1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 TRANSLATING BY FACTORS

Translating by factors—this may sound familiar and novel at the same time. Everyone knows what factors are, and everyone knows the preposition *by* in expressions such as *judging by actions*, *singing by ear*, *acting by instinct*. In all of these examples *by* precedes the means or the yardstick used to perform an action. And this is exactly what we mean when we say *translating by factors*—translating by means of factors, going by factors to perform translations.

1.1.1 Factors in Translation Studies

To make the idea of translation factors a little bit more concrete let us have a look at the way(s) translatologists have used the notion of "factor" in some of their publications.[1]

- K. Bales (1976), 'Factors Determining the Translation of American Belles-Lettres into Hungarian . . .´;
- R. de Beaugrande (1978), *Factors in a Theory of Poetic Translating*;
- M. Bowen (1980), 'Bilingualism as a Factor in the Training of Interpreters';
- B. Hlebec (1989), 'Factors and Steps in Translating';
- J. S. Holmes (1972), 'The Cross-Temporal Factor in Verse Translation';
- O. Kade (1964), 'Subjektive und objektive Faktoren im Übersetzungsprozess. Ein Beitrag zur Ermittlung objektiver Kriterien des Übersetzens als Voraussetzung für eine wissenschaftliche Lösung des Übersetzungsproblems';

- J. Skov-Larsen (1980), 'On the Establishment of Formalized Transfer Rules Based on Cotextual and Contextual Factors';
- K. Soomere (1989), 'A Statistical Analysis of Rhythm as One of the Key Factors of Adequacy of Literary Translation of Prose (from English into Estonian)';
- H. S. Straight (1975), 'Translation: Some Anthropological and Psycho-linguistic Factors';
- W. Walther (1990), 'Faktoren für die Übersetzung von Metaphern (Eng-lisch-Deutsch)';
- W. Wilss (1992), 'Was ist Übersetzungsdidaktik? Versuch einer Fakto-renanalyse.'

Even this small eclectic list of titles enables us to distinguish several kinds of factors. These are

1. factors in the training of translators and interpreters (Bowen, Wilss);
2. factors for the assessment of quality and adequacy of translation (Soo-mere, Straight[2]);
3. factors determining the translation of certain text classes (Bales, de Beau-grande, Holmes), other linguistic phenomena (Walther), or translation in general (Hlebec, Kade, Skov-Larsen).

It is only common sense to say that the very same factors determining trans-lation (3) may also be drawn upon as criteria for judging the adequacy of translation (2). And, again, the same factors are expedient to be imparted in the training of translators and interpreters (1).[3] So we can see unity in diver-sity, which actually facilitates our presentation, because for our purposes it is not ultimately necessary to distinguish among the three areas of application of translation factors.

The various factors themselves, however, do have to be distinguished for an overview—as, for instance, is done by Wilss in describing the situa-tion of the translator who

> can choose from among several more or less equally acceptable TL [target lan-guage] versions. The translator's singling out of a specific variant may depend on various factors:
>
> 1. the type of text to be translated,
> 2. the extent to which the SL [source language] text bears stylistic markings,
> 3. the intended TL audience,
> 4. the extent to which the translator can comprehend the SL text and identify himself with it,
> 5. the translator's stylistic preferences and his ability to recognize and handle stylistic registers. (1982: 105)

These, of course, are not the only translation factors existing. Sager (1989: 93 ff.) elaborates on "the considerable number of variables which affect the

translation process," including situational factors, the awareness factor, user factor, textual factor, research factor, and revision factor.

Many more factors could be enumerated. In fact, their number is so large that S. D. Ross of SUNY, Binghamton, sums up the whole situation by stating: "The complexity of translation, the number of factors involved, is enormous" (1981: 11).

Capitulate to this complexity? No translator can afford this if he or she wants to stick to that profession. As a way out we propose to make complexity transparent by systematizing translation factors.[4] This is in line with Wilss's (1988: 14) insight that "the more or less *complex* textual situation the translator is faced with consists of a bundle of *factors*, among which the translator sorts out those factors that are relevant to one's decisions in the translation process" (our translation and emphasis).

Systematizing translation factors would first involve pointing out factor dimensions and then finding out the individual factors and their effects. This is exactly what we propose to do in this book, chapter headings indicating factor dimensions. Chapters 2–4 will feature the classical semiotic dimensions of syntax, semantics, and pragmatics. In Chapter 5 we will discuss factors relating to spoken and written language. Chapter 6 will show different translation units as relevant factors. Chapter 7 will be devoted to the influence of factors that are essential elements of any translation situation. Finally, we will examine more theoretical issues such as the distinction between *translation* and *adaptation* in the light of the notion of "factor."

