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INTRODUCTION

The present work arises out of two main circumstances: first, a personal interest in the fascinating worlds of translation and diplomacy; second, the realization that diplomatic translation as carried out within Embassies is still a largely unexplored field within the academic discipline of Translation Studies. Given the fact that the world of diplomatic relations is traditionally somewhat inaccessible to outsiders, the decision was taken to investigate translation within the multimodal context of Embassy websites.

The advent of the Internet as an international medium for the dissemination of information has been revolutionary both for the practice of diplomacy and translation, granting both fields an unprecedented visibility. Websites are becoming increasingly indispensable for the public diplomacy of diplomatic Missions. Being multimodal in nature, they enable Embassies to promote their political, economic and cultural interests with an enhanced impact and outreach potential compared to the past and, at the same time, create novel demands for translators.

For the purpose of this work five Embassy websites have been selected: the British Embassy website, the Canadian Embassy website, the Australian Embassy website, the USA Embassy website and the New Zealand Embassy website. All of them present a bilingual version (English-Italian). Translated websites lend themselves particularly well to an interdisciplinary study approach that caters both for their intrinsic multimodality and the translation/localization process they have undergone.

Chapter 1 outlines the broader context for the study of Embassies with a view to assisting a deeper understanding of their significance for the conduct of bilateral relations. An historical account of the origin and evolution of diplomatic practice is provided, followed by an overview of major contemporary issues in studies on diplomacy and an in-depth description of the running of a contemporary Embassy.

Chapter 2 explores the notion of translation today as it has evolved within the academic discipline of Translation Studies. The origin and evolution of the discipline are discussed in detail and the notion of translation as mediation is addressed with a view to highlighting the fundamental role played by translators in the daily practice and process of translation.

Chapter 3 lays the methodological foundations for the applied analysis of the selected Embassy websites. The relationship of translation with globalization and the

related phenomenon of localization is first discussed, providing a general framework for the translational analysis of the selected Embassy websites. A working field for the study of Embassy websites is then identified within the context of multimodality, drawing on the work in visual grammar of Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006).

Chapter 4 finally addresses the analysis of the selected websites from the visual and translational point of view. First, the websites are described in terms of content and semiotic design applying the compositional, interactional and representational semiotic categories indentified by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006). On this basis, the overall diplomatic meaning conveyed by each website is assessed. Second, each translated website is compared against its original to establish what has been translated and what has not been translated, describe the main translation strategies involved and ultimately evaluate the extent to which the translated texts reflect the diplomatic priorities accorded by each website.

The overall aim of the present research is to emphasize the increasingly importance acquired by diplomacy in international society in the last few decades and the need to investigate the communicative strategies employed by bilateral Mission. Within this broader context, the present work will explore in particular the link between visuality and translation and assess how this relationship acquires diplomatic value.

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Chapter 1

DCM	Deputy Chief of Mission
IR	International Relations
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
VCDR	Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations

Chapter 2

DTS	Descriptive Translation Studies
SC	Source Culture
SL	Source Language
ST	Source Text
TC	Target Culture
TL	Target Language
TT	Target Text

Chapter 4

FAQs	Frequently Asked Questions

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CHAPTER 1

DIPLOMACY AND ITS FUNCTIONS

1.1 Introduction

Bilateral resident diplomacy has long been regarded as one critical element in the functioning of international society although after the Second World War it has been supplemented by increasingly different settings. The evolution of the role and functioning of embassies reflects the "process of evolutionary change" (Hocking, 1999: 21) which diplomacy has experienced throughout the years, "dictated by developments in the nature of the state and society and the international environments in which they are located" (Hocking, *ibid*: 21).

The embassy's usefulness has recently been subject to an intense debate. In view of the rapid changes of society some voices in the literature have claimed the decline of the institution, while others have counteracted this statement by showing its renewed importance resulting from a differentiation of tasks.

Such "variety of conceptualisations" (Jönsson, 2002: 212) is not limited to the resident embassy only; rather it reflects a major feature of the whole field of diplomatic studies, that is its fragmented nature. Indeed, although the field is rich and varied and provides a wealth of useful information in need of systematisation it lacks a sound theoretical basis (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 9). Further, a number of pertinent aspects have received great attention (e.g. negotiation) while others have been widely neglected[1]. In sum, lack of scholarly consensus and a few relevant gaps is what up to date essentially characterizes diplomacy studies.

The aim of the present Chapter is to outline the broader context for the study of Embassies, with a view to assisting a deeper understanding of their importance as "the cutting edge of the diplomatic system" (Rana, 2004) and a better evaluation of the

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[1] On his website, Berridge indicates the type of research required on contemporary diplomacy, which covers a variety of fields and aspects related to diplomatic practice. These includes among others: consular officers; trends in engaging local staff Ministries of Foreign Affairs (MFAs); diplomatic education and training, the International Sections of Government Departments; consensus decision-making; video-conferencing; telephone diplomacy; legal advisers; planning departments in MFAs; comparative study of Commercial Diplomacy; public diplomacy; pre-negotiations; summitry; Vienna Conference [not Convention] on Diplomatic Relations, 2 March-14 April 1961 and Vatican diplomacy. Source: http://grberridge.diplomacy.edu/ [last accessed 27 November 2008].

communicative and informational potential of their websites. Three main areas of investigation will be identified: theory, practice and history (section 1.2). Section 1.2.3.3. will address major contemporary issues in diplomacy studies, with a focus on the key shaping factors affecting the current role of Embassies. Section 1.3 will describe the running of a contemporary Embassy, comparing traditional functions and new tasks.

1.2 State of the art in studies on diplomacy

1.2.1 Theory and practice in diplomacy

The study of diplomacy falls within the concern of International Relations (IR), a relatively new academic discipline officially recognized as such when the Chair of International Relations was established at the University of Wales, Aberystwyth in 1919 (Burchill and Linklater, 2005: 6)[2]. Diplomatic literature is vast and varied, offering an abundance of accounts of various kinds written by either practitioners or historians (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 7). However, as Jönsson observes (2002: 212), compared to other areas of IR such as bargaining and negotiation, diplomacy appears to be "a considerably less established field of study" in spite of the fact that it constitutes "the institutional framework within which much of international negotiation takes place".

Notwithstanding some potential confusion in the terminology as "the terms 'international theory' and 'diplomacy' are sometimes used interchangeably" (L'Etang, 2006: 380), in fact the field of international relations has devoted little theoretical work specifically addressed to diplomacy, as noted by a number of contemporary scholars (Jönsson, 2002; Jönsson and Hall, 2005; L'Etang, 2006; Sharp, 2005; Sofer, 1988; Steiner, 2004) and a few distinguished diplomats (e.g. Eban, 1983; Rana, 2004). James (1993) remarks that there is a tendency among writers on general books of IR "to relegate diplomacy to one of the lesser tool of foreign policy". For L'Etang (2006: 381), it seems that diplomacy is interesting "insofar as it contributes to specific political decisions or crises and is treated descriptively rather than analytically".

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[2] International relations theory is divided into several broad streams. Rana (2007: 31-2) overviews current ideas in the field; Burchill and Linklater (2005) widely discuss the nature and meaning of "theory" in the context of international relations and explore in detail a variety of both traditionally dominant and more recent perspectives, including liberalism, realism and neo-realism, rationalism, Marxism, critical theory, post-modernism, constructivism, feminism and green politics.

In view of diplomacy's importance to the management of relations between states and societies, the marginalization suffered by the discipline within the field of IR has surprised many and the reasons for such state of affairs have been widely investigated (Eban, 1983; Jönsson and Hall, 2005; Steiner, 2004, Wolfe, 1998). Essentially, what seems to make it "very difficult to theorize about diplomacy" (Sharp, 2005: ix) is the contrast between the aspiration and the broad focus of interest of IR analysts and the very nature of diplomatic practice.

According to Burchill and Linklater (2005: 1-28), IR has its roots in the intellectual reaction to the unprecedented horrors of the First World War. The conflict shook confidence in classical diplomacy and in the use of force as a means to maintain the balance of power, while a strong view emerged that the study of history was inadequate as a guide to the future behaviour of states. A new academic discipline devoted to the comprehensive and rigorous study of international conflict was thought essential to prevent the recurrence of war. As Burchill and Linklater (*ibid*: 2) clearly explain

> proponents of the scientific approach attempted to build a new theory of international politics, some for the sake of better explanations and higher levels of predictive accuracy, others in the belief that science held the key to understanding how to transform international politics for the better.

Such scholars were trying to apply the methodology typical of the physical sciences, which emphasize certainty, exactness and scientific rigour. Their thrust was quantitative and behavioural, away "from the discussion of specific countries and conflicts and plunged into an austere preoccupation with formulas and general doctrines" (Eban, 1983: 381).

The search for a theory of international relations based on scientifically verifiable propositions, along with the constant widening of the discipline's object of analysis throughout the years has been perceived to be incompatible with the practice-based nature of diplomatic practice, where the "chance event, the unintelligible" (Raymond

Aron, quoted in Eban, 1983: 381) is a defining trait[3]. The resulting picture has been one where

> those most committed to comprehensive international theory have excluded diplomacy from their generalisations on the grounds that it is too uncertain and unpredictable (Steiner, 2004: 493).

The role of theory has been widely debated both within IR and the field of diplomacy. IR is still cast today as "a discipline of theoretical disagreements" (Holsti, 1985 quoted in Burchill and Linklater, 2005: 4). Burchill and Linklater's analysis reveal that an agreed definition of theory is missing and so is a shared view about its purpose and proper place in the wider context of international relations. Throughout the years, the very process of theorizing itself has become a crucial object of inquiry to the extent that some have started to wonder whether this excessive preoccupation has been detrimental to the "analysis of 'real-world' issues and a sense of responsibility for policy relevance" (Burchill and Linklater, 2005: 3).

Diplomacy seems to suffer from the same contradictions and lack of consensus as IR, which has created a profound divide between "practitioners on the ground and academic theorists" (Rana, 2004: 27). A controversial key issue has been the relevance of theory to empirical practice. As early as 1968, Burton (1968: 150) forcefully contended the unavoidable role of theory. His informing tenet was the idea that all human perception and decisions are theory-driven:

> some set of values, some conviction about the rights and duties of States, some theory or conception of international society, or some expectation of the behaviour of other States, is at the back of every decision taken by the practitioner of International politics. It is also behind every judgment made by a scholar.

Burton (*ibid*: 149) argued that theorizing – either its presence or absence - has an important place in the decision-making process, determining what will be observed and how it will be interpreted. He envisaged a "scientific practice of diplomacy", that is the

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[3] Israeli diplomat and politician Abba Eban (1915-2002) provides (1983: 381-5) an overview of the various approaches put forward by academics since the explosion of theorizing in the United States in the early Sixties; Jönsson and Hall (2005: 12-23) analyse in-depth the causes of the lack of theorizing of diplomacy and its marginalization in IR theory.

formulation of commonly observed international rules of behaviour". In his view, therefore, theory is needed both to conceptualise events and as a "valuable guide to practice" (*ibid*: 149).

For L'Etang (2006: 381), on the other hand, a theoretical study of diplomacy

> must go beyond practical guidance and consider the motivations, values, beliefs and conventions of the practice, its organizational and social effects, as well as the underlying assumptions and political configurations that go along with these practices.

This scholarly clarity of vision contrasts sharply with the practitioners' profound mistrust towards the existing IR constructs and their value for daily diplomatic practice. In the early 1980s, Eban (1983: 384) clearly argued that

> working diplomats tend to doubt whether any fixed doctrines are applicable to specific cases. They are convinced that theories have a lesser role in shaping policies than facts, and that those who come to diplomacy with fixed conceptual systems in their minds do not have the freedom of maneuver essential in a changing world.

He himself questioned the applicability of IR science to diplomacy and cautiously admitted that, although it was "too early to pass a final judgment on the search for a theory of international relations", research carried out up to that time had not yet had any impact on concrete issues of diplomacy, resulting in the "traditional documentary approach" still holding the field (Eban, *ibid*: 382-3).

More recently, Rana (2004: 26-30) has analysed how abstract theory can deceptively impact on the study as well as on the conduct of diplomacy[4]. He interestingly notes that the challenge to the rigidity of IR schools of thought is especially directed towards the neo-realist ideas, "which over-emphasize the political security dimension in international relations at the cost of economic, cultural and the other soft forms of diplomacy" (Rana, *ibid*: 26). This view is deeply in contrast with what "practice-determined analysis of diplomacy, from times past to present, tends to suggest", namely "that these non-political dimensions of diplomacy are more dominant

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[4] Kishan R. Rana spent 35 years in the Indian Foreign Service, serving as Ambassador/High Commissioner in Algiers, Prague, Nairobi and Mauritius, and Consul General in San Francisco. He retired as ambassador to Germany in 1995. Since then, he has worked as a business advisor, assisting international and Indian companies, and taught at the Foreign Service Institute, New Delhi.

in external relations, and govern the actual work content, than most IR theorists would have us believe" (Rana, *ibid*: 27).

In addition to this, Rana (*ibid*: 27-8) also shows how the gulf between theorists and practitioners leads to serious misjudgements, as is evident with the speculation, in the recent past, on the relevance and utility of ambassadorship and the traditional embassy:

> in the early 1990s it became a fashionable theme in academia that the resident envoy had outlived his utility, and was reduced to providing services as an inn-keeper, travel agent and greeter and receiver of visiting high personalities and delegations. […] Consequently, the resident envoy had become more or less irrelevant, bereft of value. It became customary to ask students in academic diplomatic studies if the traditional embassy 'has not outlived its usefulness'[5].

The theorist-practitioner distance well illustrated by Rana is – as he (2004: 27) himself argues – a true peculiarity of diplomacy studies:

> the situation is not unique, but there may not be many disciplines offering more spectacular divergence.

Eban (1983: 384) has described it as an "intrinsic antagonism", engaging the two groups in a "constant polemic" with no easy solution. The theorists' tendency to generalize and conceptualize is counteracted by the diplomats' thrust towards reflection and prescription, based on personal experience. Advocates of the scientific method want to investigate classes of phenomena, while diplomats consider their discipline an "inexact science" (Eban, *ibid*: 384) and require systems that make "allowances for contingency, emotion and personality" (Eban*, ibid*: 383). The "value-free and detached observations" (Jönnson and Hall, 2005: 2) pleaded as prerequisites for theory-building have no place in the practitioners' literature, which is frequently "emotion-laden and opinionated" (Jönnson and Hall*, ibid*: 2).

The works practitioners have produced from time past to the present are very much of the "how to do it variety" (L'Etang, 2006: 381), concerned with defining the characteristics of the good diplomat and providing guidelines on how diplomacy should

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[5] A review of the functions and tasks of embassies will be explored in greater detail later on in the chapter (§1.3.2).

be best conducted. Jönsson and Hall (2005: 7-9) give a brief outline of key treatises, starting from *Arthasastra* − an Ancient Indian work on statesmanship written in the fourth century BC. In between they list a whole series of tracts worth noting: *Short Treatise About Ambassadors*, the first European textbook of diplomatic practice, written in 1436 by Bernard du Rosier and followed by hundreds of similar works; Don Juan Antonio de Vera's *El Embajador*, written in 1620 and later translated into French and Italian; *L'Ambassadeur et ses functions* (1681) by the Dutch diplomat Abraham de Wicquefort and *De la manière de négocier avec les souverains* (1716) by François de Callières. Callières' book, which gives valuable advice on the qualities of a good negotiator, is still to date regarded as a commendable reference (Satow, 1979: 91).

Contemporary key resources are Ernest Satow's *A Guide to Diplomatic Practice* and Harold Nicolson's *Diplomacy* (1963) and *The Evolution of the Diplomatic Method* (1953). The three works have all been praised as "modern classics" (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 8)[6]. Satow describes in great detail the rules, laws and conventions covering the conduct of diplomacy, not only between individual nations, but also through international organisations. He provides an insightful view of diplomatic privileges and practice, the classification of diplomatic agents, the issue of precedence, the framework of treaties and conventions, ratifications and other subjects which "may be considered as forming part of International Law" (Satow, 1979: 5). The aim and intention of his effort was "to produce a work which would be of service alike to the international layer, the diplomatist, and the student of history" as well as "to the general public and to writers who occupy themselves with international affairs" (Satow, *ibid*: 2-5). As noted by L'Etang (2006: 381), the guide is still widely used today by the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Practice and personal experience also inform Nicolson's published work, as he himself writes in his introduction to *The Evolution of Diplomatic Method* (1963: 1):

> when I was honoured by the invitation to give these lectures, I decided to choose a diplomatic subject. Having spent much of my life in the practice and study of diplomacy,

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[6] Ernest Satow (1843-1929) was a distinguished British scholar-diplomat. His guide, written in his retirement, was first published in 1917 and has since been revised several times by distinguished diplomats. Now it is in its fifth edition. Harold Nicolson (1886-1968) was a renowed British diplomat too, as well as an author, a diarist and a politician.

I felt I might be able to illustrate the theme by comparisons drawn from personal experience.

L'Etang (2006: 381) criticizes Nicolson for adopting an uncritical approach and stating that the essence of diplomacy lies in common sense. Nicolson (1963: 35) views theory as "a generally accepted idea of the principles and methods of international conduct and negotiation". From this perspective, he reviews the origin and development of diplomatic theory, throwing light on how tendencies have impacted on the condition of diplomacy through time[7].

Nicolson's approach contradicts Burton's contention that it "it is not always appreciated by practitioners that their decisions are always guided by a notion or theory" (1968: 150). At the same time it points to the key issue of defining the notion of theory as a pre-requisite for discussing its relevance to diplomatic practice and evaluating its usefulness, which contemporary diplomatic studies still seems to be far from achieving.

To sum up the current state of facts, it can be said that not only is the field of diplomacy under-theorized, but it is also fragmented (Jönsson, 2002: 217) and evidently pervaded by highly contradicting trends. Jönsson and Hall (2005: 8) deny that what has been written by practitioners throughout history "amount to anything we might label diplomatic theory, even if this is the term that is often used when referring to their works". The theoretical constructs provided by IR have been proved inadequate, as they fail to impact on the concrete issue of daily practice, even running the risk of being misleading. Yet Rana (2004: 27) voices the necessity of having diplomacy accepted "more universally as a specialist skill" and Eban (1983: 384) that of finding common ground between scholars and diplomats as "each of them has a case".

Recently, an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice has been made by Jönsson and Hall in their book *Essence of Diplomacy* (2005). As the title suggests,

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[7] The main currents of diplomatic theory he identifies are the following: Roman law, the Byzantine tradition of ingenuity, the imperial legacy of power-politics, leading to the conception of diplomacy as an adjunct to the military feudal caste; the papal idea of a world discipline resting upon religious sanctions; the mercantile conception of bargaining; and more recently, the theory of the military and political caste which survived the feudal system, tending towards power-politics and concerned with national prestige, status, precedence and glamour; and the bourgeois conception arising from the contacts of commerce, tending towards profit-politics and concerned with appeasement, conciliation, compromise and credit. For further information see Nicolson (1963: 34-55).

the purpose of the authors' work is to explore essential dimensions of diplomacy, "looking for the common denominators characterizing diplomacy across time and space" (Jönsson and Hall, *ibid*: 24). They view diplomacy as a perennial, existential phenomenon, whose varying forms throughout history can be subsumed under some constitutive categories, namely communication, representation and reproduction of international society. Communication is a core dimension, since without it diplomacy cannot exist. Avoiding misunderstandings and achieving shared meaning has been central to diplomatic communication throughout the ages. Representation refers to diplomats acting on behalf of principals, representing them and their polities. Finally, reproduction of international society refers to the processes by which diplomacy contributes to creating and continuing a particular international society.

Jönsson and Hall (2005: 3) clearly state that they have "no pretensions to develop a full-fledged theory of diplomacy"; rather their endeavour "is perhaps best characterized as pre-theoretical groundwork". Their approach however is not only a valuable response to the need of systematisation characterising the copious literature on diplomacy. It is also a realistic endeavour to look for permanence and continuity within constant change, as already advocated by Melissen (1999).

In the preface to the book, Sharp (2005: ix) defines Jönsson and Hall's work "path-breaking" and welcomes it as a real attempt to solve the conflict between theory and practice setting the agenda for future research:

> after this book, practitioners and historians will no longer be able to ignore the benefits, at least, of international theorizing, and IR scholars will no longer be able to ignore diplomacy's centrality to nearly everything in which they are interested. Indeed, a research agenda of empirical studies is now needed to explore the full implications of Jönsson and Hall's argument.

To conclude, studies on diplomacy are currently pervaded by a number of invigorating trends which try to compensate for existing gaps and solve contradictions. The conflict between theory and practice is not easy to solve, but it seems that valid attempts have recently been made towards that direction.

1.2.2 Defining diplomacy

"There are almost as many definitions of diplomacy as there have been writers on the subject" wrote Sondermann (1970: 241). For Jönsson (2002: 213) this should not

come as a surprise, given the "undeveloped and fragmented nature" of the field which hinders the achievement of scholarly consensus. Melissen (1999: xiv), on the other hand, speaks of the "increasingly labyrinthine nature of modern diplomacy", which makes it difficult to reach a definition that proves "helpful in analysing today's varied manifestations of diplomacy" (*ibid*: xvi). Similarly, Watson (1982: 11) argues that "a complex activity of this kind is difficult to comprehend in a single phrase".

Etymologically, the word *diplomacy* comes from Greek and was later adopted into Latin. As Nicolson (1963: 26) argues, it

> is derived from the Greek verb "diploun" meaning "to fold". In the days of the Roman Empire all passports, passes along imperial roads and way-bills were stamped on double metal plates, folded and sewn together in a particular manner. These metal passes were called "diplomas".

At a later stage, the word *diploma* was applied to other official documents embodying arrangements with foreign communities or tribes (Nicolson, *ibid*: 27) as well as to letters of recommendation and orders enabling the traveller to use the public post (Gaselee, 1939: 11).

This original use of the word *diploma* has influenced for centuries the meaning of 'diplomacy' and 'diplomatic', which was associated with the study of past treaties and the preservation of archives:

> as these treaties accumulated, the imperial archives became encumbered with innumerable little documents folded and endorsed in a particular manner. It was found necessary to employ trained clerks to index, decipher and preserve these documents. Hence the profession of the archivist arose, and with it the science of palaeography. The science, that is, of verifying and deciphering ancient documents. These two occupations were, until late in the seventeenth century, called "res diplomatica" or "diplomatic business", namely the business of dealing with archives or diplomas (Nicolson, 1963: 27).

It was only towards the end of the 18th century that *diplomacy* came to denote the conduct or management of international relations. The first to use the term in this sense was Burke in 1796 (Nicolson, 1963: 28; Ostrower, 1967: 110; Satow, 1979: 6). This shift of meaning, however, has not removed the scholarly or technical element from diplomatic practice, which "is still vital to the functioning of any efficient Foreign Service" (Nicolson, 1963: 28).

The variety of current definitions of diplomacy can be grouped under three major categories: broad vs. narrow definitions - as pointed out by Sharp (1999: 37) and Jönsson (2002: 213) – and a wider characterization of diplomacy in terms of generic concepts.

In broad conceptions, diplomacy tends to be associated with foreign policy, though the terms are not synonymous. Foreign policy represents the legislative aspect of a country and it is formulated by the government, whereas diplomacy is its executive side. If the purpose of the former is to further a state's interest, by establishing goals, prescribing strategies and setting the broad tactics to be used in their accomplishment, the latter aims at strengthening the state or nation it serves by advancing the interests in its charge (Encyclopaedia Britannica, online)[8]. Satow's (1979: 3) definition of diplomacy as "the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of official relations between the governments of independent states" can also be considered an instance of a wide approach, as he himself admits.

In narrow conceptions, on the other hand, diplomacy refers to the practices of professional diplomats, in particular negotiation, traditionally seen as the "hard core" (Melissen, 1999: xvii) of the discipline. The approach informs a number of definitions, such as the classic one coming from the *Oxford English Dictionary*:

> diplomacy is the management of international relations by negotiation; the method by which these relations are adjusted and managed by ambassadors and envoys; the business or art of the diplomatist,

and taken as a term of reference by a number of scholars (e.g. Gaselee, 1939: 10; Nicolson, 1963: 15). More recently, Berridge (1995: 1) has elaborated on this formulation, stating that diplomacy is

> the conduct of international relations by negotiation rather than by force, propaganda, or recourse to law, and by other peaceful means (such as gathering information or engendering goodwill) which are either directly or indirectly designed to promote negotiation.

