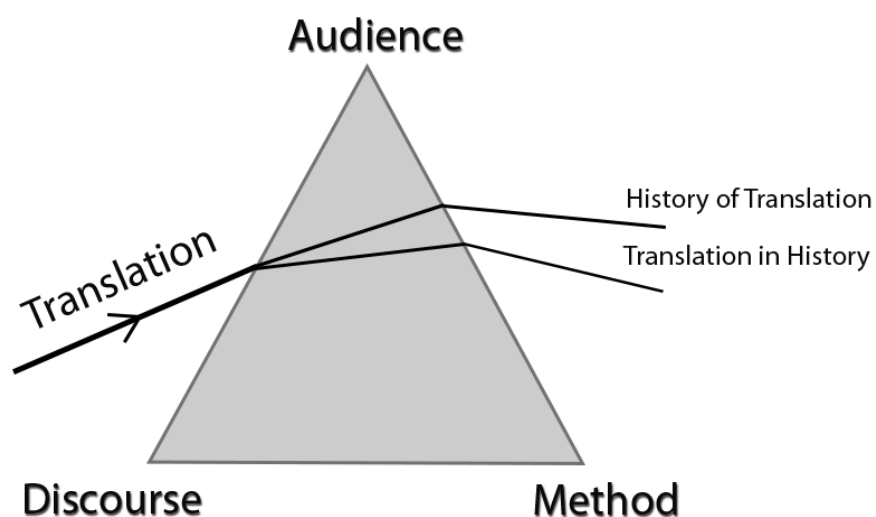


Figure 3. The prism of interdisciplinarity of HTS

As shown in Figure 3, the audience, method, and discourse can impact how we historically approach the topic of translation and any related specific area (e.g., different subcategories of subject matter). The arrangement of the three aspects can take different shapes, thus generating different conceptions of interdisciplinarity of HTS. Posing deep epistemological questions, the arrangement mostly depends on one's research agenda and academic belonging. Whatever the case, it should be noted that both history of translation and translation in history foster valuable knowledge and make contribution, in their distinctive ways, to our understanding of translation and history.

Finally, it is crucial to recognize the interdependence between the three epistemic criteria. For example, certain specialized areas of analysis may yield more effective outcomes for translation pedagogy, while others may have greater relevance for non-translation domains. Additionally, both subject matter and relevance are intertwined with interdisciplinarity. For instance, the research project aimed at contributing to non-translation domains must adopt appropriate methods and scholarly discourse to enhance its communicability to scholars and audience in the relevant field.

7. Conclusion

The epistemic literature on translation historiography was analyzed in order to see how the scholars conceptualized HTS in terms of three epistemic criteria, namely subject matter, relevance and aims, and interdisciplinarity. The results suggest that HTS can be seen as having distinctive subject matter, relevance and aims, and the interdisciplinary character within the wider scholarly community. However, the analysis also reveals divergent perspectives in the literature, resulting in a diverse set of categories, themes, and research directions. The diversity can be seen as a sign of angst among the scholars of the nascent subfield.

In any case, the epistemic characteristics of HTS qualify it as a legitimate field of inquiry within TS but with far more reach that extends to neighboring disciplines and in particular to history and historiography. These results provide an

epistemological foundation for the promotion, recognition, and development of HTS. They support the argument that HTS has gained autonomy, differentiation, and status, hence deserving recognition as a subdiscipline of TS with its own governing logic and epistemic foundations. This analysis focused on only three epistemic criteria, and further exploration of other criteria, such as approaches or types of data, could provide further insights. Additionally, investigating the interdependence between epistemic criteria and their dialectical influence on each other is another promising avenue for research.

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