The idea of translation factors, giving an overview of them and setting up a system is nothing new. It was expressed as a desideratum by Senn saying:

> But some better help they would deserve indeed, the translators. . . . What experts could practically contribute would quite simply be a synopsis of *all* aspects recognized. . . . The list would have to be open-ended and continually enlarged. It could at the most be clearly arranged, possibly be fit into a system. In this way it would, after all, outline what matters for an ideal translation . . . , what *else* would *also* have to be taken into account. This would be apt to open several eyes, and a mere glimpse into the very variety of competing criteria could even easily check the dogmatically arrogant peacocking of (some of us) critics. (1986: 83; our translation; emphasis as in the original)[5]

To date there are several synopses as desired by Senn. To begin with, the very volume containing his appeal offers an answer to his quest. Snell-Hornby (1986a: 16 ff.), who is aware of the "multiperspectiveness of language and text" (p. 16; our translation), sets up a layer model of aspects relevant to translation. Within the limits of her introductory remarks, however, she cannot offer much more than an enumeration of factors. Other authors go more deeply into each translation factor. In Chapter 3 of her 1991

publication, Nord lists "the factors of source text analysis," dealing with nine *extratextual factors*,[6] nine *intratextual factors*, as well as the factor *effect* (pp. 35–140). Similarly Stolze (1992) sets up *categories of reception* (pp. 89–194), which she supplements by *categories of production* (pp. 195–264), going into a wide range of factors in each of them.[7] Both authors amply illustrate the factors referred to by means of various sample texts and renditions of various kinds. Last but not least, Wilss (1989: 133) mentions the "multifactor approach as, e.g., developed by Newmark (1981)."

Acknowledging these detailed analyses we venture to add another study in this field. Its justification is twofold: Its first speciality lies in illustrating the factor approach with reference to *one single* linguistic phenomenon—the English and German modals (see Section 1.2). The advantage of this unified perspective is obvious. Each translator is repeatedly faced with translating specific linguistic items. Focusing on a small group of items occurring frequently enables us to point out the many and multifarious factors relevant to their translation. This publication can thus be seen as a guide for translating that group of expressions.

The second speciality about this book is that the kinds of factors referred to above will be presented in their respective functions. Translating by factors does not mean taking factors into account 'as such' but with reference to their specific roles or functions. An example will make this point clear.

Indefinitely many English combinations of the form *adjective plus noun* can safely be transferred into German; such as,

blue sky	blauer Himmel
expensive book	teures Buch
beautiful picture	schönes Bild
small house	kleines Haus

In English, also the expression *medical student* may be added to the list but in German the structurally corresponding construction *medizinischer Student* is just not possible. The reason is that it would suggest that the student himself is medical. In German the rule is that for an adjective to premodify a noun it must denote a characteristic of the referent of that noun; otherwise the syntagma will be ungrammatical. So in the case of the SL expression *medical student* a semantic factor (viz., the information that "medical" is no characteristic of "student") will act or function as a blocking factor to the TL rendition **medizinischer Student*.

This example has shown that we may distinguish between two phenomena:

- kinds of factors (e.g., SL and TL semantic factors, pragmatic factors);
- functions of these factors (e.g., that of blocking renditions, giving rise to blocking factors).

Now the blocking of renditions is, of course, not the only function factors can fulfill. We want, after all, to arrive at possible and actual renditions (such as *Medizinstudent*), so there must also be something like 'enabling factors.' In fact, the factors to be presented in Chapters 2 and so forth may fulfill so many functions that it is possible to come up with a taxonomy of factor functions. To indicate what awaits the reader, here is a small glossary featuring factor functions.

1.1.2 Glossary of Factor Functions

Factor may be defined as "any of the circumstances, conditions, etc. that bring about a result; element or constituent that makes a thing what it is" (*Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language*, 1983: 656, s.v. *factor* 2).

The result brought about by translation is renditions. The factors bringing about renditions or making them what they are may therefore be referred to as *translation factors*.

So the basic function of translation factors is to bring about renditions. What is involved in detail may be indicated with reference to more specific factor functions, giving rise to corresponding classes of translation factors such as the following ones:

- *invariance factors* make an SL feature reappear in the TL rendition;
- *change factors* make an SL feature disappear or a new or additional feature appear in the TL rendition;
- *partial change factors* make an SL feature appear partially different in the TL rendition;
- *bidirectional factors* operate in both translation directions (for instance, German-English and English-German);
- *unidirectional factors* operate in only one of two translation directions;
- *blocking factors* make a specific TL rendition impossible;
- *incompatibility factors* are blocking factors due to the incompatibility of features;
- *compensation factors* compensate for the effect of blocking factors, of indeterminacy of SL features, and so on;
- *identification factors* identify SL characteristics;
- *disambiguation factors* reduce or eliminate ambiguity in SL items;
- *production factors* contribute to creating the TL version;
- *target factors* relate to the target of the translation as determined by the client;
- *optimizing factors* bring about renditions that are more adequate with respect to specific needs;
- *revision factors* revise otherwise standard translation formulas and other seeming SL-TL correspondences;