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8 Source: http://www.britannica.com/, last accessed 25 November, 2008.

Equating diplomacy with negotiation is for Nicolson (1963: 15) a way "to avoid straying on the one hand into the sands of foreign policy, and on the other into the marshes of international law". However, as Melissen (1999: xvii) points out, such kind of formulation only captures "part of the riches of diplomatic life" and leaves aside other important tasks that constitute the bulk of work for many practitioners. Watson (1982: 11) also criticises such limiting definitions and praises more comprehensive descriptions.

For Sharp (1999: 37) "diplomacy is one of those terms that is best approached through a consideration of its usages, rather than by an attempt to assert or capture a precise, fixed or authoritative meaning". As has recently been advocated by authors such as Jönsson and Hall (2005) or Melissen (1999), an enlightening way to do so is by looking at the discipline in terms of its institutional functions in international society. In this view, diplomacy is defined as

> the mechanism of representation, communication and negotiation through which states and other international actors conduct their business (Melissen, 1999: xix).

Authors supporting such a view understand diplomacy as a timeless and boundless "human condition that precedes and transcends the experience of living in the sovereign, territorial states of the past few hundred years" (Sharp, 1999: 51).

1.2.3 Historical studies

Diplomatic history has been qualified as "an old subdiscipline" (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 9), providing a wealth of useful information from antiquity onwards. Like practitioners, historians have been strongly attacked. They have been accused of being "mere chroniclers" of an "embalmed past" (Lauren, 1979: 4), idiographic and descriptive rather than nomothetic and analytical (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 7; Sofer, 1988: 196):

> the defining characteristic of historians may not be their dedication to the past in general, but their immersion in a *particular* past (Lynn, 2001: 363 quoted in Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 7, emphasis in the original).

Yet, the value of diplomatic history is far from being dismissed, as the careful amassing of documentary evidence – one of its hallmarks (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 10) - provides sound empirical foundation for a broader understanding of the nature of diplomacy.

Several diplomatic writers (e.g. Cohen, 1999; Gaselee, 1939; Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995; Nicolson, 1953, 1963; Watson, 1982) include in their work useful and interesting chronological accounts of the evolution of diplomacy. As pointed out by Jönsson (2002: 214),

> chronological narratives often figure predominantly in much used texts. […] authors have varying temporal scope, the main difference being between those who set the beginning at fifteenth-century Italy and those who delve further back into the pre-history of modern diplomacy. The latter usually refer to diplomacy in ancient Greece, the Roman Empire and Byzantium, and less frequently to ancient Near East, Chinese and Indian diplomatic traditions. Regardless of scope, a prominent purpose of these accounts is to identify significant hereditary links and turning points in the development of diplomacy.

By identifying such hereditary links emphasis is placed on continuity and on the permanent nature of diplomacy itself. Nicolson (1963: 14), for instance, clearly states that the aim of his historical review is

> to show that diplomacy is neither the invention nor the pastime of some particular political system, but is an essential element in any reasonable relation between man and man and between nation and nation.

Cohen (1999: 1) underlines the necessity "to distinguish between the superficial and the essential" in order to reach "a balanced and objective evaluation of diplomacy and an understanding of its irreducible functions".

The history of diplomacy will be reviewed here with a twofold purpose: to provide a context for the birth and the development permanent embassies, on the one hand, and to assess the importance of its communication mechanisms as they have evolved over time, on the other. Diplomatic systems will be analysed according to a classic three-fold division: diplomatic systems of antiquity, modern diplomacy, contemporary diplomacy.

1.2.3.1 Diplomatic systems of antiquity

Non-European traditions

The origins of diplomacy date back to ancient times, preceding what Nicolson (1953: 2) calls "the dawn of history" States, Watson notes (1982: 14), are committed to diplomacy by the nature of the world in which they exist, as they cannot operate in a vacuum of isolation. Thus, either in a rudimentary or developed form diplomacy is brought into existence insofar as there are two or more nations having any relation at all with each other (Gaselee, 1939: 10).

Initially, diplomacy appears in the form of sporadic communication between independent states. Early diplomats were heralds occasionally carrying oral messages from one independent chief or group to another (Watson, 1982: 15). As civilizations started to evolve, communication became more regular and based on written correspondence, without however dismissing face to face communication:

> the practice of sending messengers or heralds to transmit and amplify the written correspondence of course continued, until it developed into the permanent embassies and delegations of our own time. Indeed oral communication, face to face, mainly thorough expert intermediaries but where necessary by personal meetings of heads of government, remains the fundamental method of diplomacy. But what is said orally is lost to posterity unless it is recorded. We can follow the diplomatic negotiations of long ago only from the moment that archives began to be kept in which a summary of exchanges was recorded (Watson, 1982: 83-4).

Cohen (1999: 3) remarks that the very first known diplomatic document is the file copy of a letter inscribed on a cuneiform tablet dating around 2500 BC. It was carried by a messenger sent from the kingdom of Ebla, near the Orontes and the Mediterranean coast, to the kingdom of Hamazi, in today's northern Iran.

Extensive evidence exists of Ancient Near Eastern diplomacy thanks to the discovery in 1887 in Egypt of the Amarna archive. The archive consists in a collection of about 400 cuneiform tablets and refers to a period lasting from ca. 1460-1220 BC, known as the Amarna Age. The Amarna diplomatic community involved five major powers, Egypt, Mittani, Hatti, Babylonia and Assyria, the secondary trading states of Ugarit and Alashiya-Cyprus and a few others peripheral states (Cohen, 1999: 7).

Cohen (*ibid*: 7-9) summarises the salient features of Amarna diplomacy as follows:

▪ an elaborate code of protocol and customary law;

- highly professionally skilled diplomats trained as scribes and linguists and employed on specific, not resident missions;

- a unique tolerance of diversity, based on the myth of community transcending civilizational differences;

- the widespread use of Akkadian as a *lingua franca*.

Amarna diplomacy was highly sophisticated, a refined example of a mature diplomatic system. In particular, the use of a common language facilitating diplomatic discourse was a key factor. Cohen (*ibid*: 9) analyses the reasons why Akkadian was highly successful as a *lingua franca* and interestingly compares it with Renaissance Latin and today's English:

> […] adoption of Akkadian was a virtual condition of civilized diplomatic activity. Like Latin in the Renaissance, it was the long dead language of literature and learning rather than the tongue of the hegemonic power, as is English today. This meant that no one need fear and resent the cultural encroachments of the dominant civilization.

In addition, Akkadian represented a powerful force of cohesion, as its acquisition "which took years of training in scribal academies, produced a transnational, collegial elite".

Other diplomatic systems of antiquity worth mentioning are Indian and Chinese diplomacy. They both consisted of a number of independent states and developed complex models of communication and diplomatic practices (Cohen, 1999: 10-1; Watson; 1982: 89-92).

European traditions

The first diplomatic system in the Western world of which copious evidence exists is the Greek one (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 8). It was characterised a number of small independent, but connected city-states in need of constantly communicating among themselves. Diplomacy was mainly aimed at regulating such inter-state relations (Adcock, 1975: 128).

Some scholars (e.g. Cohen, 1999: 10; Jönsson, 2002: 214) consider Greek diplomacy rudimentary and parochial, while others, like Nicolson (1953: 3), praise its elaborate system of intercourse[9].

The Greeks cities were regularly sending and receiving temporary, strictly ad hoc embassies. Ambassadors were carefully selected orators invested with the task of pleading the cause of their city before the popular assemblies of foreign states. They were not expected to acquire information or write reports about the countries they visited, but just to release a magnificent speech.

The Greeks had also a system of permanent consular representation. Consular agents – or *proxeni*[10] – were citizens of the city in which they resided, not of the state they were acting for. Their primary responsibility was trade, but they also had to provide for the accommodation of their ambassadors, brief them on the current political situation and, in general, find ways of harmonizing the interests of the two city states. Watson (1982: 88-9) interestingly contrasts and compares the figure of the *proxenos* with that of the modern resident ambassador:

> proxeny, as an alternative to sending resident embassies to other capitals, works well if the interests of the two states are *not* in serious conflict; but when they are, the loyalties of the proxenos are bound to be torn between the interests of his own city and those of the one he represents. Nowadays an ambassador in a democratic country will have close contact with one or two prominent citizens, especially members of the parliament or legislature, who are good friends of his country and will give him advice about how to improve relations between the two and will also speak up for his country in public. But the invention of the resident ambassadors, both to other capitals and to international bodies like the United Nations, has prevented the use of proxeny as an important device in our own international system.

Greek diplomacy was not always effective in practice. Cohen (1999: 10) blames it on the method of public oratory rather secret negotiation. Hamilton and Longhorne (1995: 10) highlight that lack of consistency, continuity and confidentiality greatly slowed the pace of Greek diplomacy, while lack of confidence impeded any sound negotiation to be carried out (Nicolson, 1953: 10).

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[9] As evidence for this, Nicolson (1953: 3) lists the number of words the Greeks had to distinguish the various stages and types of agreement, e.g. diallagή (reconciliation), sύntaxiς (arrangement), omología (compact), sunqήkh (convention), summaχía (alliance), sύmbolon (commercial treaty), and eirήnh (conclusion of peace).

[10] For Nicolson (1953: 8), the consul was one of the most useful institutions developed by the Greeks. Mosley (1973) further discusses the use of proxenia and envoys in Ancient Greece.

Greek traditions and precepts were handed down to the Romans, who were not particularly apt to conduct negotiations and did not contribute much to the development of diplomacy (Hamilton and Longhorne, 1995: 12; Nicolson; 1963: 23). Their contribution is instead to be sought in the area of international law. They produced rulers and administrators (Satow, 1979: 4), viewed diplomatic relations in hierarchical terms and did not developed any mechanism to handle relations beyond the frontiers of the empire (Cohen, 1999: 10).

When the Western Empire collapsed in the 5th century AD most of its diplomatic traditions disappeared. Its Eastern half continued as the Byzantine Empire, producing the first professional diplomats (Encyclopaedia Britannica, online)[11]. Byzantine diplomacy had a more lasting impact than that of the Romans:

> the expansion of its techniques, its immensely long range and its persistence made it a forerunner of the modern system to a degree which its predecessors could not have been, and the close relationship between Byzantium and Venice provided a channel of transmission to the Western world (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 14).

The Byzantines attained remarkable diplomatic developments. They were the first to set up a special government department to deal with external affairs and train professional negotiators. These were sent on missions abroad with written instructions and were expected to provide full reports on the internal situation in foreign countries and their mutual relations (Gaselee, 1939: 14-26; Nicolson, 1953: 24-7; Nicolson, 1963: 24-6). This kind of task implied that

> qualities other than those of the herald or the orator were needed. What was required were men of trained powers of observation, long experience and sound judgment. It was in this manner that the type or character of the professional diplomatist gradually evolved. Even as the orator type replaced the primitive herald type, so also did the orator give way to the trained observer (Nicolson, 1963: 25-6).

Notwithstanding these achievements, the overall model the Byzantines developed and handed down to the Italians was highly devious and earned them "a justifiable reputation for treachery, deception and double-dealing" (Cohen, 1999: 12). Under the constant threat of war, the basic aim of their policy was to build a network of allies. In

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[11] Source: http://www.britannica.com/, last accessed 25 November, 2008.

order to attain it, they exploited any possible means at their disposal, including dynastic marriage, bribery, flattery or intelligence-gathering (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 14-20).

Owing to their long and intimate relations with the East, facilitated by the geographical location, the Venetians learned much from Byzantium, developing an extensive and organised diplomatic system which set the pattern for the Italian cities, France and Spain and eventually for all Europe. The Venetians were the first to establish systematic state archives for the preservation of diplomatic documents. They cover nine centuries (from 883 to 1797) and contain the written instructions prepared by the state for its envoys; the *avvisi* or newsletters informing ambassadors of events at home; the despatches sent by the diplomatic agents to their government and the *relazioni* or the final reports written by the ambassadors on completion of their missions. Such *relazioni* reported on the geography, politics and society of the countries where the ambassador had served as well as the nature and success of Venetian policy in relation to it. After 1530s, these reports were made available for the training of future ambassadors to the same places (Gaselee, 1939: 26-31; Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 53; Nicolson, 1953: 27-30).

1.2.3.2 Modern diplomacy

It is widely accepted among scholars that the birth of modern diplomacy occurred in Renaissance Italy and that the most important innovation was the introduction of permanent diplomatic missions with resident ambassadors (Mattingly, 1988; Romano, 1992; Serra, 2000)[12].

The fact that Italy became "the mother of organized or professional diplomacy" was inevitable (Nicolson, 1953: 29), being essentially a product of the political conditions of the time. As Berridge (1995: 3) explains,

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[12] Hamilton and Langhorne (1995: 31-2) define the birth of resident diplomacy a truly "revolutionary change". Mattingly (1987: 47-54) describes at length the Italian Renaissance environment which provided the context for the birth of permanent diplomacy; Conatser (1997: online at http://www.bsu.edu/libraries/virtualpress/student/honorstheses/pdfs/C66_1997ConatserWendyLynn.pdf, last accessed 27 September 2008) provides an in-depth discussion of the evolution of the office of resident ambassador in 15th century Italy with a view to highlighting the differences between the medieval ad hoc ambassador and the resident.

the invention of the resident mission was above all a function of the intensification of diplomatic activity in the fifteenth century, especially on the part of the nervous, vulnerable and yet frequently ambitious Italian city states. As envoys were having to be despatched more and more often on journeys which did not become more and more safe, and as the duration of their stays had to be increasingly extended, 'it was discovered to be more practical and more economical to appoint an ambassador to remain at a much frequented court' (Queller, 1967, p. 82). In any case, in the new conditions it had also become difficult to find enough suitable persons to act as envoys, a role which was even less popular than modern-day jury service. However, apart from the practical and economic advantages, the institutionalisation of the resident ambassador also signalled an increasing awareness that diplomacy itself worked most efficiently when it was a continuous, rather than episodic, process.

A key event in the birth of modern diplomacy and resident ambassadorship was the ratification of the Peace of Lodi (1454) a treaty between Venice and Milan to end the succession wars to the Milanese duchy. The treaty was followed by a 40-year period of relative peace, during which power was balanced among the five states dominating the Italian peninsula: Venice, Milan, Naples, Florence, and the Papal States[13].

As reported by Romano (1992: 808), the Peace of Lodi marked the beginning of a period of transition during which Italian States tried to strengthen their authority and national power. In this process, resident diplomacy played a key role in contributing to preserving the equilibrium achieved in Lodi. Indeed,

> grazie a essa gli Stati italiani poterono meglio controllarsi e sorvegliarsi, evitare sorprese, dissipare malintesi, mantenere intatto con continui aggiustamenti di rotta l'equilibrio di Lodi (Romano, *ibid*: 808).

Along similar lines, Serra (2000: 91) shows how the attempt to preserve the political balance among Italian States was at the same time the cause and the effect of permanent diplomacy, which in turn became the model for the subsequent development of European diplomacy:

> il sistema di equilibrio richiede incessante studio e cura. Esso sviluppò un'arte politica in Italia, che illustrata dal Macchiavelli, dal Guicciardini, da Marsilio Ficino, da Pico della Mirandola benne accuratamente studiata all'estero e presa a modello, in un quadro più

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[13] In conjunction with the treaty, a 25-year mutual defensive pact was concluded to maintain existing boundaries, and an Italian League ("Santissima Lega" or "Lega Italica") was set up. The states of the league promised to defend one another in the event of attack and to support a contingent of soldiers to provide military aid. The league was officially proclaimed by Pope Nicholas V on March 2, 1455 (Mattingly, 1988: 75-77).

vasto ma in cui i termini erano praticamente gli stessi. «Fra il Sei ed il Settencento, nota giustamente il Morandi, si è avuta una ricca elaborazione teorico-pratica del principio, il quale ha poi manifestato, proprio nella varietà e nell'adattabilità delle sue forme, un profondo vigore di vita». Ciò fu possibile, perché coincise (ed in parte provocò) con il sorgere di una diplomazia a carattere permanente[14].

To ensure the preservation of political equilibrium among Italian states, constant communication among rulers became essential, as did speed and the efficient assessment of news. Only a system of continuing representation could guarantee all this. Thus, the if in the past, the mark of diplomatic technique had been the sending of messages from one ruler to another, now informed representatives on the spot, able to establish a network of personal contacts, were required to secure a regular and "more authoritative flow of information home" (Berridge, 2005: 109). For the former purpose, special, *ad hoc* embassies continued to be used, while the new tasks of resident ambassadors gradually led to the development of embryo foreign ministries in the chanceries of Italian states and organized embassies:

> the principal duty of the resident was to convey news to increasingly efficiently chanceries at home. Rulers had an insatiable appetite for accounts of the daily politics of other states […] This practice must have been deliberately encouraged so that the sifting of many such reports by the clerks in the chancery could reveal important connections not comprehended by the man on the spot. The workload for such clerks was frightening. the assiduous ambassador might write home every day and one Venetian ambassador at Rome piled up 472 despatches in a year, and he is unlikely to have been exceptional. If the workload at home was heavy, it became clear that during the fifteenth century that the resident, too, was in need of help. It became the general practice in Italy to give the resident an official salaried and accredited secretary (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 33).

It is difficult to establish with exactitude when the permanent embassy replaced the temporary mission. A number of scholars (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 34; Mattingly, 1988: 60; Nicolson, 1963: 30; Satow, 1979: 4), however, concord in indicating that the first recorded state to build up a network of representation within

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[14] Mattingly (1988: 71-77) provides a detail historical account of the political climate and the wars characterizing the decade preceding the Peace of Lodi. In assessing the impact that the treaty had on the origin and the evolution of modern resident diplomacy, he argues: "the decades preceding the Peace of Lodi had proved the value of a system for resident diplomatic agents in the struggle for survival and for power. It was characteristic of the age that the conclusion of a universal league for the maintenance of peace and the mutual defence of the status quo was made the occasion, not for abandoning the new weapon, but for improving it".

Italy was Milan. In 1450, the Duke of Milan accredited the first resident embassy to Cosimo de Medici through its representative Nicodemus de Pontremoli, who resided in Florence for about twenty years. Envoys were initially called 'resident orators', as the title of 'ambassadors' became current only around the middle of the 16th century.

Gradually, the habit of permanent representation spread to virtually all Italian and European States and by the end of the seventeenth century a complete diplomatic system based upon the resident ambassador was in existence (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 35; Rana, 2004: 2), performing an important balancing function as it had done in 14th century Italy (Romano, 1992: 809)[15].

In the process of Europeanization of diplomacy, the French have been credited with the merit of professionalising the system inherited by the Italians (Berridge, 1995: 2) and enhancing those features which still make up contemporary bilateral diplomacy. These have been discussed in depth by Berridge (1995: 2-14; 2005: 108-115) and Hamilton and Langhorne (1995: 55-) and include secrecy, protocol and elaborate ceremonial, confidence, honesty and the professionalisation of the system.

Secrecy implied that either the fact or the content of negotiations were kept secret. This was considered an important defence mechanism against any attempts at sabotaging talks and a protection measure for subsequent negotiations with different parties, which could not be otherwise guaranteed by revealing the weaknesses and negotiations tactics involved in any discussions between states.

Strict orders regarding protocol and ceremonial were included in the instructions given to a French Ambassador. Protocol refers to the procedural rules of diplomacy, among which the regulation of diplomatic precedence (the order of diplomats' receipt at official functions or of their signatures to treaties) has always been particularly important.

The distinguishing feature of French diplomacy was honesty, a sign of the maturing of the diplomatic system. It was strongly advocated by François de Callières in his work De la manière de négocier avec les souverains, praised by Nicolson (1953: 62) as "the best manual of diplomatic method ever written". Callières contended that the

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[15] As observed by Mattingly (1988: 60), "Italy first found the system of organizing interstate relationship which Europe later adopted, because Italy, towards the end of the Middle Ages, was already becoming what later all Europe became".

purpose of diplomacy is not to deceive, but to create confidence, which can only be inspired by good faith.

The professionalisation of diplomacy was also strongly advocated by Callières, who saw nepotism as a curse and deemed it essential to recruit diplomats on the basis of their merits rather than for their family connections. The process was slow and irregular, even in France, but introduced nationality requirements, tests, clear ranks, training programs and regular payments. Three developments are noteworthy: the replacement of Latin by French as the *lingua franca* of diplomacy, which for Nicolson (1953: 57) is "better adapted than any other to an intercourse requiring the perfect fusion of courtesy and precision"; the establishment of the 'diplomatic corps', that is the body of diplomats resident in the same capital and representing different states, with its own rules of procedures and the same privileges; and the expansion of foreign ministries, based on a clear division of duties[16].

The congress of Vienna in 1815 was another key event in the development of modern diplomacy, as it sanctioned the status of the profession with an international agreement. Diplomacy acquired, in definite forms, its own rules, conventions and prescriptions (28). Four categories of representatives were created: (1) ambassadors, papal nuncios and papal legates; (2) envoys extraordinary and ministers plenipotentiary; (3) ministers resident; (4) chargé d'Affaires. It was established that the senior ambassador became the dean of the diplomatic corps and the question of diplomatic precedence was regulated, whereby the scheme laid down by the Pope in 1504 (Berridge, 2005: 111) was abolished and diplomats would be ranked according to the priority of his appointment in a given capital. It also became customary that treaties at a conference would be signed in alphabetical order (Nicolson, 1953: 32-3).

Although Nicolson (*ibid*: 72) praised the French system as "that best adapted to the conduct of relations between civilised States", he was also "fully conscious of the many faults that the system encouraged" (Nicolson, *ibid*: 77). An important one was the "habit of secretiveness" which resulted from confidential negotiation and "did induce

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[16] The first Foreign Ministry was created in 1626 in France, by Richelieu, and the British Foreign Office only in 1782 (Berridge, 2005: 6). The expansion of the Foreign Ministry in France led to the establishment of a political and a financial department, a legal office (from the 1720s), a translation office (from the 1760s) and a cartographic department. The French arrangements were the most advanced in Europe and came to be widely imitated (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 73-4).

men of the highest respectability to enter into commitments which they did not divulge" (*ibid*: 77-8). As observed by Jönsson (2002: 215), in the wake of the First World War such secretiveness was heavily criticised and the whole diplomatic system was held responsible for failing to prevent the outbreak of the war. Widespread demands for a 'new' diplomacy were raised by many, most famously President Woodrow Wilson who in 1918 advocated that in the future contacts among states "should be nothing but 'open covenants of peace openly arrived at', and that 'diplomacy should proceed always frankly and in the public view'" (Nicolson, 1953: 85). One year after, the creation of the League of Nations properly inaugurated 'multilateral diplomacy', marking a change in international relations which was to become increasingly swift in the years to follow.

1.2.3.3 Contemporary diplomacy

When considering contemporary diplomacy, two broad interrelated areas of analysis emerge in the recent literature (Barston, 1997; Berridge, 2005; Melissen, 1999; Rana, 2004; 2007): the changes occurring in international relations since the end of the Second World War and the impact on diplomatic activity and, more specifically, on the role of the resident ambassador and the embassy as the most visible agents of bilateral diplomacy.

Melissen (1999: xiv) portrays the second half of the 20th century as a "turbulent" period, constantly testing diplomacy's capacity "to absorb the impact of change on international relationships and to preserve an essential degree of cohesion in international society as a whole" (*ibid*: xix). A major upheaval was the termination of the Cold War in 1990, which ended the stable framework of international relations that had anchored the foreign policy and diplomacy of most countries and created a sort of 'fluidity' whereby countries have started to build a network of relationships to pursue their external objectives. (Rana, 2004: 21-2).

Another key shaping factor of contemporary diplomacy has been the continued expansion of the international community after 1945, which has more than tripled the total number of nation-states. The most updated evidence is provided by Rana (2007: 3):

> decolonization took the number of UN member-states from 50 at San Francisco in 1945 to over 160, and the 1990 breakup of the Soviet Union and the upheavals in former Yugoslavia have raised the number to 190.