- *ellipsis* or *elliptical factors* allow for omission of (a) certain element(s);
- *divergence factors* give rise to a number of TL forms that is greater than that of the SL forms;
- *convergence factors* give rise to a number of TL forms that is smaller than that of the SL forms;
- *transposition factors* bring about transpositions (i.e., changes in word class);
- *modulation factors* bring about modulations (i.e., changes in perspective);
- *relevant factors* are those factors that are functional in a given case;
- finally, according to their 'strength,' factors may be *obligatory* or *optional*. So there are obligatory transposition factors, optional change factors, and so on.

All these functions can be fulfilled by the kinds of factors referred to before (in Section 1.1.1). This gives rise to combinations such as semantic invariance factors as well as semantic change factors, pragmatic identification factors, and so on. What this means in practice will be discussed and illustrated in later chapters. Before doing so, however, we should have a look at the linguistic area that will supply our examples: the modals.

1.2 THE MODALS FOR A CASE STUDY

The English and German modals are a field of study on which much has been published during the past two decades. As the bibliographies by Kątny (1987; 1989a; 1990a) show, however, most of the publications have focused on the modals of one of the two languages only. So in adding another contrastive or translational study of the modals there is not so much danger of repeating others, particularly if translating the modals is expressly considered in the light of a fresh approach—translating by factors.

1.2.1 Status of the Modals

If one's aim is to demonstrate the working of a great variety of factors molding renditions, it would not make much sense to choose as examples pairs of SL-TL expressions that tend to be invariable—for the simple reason that not many, if any, translation factors will be involved.

But what can be expected of words such as WILL, WOULD; SHALL, SHOULD; CAN, COULD; MAY, MIGHT, and MUST? They look so simple, they are constantly being used by everyone; so why should anyone (including translators) be particularly concerned about these *modal auxiliaries,* or *modals* for short?

"There is, perhaps, no area of English grammar that is both more impor-

tant and more difficult than the system of the modals," Palmer (1979a: v) explains, maybe surprisingly. Palmer, as the author of two books and many articles on modality, will know what he says.

Now if the system of the English modals is that intricate, what can—or even must—be expected of a translation study involving one more language! Will the English modals and the German ones—MÜSSEN, SOLLEN, KÖN-NEN, DÜRFEN, MÖGEN, and WOLLEN—not be a promising object of a translation factor analysis? We contend they will,[8] and in presenting such an analysis, we are reminded of Potter's (1974: 4) words, "Here is a chance for someone. So far as I know, no qualified linguist has yet made a competent and comprehensive investigation of English and German auxiliary verbs."

Eight months after this desideratum was published, Lodge (1974) submitted his Ph.D. thesis on exactly this topic. It was preceded by Schmid (1966), who confined his thesis to the translation of *(nicht) müssen* and *(nicht) dürfen*, however. And it was followed by a few other theses that were also restricted in scope in different ways:

- In Matthews's (1979) study, "German . . . took something of a back seat" (Matthews 1991: 11);
- Buelens (1981) is devoted to KÖNNEN, DÜRFEN, MÖGEN, and their translations into English;
- Temmerman (1981) is a contrastive study of MÜSSEN, SOLLEN, and WOLLEN and their English equivalents.

The drawback of all these studies is that they are not published. Nehls (1986), however, presents in published form a comprehensive contrastive analysis of the English and German modals. As in his 1979 thesis, Matthews (1991) does include the German modals, but again "the discussion mainly concerns English, with occasional side-glances at German" (*Lingua* 85, 1991: 374). In Palmer (1986) English and German are just two of a wide range of languages considered from the point of view of modality.

All these book-length accounts are complemented by a number of papers either giving a short overview of the systems of the English and German modals (Butler 1972, Bouma 1975, Lodge 1977, Standwell 1979), or going into specific linguistic aspects (Townson 1981, Doherty 1982) and aspects of language learning (Kufner 1977).

Because the systems of the modals in English and German differ, it will soon become apparent to anyone dealing with this field of language that, for rendering modals, also expressions other than modals have to be employed. Many of them are referred to as *modal expressions*.

Remembering the time of writing his thesis, Matthews (1993c: 113) observes that "the range of means, both lexical and syntactic, that languages have to express modal concepts . . . received too little attention at the time [of writing this thesis] in the standard English and German works on modal-

ity, including reference grammars, and, in my opinion, still receives too little attention . . ."

The present work will cover this "range of means" from the perspective of the modals of the English-German language pair; that is, we will ask, Given an SL modal, which TL modal(s) or other expression(s) can be used to render it? and, vice versa, Given an SL expression, is there a TL modal to render it?