The growth in the number of states has been defined as the "crowning achievement" of contemporary diplomacy (Cohen, 1999: 14).

As a direct result of the expansion in UN membership there has been an enormous increase in the quantity and pace of diplomatic encounters. Cohen (*ibid*: 1) emphasizes that a global system has come into existence since the end of the Cold War "marked by the unprecedented situation in which almost all states are in diplomatic relations with almost all other states"[17]. Such expansion in the number of states and hence in interests and points of view has also continuously fashioned the agenda of issues to be tackled, which have become "more complex, intertwined and technical than ever before" (Rana, 2004: 12). Barston (1997: 5) analyses them in some detail:

> the broadening of the international agenda especially since the 1970s into issues concerning trade concerning trade, technology transfer, aviation, human rights, transnational environmental and sustainable development questions has continued with the increasing addition of novel or revived threats. Examples of the latter include global sea-level rise: stratospheric ozone depletion; environmental sabotage; money laundering; refugee dumping; transnational stock exchange fraud and 'black market' nuclear materials trade. Underlying the expanded diplomatic agenda are a range of issues concerning the relationship between domestic and external policy, sovereignty and the adequacy of agreements and arrangements at a bilateral, regional, international or global level.

In addition to the growth and diversification of activity, diplomacy has also witnessed the entry of new types of actors in the international community and an upsurge of multilateral diplomacy. Participation by untraditional actors constitutes what Cohen (1999: 2) defines "paradiplomacy":

> a wide variety of information-gathering bodies, official and non-official, have excellent access to inside information. Washington law firms represent and negotiate on behalf of foreign governments with US state and federal agencies. Private consultants are hired to provide technical advice and public relations services to governments. Diplomatic services are bypassed by other government agencies. There is much talk of so-called track-two diplomacy, i.e. conflict resolution by private citizens and groups.

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[17] On the basis of the *Yearbook of International Organizations 1997/8,* Melissen (1999: xiv) interestingly notes that the 185 United Nations members amounted to 17,020 pairs of possible bilateral relationships and almost 6,000 conventional international organizations.

Multilateral or conference diplomacy has become a hallmark of the 20th century (Jönsson, 2002: 216), leading to a complete overhaul of the organization of foreign ministries (Melissen, 1999: xv). The variety of multilateral settings has come to supplement the more traditional bilateral resident diplomacy and states increasingly deal with one another in mixes of both (Barston, 1997: 5; Melissen, 1999: xiv).

Perhaps, the most significant factor affecting the evolution of diplomacy has been the revolution in information and communication technology, especially – argues Rana (2007: 6) – when it interrelates with other factors. He gives (*ibid*: 6-7) an insightful practical example:

> 'hypertext' as an application of Internet has been around for some years. The twin pressures of disruptive demonstrations by combative NGOs led by anti-globalization zealots (as witnessed at the WTO meetings of Seattle in December 1999, and the G-8 Summit in Genoa in July 2001), and reluctance by many to travel abroad excessively owing to the dangers of terrorism, has forced change. International agencies like the World Bank are shifting a part of conference negotiations to 'distance' hypertext based dialogue via the Internet.

The spread of the Internet and the accessibility of a vast amount of online information has had two major consequences: it has led to a sort of "commodification" of information, whereby anyone can get hold of information from almost any newspaper in the world, and it has increased the rapidity of contacts, with the result that the communication between the MFA and resident missions are now more continuous and rapid than ever before (Rana, 2004: 14-5).

Rather ironically, while the rapidly evolving international context has undeniably given centrality to diplomacy, it is often argued that the joint impact of its various forces or "exogenous developments" (Hocking, 1999: 22-3) has made ambassadors and embassies far less relevant than before (Rana, 2007: 27). Rana (2004: 22-3) quotes Robert D. Kaplan, who in 1996 went so far as to state that "the embassy may not survive beyond a few more decades". Another frequently quoted detractor of the resident embassy is Zbigniev Brzezinski, who in 1970 remarked that if foreign ministries and embassies "did not already exist, they surely would not have to be invented" (Jönsson, 2002: 216). By contrast, there are important voices questioning the validity of such arguments and supporting the continuous and enhanced role of bilateral diplomatic activity. The underlying assumption of this line of thought is the rarely made

proposition that "change might, in redefining the role of professional diplomacy, reinforce its significance" (Hocking, 1999: 23).

The points generally cited in support of the decline argument are critically reviewed by Berridge (2005: 119), while Rana (2004: 8-23; 2007: 1-16) provides authoritative insights into the opposing argument. The two perspectives may be compared and contrasted as in table 1.1 below.

The emerging picture is one where "the decline of the role of ambassador is overstated" (Barston, 1997: 5)[18]. Rather, the pluralization of international relations, the growing interdependence of countries and multi-form dialogue between them has led to a substantial transformation of his role and has increased his work. Far from confronting termination, therefore the ambassador and his embassy remain the only agencies of government able to follow activities in different sectors and monitor the totality of the bilateral relationship in any foreign capital (Rana, 2007: 28). In sum,

> we are at the cusp of a renaissance of bilateral diplomacy, not at the cost of multilateral and regional focus, but as a vital activity in its own right in the pursuit of state interest (Rana, 2007: 8).

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[18] In an article entitled "The end of diplomacy?", Ambassador Henry E. Catto Jr. (2001, online at http://www.usip.org/virtualdiplomacy/publications/reports/14.html#introduction (last accessed 28 August, 2008) provides an interesting and authoritative perspective on the impact of the communication revolution on diplomacy:
"When the first telegram arrived on the desk of British foreign minister Lord Palmerston in the 1840s, he is said to have exclaimed, "My God, this is the end of diplomacy." Palmerston's fears, quaint to our ears, nonetheless have contemporary resonance. During my tenure as the U.S. ambassador to the United Kingdom, I recall the frustrations caused by George Bush the elder having Margaret Thatcher's phone number. He would call, and the first time I would know about it would be when some Whitehall type would say with a bit of a leer, "Quite a surprise your president sprang on Maggie yesterday!" I would mutter something vague and change the subject, for the United States had no mechanism for informing ambassadors of high-level phone conversations. [...] If the phone can rattle a diplomat's composure, the thought of what the e-world can do is indeed daunting. What impact, one may wonder, will the Information Revolution have on diplomacy? As the French would say, plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose! There will be no substitute for diplomats meeting face to face, and there will be no excuse for not adopting the latest technology to amplify the voices of diplomacy. My experience as U.S. ambassador in San Salvador, Geneva, and London convinced me that, if anything, we must redouble our diplomatic efforts to communicate with allies and adversaries".
From 1971 to 1993, Henry E. Catto, Jr. served several presidents in a distinguished career of government service, including posts as U.S. ambassador to El Salvador, and Great Britain, and director of the U.S. Information Agency.

Arguments in support of the decline of the embassy	Arguments in support of the enhanced role of the embassy
The speed and ease of communication as well as the technology of travel has made it easy for heads of state or government to establish direct contact, thus bypassing their local ambassadors.	Modern communication makes it easy to treat the ambassador and his team as stakeholders for continued consultation at every stage of the policy development process.
The expanded role of direct or '**personal' diplomacy** (Barston 1997: 4) has diplomatic as well as economic advantages, since functions such as representation and negotiations are better executed directly.	Direct diplomacy at first sight reduces the role of the ambassador in terms of his direct participation; but in most situations it actually adds to his coordination responsibility. European Ambassador Herz (1983) has also argued that it is an illusion that direct dialogue and concordance at the top can resolve issues. The responsibility of carrying out all the work of preparation, communication at multiple levels in the partner country and follow-up to produce sustainable result remains with the resident envoy.
The opportunities for direct international exchange have increased with the growth of international organizations and regional integration as in the European Union.	The importance in **multilateral diplomacy** is an undeniable fact, but to some extent this preoccupation has led to a loss of focus on bilateral relations, the basic building block in international relations. If anything, the plurality of actors has increased the ambassador's responsibility as the constant element in the multiform dialogue between states.
The **huge development in the international mass media** has drastically reduced the importance of missions in information-gathering and political reporting, which was the main cause of their establishment in the 15th century.	The embassy team now concentrates on the analysis and information synthesis of issues that are not addressed by the media, or lie in the sectors that the general public interest does not cover, but are valuable for MFAs and others at home. Thus the tasks for analysis and data collection are reoriented.
Serious **ideological tensions** and deepening **cultural divisions** across the world put in serious danger the exchange of resident missions in hostile states.	
	Communication with domestic non-state bodies is mainly handled by home agencies, while embassies concentrate on non-state entities in the country of assignment. The ambassador cultivates non-state sectors because they occupy a part of the foreign affairs *espace*. Understanding them is part of his 'outreach' to the movers and shakers of the receiving country.
	The **variety of issues on the international agenda** calls for an ability to master diversity and complexity. This has also been called 'broad-band' ability and high 'learnability'. These are the new requirements for the ambassador.

Table 1.1 Arguments in support of the decline of the embassy vs. arguments in support of the enhanced role of the embassy

1.3 Resident embassies and their ambassadors[19]

1.3.1 Inside an embassy

Permanent diplomatic missions locate a state's official representatives abroad and they are usually based in the capital city of another country. Not every state decides to establish bilateral missions, perhaps owing to the fact that their agenda is insufficiently important. In some cases, only one state might have a mission on the area of another. Generally speaking, however, the majority of international relationships of some mutual significance in which the states involved enjoy diplomatic relations exchange permanent missions (Berridge, 1995: 19-20).

With some adaptation to the local context, embassies operate on the norms, procedures and style of the home administration through the supervision of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. MFAs and embassies represent the intertwined diplomatic system of a country, through which its foreign policy is implemented. The former function as the core, while the latter are the field units, each vitally dependent on the other.

Rana (2004: 143) defines the embassy as "an insular, inward-oriented community, with a distinct ethos – a home outpost implanted in a foreign land. Its team is traditionally composed of three categories: diplomatic officers, home-based non-diplomatic support personnel and locally recruited staff.

Diplomatic officers supporting the ambassador include junior officers, senior officials and the deputy chief of mission (DCM). **Junior officers** start as third secretaries or attachés, usually 'on probation'. The rank is transitory and held until promotion as second secretary comes on confirmation in the service. The next level is the first secretary, after 5 or 7 years of service. The rank of second or first secretary is thus held through more than one overseas appointment. **Senior officials** are the counsellor and the minister-counsellor. Their tasks correspond to those of the first secretary, but they enjoy greater autonomy, handling projects, often supervising junior officials and sometimes even heading departments.

Finally, the **DCM** in a large mission is responsible for the daily management and may also supervise some departments on behalf of the ambassador.

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[19] Unless otherwise stated, the content of the whole chapter is based on Rana (2004; 2007).

The embassy team may be also composed of officials from other agencies, especially if the mission is large. These include: specialists from line ministries (such as agriculture, education, immigration, science and technology and so on); defence attachés and 'undeclared' intelligence officials with 'cover' assignments.

All the diplomatic and non-diplomatic embassy personnel fall under the guidance and supervision of the ambassador. The size of a diplomatic mission varies greatly, ranging from micro-embassies of just one official and a few local staff apart from the ambassador to large embassies that may even total a thousand. This places a different demand on the ambassador's responsibility for internal coordination. Generally speaking, however, the ambassador need human resources management skills as well as managerial qualities as he is personally responsible for all that occurs within the mission. He needs to be able to apply limited resources to a variety of tasks, for which he has to keep a clear focus on the real priorities in the overall interest and credibility of his home country. As Rana (2004: 144) explains

> he must ensure that all actions undertaken by the embassy team produce some advantage, however incremental, for his country and its reputation in the receiving state. It makes a great deal of sense for the envoy to view the country image as akin to corporate brand equity that shapes everything connected to the totality of that enterprise.

Ambassadors perform their management and leadership functions in three essential ways:

- through a supervision of all inward and outbound embassy communications; this implies scanning all copies of messages sent out and all those received, be it by cipher, fax or email;
- through regular meeting with visitors from the home country, namely politicians, officials, journalists, businessmen, scientists, academics and so on;
- through frequent internal coordination meetings with all the diplomats of the mission.

Essentially, what distinguishes contemporary ambassadors from the past is a deep involvement in what Rana (2004: 7) defines "low diplomacy, the ordinary business of managing relations with single countries bilaterally". The classic age of high diplomacy, which lasted until post-Second World War decolonisation, was characterised almost exclusively by direct personal access to heads of state and government in the host

country, far from the public gaze. Today ambassadors have to tackle "a bewildering array of functional areas and subjects and deal with multiple players, both abroad and at home". However "unglamorous" it may be, it represents the very stuff of contemporary international life" (Rana, *ibid*: 21).

1.3.2 Traditional functions and new tasks of resident Missions

Diplomatic work is legally anchored in the 1961 *Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations* (VCDR), which represents a key point in the history of diplomacy. Until then, diplomatic law had been regulated chiefly by customary law, that is "the accumulated practice of states that had come to be accepted as binding upon them. What the VCDR did was to codify the customary law on diplomacy, that is, clarify and tighten it, refine its content, and relaunch it in the form of a multilateral treaty" (Berridge, 2005: 115)[20].

Article 3 of the VCDR lists the proper functions of a diplomatic mission:

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1. The functions of a diplomatic mission consist *inter alia* in:
    (a) representing the sending State in the receiving State;
    (b) protecting in the receiving State the interests of the sending State and of
         its nationals, within the limits permitted by international law;
    (c) negotiating with the Government of the receiving State;
    (d) ascertaining by all lawful means conditions and developments in the
         receiving State, and reporting thereon to the Government of the sending State;
    (e) promoting friendly relations between the sending State and the receiving
         State, and developing their economic, cultural and scientific relations.
2. Nothing in the present Convention shall be construed as preventing the performance of
    consular functions by a diplomatic mission.

Figure 1.1 Article 3 of the VCDR

Denza (1998 quoted in Rana, 2007: 21-2) notes that only the four classic functions of *representation*, *protection*, *negotiation* and *observation* were suggested as the functions of diplomatic missions, while *promotion* was added later as requested by three member-states, i.e. Philippines, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

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[20] The Convention was signed in Vienna on 18 April 1961 and came into force three years later, when, on 24 April 1964, it had been ratified by 22 states, the minimum number required under its terms (Berridge, 1995: 28).

Representation is essentially concerned with prestige, a reminder of the importance and traditions of a country. It involves activities such as presentation of credentials, protocol, entertaining, giving public lectures, appearing on TV and radio shows, attending state ceremonial occasions (Barston, 1997: 2; Berridge; 2005:120-1).

Negotiation is the age-old key function of diplomacy. In its classic or narrow sense, it is associated with the process leading to the ratification of treaties or agreements, which cannot however be divorced from diplomatic routine skills, such as understanding local culture, building effective interpersonal relationships, understanding the objectives of one's own negotiating partner and those of the home government, obtaining information, persuading, dissuading, influencing an action or decision and so on. In this sense, "negotiation is one of the tools of the diplomat's trade" as "virtually every conversation diplomats have with foreign officials involve the art of negotiation" (Hopkins, 1992: 73).

In the past few decades, the role of embassies in the negotiating process has undergone substantial modification, as political leaders or special appointed negotiators have increasingly taken the lead. Hopkins (*ibid*: 75) notes that the embassy, and particularly the ambassador, may sometimes take this as a derogation of embassy or a lack of confidence in ambassadorial ability to pursuit the target objectives. However, the practice has inevitable advantages, particularly given the growing interdependence and complexity of today's world.

Indeed, the special negotiator and team of experts may know the finest details and technicalities of the subject under negotiation, but the embassy team, being familiar with the foreign country, is far more sensitive to how the matters to be discussed will be perceived on the local scene. Its challenge is to make certain that the requirements for a successful negotiations are reconciled with home interests (Hopkins, 1992: 74), preventing feelings of rejection on the part of the host country as well as the envoy's "temptation either to break off prematurely or make rash concessions in order to return home on schedule" (Berridge, 2005: 122). Thus, even if negotiation is no longer the prime task of resident ambassadors, they nonetheless play an "important supporting role, not least in following up negotiations when an envoy has departed" (Berridge, *ibid*: 122).

Like representation and negotiation, **information gathering and political reporting** has long been one of the most important functions of the resident embassy, enabling the home country to pursue its foreign policy objectives. A wide variety of aspects are targeted:

> the state of the economy, foreign policy, the morale of the armed forces, scientific research with military implications, the health of the leader, the balance of power within the government, the likely result of any forthcoming election, the strength of the opposition, and so on […] (Berridge, 1995: 41).

Diplomats need to rely on a wide variety of sources other than their immediate contacts or those of embassy colleagues; this will enable them to avoid the pitfalls of listening to an unrepresentative or biased group of interests, which might then lead to wrong judgments and conclusions (Hopkins, 1992: 14-32). Internet has made information collection very easy, but places harder demands on the diplomat's ability to focus on relevant material and to objectively analyse it for reportage purposes (Rana, 2007: 41).

Promoting friendly relations with local elites is also a very important duty of an embassy. To this end, "a good embassy will honour local customs […], mark important local events, and engage in extensive local contacts" and will make sure that "gratuitous offence is not given to the host government in the event that some unpleasant message has to be delivered" (Berridge, 2005: 121-2). All these activities fall under the so-called "networking" or "cultivation of contacts" (Berridge, 1995: 36), which is "a vital instrument of diplomacy" (Rana, 2007: 41). Its importance is evident when considering that

> "a well 'networked' embassy will obviously find it easier to gain influence and gain information; it will also be better placed to handle a crisis in relations should one subsequently develop (Berridge, 1995: 36).

In analysing changes in contemporary diplomacy, Rana (2007: 21) highlights the need to provide an expanded definition of the embassies' tasks. Without discounting the validity and usefulness of the VCDR whatsoever, he deems that the formulation embedded in article 3 "evokes a less than proactive image of the tasks involved", failing to capture "the full focus and intensity of contemporary diplomatic activities". He

(2007: 24-5) therefore suggests an alternate short working description of diplomatic work dividing it into five major tasks that are action oriented, namely

- promotion
- outreach
- feedback
- management
- servicing[21].

Since feedback refers to the work of reportage, while management to the task of running the embassy considered above, the following section will address the promotion, outreach and servicing roles of embassies. It is precisely these three interrelated areas of activities that find in websites their most efficient medium of implementation.

1.3.2.1 Promotion, outreach and servicing

Promotion and outreach have replaced the old negotiation and representation functions, expressing them more proactively. Promotion in particular is a word form the VCDR that has gained relevance. These two tasks cover a vastly expanded 'advocacy' role directed towards a wider scope of state and non-state entities. Diplomatic discourse with the latter in particular has regularly increased in direct proportion to their involvement in the conduct of external relations. Non-state partners include: non-official advisory groups, ethnic groups, NGOs, academics, think tanks, researchers, scientists, business sectors, the media and any other actor able to influence foreign affairs.

Promotion relates more specifically to 'selling' the state, while outreach means essentially two things: 1. creating favourable constituencies and gaining allies, to be

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[21] Similarly, the Paschke Report (2000: online at http://grberridge.diplomacy.edu/Paschke.htm (last accessed 12 September, 2008) - a German review carried by Ambassador Karl Paschke on Germany's bilateral embassies in the countries on the European Union with the purpose to to determine how the demands on embassies in EU countries have changed as a result of European integration and what organizational conclusions should be drawn from this – shows how certain functions of traditional diplomacy have become superfluous. One of them is the conduct formal negotiations with host country governments. On the other hand, the report shows how today embassies face new, additional challenges which have turned the ambassador first and foremost into communicator and mediator of national positions vis-à-vis all sections of the politically informed public in his host country.

used as source of information and 2. creating the means and methods of influencing decisions. **Servicing** includes all the routine tasks performed by the embassy that mainly deal with the members of the public. The three tasks are intertwined and the key areas of their working are:

▪ **politics**: it the ambassador's first priority.

▪ **economics**: considered earlier as a peripheral activity, economic diplomacy has gained importance to the extent that "today diplomatic services place virtually equal emphasis on political and economic work" (Rana, 2007: 67).

▪ **public diplomacy** and **country image:** culture, media and public diplomacy – including national image-building - constitute the resident mission's third area of attention.

The key tasks and working methods for each of these three broad areas are detailed in the following sets of tables:

Political work	Purpose	Methods
	It entails, among other things, presenting the views of the home country on important issues concerning directly the two nations or affecting third-country. The ambassador has also a certain degree of freedom to raise political issues at his own initiative, to investigate intentions or analysing an ongoing situation and convey evaluations back home.	The standard methods for cultivating relationships at a political level consist of the following: - initiation of contact; - dialogue and exchanges of visits at various levels, - agreements covering new areas of cooperation; - consultation mechanism; - cooperation in functional areas;

Table 1.2 Political diplomacy

Economic diplomacy	Purpose	Methods
Trade promotion	All countries today pay strong official attention to trade promotion. The prime but not exclusive focus is on exports.	Trade development work includes the following: - a careful analysis of one's global exports - helping local companies to export to the home country; - helping local exporters to access the home market; - supplying domestic exports associations and exporters with market data and insights gained from broad contact with local importers, visits to trade show and so on; - focusing on new products; - initiating proposals for visits by trade delegations; - participating in trade fair.
Investment promotion	Investment promotion has emerged as the special priority of economic diplomacy. It is mainly focused on inward investments, but not excluding the home country's outbound investments	Methods of investment promotion include the following: - extensive: creating broad 'catchments' of potential investors, through publicity, distribution of promotional material, organizing or participating in investor conferences, business seminars at chambers of commerce and other forms of wide outreach - intensive: cultivation of target investors, identifying decisions makers, within the foreign companies being pursued, holding frequent meetings with them, overcoming doubts, providing clarifications and the like; - pursuit of major enterprise; - pursuit of companies that have existing investments to get them to consider other avenues; - marketing of success stories.
Technology	It involves attracting suitable technology plus technology "harvesting". Missions can play a facilitator role in this area.	Methods include: - gaining insight into the technology achievements of the target country. - Some countries have science counsellor within large missions.
Aid management	The embassy has an oversight responsibility to keep good working contacts with the aid administration agency of the donor country and to advise the specialists on wider political issues.	

Table 1.3 Economic diplomacy

Public diplomacy and country image	Purpose	Methods
Public diplomacy	It is a controversial concept as it carries mixed meaning. In the UK it is often equated with propaganda; in contrast the German Paschke Report (2000) gives the following definition "reaching out to people in the host country, actively communicating through ongoing dialogue with all sections of the informed public in order to generate interest in and understanding for both our European and bilateral concerns".	Methods include: - implementing cultural programs, - establishing the "cultural centre", usually under the embassy supervision; - making regular contacts with editorial offices, daily and business press, journals and TV networks; - exchanges of students; - bilateral agreements for cooperation in science and research and not least consular service, such as visa or passport issue.
Country image building	It is closely tied with public diplomacy, though it has a wider focus. Rana (2004: 87) properly emphasizes its significance as follows: "be as it may, in the practical business of diplomacy, all countries are concerned over how they are perceived by others, since this affects concrete inter-state activities such as the inflow of tourists, visits by businessmen and foreign investments, and the credibility of a country as a worthy partner in all types of foreign dealings".	
Servicing		Methods include: - consular services; - protection to own citizens, - responding to queries of businessmen, - providing information to own citizens and to foreign nationals and so on.

Table 1.4 Public diplomacy and country image

The in-depth analysis of contemporary embassies' tasks well shows that although some of the work has profoundly altered, the need for embassies is unchanged. Rana

(2004: 4) is therefore right in stating that "today there is a greater functional necessity for the resident ambassador than any previous time". No other agency is in a better position to continually engage in the functions of public outreach, promotion and servicing[22].

A vital part of the changed environment in which contemporary diplomacy operates is the media through which such tasks are now carried out. These have exploited the potential offered by advancements in modern communication technology and have made websites a core element of bilateral diplomatic work.

1.3.2.2 Embassy websites

It is becoming increasingly recognized that in the Internet age a well designed webpage is an indispensable tool for economic diplomacy, public outreach and country image building. Websites give basic information on the home country and enable embassies to advance their economic diplomacy via the commercial and market information and news that are posted there (Rana, 2004: 94).

Rana (2007: 94) defines the key criteria to produce a good quality embassy website as follows:

> providing user-friendly formats, with a wider range of information, hyperlinks to other official and institutional promotional sites, and constant updating are among the elements that have to be addressed. No less important is a feedback function. One also need to monitor the way major search engines evaluate one's website, and to engage in dialogue that ensures good attention for the website[23].

The website is also the place where much of the mission's briefing material can today be posted. This may include:

- an unclassified 'country brief', outlining the basic features of the host country and a general description of the bilateral relationship;
- a more detailed brief on the bilateral relationship;
- a 'fact sheet' setting out the country data;

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[22] Along similar lines, the Paschke Report (2000: online at http://grberridge.diplomacy.edu/Paschke.htm (last accessed 12 September, 2008) strongly asserts that embassies are by far an obsolete institutions; rather they are key players in the establishment of sound and mutually enriching bilateral relations among countries.

[23] The Paschke Report (2000: online) further highlights the need for s well-designed and user-friendly website when recommending that missions must manage attractive, constantly updated homepages, which should be set up with professional assistance.

- a standard commercial guide for businessmen and potential exporters looking for basic information on the country;
- health and safety advice for tourists, if necessary;
- guidelines on consular issues or passport renewal (Rana, 2007: 189-190)[24].

In the literature on diplomacy, mission websites still seems to be uncharted territory. While wider Internet-related issues have started to be explored (Baldi, 1998; Kurbalija and Baldi, 2000; Kurbalija and Gelbstein¸ 2005) with a view to examine how the information and communication technology revolution is affecting the daily practice of diplomacy, a survey is missing into the role of websites as communication tools and platforms for a mission services (Nuk and Olejarnik, 2002) and tasks. This study intends to provide an initial step in that direction, by analysing the visual grammar of websites and investigating how this has been exploited to fulfil the embassy's needs of public outreach and country image building.

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[24] Rana (2007: 190) also recommends that visa application forms be provided on the website "for easy download by applicants, both as a service to users and to save needless correspondence".

CHAPTER 2

TRANSLATION STUDIES: ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF AN ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

2.1 Introduction

Diplomacy and translation are intimately linked. The wide spreading contacts between nations as analysed in Chapter 1 (§ 1.2.3.3) have led more countries to take an increasingly active - and interactive - role in international affairs. At the same time, while English has gained currency both as an international language and as the language of diplomacy, international organisations are recognising the various languages of their member states as official or working languages for their proceedings, thus bringing to the front, more than ever before, the vital importance of translation to diplomacy[25].

Although this is the most obvious point of contact between the two fields, the relationship between translation and diplomacy is not limited to a functional role. It is a deeper connection stretching to the nature itself of both disciplines. Diplomacy and translation somewhat overlap insofar as they involve what Delisle and Woodsworth (1995: 273) envisage as "a direct, immediate, and highly personal act of mediation between individuals". Like diplomats, "translators have to be sensitive to the cultural and social differences which exist in their languages and be capable of addressing these issues when translating" (Chriss: online)[26].

Furthermore, similar to diplomacy, translation has always provided a vital link enabling different cultures to interact (Gentzler, 1998: xii). As Wills (1982: 27) argues, this crucial necessity is related to the fact that "mankind is by nature destined to speak many languages and that this state of affairs is not to be remedied by either international conventions of language or coercive language policy measures". Taylor (1990: xiii) also highlights that the multitude of tongues "is a perfectly natural situation" and since "the specificity of each language is embedded in its culture" it follows that different cultures must communicate through a language transfer process. In this regard,

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[25] Source: http://www.diplomacy.edu/language/Translation/default.htm, last accessed 25 November, 2008.
[26] Source: DiploFoundation, at http://www.diplomacy.edu/language/Translation/default.htm, last accessed 25 November, 2008.

each historical period has had to rely on relatively few men and women who possessed the gift of foreign tongues. Whenever the services of such people are required to aid communication, some process of translation takes place[27].

If the 20th century witnessed a surge in the pivotal role of diplomacy, it was likewise defined the "age of translation" (Jumpelt, 1961) with the end of the Second World War as a kind of turning point for both activities. A greater and more diverse need for translation was brought about by the rapidly evolving international context. In a few decades, translation developed from being a means of communication between men of letters and educated readerships into a full profession, a real business dealing with ever-growing quantities of material of a technical, commercial, political or legal nature (Scarpa, 2008). Its methods and practices widened, altering the profile and role of the translator, expanding the concept itself of translation and attracting an ever-increasing interest from scholarly research.

Translation's empirical nature, however, made its relationship with theory a confused and controversial one during most of the second half of the last century, echoing to a certain extent the theorist-practitioner debate in diplomacy studies (§1.2.1). Very often the dialogue between academics and professionals has been difficult to the extent that the relevance of theory to practice has been widely questioned[28]. Translation finds itself at the intersection of two opposing tendencies. Like every empirical activity,

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[27] In his review of translation history, Taylor (1990: 1-10) points out that the very first translation might be traced back to ancient Egyptian culture, or to at least three thousand years B.C. He then identifies four key stages in the history of the discipline in the Western world: Roman translation from Greek literature, where Cicero's translation of Plato is of particular significance; the 16th and 17th centuries, marked by a renewed interest in the ancient classics as the spur to the rebirth of culture; the 17th and 18th centuries, where the decline of Latin and the concomitant rise of linguistic nationalism led to a more varied need for translation; the post world-war period of the 20th, which marked the beginning of translation turning into a 'business'.

Taylor also notes that for many centuries, the most abundant literature on the history and practice of translation focused on the Bible, which has been translated by many people at many different times. Other outstanding examples of translation being a continuing process are Shakespeare and Dante.

Kelly (1979) and Deslile and Woodsworth (1995) provide fuller historical accounts of translation.

[28] The lack of dialogue between theorists and practitioners has been lamented by a number of authors. Wilss (1982: 52) reports a state of general confusion among academics as to the actual object of translation theory and its relationship with practice. Taylor (1990: 12) adds to this a lack of agreement concerning the extent to which the two should be applied to the training of translation. Neubert (1989: 5) highlights the social purpose fulfilled by academic institutions, and thus pleads not to turn them into an "intellectual ivory tower". Snell-Hornby (1988: 48) praises professionally oriented theories and its attractiveness to practising translators, who can relate these approaches to their work and requirements. Wagner and Chesterman (2002) provide an interesting discussion about the relevance of theory to practice, aimed on the one hand at challenging the view of theory of those already working at the "wordface and who are sceptical of all theorizing, and on the other at strengthening the connections between theory and practice for those in the "ivory tower", such as students, teachers and scholars.

it tends to free itself from its craftsmanlike quality and to reach, through theory, a more scientific status (Fedorov, 1958 quoted in Mounin, 1965: 71), but at the same time it defies a scientific type of theorising, which promotes rigour and exhaustiveness. Being multifaceted in essence, it calls for a flexible approach that enables scholars to study it from a diversity of perspectives, to account for the host of factors and processes involved and to give a more truthful and useful insight into its actual practice.

In sum, diplomacy and translation share the common core of being essential human activities operating in a changing scenario which affects the daily work of its agents. Both disciplines seem to be best analysed through the lenses of a "unity in diversity" approach (Hatim and Mason, 1997) which not only reconciles contemporary challenges with perennial attributes, but it also emphasises the fundamental similarities that exist between all types of translating. The aim of this Chapter is to explore the notion of translation today, with a focus on those factors that, while not betraying its timeless essence, give the practice its current specifity. The discussion will be framed within the academic discipline of *Translation Studies* that investigates the theory and all the phenomena related to translation.

2.2 The concept of translation

Although the practice of translating is long established, recognized as "playing a crucial role in interhuman communication" (Munday, 2001: 3), to date there seems to be "no definite agreement as yet as to what the term 'translation' actually covers in terms of communication" (Ulrych & Anselmi, 2008: 257). As Riccardi (2002: 1) notes

> the way in which translation has been dealt with has often changed over time, influenced by the literary, historical and philosophical background of the period. Even the terms used to express the concept of what we now define as translation have experienced an expansion or a reduction of their meaning (italics in the original).

A number of scholars (e.g. Hatim and Munday, 2007; Newmark, 1981, 1991; Munday, 2001; Roberts, 2002; Sager, 1994) indicate that the basic problem with defining translation is capturing the very distinct perspectives entailed in the practice. The nature of the concept itself is "misleading due to its etymology" (Newmark, 1981: 7), since the term *translation* encompasses both the notion of process and product. On

account of this, Sager calls for an *a priori* disambiguation of the sense in which "translation" is used

> English, like a number of other languages, permits the same formation pattern for both product and process nouns. In a technical environment where the same product may be obtained by different processes, this distinction is crucial and needs explicit clarification (Sager, 1994: 115)[29].

The frequently quoted definition taken from *The Concise Oxford English Dictionary* illustrates this semantic plurality:

> **translation** *n*. **1.** the act or an instance of translating. **2.** a written or spoken expression of the meaning of a word, speech, book, etc. in another language[30].

The first sense refers to the process of translation or the act of "transferring a written text from SL to TL" (Hatim and Munday, 2007: 6), the second to the product or the actual text produced as a result of that process. As pointed out by Hatim and Mason (1990: 3), readers have only access to the end-product and not to "pathways leading to decisions, to the dilemmas to be resolved by the translator".

In the current landscape of translation studies, the contrast between narrow and broad definitions of translation largely reflects the evolution of thinking on the subject

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[29] Juan Sager writes from a professional stance, that of industrial settings. In such environments, both meanings of translation comprise a wide range of concepts which, he feels, are not sufficiently delineated in current theories, as for many of them there are not yet separate names (1993: 115) The issue will be referred to again later on, when analysing the expanded meaning acquired by "translation" and when further dealing with the notion of translation as mediation.

[30] The distinction between *translation*, which is written and *interpretation*, which is oral is still a matter of some controversy among scholars. Riccardi (2002: 1) points out that at present "translation is the hyperonymy for both the written and oral mode", even though the verbs derived from the Latin *interpretari* are used to indicate oral translation. Roberts (2002: 429-430) concedes that the term *translation* is generic, referring to both the written and oral interlinguistic transfer of messages. She however points out that translation terminology has gradually evolved to distinguish between the various senses of the term, so that a clear distinction is now made between "interpretation" as oral transfer and "translation" as written transfer. Still, Kingscott (1996: 296) considers translation and interpreting as two different applied language professions, while Ulrych (1999: 26-7) emphasizes the degree of overlapping between the two. Gouadec (2007: 88) endorses a neat distinction between translators and interpreters, as the former "always translate *written* material or code or transcribed pre-recorded speech" and this operation "usually implies a time-lag between the moment the material is produced and the time when it is translated". He however admits the presence of hybrid forms, such as translations designed to be spoken (e.g. theatrical performance, dubbing, voice over) or dictated for increased productivity.

For clarity's sake, the present work will be solely concerned with the 'restricted' meaning of *translation* covering the mediation of written messages. With Sager (1994: 125), it is believed that "while the ultimate purpose of overcoming a language barrier is the same, the circumstances of mediation and the techniques are quite different".

and the profound transformation experienced by the translating practice since the mid-twentieth century. Early approaches to the study of translation, mainly concerned with the search of a single scientific theory that would encompass all translating, were constructed around the notion of linguistic transfer, intended as a code-switching operation. This was variously referred to as 'reciphering' (Kade, 1968), 'transcoding' (Popovič, 1971) or 'transcodage' (Ladmiral, 1979) and represented in a number of formalised diagrammatic models, which ended up being so universal and general that they lost touch with empirical reality (in Wilss, 1982: 83). They further promoted an atomistic, artificial and simplistic view of translation, with the selecting of "the so-called 'optimal equivalent' from the diverse potential equivalents" (Snell-Hornby, 1988: 16) at the heart of their methodology. Such kinds of formulations have long been overcome and already in 1975 Steiner maintained, rather extremistically (Ulrych and Anselmi, 2008: 257), that "inside or between languages human communication equals translation" (Steiner, 1975: 47).

Between the early narrow definitions and Steiner's broad formulation, several in-between "worthy efforts" (Taylor, 1990: xv) have been made, mainly to avoid the banality of a graphic description "without necessarily going into the highly technical cerebral processes involved" (Taylor, *ibid*: xiv- xv). Among these, Nida's and Newmark's definitions are worthy of note.

As early as 1964, Nida declared language to be "essentially a code in operation, or in other words, a code functioning for a specific purpose or purposes" (Nida, 1964: 120). He thus added a dynamic, extra-linguistic dimension to language study, which he considered

> especially important for translation, since the production of equivalent messages is a process, not merely of matching the parts of utterances, but also of reproducing the total dynamic character of communication (*ibid*: 120).

More specifically, he viewed translating as a process that

> consists in reproducing in the receptor language the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style (Nida and Taber, 1969: 12).

Working along similar lines, Newmark (1981: 7) described translation as

> a craft consisting in the attempt to replace a written message and/or statement in one language by a written message and/or statement in another language

and further distinguished between semantic translation, which "attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original" and communicative translation, which "attempts to produce on its readers an effect as close as possible to that obtained on the readers of the original" (Newmark, *ibid*: 39)[31].

The organising concept of these (and other contemporary[32]) definitions was the notion of equivalence and the study of translation was embedded in a fundamentally context-oriented communication dimension. Scholars became aware that "linguistic communication cannot be studied *in abstracto* and that many non verbal elements surround the so-called linguistic communication" (Cattrysse, 1998: 8). In this regard, worthy of mention is the model proposed by Jakobson in his essay *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation*, where he identifies (1959/2004: 139) three types of translation labelled as intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic:

1. Intralingual translation or *rewording* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.
2. Interlingual translation or *translation proper* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.
3. Intersemiotic translation or *transmutation* is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of sign of nonverbal sign systems.

Interlingual translation entails a substitution of "messages in one language not for separate code-units but for entire messages in some other language" (Jakobson, *ibid*: 139).

Jakobson's views were ground-breaking in more than one way. Commenting on his model, both Sager (1994: 121-2) and Snell-Hornby (2006: 21) underline that his semiotic understanding of interlingual translation goes further than the traditional

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[31] Newmark's distinction between semantic *vs.* communicative translation is closely associated with Nida's formal *vs.* dynamic equivalence, the former being source-oriented and "designed to reveal as much as possible of the form and content of the original message", the latter being target-oriented and based on the equivalent effect principle (1964: 165-166). Such kinds of dichotomies reflect the age-old debate of word and sense concerning "the degree of latitude the translator is permitted in representing the source text in translation" (Hatim and Mason, 1990: 5), which has besetted Translation Studies until recently (Snell-Hornby, 1988: 9).
[32] See for instance Catford (1965).

systems insofar as he emphasizes the need for human cognitive processes, providing the element up to that time missing in other definitions[33]. In this sense, Jakobson pioneered perspectives and views encapsulated in more recent approaches to translation.

Furthermore, by identifying "equivalence in difference" as the "cardinal problem of language and the pivotal concern of linguistics" (1959/2004: 139), Jakobson anticipated the emphasis that communication-oriented theorists would place from the 1970s onwards on translation as an interlingual process entailing the replacement of equivalent units. And finally, as Ulrych (1999: 36), remarks by introducing an intersemiotic dimension to the translating process he "has stretched the concept of translation to its limits", pointing not only to the broader vision which would characterise contemporary approaches to the study of translation, but also to the importance that intersemiotic translation would acquire as an "integral element in multimedia and multimodal transfer" (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 21).

Over the years, definitions have indeed widened to a great extent to reflect the progressively changing scenario surrounding the translation activity. The one provided by Sager (1994: 293) in relation to the translation process is highly indicative of this trend:

> translation can be described as a range of deliberate human activities, which are carried out as a result of instructions received from a third party, and which consists of text production in a target language, based, inter alia, on the modification of a text in a source language to make it appropriate for its intended new purpose.

However, it is the much quoted entry in the specialised *Dictionary of Translation Studies* (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997: 181) the most indicative instance of an expanded concept:

> **Translation** An incredibly broad notion which can be understood in many different ways, for example, one may talk of translation as a process or a product, and identify such sub-types as literary translation, technical translation, SUBTITLING and

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[33] Sager (1994: 122) goes on to explain that Jakobson's choice of "interpretation" must be understood as a generic term for a whole series of cognitive processes which occur in the translator's mind, and which are associated with three major activities, namely:
- problem-solving […] for establishing meaning and intention;
- decision-making for the choices in the new production process;
- evaluation for assessing the decisions taken in relation to previously defined objectives.
Levý (1967/2001) further elaborated the notion of translation as a decision making process.

MACHINE TRANSLATION; moreover, while more typically it just refers to the transfer of written texts, the term sometimes also includes INTERPRETING. […] Furthermore, many writers also extends its reference to take in related activities which most would not recognize as translation as such (see for example DIAGRAMMATIC TRANSLATION, INTER-SEMIOTIC TRANSLATION, PARAPHRASE and PSEUDOTRANSLATION[34]).

Writing only a couple of years on, Ulrych (1999: 34) noted that the definition had already been overtaken by events and translation had come to encompass quite a few more types and sub-types. Notwithstanding these contingent temporal limitations, what is of interest in an evolving defining perspective is the inclusion under the term *translation* of "a host of factors and processes that were once considered as lying beyond what constituted 'translation proper' or 'genuine translation'" (Ulrych, 1999: 33)*,* which result in

a range of documents, such as parallel texts, multilingual instructions, foreign language abstracts, gists, prose paraphrases of poetry, which are all generically called 'translation' because they are written in a 'target language' on the basis of texts in a 'source language' and because they maintain a certain similarity with their source language text (Sager, 1994: 116)[35].

If we accept this broad notion of translation, then we would also be inclined to agree with the overcoming of the most traditional concept of equivalence, or at least with its partial reformulation. As clearly emerges from the above definitions, the relationship holding between a source text (ST) and a target text (TT) is no longer framed in the mathematical and formal logic terms employed by structuralist linguistics-oriented approaches to denote "a relationship of absolute symmetry and equality involving guaranteed reversibility" (Snell-Hornby, 1988: 17). Within this framework, the concept was simplistically conceived as an interlingual one-to-one correspondence, with a very limited range of application. With the widening of the notion of translation, on the other hand, equivalence has been rethought to stretch to its more general meaning

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[34] For a discussion of pseudo-translation and the different meanings it takes whether in relation to literary translation or to the practice-oriented and linguistic approaches or to areas focussing on socio-cultural factors see Ulrych (1999: 34-5).

[35] It is becoming increasingly recognized that in view of the rapidly evolving context, the terms *translator* and *translation* now appear too restrictive and are replaced by broader terms such as language *mediator* and *language mediation*, and even *language professional* and *language industry* (Roberts, 2002: 442). Kingscott (1996: 295-7) talks of "reader-oriented writing" or "multilingual technical communication". Gouadec (2007: 46) employs the term "linguistic localiser".

of 'similar significance', 'virtually the same thing' (Snell-Hornby, *ibid*: 17), enabling scholars to put forward more relative definitions of translation and more realistically portray what actually occurs in real-life practice. Thus, for Veermer (1989/2001: 230), the nature of translation "is primarily determined by its *Skopos*[36] or commission". Similarly, in Nord's (1991: 28).view equivalence means adequacy to a purpose and

> translation is the production of a functional target text maintaining a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the intended or demanded function of the target text (translation skopos).

More generally, for Sager (1994: 116-7)

> the ultimate criterion for identifying a document as a 'translation' is its derivation from a document in another language. Hence, a 'translation' can also be defined as a derived document which maintains a certain degree of similarity of content with its source document while being clearly dissimilar in language from its source[37].

The notion of equivalence was to be completely abandon by descriptive schools of thought (the so-called Descriptive Translation Studies or DTS) and, as we shall further explore below, was substituted by that of norms. Translation came to be viewed as a manipulative process entailing a "rewriting of an original text" (Lefevere, 1992a: vii) and sharing the same basic processes which are at work in other forms of rewriting such as historiography, anthologization, criticism and editing (*ibid*: 9). This was in line with the fundamental target-oriented thrust of DTS, which clearly emerges in Toury's (1995: 32) exceptionally broad vision of translations as "all utterances which are presented or regarded as such within the target culture, on no matter what grounds". Toury is against the formulation of any *a priori* essentialist definition, deemed too restrictive for an activity as variable as translation. As he (*ibid*: 31), explains

> not only would the field of study be considerably shrunk that way, in relation to what cultures have been, and are willing to accept as translational, but research limited to these boundaries may also breed circular reasoning: to the extent that the definition is indeed

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[36] *Skopos* is the Greek term for 'aim' or 'purpose' and as such it came to be employed to refer to the purpose of a translation. The issue will be referred to in greater detail in section 2.3.2.2

[37] Underpinning this view is the conviction that some "genuine borderline cases" prevent a clear definition of translation, "since, especially in literature, adaptations, paraphrases and imitation of texts in other languages are sometimes difficult to separate from translations" (Sager, 1994: 125).

adhered to, whatever is studied – selected for study because it is known to fall within it, in the first place - is bound to reaffirm the definition.

What he thus aims to address in his definition "even in the longest run, is not even what translation is *in general*, but what it proves to be *in reality*, and hence what it may be expected to be under various specifiable conditions" (Toury, *ibid*: 32)[38].

In sum, in only a few decades the concept of translation has been broadened mainly to reflect the diverse tasks that translators are expected to carry out in their daily practice[39]. Translation is today a "phenomenon that has a huge effect on everyday life" (Hatim and Munday, 2007: 3), covering a wide range of reference. In this process, if on the one hand the concept has become somewhat fuzzier, on the other a more truthful description of the field has been attained, one in which the cognitive, cultural and, more recently, ideological and visual phenomena are accounted for as integral parts of both process and product (Hatim and Munday, 2007: 6). Yet, despite the undeniable "diversity of the translation world" (Hatim, 1997: 1), there is a common thread which gives the different fields and modes of translating a remarkable unity. In Hatim's (1997: 2) words this uniformity lies in the "underlying principles behind the production and reception of texts – *all* texts, written and spoken, source and target, technical and non-technical, etc." and emerges when translating is viewed as

> an act of communication which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication (which may have intended for different purposes and different readers/hearers) (*ibid*: 1).

It is with this perspective in mind that we shall now turn to properly consider the academic discipline concerned with the study of translation, focusing in particular on the views and research paradigms which will frame our investigation into embassy translation practices.

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[38] Snell-Hornby (2006: 156) views in Toury's approach a way to end age-old debates centred on the notion of equivalence. Alternatively, she suggests to take Reiss' broad view of translation as consisting of five basic types: interlinear, grammar translation, scholarly or documentary translation (Venuti's "foreignization" and Newmark's "semantic translation"), communicative (or instrumental) translation, modifying (or adapting) translation.

[39] The discussion conducted here certainly does not exhaust all the definitions that have been and could be given of translation. It was aimed at illustrating the considerable diversity of scholarship in the field, but also the varieties of meanings that translation currently entails.

2.3 Translation Studies

It is widely acknowledged (Munday, 2001; Riccardi, 2002; Roberts, 2002; Venuti, 2004) that if interest in translation goes far back in recorded history and there is a vast body of literature on the subject starting at least from Cicero and Horace, the study of the field grew into an academic discipline in its own right only in the second half of last century. Past writings on translating, however valuable, basically took the form of uncoordinated "passing remarks" (Venuti, 2004: 13), usually included in letters, essays or introductions to translations. As Wilss (1982: 11) observes, these commentaries never managed to coalesce "into a coherent, agreed upon, intersubjectively valid theory of translation".