In dealing with these questions we will focus mainly on the *factors* motivating the choice of particular TL renditions. Before presenting these translation factors, one by one, it will be useful to list the criteria that define our object of study.

1.2.2 Defining Criteria of the Modals

Many attempts at defining the term *modality* are based on semantic or pragmatic criteria (see Section 3.2.2 and so forth). For the definition of the class of modals, however, usually syntactic and morphological criteria are given. The following two lists summarize the formal characteristics of the English and German modals as stated by Nehls (1986: 12 ff.).

1.2.2.1 The English Modals

1. No −*s* morpheme in 3rd pers. sg. present tense.
(1) She can speak English.

2. No imperative mood.
(2) *Can! (* [asterisk] indicates that a sentence, utterance, and so on is unacceptable or ill-formed).

3. Modals are linked to an infinitive without TO (a flat or bare infinitive; see example (1)).

4. No DO periphrasis is possible in interrogative clauses (including tag questions) and in negative clauses.[9]
(3) Can she speak English?
(4) She can speak English, can't she?
(5) She cannot/can't speak English.

5. No infinite forms; suppletives or suppletive forms (see examples under a and c) must be used for infinitives, present and past participles, and gerunds.
a. For this reason, it is impossible to form a complex tense with a modal:
(6) *She has never can/could write long letters.
(7) She has never been able to write long letters.

b. Due to lack of past participle, no passive voice may be formed.
(8) *This is could done by her.

c. Modals do not usually combine with each other; hence,
(9) *She must can come.
(10) She must be able to come.

6. Modals precede all other verb forms.
(11) She could have been speaking English.

Criteria 1–6 are applicable to the verbs listed below. As a subsystem of the English verb system, these verbs are thereby formally clearly defined as modals:

WILL	WOULD
SHALL	SHOULD
CAN	COULD
MAY	MIGHT
MUST	

1.2.2.2 The German Modals

1. No verb endings in 1st and 3rd pers. sg. present tense.
(12) Ich/Er kann/darf/muss/ . . .

2. No imperative mood.
(13) *Kann!

3. The infinitive is linked without ZU.
(14) Er kann fahren.

4. Present perfect and past perfect are formed with the infinitive.
(15) Er hat(te) fahren können/dürfen/müssen/ . . .

These four criteria are applicable to MÜSSEN, SOLLEN, KÖNNEN, DÜR-FEN, MÖGEN, and WOLLEN, which thus qualify as the German modal verbs proper.

Interestingly, the English and German modals share some characteristics: criteria 1–3 in both languages correspond to each other.

1.3 GOAL OF THIS STUDY

As stated in Section 1.2.1, it is our aim to focus on the factors motivating the choice of particular TL renditions. But neither is it our ambition to cover all possible translation factors existing nor do we intend to deal with all aspects relating to each modal. In view of the complexity of our subject matter we will have to be eclectic and illustrate a number of translation factors by way

of some examples. Our presentation is geared more toward inspiring further research in this field than toward compiling an encyclopedia of translation factors.

This eclectic perspective is also reflected in our reference to previous studies. Whenever appropriate we will draw upon others' insights; but it is not our intention to give a full overview of the hundreds of publications on modality or of those in the field of translation studies, which may well be said to run into the thousands. Especially the German modals will be treated largely on the basis of the competence of the authors as native speakers of German.

As indicated in Section 1.1.1, this study is geared toward making the complexity of the translation situation transparent by presenting translation factors in a systematic way. We would consider reading this book an exercise for becoming familiar with what might be called *factor thinking*; that is, the habit of breaking up a complex (translation) task into its smaller, more manageable units—its factors. Naturally, this factor approach will be most useful to those who have not yet acquired full translation competence. Hence our target group is students of translating and interpreting, as well as intermediate and advanced learners of German or English. We hope they will enjoy reading this book not just because it is expected to facilitate and improve their translating, but also because its field of illustration, modality, has an inherent attraction to it: "To seek to understand modality is to set out on a fascinating voyage of discovery in the human mind" (Fawcett 1983: ix). This statement may be explained in terms of the fact that use of the modals presupposes a specific worldview (see Gutknecht 1971): whatever someone may or must (be) do(ing), for instance, depends upon the kind of (physical, social, rational) world he or she lives in. Worldviews in turn exist in consciousness. So study of modality is indeed a voyage of discovery in the human mind.

At the same time every native speaker will agree that modality, especially the modal verbs, are all-pervasive in our world of daily communication and action. This experience is nicely captured in a couplet by Rückert (1882: 335, quotation from section *Fünfte Abtheilung: Weisheit des Brahmanen. Siebente Stufe: Erkenntnis*):

Sechs Wörtchen nehmen mich in Anspruch jeden Tag:
Ich soll, ich muss, ich kann, ich will, ich darf, ich mag.