Scholarly investigation became uninterrupted and systematic from the late 1950s onwards, when linguistics took an interest in the study of translation[40]. This

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[40] As remarked by Hatim and Mason (1990: 22), the rise of linguistics as a new discipline in the 20th century "brought a spirit of optimism to the pursuit of language study, a feeling that the groundwork was at last being laid for a systematic and scientific approach to the description of language". Indeed, the discipline abandoned its traditional philological bias and set out to investigate the functioning of language as a system. Two major traditions can be distinguished. On the one hand, there was a formalist tradition, whose main exponents were Ferdinand de Saussure and Noam Chomsky, and on the other, a functionalist tradition, represented, among others, by the Prague School linguists K. Bühler and R. Jakobson, by the anthropologist B. Malinowski and by the British linguists J.R. Firth and M.A.K. Halliday. The major concern of scholars within the formalist tradition was to have linguistics accepted as a science, on a par with other disciplines such as physics, mathematics, chemistry and so on. To do so, they attempted to approximate the methodologies of these disciplines, where the scientific approach was considered to be most effective. As a result, attention was focused on those aspects of language that could be most completely described and formally classified. In the second half of the century, linguists abandoned the methodological stringency typical of the natural sciences and of mathematics and began to exploit the findings of other disciplines, such as psychology and sociology. This change of focus provided them with a more adequate and true-to-life framework of reference for language investigation and led scholars to widen their field of interest from the micro-level of the word to the macro-structure of the text.
As far as translation is concerned, the fact that linguistics became concerned, for the very first time in history, with its study was a turning point in the evolution of the discipline. As Larose (1989: 33) admits, up that moment translation had been dismissed by most linguists as an operation *sui generis* and deemed unworthy of being considered a proper object of investigation. Normally, it was merely instrumental to language learning in modern language courses. The injection of linguistics into translation made it shift from being "une épreuve de travaux pratiques, de nature généralement littéraire" (*ibid*: 64) into a branch of applied linguistics. Structuralism led the basis for the emergence of contrastive analysis, which put forward an analytical and classification-oriented approach to translation. Vinay and Darbelnet' *Stylistique Comparée du Français et de l'Anglais* (1958) is the first significant attempt to draw up a systematic set of propositions dealing with the translation process.
For a comprehensive discussion of the different branches of linguistics see Lyons (1981: 32-64). For an overview of the academic relationship between linguistics and translation up to the 1960s see Munday (2001: 7-9); for a more comprehensive discussion see Mounin (1976). See Gentzler (2001) for a discussion of how translation was promoted in universities in the 1960s in the USA. For a presentation and a critical appraisal of the potential relevance of different linguistic theories and concepts see Snell-Hornby (1998: 65-105) and Taylor (1998: 10-64).

development was the result of a combination of factors, the most significant being the growing importance of translation as an instrument of communication and the rise of machine translation[41]. The field soon became dominated by two main and rather contrasting modes of research, one focused on linguistic matters, the other on literary concerns. Each of the two areas tended to exclude the other and to limit the kinds of texts they addressed "to show their methodologies to best advantage, viewing each other's work and accomplishments with scepticism" (Gentzler, 2001: 77). The linguistics-oriented approaches were convinced that no other discipline but linguistics could suitably deal with and solve all the facets of translating (Mattioli, preface to Apel, 1993: 11 quoted in Ulrych, 1999: 56). Based as they were on the developments of the early structuralist tradition, with its emphasis on scientific analysis, these approaches tended to disregard any line of investigation which was considered non-scientific, rejecting in particular the "alogical solutions and subjective speculation" (Gentzler, *ibid*: 77) of literary scholars. On their part, scholars within the literary field were suspicious of the theoretical assumptions, the prescriptive attitude and the jargon typical of linguistics-based theories and they began to look for new research models that could account for the phenomenon of literary translated texts in their concreteness and complexity[42].

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[41] Mounin (1976: 103) describes the relationship between linguistics and translation as a "conjunction nécessaire" and highlights the key role played by the advent of machine translation. Indeed, machine translation provided an important motivation for basing translation procedures on linguistic analysis as instructing a machine on how to translate could only be done through detailed linguistic analysis and descriptions. Linguists became aware of the urgent need to deal with "problèmes qui jusqu'à cette date n'étaient souvent qu'échantillonés, ou ignorés: problèmes sémantiques ou lexicologiques du mot à mot, des vocabulaires techniques (microglossaires), des polysémies, des idiotismes, du contexte, etc.; problèmes syntaxique surtout, qui suscitent un foisonnement jamais vu de solutions dans ce domaine, mais encore largement hypothétiques: opérationnelles, distributionelles, transformationelles, génératives, lesquelles ont braqué l'attention sur un des secteurs les moins développés de la linguistique"(*ibid*: 72-3).

Even though machine translation did not have the success that was expected, it nonetheless gave a fundamental impulse to the development of linguistic theories of non-automatic translation (Nida, 1976: 70). For an updated review of translation technologies as a field of interdisciplinary study see Alcina (2008).

[42] In fact, prescriptivism is a trait typical not only of linguistically-oriented approaches, but also of much traditional theoretical thinking about translation across history. As Taylor (1990: 14) argues, "any glimpse at a reputable treatise on the theory of translation will seem to devote a great deal of its time to dealing, in one way or another, with 'how' to translate a given type of text. This question of 'how' to translate a text may seem to be the obvious 'raison d'etre' of a theory of translation [...]".

Cicero, in his Libellus de Optimo Genere Oratorum (46 BC) explicitly recommended that translators should proceed "non ut interpres...sed ut orator" (Mounin, 1976: 24), that is to render a source text freely, avoiding a word-for-word translation. The French humanist Etienne Dolet, un *La manière de bien*

As Riccardi (2002: 2) notes, "the linguistic/literary dichotomy has not been overcome yet", but it is a fact that the field of study has over the years expanded to such an extent that has brought into being a "multidisciplinary approach which could integrate, under the general heading of translation studies, subdisciplines that may account for all translation phenomena". Together with this broadening of horizons, the field has shifted the main research paradigm from prescriptivism to descriptivism, providing crucial notions to fit the ever-expanding translating practice.

2.3.1 The origins of the discipline: Holmes' map

The development of the field as an independent academic discipline saw its beginnings in the seminal paper by James S. Holmes "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies" (Holmes, 1988/2004). The paper - originally presented at the Third International Congress of Applied Linguistics in Copenhagen in 1972, published in an expanded form in 1975 and later included in a collections of essays (1988) – "is

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traduire d'une langue en l'autre published in 1540, outlined five rules for translation (quoted in Nida, 1964: 15-16; Bassnett, 1991: 53):
- understanding perfectly the content and the intention of the original author;
- mastering both source and target languages;
- avoiding word-for-word renderings so as not to destroy the meaning of the original and to ruin the beauty of the expression;
- employing the speech forms in common usage;
- choosing and ordering words so as to produce a total overall effect with appropriate tone

Tytler, whose *Essay On the Principles of Translation* is credited with being the very first book in English of modern translation theory (Hatim and Mason, 1990:16) gave three "laws of translation":
- that the Translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work;
- that the style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original;
- that the Translation should have all the ease of original composition.

More recently, Nida (1964: 164) formulated the "basic requirements" of a translation in highly similar terms:
- making sense;
- conveying the spirit and manner of the original;
- having a natural and easy form of expression;
- producing a similar response.

Finally, it is interesting to read some of Savory's (1969: 50) highly contradictory rules on how a translation should be, which also shows the lack of agreement about what constitutes a modern theory of translation :
- a translation should read like an original work;
- a translation should read like a translation;
- a translation may add to or omit from the original;
- a translation may never add to or omit from the original.

generally accepted as the founding statement for the new discipline" (Gentzler, 2001: 93)[43].

In the essay, Holmes (1988/2004: 181) laments the fact that translation research was scattered across older disciplines and still unprepared to handle the expanded interest of scholars moving into the field, in particular

> from the adjacent fields of linguistics, linguistic philosophy, and literary studies, but also from such seemingly more remote disciplines as information theory, logic, and mathematics, each of them carrying with him paradigms, quasi-paradigms, models, and methodologies that he felt could be brought to bear on this new problem.

The resulting state of affairs appeared to be dominated by

> great confusion, with no consensus regarding the types of models to be tested, the kinds of methods to be applied, the varieties of terminology to be used. More than that, there is not even likemindedness about the contours of the field, the problem set, the discipline as such. Indeed, scholars are not so much as agreed on the very name for the new field (*ibid*: 181).

Thus, the primary objective Holmes set out to pursue was systematising "the scope and structure of the discipline" (*ibid*: 183). The lack of consensus as to its precise area of concern, together with the lack of a generally accepted name for the field of research, were in his view the two major impediments to the development of the discipline.

The first question he (*ibid*: 182-3) addressed was the name for the field, which he considered the less important of these two impediments. None of the terms that had been used through the years, he felt, were adequate: traditional terms like 'art' or 'craft', but also 'principles' or 'fundamentals' reflected too closely the subjective attitude or background of the writer; more recent neologisms such as 'translatology' or the French

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[43] James Holmes was an American-born scholar who in the 1960s became a lecturer at the Department of General Literary Studies at the University of Amsterdam. He was more or less critical of all the linguistic theories that had been put forward up to that moment, but remained alert to every new development in linguistics that could profitably advance the study of translation (Van Den Broeck, introduction to Holmes, 1988: 3). He was therefore enthusiastic about "the clearly discernible trend away from sentential linguistics" (Holmes, 1988/2004: 187) that the 1970s were witnessing, which he hoped would "encourage linguistically oriented theorists to move beyond sentence-restricted translation theories to the more complex task of developing text-rank (or "rank-free") theories.

'traductologie' were too obscure; other designations like 'translation science' or 'Übersetzungswissenschaft' too bold and placed the study of translating and translation

> in the company of mathematics, physics, and chemistry, or even biology, rather than that of sociology, history, and philosophy – or for that matter of literary studies (*ibid*: 183).

He was also sceptical about the use of 'translation theory'. While recognising that the designation had been productive, he however claimed that much valuable research was being carried out in the discipline that did not "strictly speaking, fall within the scope of theory formation" (Holmes, *ibid*: 182).

After having rejected each of these alternatives, Holmes argued for the adoption of "Translation Studies" as the most appropriate of all the designations available in English on account of the highly productive character of the term 'studies' in the naming of new disciplines, especially in the humanities or arts[44].

As for the second impediment, Holmes mapped the field of Translation Studies into an overall framework which was visually represented by Toury (1995: 10) as follows:

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[44] Newmark (1981: 19) also discusses at length the name for the discipline. His views somewhat overlap with Holmes's, but crucially diverge in the choice of the name, which reveals a diversity of research interests as well as an essentially opposing attitude to translation study and practice. Both scholars viewed with scepticism the possibility for translation research of ever reaching a true scientific status as envisaged in the early linguistic approaches to translation. Like Holmes, therefore, Newmark discarded most of the terms that were coined in those years hinting at the existence of a "science of translation", but finally opted for 'translation theory', even though he himself was aware of the partial inadequacy of the designation:

> "translation theory is a misnomer, a blanket term, a possible translation, therefore a translation label, for Übersetzungswissenschaft. In fact translation theory is neither a theory nor a science, but the body of knowledge that we have and still have to have about the process of translating: it is therefore an -ology, but I prefer not to call it 'translatology' (Harris, 1977) or 'traductology' (Vasquez-Ayora, 1977), because the terms sound too pretentious - I do not wish to add any -ologies or -isms. Besides, since, as Gombrich (1978) has pointed out, Kunstwissenschaft translates 'art theory', 'translation theory' will do" (1981: 19).

Newmark makes no mention of the term "Translation Studies" as it carries connotations which he does not share. As he himself explains, "it suggests that all you are doing is objectively writing about something" (personal communication during an interview on 27 August, 1997). Although, as we will see in the rest of the Chapter, Holmes called for an interdependent, dialectical relationship between the theoretical, descriptive and applied branches of the discipline, in fact, its evolution was to be mainly in the descriptive branch and Newmark has simply never been interested in that. Rather, his attitude has always been normative and evaluative, mainly concerned with providing guiding principles as how to best achieve a good and effective translation.
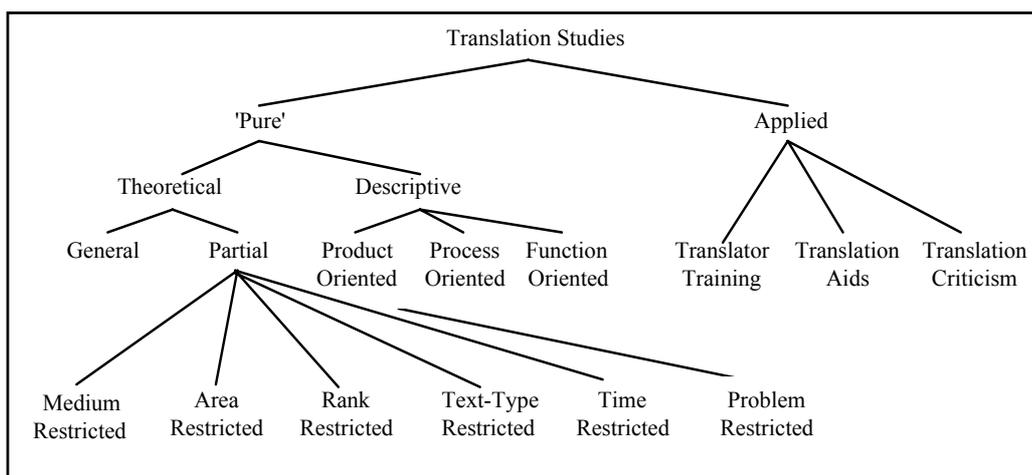
Figure 2.1   Holmes' map of Translation Studies

As is evident, Holmes divides the discipline into a number of levels or branches. The main split is between the *Pure* vs. *Applied* branch; *Pure Translation Studies* further breaks down into *Theoretical* (*General* and *Partial*) vs. *Descriptive Translation Studies*, with the latter subdividing again into three different research foci: *Product-*, *Process-* and *Function-Oriented*. For Toury (1995: 9), the main merit of Holmes' map lies precisely in this notion of division,

> not as a mere necessary evil, that is, but as a basic principle of organization, implying as it clearly does a proper *division of labour* between various kinds of scholarly activity (emphasis in the original).

Holmes' explanation of his framework starts from the assertion that translation is an empirical discipline. Thus, as aptly observed by Ulrych (1999: 50), he "establishes the centrality of experience and observable facts as the guiding principles of translation studies". He (1988/2004: 184) then states the two main objectives of pure translation studies, namely

> (1) to describe the phenomena of translating and translation(s) as they manifest themselves in the world of our experience, and (2) to establish general principles by means of which these phenomena can be explained and predicted.

The first objective falls within the scope of descriptive translation studies (DTS), the second within that of translation theory (TTh).

Of these two branches, he gives prior consideration to DTS, as it is the one that keeps constant and closest contact to the empirical discipline under investigation. He analyses at length what each of the three research areas covers:

- **product-oriented DTS** explores existing translations, starting from the description of individual translations and further involving a comparative analysis of various translations of the same text. These smaller-case studies can be included in larger corpora of translations, which can either be diachronic or synchronic;

- **process-oriented DTS** is concerned with investigating the mental processes taking place in translation;

- **function-oriented DTS** attempts to describe the function of translations in the receiving socio-cultural context, pursuing questions such as "which texts were (and, often as important, were not) translated at a certain time in a certain place, and what influences were exerted in consequence" (Holmes, 1988/2004: 185).

In keeping with the importance accorded to the descriptive branch, Holmes envisages that the results of DTS research should inform translation theory, whose main concern lies in using these results

> in combination with the information available from related fields and disciplines, to evolve principles, theories and models which will serve to explain and predict what translating and translations are and will be (*ibid*: 185).

Under the theoretical branch, Holmes (*ibid*: 186-8) distinguishes between general and partial theories and focuses his analysis on the latter:

- **medium-restricted theories** subdivide according to the medium used. Thus there can be theories of human vs. machine translation; mixed or machine-aided translation; written vs. oral translation (i.e. interpreting, which further breaks down into simultaneous and consecutive);

- **area-restricted theories** are limited to specific languages or cultures, the former closely related to the work done in comparative linguistics and stylistics;

- **rank-restricted theories** concern lower linguistic ranks or levels, usually the word or sentence;

- **text-type restricted theories** consider specific discourse types or genres, like literary translation, Bible translation or the translation of scientific texts;

- **time-restricted theories** concern themselves with the translation of contemporary texts as opposed to texts from an older period;
- **problem-restricted theories** are confined to one or more specific problems such as equivalence or the translation of metaphors or proper names.

These theories should not be thought of as mutually exclusive; in fact, more than one restriction can often apply at any one time. Thus, literary theories would be typically restricted as to area, medium and text type (Holmes, 1988/2004: 188).

The 'applied' branch of Holmes' framework concerns activities addressed to specific practical applications, most notably translation training, translation aid and translation criticism:

- **translation training** covers teaching methods, testing techniques and curriculum planning;
- **translation aids** involve lexicographical and terminological aids and grammars;
- **translation criticism** refers to the evaluation of translations.

Holmes also mentions a fourth area, that of **translation policy**, where he sees translation scholars informing on the place and role of translators, translating and translations in society, including questions such as the social and economic position of translators or the role of translation in teaching.

Despite the divisions marked out by Holmes, a crucial point in the map is the interdependent relationship established between the three branches, with each of the them

> supplying materials for the other two, and making use of the findings with which they in turn provide. Translation theory, for instance, cannot do without the solid, specific data yielded by research in descriptive and applied translation studies, while on the other hand one cannot even begin to work in one of the other two fields without having at least an intuitive theoretical hypothesis as one's starting point (*ibid*: 190).

This is in keeping with what he envisaged as the ultimate goal of translation studies, namely "to develop a full, inclusive theory accommodating so many elements that it can serve to explain and predict all phenomena falling within the terrain of

translating and translation" (*ibid*: 186). Thus far from being unidirectional, the development of translation theory is more of a dialectical one[45].

It was precisely in view of this dialectical relationship that Holmes finally recommended that attention should be given to all three branches, so as to ensure the growth and flourishing of the discipline even within the varying needs of a given moment.

2.3.2 The development of Translation Studies: the rise of descriptive models

Although Holmes came in for some criticism for devoting greater attention to the 'pure' side of theory and description seemingly at the expenses of the applied branch (Munday, 2001: 13; Ulrych, 1999: 51-2), his framework is often legitimately employed as a point of departure and praised for the breadth of his vision (Shuttleworth and Cowie, 1997: 184). Munday (2001: 13) underlines that the crucial role played by Holmes' map "is the delineation of the potential of translation studies", while Snell-Hornby (2006: 41) defines it as "a visionary blueprint of the future discipline". The name itself suggested by Holmes was meant to give "a more tentative and open range to scholarly activities than 'science', 'theory', etc" (Lambert, 1991: 26-27), thus accounting for a flexible division to incorporate further developments that would take place[46].

As Ulrych (1999: 52) asserts, the evolution of the discipline has mainly occurred in DTS, although recently there have been notable developments in the applied fields as

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[45] The issue of what constitutes translation theory has been the object of great debate among translation scholars; not surprisingly, as it reflects a "much expanded range of fields and approaches reflecting the differentiation of modern culture" (Venuti, 2004: 4). Kelly (1979: 1) argues that a "complete" theory of translation has "three components: specification of function and goal; description and analysis of operations; and critical comment on relationships between goal and operations". Venuti (2004: 5) envisages the history of translation theory as a set of changing relationships between the relative autonomy of the translated text and two other categories: equivalence and function. Steiner (1975: 280-1) argues that a translation theory "presumes a systematic theory of language with which it overlaps completely or from which it derives as a special case according to demonstrable rules of deduction and application". Sager (1994: 117) lists the following dimensions of a translation theory: communicative/author dimension; document or product dimension; reader/agent/recipient dimension; motivation/translator dimension; situational dimension. Finally, for Newmark (1981: 19) "translation theory's main concern is to determine appropriate translation methods".
[46] Hermans (1999: 8) notes that the name "Translation Studies" proposed by a pioneer of descriptivism as Holmes was led to some confusion, as the designation "has on occasion been taken to mean the specifically descriptive line of approach". Translation Studies is however now commonly used in its broader sense to indicate the whole discipline concerned with "any and all aspects of translation", whether theoretical, empirical or applied.

well. In fact, the growth in Translation Studies since Holmes' paper has seen different areas of his map come to the fore (Munday, 2001: 14), both in linguistics and literary circles[47].

It has become customary to analyse the evolution of the discipline in terms of "turns" (Snell-Hornby, 2006), which roughly correspond to the last three decades of the 20th century and mirror the exponential broadening of horizons among scholars. As it will become clear in the following sections, each of these 'turns' would prove instrumental in providing a range of perspectives for critical discussion and in giving the field of study its interdisciplinary quality.

2.3.2.1 The pragmatic reorientation of the 1970s and the growth of systems theories

Compared to the previous decade, the 1970s marked the beginning of a more fruitful interaction between linguistics and translation theory. The development came with the so-called 'pragmatic turn' in linguistics, which shifted attention from the micro-level of the word and sentence to the macro structure of the text as the primary object of investigation and undermined the simplistic assumption – much informed by structural-generative linguistics - that translation merely requires learning vocabulary lists, applying grammar rules and exchanging labels (Snell-Hornby, 1988: 65-8)[48].

The pragmatic speech act theory put forward by Austin (1962) and further developed by Searle (1969) brought about a view of utterances as both statements and actions and has come to be considered one of the major forces in the pragmatic reorientation of those years, together with

> the inclusion of social and communicative aspects of language and the emergence of text linguistics, which all favoured a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to translation, more critical and appreciative investigations of the process and product of translation and hence the development of the discipline of Translation Studies as such (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 37).

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[47] Gentzler (2001: 94) highlights how the product-oriented branch became the approach most identified with later Translation Studies, calling for a text-focused empirical description of translations; the function-oriented branch introduced a cultural component effecting a translated text's reception; the process-oriented approach became less important as the field developed.
[48] For a critical discussion of Chomsky's generative grammar, its applications to translation and its limits see Gentzler (2001: 48-59).

Along similar lines, Wilss (1982: 38) argues that the development of functionalism in linguistics supplemented the

> structural-generative linguistic theory with a situational-contextual view of linguistic relationships. […]. The latter in turn affected the development of the science of translation in many ways: through the emergence of text-linguistics, which views text as a coherent sequence of sentences [and] by distinguishing between designation (meaning), which governs the relationship within a language between signifiant (signifier) and signifié (signified), and denotation (reference), which determines the relationship between linguistic sign and the external world. This made it possible to differentiate between the linguistic dimension of the translation process (what is said) and its communicative dimension.

The linguistic-oriented scientific study of translation was continued in Germany, where it received a fundamental impulse mainly by the Leipzig School theorists (Gentzler, 2001: 67-9, Munday, 2001: 14; Snell-Hornby, 2006: 26-9). In view of the developments occurring in the study of language, the foundations were laid for a rethinking of the equivalence concept in more content-based and communicative terms (Snell-Hornby, 1988: 21-2).

Germany also saw the rise of theories centred around functional text typologies such as the one put forward by Reiss (1977/1989). Reiss' approach builds on Bühler's three-way classification of language functions into *Ausdruck* (expressive), *Darstellung* (informative) and *Appell* (vocative). On this basis, she identifies three different types of texts, namely:

- **informative texts**, aimed at "plain communication of facts";
- **expressive texts**, conveying the author's aesthetic dimension of language
- **operative texts**, whose main function is to appeal or to persuade the reader of the text to act in a certain way.

To these three types, Reiss adds a fourth one, comprising **audiomedial texts**, such as films or visual and spoken advertisements.

Chesterman (1989: 28) represents Reiss' typology as follows (figure 2.2):

Informative

```
                    reference
                    work

                    report

                    lecture

              operating instructions

                 tourist brochure

  biography                              sermon

  play           official speech         electoral speech

                    satire               advertisement
  poem
```

Expressive   Operative
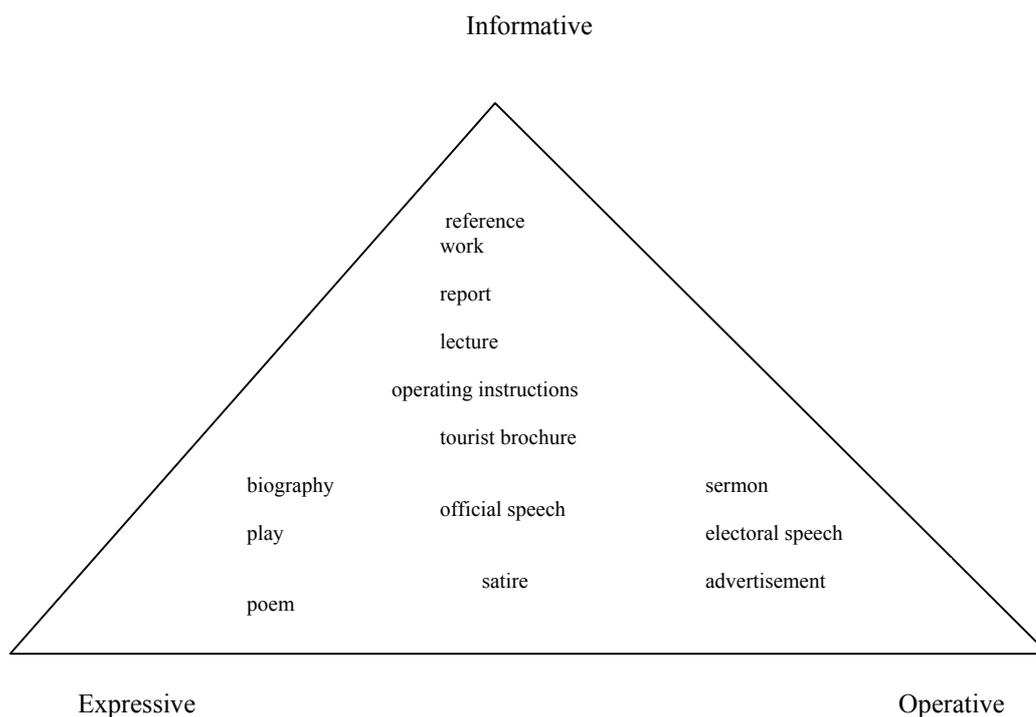
Figure 2.2 Reiss' typology of text types (adapted from Chesterman, 1989: 105)

Reiss recognizes the existence of hybrid types of texts, but emphasizes that texts have a predominant function which determines the translation method to be adopted for each type. Thus, informative texts require a "plain prose" translation, with the use of explicitation as required; expressive texts should use the "identifying method", with the translators adopting the perspective of the ST author; operative texts should be adapted to the target culture, with the translator trying to achieve an equivalent effect among TT readers; finally, with audio-medial texts (not included in Chesterman's figure) translators should supplement written words with visual images and music.

Reiss' insights into text typology have had the merit of contributing towards moving the focus of attention away from lower linguistic levels towards a consideration of the communicative purpose of translation. However, over the years her approach has also been criticised for being essentially rigid and establishing a strict correlation between function, text type and translation strategy (Munday, 2001: 77; Ulrych, 1999: 15)[49]. As future research was to show, the translation strategies adopted depend on a

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[49] In Fawcett's (1997: 106) view this is the most serious criticism of Reiss' text type approach, as "there is quite simply no necessary link between text function and translation strategy". Another important

variety of factors including the translator's role and purpose, socio-cultural forces, ideologies, the commissioner's brief and so on.

Alongside a pragmatic reorientation, the 1970s witnessed another reaction to static prescriptive models coming from literary-oriented quarters. There was a widespread desire among scholars to look for new conceptual frameworks that could change the nature of translation analysis and, above all, restore a balance between originals and translations. This feeling was fed by an opposition to the prevailing attitude of considering a legitimate object of study only canonised texts, that is "accepted by the community as of high literary worth" (Holmes, 1988: 107). Translation, by definition, did not traditionally belong to the canon; rather, it was relegated to the periphery as a second-rate product (Hermans, 1985: 5). Further it was dismissed as a secondary activity, a mere copy or substitute of the original:

> translation has been frequently contrasted unfavourably with 'original' writing, as a kind of lesser activity, or as a form of training for the real 'business' of writing (Bassnett, 1996: 10).

This attitude was now being rejected since it had turned the study of translation into a "repetitive, predictable and prescriptive exercise" that merely served "to demonstrate the original's outstanding qualities by highlighting the errors and inadequacies of any number of translations of it" (Hermans, 1985: 8-9).

By far, the most influential model turned out to be the polysystem theory developed by the Israeli scholar Itamar-Even Zohar (1978/2004). The model considered translated literature as a system functioning in the broader historical, social and literary system of a given target culture. In particular, building on the work of the Russian Formalists of the 1920s[50], it posited literature as a heterogeneous, hierarchized system of systems (or polysystems), in which diverse genres, trends and schools are in constant

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criticism directed at the Reissan taxonomy questions the legitimacy of having only three language functions. A few years later, Newmark (1981) devised a similar text typology based on Bühler's language functions, distinguishing between what he terms expressive, informative and vocative texts and likewise relating the predominant functions of a text to translation methodology. Compared to Reiss, however, Newmark also takes into consideration Jakobson's expanded scheme of functions, namely the phatic, the metalingual and the aesthetic or poetic. While not setting up a specific typology based on these three further functions, he nevertheless draws attention to their role in a text.

[50] The main tenets of Russian Formalism and their relevance to Translation Studies are discussed in depth in Gentzler (2001: 81-91).

competition with each other to achieve canonised status. This approach thus contrasts with a static view of literature and introduces a "highly kinetic situation in which things are continuously changing" (Holmes, 1988: 107). In this dimension, translated literature has its place, being one among a number of elements constantly struggling for domination, readership, prestige and power:

> it is necessary to include translated literature in the polysystem. This is rarely done, but no observer of the history of any literature can avoid recognising as an important fact the impact of translations and their role in the synchrony and diachrony of a certain literature (Even-Zohar, 1978/2004: 203).

Because the polysystem is in a continuous state of flux, the position of translated literature is not fixed either, alternatively occupying primary or secondary positions. In the former case, "it participates actively in shaping the centre of the polysystem" (*ibid*: 203), challenging the dominant aesthetics of the target culture and introducing new ideas, new methods and new ways of looking at the world. In the latter case, on the other hand, it conforms to, and even reinforces, existing models and conventions.

Polysystem theory thus challenged long-established perspectives in translation theory and enabled scholars to focus on the way texts function within a given literary culture, how they gain and lose their position and how social and subjective factors act as shaping forces in this process (Ulrych, 1997: 222). It allowed for a non-prescriptive definition of equivalence and adequacy, varying according to the historical and cultural context of the text. This offered translation theory "an escape" from the linguistically-biased arguments on the concept of equivalence (Munday, 2001: 111) and opened a number of paths to researches in translation studies:

> all kinds of new work began to be undertaken: the systematic study of the history of translation and translating, the recovering of the statements by translators and translation theory of previous times. This kind of work paralleled similar research in women's studies, particularly of the 'hidden from history' variety. There was a great deal of valuable, essentially descriptive research, and a great deal of comparative study that followed James Holmes's model of mapping out hierarchies of correspondences between texts in order to better analyse translators' strategies (Bassnett, 1998: 128)[51].

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[51] Bassnett (1998: 128) also notes that the polysystemic approach received some criticism most notably for shifting "attention too far away from the source text and context onto the target system".

Not surprisingly, then, polysystem theory was incorporated within Translation Studies, and merged with it to such an extent that during the 1980s the two became virtually indistinguishable (Gentzler, 2001: 106).

2.3.2.2 The 1980s: the Manipulation School and the cultural turn

If the 1970s were marked by a shift from word to text, the 1980s witnessed the move from translation as text to translation as culture. Culture-oriented developments in various camps of the field enabled the discipline to acquire its basic profile and brought about a fundamental change of paradigm[52], which led Bassnett and Lefevere's (1992a: ix) to claim that "the growth of Translation Studies as a separate discipline is a success story of the 1980s".

The incorporation of the polysystemic approach within Translation Studies occurred mainly through the work of an international group of scholars, based in Belgium, the Netherlands and Israel who, during the second half of the 1970s, were brought together at a series of symposia on literary translation. The key publication of this group was a collection of essays published in 1985 under the title of *The Manipulation of Literature. Studies in Literary Translation*, edited by Theo Hermans[53]. Since then the group has been known as the *Manipulation School*[54]. Its leading members were Susan Bassnett, Theo Hermans, José Lambert, André Lefevere and Gideon Toury (Gentzler, 2001: 104-5; 131-2; Munday, 2001: 119-121; Snell-Hornby, 2006: 47-9).

The starting point of the group's theory was the "provocative" claim (Hermans, 1999: 8) that from a target perspective "all translation implies a certain degree of

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[52] Drawing on Kuhn (1962), Hermans (1999: 9-11) clarifies the various steps involved in paradigm shifts and explains how the descriptive 'paradigm' originated in Translation Studies.

[53] Gentzler (1998: x) observes that the publication represented a milestone in the development of the discipline.

[54] Hermans (1999: 8) points out that it was Lefevere who suggested the word 'manipulation', while the term 'Manipulation School' was coined by Armin Paul Frank (1987: xiii). It then gained currency through Snell-Hornby's (1988: 22-6) account of the approach as one of the two major European schools of thought in the 1908s. Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997: 183-4) further remark that the Manipulation School enthusiastically adopted Holmes' proposed designation for the discipline. As a result, for a long time *Translation Studies* was strongly associated with an exclusive focus on the study of literary translation to the exclusion of other forms of translation. Yet Holmes' original map did not contain this limitation.

manipulation of the source text for a certain purpose" (Hermans, 1985: 11). The common ground of their theories lay in

> a view of literature as a complex and dynamic system; a conviction that there should be a continual interplay between theoretical models and practical case studies; an approach to literary translation which is descriptive, target-oriented, functional and systemic; and an interest in the norms and constraints that govern the production and reception of translations, in the relation between translation and other types of text processing, and in the place and role of translations both within a given literature and in the interaction between literatures (Hermans, 1985: 10-11).

The link with polysystem theory and DTS are evidently strong. The group totally rejected the prescriptive, source-text oriented and evaluative attitude of linguistic approaches. They took the translated text as it was and attempted to describe the various factors accounting for its nature. Translated texts stopped being considered a mere reproduction of "the original, the whole original and nothing but the original" (Hermans, *ibid*: 9) and came to be seen as the product of a manipulative activity undertaken under the influence of powerful social, ideological and poetological constraints.

Since the publication of Holmes' paper "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies", DTS has evolved to encompass a host of related issues. Snell-Hornby (2006: 49-50) notes that of the members of the *Manipulation School* Toury was to focus on developing a systematic methodology of descriptive translation studies, whereas Lefevere and Bassnett were to become most closely linked to what was hailed as the 'cultural turn' in Translation Studies. This was another "real breakthrough" (Gentzler, 1998: xi) for the field and had as its main publication the collection of essays co-edited by Bassnett and Lefevere entitled *Translation, History and Culture* (1990). The introductory essay was intended "as a kind of manifesto" (Bassnett, 1998: 123) of this major change of emphasis:

> once upon a time, the questions that were always being asked were 'How can translation be taught?' and 'How can translation be studied?'. […] Now the questions have changed. The object of study has been redefined; what is studied is the text embedded in its network of both source and target cultural signs and in this way Translation Studies has been able to utilize the linguistic approach and to move beyond it (Bassnett and Lefevere, 1990).

Fundamental to the statement was the conviction that translations are neither produced nor received in a vacuum and that

> there are all kinds of textual and extratextual constraints upon the translator. These constraints, or manipulatory processes involved in the transfer of texts have become the primary focus of work in translation studies, and in order to study those processes, translation studies has changed its course and has become both broader and deeper (Bassnett, 1998: 123-4).

As remarked by Hermans, (1999: 14), Bassnett and Lefevere pursued, both jointly and separately, the increased emphasis on institutional and ideological factors (e.g Lefevere, 1992b; Bassnett and Lefevere, 1998), while other scholars explored gender-based and post-colonial approaches[55].

In parallel, also the linguistics-oriented schools laid the foundations for the cultural turn to take place. This occurred mainly through the *skopos* theory as devised by Reiss and Vermeer (1984) (Snell-Hornby, 1988: 43-4). As stated before (see note 36), *Skopos* is the Greek term for 'aim' or 'purpose' and as such it came to be employed to refer to the purpose of a translation. The idea is at the heart of Reiss and Vermeer's theory, which postulated that the *skopos* and the mode of its realisation are negotiated with the client commissioning the translation and are largely constrained by the user's needs and expectations. Consequently, the *skopos* of a translation may not coincide with that of the source text. In this case, the text undergoes a change of function, whereas in cases where the *skopos* remains the same the two texts experience functional constancy (Schäffner, 1998: 236). Reiss and Vermeer also distinguished between equivalence and adequacy, the former referring to the relationship between two texts when the fulfil the same communicative function, the latter to the lack of a functional match and they fulfilling of the translation *skopos* outlined by the commission[56]. Functional constancy is seen as the exception.

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[55] A major exponent of gender studies was Sherry Simon (1996). Post-colonial translation theories were propounded by Arroyo (1999), Cronin (1996), the, Niranjana (1992), Spikav (1993/2004), Vieira (1999). For a critical appraisal of these movements, the bulk of which was taking place outside Europe, see Munday (2001: 131-142). For an in-depth discussion of the connection between Translation Studies and cultural studies see Bassnett (1998: 123-140). Lefevere (1992) explored the idea of translation as rewriting, which will be discussed in the following section.

[56] Toury (1995) was to make a different distinction between *adequacy* and *acceptability*, the former occurring when the translation conforms to the source norms, the latter when it conforms to the target norms (see below).

Skopos theory therefore envisages the possibility of the same text being translated in a variety of ways according to the purpose of the target text and the commission. As Vermeer (1989/2001: 228) himself claims

> what the skopos states is that one must translate, consciously and consistently, in accordance with some principles respecting the target text. The theory does not state what the principle is: this must be decided separately in each specific area.

Vermeer frequently linked his approach to the ideas of Justa Holz-Mänttäri (1984), whose theory, known as translational action, reflects "the everyday routine of the practising translator" (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 56). Her approach is deemed as being even more radical than Vermeer's for her claim that translating is not a matter of language at all, but rather a functionally-oriented communication involving cross-cultural relations (Munday, 2001: 22). It is interesting to briefly look at the series of roles and players involved in such communicative process. These have been summarised by Munday (*ibid*: 23) as follows:

- **the initiator**: the company or individual in need of a translation;
- **the commissioner**: the individual contacting the translator;
- **the ST producer**: the author of the ST;
- **the TT producer**: the translator;
- **the TT user**: the person using the TT (e.g. as teaching material or sales literature);
- **the TT receiver**: the final receiver of the TT (e.g. students or readers).

An important consequence of these approaches was the 'dethroning' (Vermeer, 1984) of the original and the upgrading of the translator's position as a key player. Given the importance of the TT in the translation process, the ST no longer plays any role in setting the standards for the translator's decisions. Translators are given the role of co-authors and are recognized the prestige of being experts in their field, competent enough to act in accordance with the commissioned *skopos*.

The paradigmatic change that took place in the 1980s was brought about by linguistics and literary oriented scholars with one major difference outlined by Toury (1995: 25) when comparing the first formulations of *Skopos* theory with the start of his own target-oriented approach:

whereas mainstream Skopos-theorists still see the ultimate justification of their frame of reference in the more 'realistic' way it can deal with problems of an *applied* nature, the main object being to improve (i.e., change!) the world of our experience, my own endeavours have always been geared primarily towards the *descriptive-explanatory* goal of supplying exhaustive accounts of whatever has been regarded as translational within a target culture, on the way to the formulation of some *theoretical* laws.

Indeed, Toury was wary of the unavoidable prescriptivism of applied orientations, "even if they are brought closer to reality […] and even if their pluralism and tolerance are enhanced" (1995: 19).

Toury's descriptive endeavours were rooted in the firm conviction that "describing, explaining and predicting phenomena pertaining to its object level" (*ibid*: 1) is the main goal of an empirical discipline. While recognising the value of many individual attempts made to account for authentic translational behaviour and its results, he did however feel the lack of a properly systematic descriptive branch to incorporate such isolated studies. These he saw as having been performed within disciplines falling outside Translation Studies, namely contrastive linguistics, contrastive textology, comparative literature, text linguistics, pragmatics or psycholinguistics:

while their subject matter could well have been deemed translational, the theoretical and methodological frameworks within which it was handled could not, if only because their interests lacked the wish to fully account for all that translation may, and does involve. What is missing, in other words, is not isolated attempts reflecting excellent intuitions and supplying fine insights (which many of the existing studies certainly do), but a systematic branch proceeding from clear assumptions and armed with a methodology and research techniques made as explicit as possible and justified within Translation Studies itself. Only a branch of this kind can ensure that the findings of individual studies will be intersubjectively testable and comparable, and the studies themselves replicable (*ibid*: 3).

In particular, Toury (1995: 3) attacked the practice inherent in these approaches of resorting to randomly selected "examples" as evidence for one's claims, ignoring the "regularities of behaviour" Toury proposed a three-step methodology (*ibid*: 36-9) which integrates a description of the product and its wider socio-cultural context:

1. situate translated texts within the target culture system and describe them in terms of their acceptability;
2. identify relationships between 'coupled pairs' of ST and TT segments and relate them to the underlying concept of translation;

3. draw generalizations as to the process of translation, that is as to "the considerations which may have been involved in making the decisions whose results were encountered at the beginning of the analysis, along with the factors which may have constrained the act" (*ibid*: 37).

The first step of Toury's methodology is what marks the 'orientedness' of his approach, which – as he himself states (*ibid*: 36) - has been wrongly interpreted by many, taken to mean that this is where observation ends. Rather, for Toury the translated text is the starting point in as far as it is a fact of the target culture:

> neither source text nor transfer operations and transferred features, nor even translation relationships, would have been excluded from a target-oriented program of DTS. They were just given a different status. This is also to say that 'orientedness' is far from tantamount to 'exclusiveness' […]: the present approach is characterized as target-oriented *because this is where its observations start*. By no means should it be taken to mean that this is where these observations would also be exhausted (*ibid*: 36) (emphasis in the original).

This programmatic stance also reflects the scholar's belief that only when all target constraints are accounted for can the transfer process approach a comprehensive explanation.

The comparative analysis envisaged in the second step of the methodology, by Toury's own admission (1995: 80) can only be partial and ad hoc in nature, as it is not carried out on the whole of the source and target texts as such, but only on certain aspects of their relation, which are chosen by the investigator according to their relevance "to the operation which would then be performed on them" (Toury, *ibid*: 88). The partial nature of the analysis is justified by Toury in methodological as well as theoretical terms. From a methodological point of view, taking the text as an ultimate unit would make the retrospective comparative task impracticable and from a theoretical point of view, "no act of translation is conceivable without *serial* operations" (Toury, *ibid*: 87).

The third step of the methodology involves the concept of norms, a crucial notion of Toury's thinking. Despite the potential ambiguity of the term, which appears to have some kind of prescriptive function (Munday, 2001: 113), norms are sociocultural constraints specific to a culture, society and time and governing the translation activity.

Norms can be reconstructed using both textual sources, that is the texts themselves and extratextual sources, such as the explicit statements or critical formulations made by translators, editors, publishers and any other individual involved in the translating act. The latter however "are partial and biased, and should be therefore treated with every possible circumspection" (Toury, 1995: 65). Norms can be of three types: initial, preliminary and operational (see Table 2.1) and can be diagrammatically represented as follows:

Initial norms Subjection to S norms Subjection to T norms Adequate translation Acceptable translation	They define the *a priori* global approach of a translator.
Preliminary norms Translation policy Directness of translation	Translation policy concerns the factors determining the selection of texts for translation. Directness of translation concerns the target society's tolerance or intolerance of translation through an intermediate language.
Operational norms Matricial norms Text-linguistics norms	They concern the actual decisions taken during the translation process itself. Matricial norms include phenomena such as omission or relocation of passages, textual segmentation, addition of passages and footnotes. Text-linguistics norms govern the selection of TT linguistic material, including lexical items, phrases and stylistic features.

Table 2.1   Toury's translation norms

Toury's methodology laid important foundations for descriptive work, but was not spared criticism. The second step of his methodology is considered one of the most controversial areas of his approach (Munday, 2001: 112). Being partial and ad hoc in nature it certainly leads to a flexible and non-prescriptive analytical means of analysis; at the same time, however, it also produces a "less than rigorously systematic means of comparing ST and TT" (Munday, 2001: 112), thus contrasting with Toury's claim for a

fully objective and replicable model. Indeed, as Munday (*ibid*: 124) argues, "the exact form of ST-TT comparison remains as yet to be determined"[57].

The concept of norms was also criticized. For Newmark, for instance, norms are to be seen as opposed to values, in that they imply the negation of translation standards; furthermore "they generalise where a sensitive translator particularises; they pursue usage where a true translator wrestles with meaning; in every age they are the epitome of smoothness, naturalness, unobtrusiveness, fluency, invisibility […] (Newmark, 1997b: 39). Hermans (1996) was to further elaborate the notion of norms by considering them social and cultural realities and not merely constraints on the translator's behaviour as they were for Toury. According to Hermans (*ibid*: 28), norms govern the translation process at virtually every stage and level: (

> firstly, in the decision by the relevant agent in the receptor system whether or not to import a foreign-language text, or allow it to be imported; secondly, if it is decided to be imported, whether to translate (whatever the term may mean in a given socio-cultural configuration) or to opt for some other mode of importation; and thirdly, if it is decided to translate, how to approach the task, and how to see it through[58].

2.3.3 The 1990s and the growing visibility of the discipline

Both the Manipulation School and Toury's development of DTS, on the one hand, and the two innovative functional approaches developed in Germany (i.e. *Skopos* theory and translational action), on the other, managed to bring about new paradigms for scholarly research. Both were "polemically oriented" (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 65) against the then linguistic dogmas, but a basic divide held strong: the descriptivists discarded any form of evaluation, while the functionalists supported it. Snell-Hornby (2006: 64) sums up the situation as follows:

> the new paradigm of the Manipulation School was based on the vehement rejection of "the normative and source-oriented approaches typical of most traditional thinking about translation" (Hermans, 1985: 64), and this extends to the rejection of translation critique in general and basically too of translators' training institutes with their inevitably normative and evaluative approach. The German functional approach was developed

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[57] Munday (2001: 117-8) provides an in-depth review of criticism received by Toury; Gentzler (2001: 123- 131; 140-4) further discusses Toury's work.
[58] Hermans (1999: 91-4) and Pym (2007, online http://www.tinet.org/~apym/on-line/translation/2007_toury_laws.pdf, last accessed 17 November, 2008) contribute a further appraisal of Toury's concept of norms and a discussion of what lies beyond.

within such institutes and naturally included an element of evaluation, but the criteria was shifted from the linguistic components of the source text to the function of the translation in the target language. That the Manipulation scholars rebelled against the particular normative dogmas of the time is absolutely plausible, but their own dogmatic rejection of any kind of evaluation has never been convincingly explained. It has also resulted in a large quantity of work in Descriptive Translation Studies, some of which, as Hermans was later to admit (1998: 99), does not go beyond a formalistic approach and lacks a clear purpose.

Beside this divergent tenet, descriptive and functionalist schools had a different understanding of basic concepts such as 'function' and 'norms' (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 64; 72-6). Notwithstanding these differences, the two schools should not be looked at as opposites *per se*. Rather, they should be seen as complementary[59].

The 1990s was an exciting time for the study of translation, which saw the influence of Hallidayan systematic functional grammar (1994) spreading to translation studies[60] along with the so-called 'empirical turn' taking place. Two key works which have employed Halliday's model are House (1977; 1997)[61] and Hatim and Mason (1990; 1997).

House's model of translation quality assessment is based on a systematic comparison of the textual profile of the ST and the TT, leading to the assessment of the quality of the translation and involving the following steps:

- outlining a profile of the ST register;

- describing the ST genre realized by the register;

- stating the function of the ST;

- carrying out the same descriptive process for the TT;

- comparing the TT profile to the ST profile and identifying mismatches or errors;

- producing a statement of quality of the translation;

- categorizing the translation as either overt or covert.

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[59] Both Snell-Hornby (2006: 163) and Newmark (1997a: 60) agree on complementarity of the two lines of thought. Although Newmark's evaluative approach is essentially opposed to the mainstream descriptive studies, in as far as they are historical and sociological in nature and only "focus on the translations as new and important components of the target language literature", the value of these contrasting views however is not denied altogether by Newmark when he (*ibid*: 60). argues that "there is no reason why the two studies should not proceed as it were side by side"

[60] Eggins (1994) provides a detailed introduction to systemic functional grammar; Munday (2001: 90-1) and Taylor (1998: 17-21; 78-80) illustrate a translation-oriented view of relevant concepts.

[61] House's original model dates back to 1977, but received a number of criticisms concerning the nature, complexity and terminology of the analytical categories employed. In her revised model, House tackles such criticisms incorporating some of her earlier categories into an Hallidayan register analysis of field, tenor and mode (Munday, 2001: 92).

An overt translation is one that does not claim to be an original and is tied to a particular source culture; whereas a covert translation "is a translation which enjoys the status of an original source text in the target culture" (House, 1997: 69) and aims "to recreate, reproduce, or represent in the translated text the function the original has in its linguacultural framework and discourse world" (House, *ibid*: 114). In this case it will be necessary to apply a 'cultural filter' through the modification of cultural elements to give the impression that the TT is an original.

Hatim and Mason's "foundations for a model of analysing texts" (1997: 14-35) integrate and go beyond House's register analysis. They combine bottom-up investigation with top-down considerations[62] in relation to the "text-context" interaction. The contextual criteria called into question are intertextuality and intentionality. Texts are considered realizations of "communicative requirements" as well as of "power-oriented stance", going from social distance to physical proximity. They define discourse in its wider sense as

> modes of speaking and writing which involve social groups in adopting a particular attitude towards areas of socio-cultural activity (e.g. racist discourse, bureacratese, etc.) (1997: 216)

The underlying principle of the whole model is the notion of motivatedness. Its centrality reflects the fact that "it is this notion which provides the essential link between textual occurrences and the context in which they are embedded" (1997: 24).

Hatim and Mason's model of textuality is finally linked to the activity of translating through the notions of communicative stability vs. turbulence (*ibid*: 27-35), presented on a continuum going from "expectation-fulfilling and norm confirming" to "expectation defying and norm-flouting". More stable texts may require a fairly literal approach with least intervention on the part of the translator, while more dynamic texts

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[62] Top-down and bottom-up processing are widely employed in cognitive psychology and adjacent disciplines to describe two different ways of analysing and processing language. As defined by Hatim and Mason (1997: 225) "**top-down** processing involves the reliance by the text user on contextual information (higher-level knowledge) in actually dealing with the information received (words, sentences, etc.). In **bottom-up** processing, on the other hand, text users mostly utilize text-presented information as a point of departure towards the discovery of some contextual effect".
Snell-Hornby (1988: 27-8) and Taylor (1998: 74-8) discuss at length how contextual analysis greatly benefited form insights contributed by cognitive psychology.

pose the translator more interesting challenges and literal translation may no longer be a viable option[63].

Munday (2001: 101) questions whether Hatim and Mason's approach constitutes a model to be applied in the conventional sense of the term; he rather suggests to take the authors' proposals "as a list of elements to be considered when examining translation", which are presented through a series of case studies on a variety of text types. This is in keeping with a flexible approach to the investigation of translation, which does not try to compress a phenomenon as varied and complex as translation into strict parameters and which attempts to cut across rigid and false distinctions between text-types.

Alongside register and discourse analysis approaches, the complexities of the translating process began to be observed from a marked psychological angle. To this end, a method of analysis known as "think-aloud" protocols (TAPs) was borrowed from psychology and applied to the study of the translating process. The technique involves asking a translator to translate a text and to verbalise, at the same time, what goes on in his/her mind during the various stages of the process. The verbal reports produced are recorded and then transcribed, with the ultimate aim of understanding the processes activated inside the "black-box" of the translators' mind[64].

TAP studies are evidently descriptive and empirical in nature, falling within the process-oriented branch identified by Holmes. Despite having been subject to a considerable amount of criticism, especially related to the methodology used and to "the lack of representativeness in the sample of informants or in the tasks they are asked to do" (Bell, 1989: 189 quoted in Roberts, 2002: 439), TAP research has given rise to interesting conclusions, enabling scholars to realise that professional translators resort to

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[63] The formulation of Hatim and Mason's approach echoes to a certain extent Newmark's correlative approach (1991; 1995), where a series of correlations built around the syntactic structure "the more … the more" or "the less … the less" are devised as a "sliding scale" (Newmark, 1991: 4) intended to supersede the traditional dichotomic analysis of translation methodology. Crucially, however, the two approaches differ in the linguistic criteria brought to bear on the choice of translation strategies. Thus, for Newmark (*ibid*: 1-2), "the more important the language of a text, the more closely it should be translated" and *vice versa* "the less important the language of a text or any unit at any rank, the less closely that too need be translated, and therefore it may be replaced by the appropriate normal social language".

[64] Roberts (2002: 439) cites Krings' 1986 study as pioneering. In fact, it was Krings who introduced the think-aloud protocol into translation studies, which has since become a popular experimental method in translation.

holistic strategies involving the text as a whole, while non-professionals prefer to adopt linear strategies, involving smaller translation units (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 124)[65].

Another highly fruitful area of empirical research emerged during the 1990s adopting the methods of corpus linguistics, namely the analysis of large amounts computer-stored texts (Munday, 2001: 190)[66]. Baker (1993; 1995, 1996) was among the first to understand the potential of corpus-based research for translation studies:

> translation studies has reached a stage in its development as a discipline when it is both ready and needs the techniques and methodology of corpus linguistics in order to make a major leap from prescriptive to descriptive statements, from methodologising to proper theorising and from individual and fragmented pieces of research to powerful generalisations. (Baker, 1993: 248).

Baker proposed three types of text corpora, namely parallel, multilingual and comparable. The use of parallel texts in translation study is self evident, whereas comparable corpora aim "to identify patterning which is specific to translated texts, irrespective of the source or target languages involved" (Baker, 1995: 234). In this respect a major concern of researchers has been to isolate the distinctive - universal - features of translated language, not as a result of interference between a specific language pair or a lack of competence in the target language, but as a proper trait of translational language *per se* (Baker, 1993: 243). These features so far concern: *simplification* or the tendency to simplify the language or message conveyed in a TT; *explicitation* or the tendency of translators to "spell things out" rather than leaving them implicit, including adding background information; *normalization* or the tendency to conform to textual conventionality as accepted by the target culture; *levelling out* or the tendency of translated texts to gravitate around the centre of any continuum rather than move towards its extremes. (Baker, 1996: 176-7; Laviosa, 1998: 280-291; Olohan, 2004: 90-144; Venuti: 2004: 327).

As with TAPs, limitations about corpus-based studies have been expressed by some quarters. Roberts (2002: 437-8) highlights that research in this area is still grappling with corpus establishment. While a number of parallel, multilingual and

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[65] Roberts (2002: 440) further points out that TAP studies have revealed the complexity of the translation process, "which involves much backtracking and recursiveness".
[66] Accessible introductions to corpus linguistics are Kennedy (1998), Hunston (2002), Tognini-Bonelli (2001). + Sinclair Zanettin

comparable corpora do indeed exist, "there is still a need for more and large corpora suitable for translation research" [67]. In addition, Roberts (*ibid*: 438) calls for the development of special tools for efficient and effective exploitation of corpus data. Olohan (2004: 22-23) further summarizes a number of critical perspectives on corpora in translation studies. These include: Hermans (1999: 92-4) who doubts whether corpora are useful in helping contextualize translations and assessing their status in a given culture at a given time; Mason (2001: 71) who cautions about generalizing from typical contrastive concordance-based analyses and Tymoczko (1998: 658) who is also wary about overemphasis on the scientific nature of corpus-based research and overuse of quantification 'to prove the obvious'. Notwithstanding these limitations, generally speaking corpus analysis has been welcomed in translation studies, linking in particular with those strands of research concerned with describing what translations are like and what translators do and continuing the interest of DTS in the autonomy of the translated text (Ulrych and Anselmi, 2008: 260)[68].

Analysing the 1990s in retrospect, Snell-Hornby (2006: 115) notes a further approach to the empirical turn which occurred in those years which was brought by events outside the discipline, mainly "by the breathtaking developments in technology and in the globalization process, which together radically changed the job profile of translators" as well as the concept of text and text-types. Texts have come to be seen as "language material" and their range has reached an unprecedented expansion. Snell-Hornby (*ibid*: 133) summarises the new developments as follows:

1. in the area of telecommunication some translation has to some extent become obsolete, partly being carried out in lingua franca English and partly, especially in the area of formal business, being replaced by informal e-mail correspondence or dealt with by fax and mobile phone;

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[67] Examples of existing corpora include: TransBase, consisting of the French and English versions of the debates of the Canadian House of Commons dating 1988-1995; the Council of Europe Multilingual Lexicography corpus; the English Comparable Corpus; the Translational English Corpus, comprising English translations from a variety of sources (Roberts, 2002: 437); and EUROCOM (Ulrych and Anselmi, 2008), a monolingual parallel corpus consisting of English texts produced within the European Commission both by native and non-native speakers and amounting to about two million words A recent example of a multilingual corpus is Cucchi (2008, forthcoming) consisting of 62 debates EU parliamentary debates held in 2006 and amounting to 4,697,915 words.

[68] For an in-depth account of the use of corpora by today's translators and researchers see Olohan (2004). Olohan focuses on corpus linguistics as a methodology and is aware that despite its potential it is still in its infancy.

2. the need for rapid processing of information, the tolerance of more informal and less accurate language and the levelling of culture-specific differences within the technological 'lingua franca' has increased the role for machine translation producing forms such as 'gists' or rough versions of information for internal uses;

3. new text types have been created by multimedia communication, some of them multimodal and multisemiotic;

4. translators have been playing an increasingly important role as linguistic and cultural mediators.

5. finally, new areas of work have emerged, such as technical writing, content management, multilingual documentation and software localization[69].

In turn, these developments have led to the broader view of translation discussed in section 2.2.

The rapidly changing trends affecting the field under study coupled with the growing interest from adjacent disciplines greatly contributed to promoting the visibility of Translation Studies as an independent discipline. Munday (2001: 4-5) and Snell-Hornby (2006. 149) indentify two main ways in which this occurred. First, specialized translating courses proliferated at both undergraduate and postgraduate level, mainly oriented at professional translator training and concerned with developing adequate curricula to meet the needs of the time. Second, there was a proliferation of conferences, handbooks, encyclopaedias and specialized publications on translation in many languages. New scholarly journals came into being, such as *Across* (Hungary), *Cadernos de Tradução* (Brazil), *Perspectives* (France), *Rivista Internazionale di Tecnica della Traduzione* (Italy), *Target* (Israel/Belgium), *The Translator* (Britain) which joined long-standing international journals such as *Babel* (The Netherlands), *Meta* (Canada) or *Traduire* (France). European publishers such as John Benjamins, Cambridge Scholar, Multilingual Matters, Rodopi, Routledge and St. Jerome greatly expanded the books on translation and a series of events and gatherings were held at international level covering a wide range of key themes.

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[69] Similarly, Wilss (1999:181) identifies three basic trends that have affected the translation profession since the beginning of the 1990s, namely globalization, specialization and technologization. We will deal in greater detail with these issues in the following Chapter (§ 3.2).

In sum,

from being a little-established field a relatively short time ago, translation studies has now become one of the most active and dynamic new areas of research encompassing an exciting mix of approaches (Munday, 2001: 5).

2.3.4 Translation Studies today: interdiscipline or multidiscipline?

In view of the number of disciplines that over the past decades have been attracted by translation as an area of research, the study of translation has been increasingly described in interdisciplinary terms (Chesterman, 1998; Hatim and Munday, 2007; Munday, 2001; Snell-Hornby, 2006; Ulrych, 1999). In this regard, Munday's (2001: 182) statement as to the status of the field today is revealing:

Translation Studies is an example *par excellence* of a field which can bring together approaches from a wide range of language and cultural studies, modifying them for its own use and developing new models specific to its own requirements.

A few years later, Hatim and Munday (2007: 8) take a definite distance from references still portraying Translation Studies as an "'emerging' discipline (e.g. Riccardi, 2002) and recognize that since Holmes' paper the field has expanded to such an extent that it is really a perfect interdiscipline, interfacing with a whole host of other fields as figure 2.3 clearly highlights:
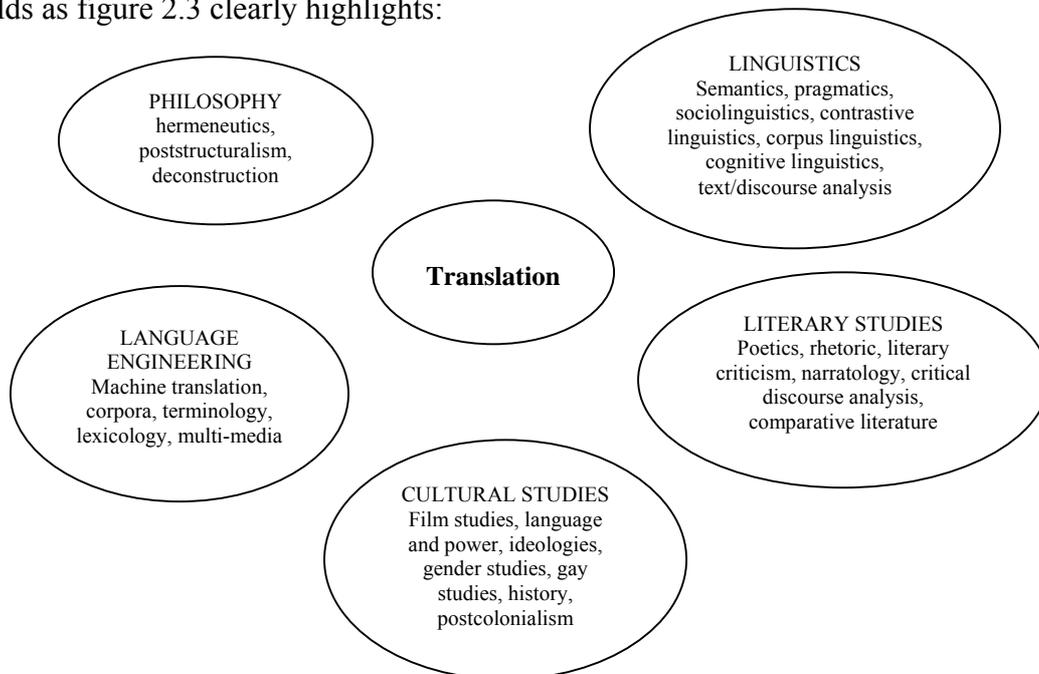

Figure 2.3 Map of disciplines interfacing with Translation Studies, adapted from Hatim and Munday (2007: 8)

The notion of interdisciplinarity is intended as a "two-way osmotic process with one discipline taking from and contributing to the development of another" (Ulrych, 1999: 32). In this sense, the current richness of the field enables scholars to view translation from a number of different angles, reflecting "the rapid exchange of knowledge in an increasingly globalized and information-rich society" (Munday, 2001: 182)[70].

Ulrych (1999: 30) rightly remarks that the interdisciplinary nature of translation was already evident in 1972 when Homes addressed the issue in his paper. At the time, however, interdisciplinarity was not viewed in positive terms by the majority of translation scholars, mainly owing to the nature of the disciplines interested in translation. Among those who openly considered translation an interdisciplinary subject was Newmark (1981). In his view, the study of translation derives primarily from comparative linguistics, and within it, it is mainly an aspect of semantics, alongside sociolinguistics, sociosemantics, semiotics, text linguistics and discourse analysis. Despite this priority, however, Newmark is at pains in stating that the study of translation "goes into areas beyond any linguistics" (1981: 37), drawing on disciplines such as literary and non-literary textual criticism, logic and philosophy. From today's perspective; Newmark's insights are forerunning, more so because he explicitly states that "translation thinking is not only a interdisciplinary study, it is even a function of the disciplines […] briefly alluded to" (*ibid*: 7).

Interestingly, the priority accorded by Newmark to linguistics in the study of translation has been recently brought back at the forefront of international debate, to the extent that Snell-Hornby (2006: 150-169) wonders whether the field at the start of the new millennium is experiencing what she calls a 'U-turns' back to linguistics. She (*ibid*: 151-2) sums up the situation in enlightening and somewhat thought-provoking terms:

> is the translatorial wheel to be reinvented yet again? Despite the promise of "new tools and new methods" (Chesterman 2002), it might seem so indeed. This suspicion is

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[70] Venuti (2004: 2) seemingly puts forwards a contrasting perspective when he argues that the map of Translation Studies reflects the current fragmentation of the field into subspecialities, some empirically oriented, some hermeneutic and literary and some influenced by various forms of linguistic and cultural studies. Munday (2001: 190) also questions whether the interdisciplinary character of the discipline is a strength or a weakness.

reinforced by studies resurrecting the age-old debate on the concept of equivalence (Koller 1995, Halverson 1997), or reintroducing prototype semantics (Halverson 1999), which […] has been extensively discussed in Translation Studies since the early 1980s. even the use of computer corpora can be seen as yet another borrowing from linguistics, and with the theme of "translation universals" (Toury 2001, Mauranen and Kujamäki 2004) another favourite concept of Transformational Generative Grammar, so eloquently dismantled by George Steiner in the 1970s, has been resuscitated into a new academic existence. All in all, it seems that the much feted emancipation of Translation Studies from the discipline of linguistics is embarking on a phase of retrogression[71].

Snell-Hornby (*ibid*: 152-9) analyses at length the possible reasons for a return to linguistics and the conclusions she reaches "are presented, not with the intention of a final verdict, but as food for thought and material for future debate" (*ibid*: 159). Two crucial points emerge from her argument: first, at this stage of the debate assessing whether the advancement of knowledge in the field of Translation Studies is facing 'new paradigms' or 'shifting viewpoints' seems to be "a judgement that probably varies with the interests and convictions of the individual reader or translation scholar" (*ibid*: 164). Second, this does not seem to impinge on the essential interdisciplinarity of both translation and its study, which rather emerge, more than ever before, as crucial areas endowed with a 'constructive' (*ibid*: 166) potential of breaking down barriers and contributing towards mutual understanding[72].

The question of interdisciplinarity, therefore, is not confined solely to academic methodological issues, but embraces real-life practice and experiences. Adopting this

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[71] Snell-Hornby's argument is somewhat thought-provoking and her final statement calls for some comment. As Mossop et al. (2005: 143) clearly argue, the question of the role of linguistics into the study of translation and of whether Translation Studies should devote more attention to the linguistic aspect of translation was brought back at the fore of international debate in view of the recent tendency to focus on the social functioning of translation. However, the "phase of retrogression" feared by Snell-Hornby is in fact a non-question, since, as Mossop et al. (*ibid*: 143) continue to argue, Translation Studies scholars cannot go back to something they never left.
    The shift in focus occurred in the late 1970s and 1980s certainly reduced interest in the language produced by translators as the object of study in itself, broadening the horizons towards the social functioning of translations in the target culture and the intercultural aspect of translational communication (§2.3.2.2.). But this does not mean that Translation Studies literature has stopped talking about language. Rather, "for those who continued to be interested in the linguistic side of translation, the above-mentioned shift in focus had the effect of making it difficult to talk about translational language as if it existed in a social vacuum. Concomitantly, shifts within linguistics were making it impossible to talk about translational language as if it existed in a cognitive vacuum. So if we now go 'back to translation as language', it is certainly not a matter of returning to the spirit that animated the 1950s and 60s" (Mossop et al., *ibid*: 143-4).
[72] Snell-Hornby (2006: 166-9) shows translation's constructive potential in enhancing cross-cultural dialogue with a series of examples taken from current socio-political situations as well as from history. These examples well illustrate "just how horribly wrong such communication can go if the act of translation as communication fails".

perspective, Ulrych (1999: 30-3) frames the issue in slightly different terms, providing further "food for thought". She suggests using the term "multidiscipline" as it is "more descriptively appropriate" (*ibid*: 32) than "interdiscipline" to accommodate the diverse areas of investigation and the variety of factors in the world around which have a bearing on translation. In particular, Ulrych (*ibid*: i) emphasizes the 'multi' element embedded in the term multidiscipline as "most suited to describing the profound changes that have occurred within the field in recent years and the one that best characterizes it". Besides the number of approaches emerged within the discipline itself, this multiplicity includes:

- the multiple forms of communication that have emerged in professional translating;
- the multifunctional essence of translating, subject to a variety of forces such as translators themselves, the source text and author, the spatio-temporal settings of STs and TTs, the socio-cultural and ideological constraints, the receivers and the reception of the TT in its culture and
- the fact that translation has become increasingly multimedial and multimodal, an issue which is especially relevant to our work.

While paying attention to the variables characterizing the practice in hand, the concept of multidisciplinarity proposed by Ulrych (*ibid*: 33) endorses at the same time a "unity in diversity" (Hatim and Mason, 1997) or "integrated approach" (Snell-Hornby, 1988) based on a careful observation of actual translation practice. Ulrych (*ibid*: 11-22) also draws extensively on the concept of genre, which she feels (1999: 16) is much better equipped than the more traditional notion of functional text type "to deal with the multidimensional features of texts"[73].

In the words of Hatim and Mason's (1997: 218), genres are "conventional forms of texts associated with particular types of social occasions (e.g. the news report, the editorial, the cooking recipe)" or the diplomat's ultimatum (*ibid*: 39). Genres reflect the way in which linguistic expressions conventionally serve some social needs and are characterized by "strict do's and don'ts regarding who the participants are, what to say

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[73] Similarly, Taylor (1998: 144) argues that for translation purposes 'traditional' text typologies may be too generic, whereas looking at the variety of texts in terms of genre allows for a higher level of specifity. In her prototypology of texts, Snell-Hornby (1988: 31) also demonstrates that the majority of texts are "hybrid forms, multidimensional structures with a blend of seemingly conflicting features" which cannot be catered for by a strictly monofunctional division.

and how to say it within certain formats generally sanctioned by the community of texts users" (*ibid*: 40).

Within given genres it is further possible to identify sub-genres and even what Hatim and Mason (1990) call 'genrelets'. If we consider medical discourse as a macrogenre, then there exists a whole complex network of sub-divisions which can include academic articles in specialized journals, textbooks for students, articles in health magazines for the general public, talks delivered at conferences, medical round-table discussions, documentaries and information leaflets at a doctor's surgery (Ulrych, 1999: 11-2). Similarly, as it will be discussed in chapter 4, the macro-field of diplomatic discourse encompasses a host of sub-genres, ranging from ambassadors's speeches, to international treaties, credential letters, personal letters, embassies' press releases, interviews with diplomatic agents, information articles on visa and so on.

Genre awareness has important implications for translation, as the socio-semiotics variables of field, tenor and mode characterizing each genre are "obviously different" and "culture specific" (Ulrych, 1999: 16). As remarked by Taylor (1998: 152):

> human language has evolved to deal with the manifold areas of human endeavour and exchange, and it is the translator's job to provide the fine tuning that is needed to transfer a genre-based text in the source language as accurately and sensitively as possible into an equivalent text in the target language. If all the elements, obligatory or otherwise, of the genre are respected, translators will do their job well and provide a true rendering of meaning across a linguistic and cultural divide.

Thus, within a multidimensional perspective of analysis, the concept of genre fits in well insofar as it reflects the multifunctional reality of the text itself as well as the multifaceted nature of the translator's field of action. The translator's ability "to provide a true rendering of meaning across a linguistic and cultural divide" is in keeping with a view that emphasizes the constructive role of translation and highlights at the same time the absolute need for professionally trained bilingual and bicultural translators who could serve as mediators between two worlds. Within this scenario the discipline of Translation Studies acquires a greater role than ever, going beyond its own academic confines to reach out other fields of study as well as the individual engaged in daily professional realities.

This review has tried to outline the major steps through which Translation Studies has shaped into the academic discipline as we know it today. Great attention has been

devoted to the major paradigmatic shift brought about by a number of authors, which informs the expanded concept of translation now reigning among them. The emerging picture is that of a thriving field with a solid academic status that accommodates a variety of convergent perspectives and some contrasting voices. It is felt that far from being a weakness, the interdisciplinary nature can derive its force precisely from this plurality of views, which not only reflects the practice in hand, but prevents the field from stagnating into uncritical positions.

The next section will discuss the notion of translation as mediated discourse. The issue is at the heart of the "translation turn", insofar as it emphasizes the presence of the translator as a key factor in the "dynamic process" (Hatim and Mason, 1990: 223) of interlinguistic and intercultural communication.

2.4 Translation as mediation

The concept of translation intimately overlaps with the notion of mediation, not only because, as Ulrych and Anselmi (2008: 257) argue, "translation is generally recognized as involving some form of mediation", but also because "messages are by definition mediated" in so far as "something is communicated by someone […] to someone else" (Cronin, 2003: 64). With a few celebrated exceptions, translators have historically been neglected figures, especially in the field of literary translation (Taylor, 1990: 8). What is more, as has been pointed out before, traditional investigation into the mediating nature of translation has focused on the transferring strategies linked to the long-standing debate abound the translator's priorities and resulting loyalties: literal *vs.* free, form *vs.* content, formal or semantic *vs.* dynamic or communicative equivalence. More recently, however, the translator's pivotal presence has become increasingly recognised by scholars to the extent that mediation is now a key word in translation studies and has spurred a great deal of debates around the whole issue of how information and knowledge is processed and relayed[74]. In particular, in line with a target-reader oriented and descriptive paradigm, a large sector of translation studies has

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[74] Recent publications are explicitly focused on mediation (e.g. Katan, 2004; Munday, 2007) and international gatherings are increasingly being organised to explore the wide-ranging implications of the mediating nature of translation and how this affects the professional profile of translators. An update of these gatherings can be found online at the following site:
http://www.intralinea.it

shifted towards the proactive stance of translators and how their mediating role results in a variety of translated documents and may bring about some change in the status quo (Gouadec, 2007; Olohan, 2004; Ulrych 2002; Venuti, 1998/2006). Bassnett (1999: 213) aptly summarizes the change in the following terms:

> awareness of translation has grown steadily, so that today the translator is viewed as a visible presence, as a mediator between texts, as someone who enables bridges to be built across linguistic and cultural boundaries. […] a translator is now rightly perceived as a figure who is emblematic of the world today: someone who occupies the liminal space in between cultures, who operates from a position of plurality and who carries out a role that is charged with immense responsibility.

Bassnett's statement points to the crucial issue of identifying the translator's identity and how it gradually evolved within the discipline. As indicated by Katan (2004: 16), the idea of the translator as a mediating agent was first advocated by Steiner (1975: 45) when he argued that

> the translator is a bilingual mediating agent between monolingual communication participants in two different language communities,

which emphasises the linguistic aspect of mediation, but disregards the cultural dimension, embedded in the term 'mediator' itself [75], as well as in the very act of translation[76]. Carmen Valero-Garcés (online)[77] remarks that in the wake of global

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[75] A variety of terms have been used to describe who the translator is, such as "bi-cultural" (Vermeer, 1978), "cross-cultural specialist" (Snell-Hornby, 1992), "go-between" (Gouadec, 2007) or "intervenient being" (Munday, 2007) to name just a few. It is however felt that more than these or any other near-synonyms, the term "mediator" is the best suited to evoke the proactive stance and the positive facilitating connotations of the translator's intervention (Hatim and Mason, 1990: 128).

[76] In this regard, Newmark (1995 quoted in Katan 2004: 3) claims that "translation is the most economical method of explaining one culture's way to another" and that "translation mediates cultures".

[77] Source: http://babelport.com/articles/32 (last accessed 27 November 2007).

Valero-Garcés's statement, polemically geared not only against traditional limiting views, but also against still popularly-held beliefs about translators, is echoed by a number of scholars. In his in-depth analysis of cultural mediation, Katan (2004: 2-3) calls for a change in the way translators (and interpreters) are perceived, implying a "move away from being seen as photocopiers and working as human dictionaries to being perceived as visible agents in creating understanding between people". Katan (*ibid*: 22) further contends that "any idea of deliberately making changes to the form of text, and manipulating the words to aid further understanding across cultures, is still viewed with suspicion". Similarly, Gouadec's (2007) refreshing investigation into real-life practice starts off with the acknowledgment that "many people still think that professional translation is just a matter of 'languages', that anyone who has translated at school can become a translator and that translating is something rather easy and straightforward (xiii). Olohan (2004: 1-5) explicitly bases her research into the use of corpora in the notion that the translator is a

changes in the structure of the societies and in the dynamics of current intercultural relationship, it is no longer possible to hold on to strictly linguistic perspectives and depict the translator

> as an errant dictionary or as a mirror that returns the image. It is necessary to admit, and not to suspect negatively that manipulating a text to make it comprehensible to the new receivers - even changing the form beyond the normal limits- is a translation.

In their investigation of linguistic mediation, Hatim and Mason (1990: 223) envisage the translator first and foremost as

> a mediator between two parties for whom mutual comprehension might otherwise be problematic – and this is true of the translator of patents, contracts, verse or fiction just as much as it is of the simultaneous interpreter, who can be seen to be mediating in a very direct way.

In their view, however, the translator not only has a "bilingual ability but also a bi-cultural vision" (*ibid*: 223), seeking to overcoming those incongruities which impede the transfer of meaning. This is possible thanks to the fact that the translator is a privileged critical reader and, as such, is uniquely placed to identify and bridge the gap across cultural divides. In line with this vision, Hatim and Mason (1997: 147) ultimately define mediation as

> the extent to which translators intervene in the transfer process, feeding their own knowledge and beliefs into processing the text[78].

The issue of the translator's intervention has been extensively dealt with by Venuti (1995; 1998/2006; 2004), for whom the notion of translation as mediated discourse plays a crucial role in scholarly research in as far as it becomes a means that contributes to the emergence of translation as a field of study in its own right:

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linguistic and cultural mediator and admits that the recognition of the translator's presence is still often a result of perceived shortcomings in their work.

[78] The translator's intervention - whether consciously directed or unconsciously filtered - is at the heart of Hatim and Mason's approach and is analysed in terms of varying mediative degrees. These range from minimal mediation, to partial, to maximal and closely impinge on the lexical, structural and stylistic choices displayed in the translated text (1997: 147-161).

the key category in any translation research and commentary is what I shall call the relative autonomy of translation, the textual features and operations or strategies that distinguish it from the foreign text and from texts initially written in the translating language. These complicated features and strategies are what prevent translating from being unmediated or transparent communication (2004: 5).

Venuti frames his discussion of the translator's presence and degree of intervention in rather different terms from the linguistic and cultural perspectives analysed so far. It could be argued that while a large sector of translation studies has been mainly concerned with defining *who* the translator is, Venuti (1995; 1998/2006) has placed the emphasis on *where* the translator stands in the translating process, as implied in the notion of 'invisibility' he adopts to describe the lack of consideration suffered by translators in contemporary Anglo-American culture, especially in the field of literary translation. This situation of relative invisibility is due to a combination of two factors: the translator's attempt to produce fluent, idiomatic and readable target texts, thus creating "an illusion of transparency" and the nature of acceptability judgements by readers of translations. These include the various players in the publishing industry as a whole, namely the publishers and editors – who choose the works, commission the translation and often dictate the translation method – and the reviewers, whose comments have a part in determining the way in which translations will be read and received in the target culture.

The translators' invisibility comes through from a number of elements, including the omission of their name on the translated work, the linguistic choices made and the translation strategies adopted. These Venuti (1995: 19-20) discusses under two opposing headings, which he labels domestication and foreignization[79]. Domestication entails the transparent, fluent, invisible translating which seeks to bring the foreignness of a text to a minimum. It is an "ethnocentric reduction" to home cultural values. Foreignization, on the other hand, "entails choosing a foreign text and developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target language" (1998: 242). It thus maximizes the strangeness of a text and supports the acceptance of "otherness" by the receiving culture.

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[79] For an appraisal of points of contacts and divergence between Venuti's dichotomy and Schleiermacher's "two roads" see Snell-Hornby (2006: 145-6).

Domestication has negative connotations for Venuti (1994: 18-9) as it conceals the actual conditions under which a text is translated and creates the illusion that the translation process and the translator's intervention have no bearing on the reading of the translated text:

> a fluent translation is immediately recognisable and intelligible, 'familiarised', domesticated, not 'disconcerting[ly]' foreign, capable of giving the reader unobstructed 'access to great thoughts', to what is 'present in the original'. Under the regime of fluent translating, the translator works to make his or her work 'invisible', producing the illusory effect of transparency that simultaneously masks its status as an illusion: the translated text seems 'natural', i.e. not translated.

What is more, it may lead to a "weird" sort of "self-annihilation", resulting in "a way of conceiving and practising translation that undoubtedly reinforces its marginal status" (*ibid*: 20). Not surprisingly, therefore, Venuti (1995: 20) pleads for foreignizing translation. He considers it "highly desirable" as it exercises an "ethnodeviant pressure on values to register the linguistic and cultural difference of the foreign text, sending the reader abroad" and thus restraining the violence embedded in domesticating cultural values. Ultimately, he calls for enhancing the translator's visibility, in an effort to show the power translators have in shaping national literatures and influencing literary canons and to reveal the constraining force of the social, historical and ideological norms on the selection of texts to translate and on the kinds of strategies to adopt.

The issues raised by domestication and foreignization has come to be associated with a choice between acceptance of or resistance to target culture social norms and constraints. In particular, foreignizing translation has been "made to fit into the framework and context of late 20th century translation ethics, as seen form a specifically Anglo-American perspective" (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 146) and needs to be understood in the context of English dominance in the modern globalized world.

A completely different perspective on translation ethics comes form Newmark (1991: 42-60), who widely discusses the mediating potential of translation in relation to the thorny issue of the translator's treatment of the ST and responsibility for the TT. The fundamental assumption underlying Newmark's approach is the conviction that there are moral values in translating that essentially go beyond any consideration of culture, context and ideology and are rooted in the moral truth as defined through the ever expanding human rights documents that the translators should implicitly subscribe

to. The translator's intervention ultimately derives its legitimacy from such documentation. In line with this, Newmark (1991: 46) contends that the most important responsibility for a translator is indicating any instance of moral infringement, such as sexist, racist, chauvinist or ageist language and any other prejudice based on class, mental and physical health, colour or religion. Aware of the delicacy of the matter in hand, he warns that any intervention will have to be pondered by the translator on the basis of a series of factors and variables. To begin with, he argues, translators have a legitimate right to refuse any commission that, in one form or the other, constitute a negation of accepted moral values. Alternatively, those who feels competent to do the job are invited to accept it and consider making readers alert to any misleading or offending sentences which may be present in the ST.

When tackling the form of the translator's potential intervention, Newmark posits a basic choice between authoritative and non-authoritative texts, which determines whether the translator should intervene intra- or extratextually. In the case of authoritative texts, Newmark advocates the accurate reproduction of prejudice accompanied with the necessary criticism made in the translator's introduction, preface, afterword or notes[80]. In the case of non-authoritative texts, on the other hand, translators have more right to adapt or modify, though never to distort, passages likely to be offensive to the TL readership. Here, therefore, translators can intervene within the text, even though their choice is basically restricted to the distancing square brackets marked off from the text and the 'sic' in square brackets. This last weapon, claims Newmark, is as far as translators can and must usually go, since "they are not licensed to engage in a polemic with their text", but should 'limit' themselves to drawing attention to source language instances infringing accepted moral truth (1991: 170).

Ultimately, translators can resort to consultation with the author of the text, the agent or the commissioner of the translation and even consider informing any of these authorities about any point where an adaptation, an alteration or an addition is enacted.

In Newmark's approach, infringement of accepted human rights is the most important reason justifying the translator's intervention, though not the only one. There

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[80] Newmark cites Hitler's Mein Kampf as an extreme example of negation of human rights, declaring his translation position as follows: "the most interesting translation of Mein Kampf I ever saw had a preface, square brackets and notes three times as long as the translated text" (1991: 75).

are at least four other valid reasons, which are referred to as "the five medial factors" or "the five universal truths". These include the factual, the logic, the linguistic and the aesthetic truth[81].

Newmark works in an avowedly source-oriented paradigm and is markedly prescriptive, but his discussion evidently extends to include also the product of the mediated transfer undertaken by the professional translator. His approach is linked to his notion of translation as a weapon for truth (1991: 162), serving the following wider purpose (*ibid*: 42-4):

> 1. to contribute to understanding and peace between nations, groups and individuals (political or humanistic purpose);
> 2. to transmit knowledge in plain, appropriate and accessible language, in particular in relation to technology transfer (technological purpose);
> 3. to explain and mediate between cultures on the basis of a common humanity, respecting their strengths, implicitly exposing their weaknesses (cultural purpose);
> 4. to translate the world's great books, the universal works in which the human spirit is enshrined and lives (artistic purpose);
> 5. a general aid or a skill required in foreign language learning (pedagogical purpose)

It is interesting to note that Newmark's personal and somewhat heterodoxical line of thought has been recently echoed by Gouadec (2007: 9), who however focuses first and foremost on the professional implications of translation's mediating role:

> translation may also be viewed as a strategic, economic, ideological and cultural weapon. But it must be emphasized that such a weapon can sometimes backfire. Thus, while good translations help improve market penetration and product acceptance by adding value to the product or process concerned (whether it be a book, film, a tractor, an extradition request, a catalogue, a computer, flowers, a sales offer, a veneering machine, etc.), inadequate, poor, or disastrous translations can do no end of damage to an export product or process. A poor translation automatically reflects badly on whatever it is supposed to support and promote, and worse still, on the company, organisation and institution that actually disseminates it, because customers will naturally assume that the company takes no more pride in its products than in the translations it uses to promote them.

Gouadec introduces quality criteria and places value judgments at the heart of his discussion of professional translation. Meeting quality criteria not only impinges on the

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[81] The five medial factors in translation were first presented a conference on Arabic Translation at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) London University in 1985 and have since elaborated in various papers and lectures (1991; 1993; 1996).

commercialization of a product, but also on the dissemination and perception of values in a culture. His stance on this point) is closer to the ethical position embedded in Venuti's methodological approach, rather than to Newmark's perspective:

> on a more general level, translation can have wider intellectual, economic, cultural and linguistic implications for individual nations. Good quality translation can help slow the gradual downgrading of a language and culture under the pernicious influence of "false" values. It can thus become a way of defending and promoting the target language and culture (Gouadec, 2007: 9

As a result, translation is envisaged either as "a driving force helping to boost and promote intellectual, industrial, economic, political artistic and cultural development, or on the contrary, a vector of colonisation in the same areas" (Gouadec, *ibid*: 10)[82].

Gouadec's investigation into translation is essentially prescriptive in nature. Unlike Newmark, however, his approach does not seem to aim at positing a dividing line between himself and a purely descriptive paradigm. Admittedly, his endeavour "seeks to describe and analyse the true world of professional specialized translation, taking the diversity of practices, situations and environments into account" (Gouadec, 2007: xiv). In doing so, Gouadec (*ibid*: 6-7) seeks to explain that in a complex and diverse task as translation is, quality "never comes cheap and also, the other way round, why 'cheap' translations, sub-contracted at knock-down prices, can generate huge costs in the long run because of their potentially disastrous consequences". Thus, a quality translation must be:

- accurate: true to the facts and to their interpretation within the limits of the domain concerned;

- meaningful: the message must make sense in the TL and culture, even though concepts may vary across cultures[83];

- accessible: the content and register of language must be adapted to the T reader's level of technical competence, besides being readable, coherent, logical and well written;

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[82] Compare Newmark's (1991: 161-8) view of translation as an implicit instrument of moral, linguistic and cultural criticism turned on the source text, which is "suddenly stripped of much of its own culture and all its own language" and "is exposed to the harsh light of a different culture and language".

[83] This has a number of implications, including the fact that concepts or connotations may need additional clarification in the target language, or may need deleting because they have become meaningless, or they may take on offensive connotations in the target language.

- effective and ergonomic: the translation must fulfil its initial purpose and any subsequent one that its readers might consider;
- compliant with any applicable constraints, such as rules and regulations, official standards of terminology, linguistic and cultural usages;
- compatible with the client's interests.

Professional translating has likewise been extensively analysed by Sager (1993: 178), who has focused on the resulting texts from the variety of mediating activities that translators are expected to undertake in the course of their practice. The typology he has devised is worth examining in some kind of detail (see figure 2.4).
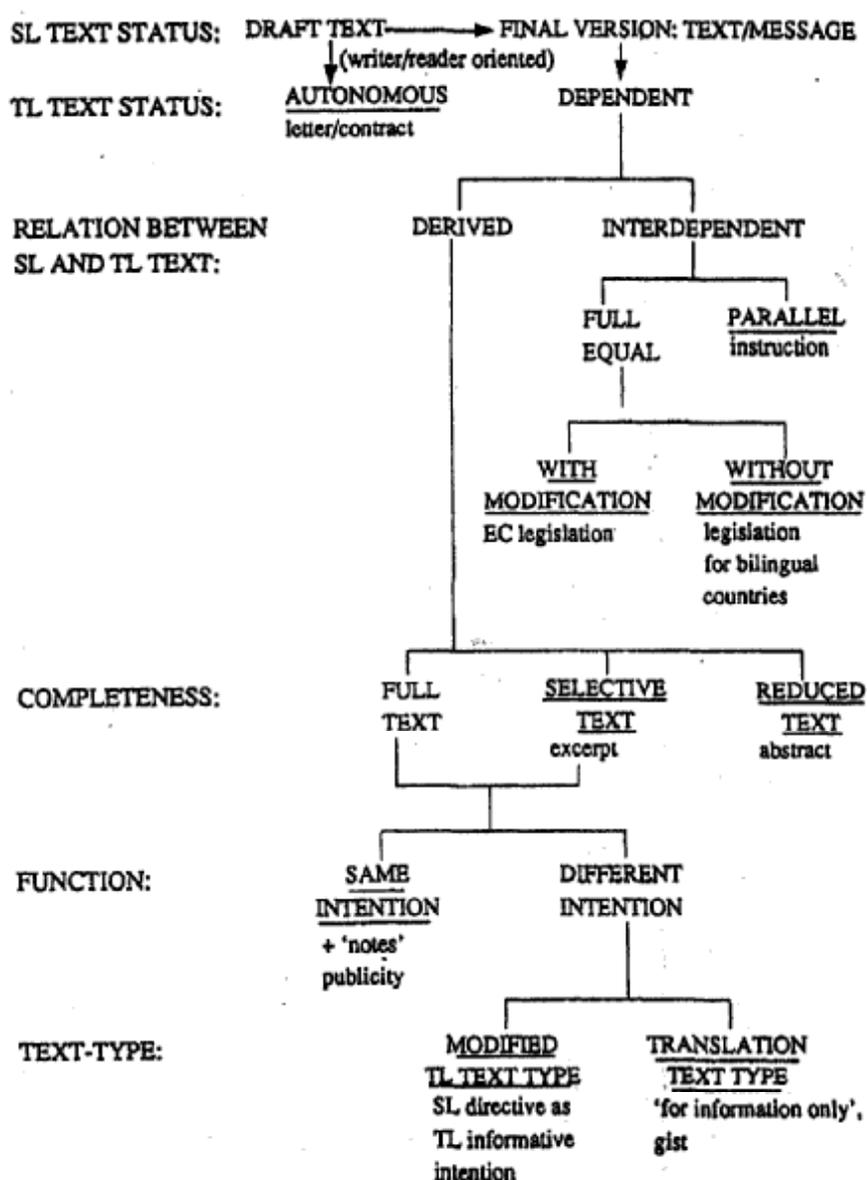
Figure 2.4 Sager's text typolgy

A fundamental difference is posited between *autonomous* and *dependent* texts, the former being independent messages created from SL drafts, the latter subsuming all other translations. Those which have the same status of the ST and co-exist in parallel with it are *interdependent*, those which do not have a link with the ST are *derived*. Interdependent texts can be full equal or parallel. *Full equal* documents are functionally equal and the distinction between the ST and the TT disappears after completion of the translation. Bilingual or multilingual legislation is a good example. *Parallel* documents are bi- or multilingual versions applicable to the same situation, such as the multiple version of instructions or descriptions of products for which there is no recognisable SL text.

Under the heading *derived* texts, Sager distinguishes between full, selective and reduced texts, on the basis of their completeness. *Full* texts are self-explanatory; *selective* texts can be excerpts, usually fulfilling some information service; *reduced* texts are typically abstracts and are regularly produced in industry for journals in-print and on-line. Both full texts and excerpts can be translated with the same function or a different one. Documents that retain the *same function* come closest to what is traditionally judged a translation and may range from whole book translations to simple messages. They are most usual in situations characterized by few cultural and knowledge differences. On the other hand, those culture-bound texts inextricably linked to the their situation and are not transferable as such require a translation with *different functions*. These can be furthered distinguished into *modified text types* requiring some kind of explanation or annotation, and *translation-specific text types* changing form completely, as instanced by 'gist' translations, where only the content is translated.

Discussing Sager's typology, Ulrych (1999: 21) points out that what Sager labels

> draft texts and translation text type represent the two extremes of the translation continuum and are actually mirror images of each other: in the former case, a complete target text is created on the basis of a minimal source text; in the latter case, it is the source text which is a complete text and the target text which is minimal.

Sager's perspective is clearly target oriented and as he himself (1994: 183) admits "presents a major departure from conventional views". Although the relationship with the source text is not denied, the emphasis is however placed on the wide range of text manipulating activities daily engaging professional translators, who come across as

mediators called upon to provide diverse solutions for the circumstances they are faced with[84]. As we will see in chapter four, the translator's mediating competence is crucial in embassy translation for website use, where the needs of the foreign *vs.* host country audience and the range of genres displayed dictate very different approaches to the TT.

Much of the features and implications of mediated discourse presented here have much in common with the notions of "rewriting" and "patronage" introduced by Lefevere (1992a). In fact, as Ulrych and Anselmi (2008: 258) point out, in translation studies the idea of rewriting as elaborated in the field of literary translation has served to indirectly investigate the wider concept of mediation. The following section will explore the issue in detail.

2.4.1 Translation as a form of rewriting

In the preface to his book *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, Lefevere (1992a: vii) declares translation to be "a rewriting of an original text". Working from a comparative literature perspective and influenced by polysystemic work and the Manipulation School, his main concern is the analysis of those "very concrete factors" (*ibid*: 2) that govern the acceptance or rejection of texts, such as issues of power, ideology, institution and manipulation. Relations between these factors contribute to making rewriting "the motor force behind literary evolution" (*ibid*: 2):

> all rewritings, whatever their intention, reflect a certain ideology and a poetics and as such manipulate literature to function in a given society in a given way. Rewriting is manipulation, undertaken in the service of power, and in its positive aspect can help in the evolution of a literature and a society. Rewritings can introduce new concepts, new genres, new devices and the history of translation is the history also of literary

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[84] Sager (*ibid*: 184) also analyzes the typology of functional translation worked out by Gouadec (1990: 332-341), which presents a different terminology, but it likewise highlights the mediating role of translators:
- keyword translation, i.e. the extraction of keywords from the SL document and their translation into the TL;
- selective translation, i.e. the limiting of translation to one aspect of the topic of the document resulting from the deleting of irrelevant information;
- abstract translation, i.e. a condensed translation of the information provided by the SL document;
- diagrammatic translation, i.e. the transfer of the SL text content into a diagram;
- translation with reconstructions, i.e. complete translation of content with disregard to the form;
- absolute translation, i.e. the complete transfer of both the quantitative and qualitative value of the document;
- sight translation, i.e. a running commentary of a text.

innovation, of the shaping on one culture upon another. But rewriting can also repress innovation, distort and contain, and in an age of ever increasing manipulation of all kinds, the study of the manipulation processes of literature as exemplified by translation can help us towards a greater awareness of the world in which we live (*ibid*: vii).

Rewriting is for Lefevere a broad phenomenon that spans a variety of forms of text production including historiography, anthologizing, criticism and editing[85]. They are envisaged as sharing the same basic processes; however, it is translation the most obvious type of rewriting and potentially the most influential. It has the ability to project the image of an author, a work, a period, a genre or even a whole literature in another culture. Image is indeed a central notion in Lefevere's thinking, who acknowledges its enormous power in societies as projected by its makers or rewriters. It intertwines with the issue of the text originality. In Lefevere's (1992a: 6) own words:

> when non-professional readers of literature […] say the have "read" a book, what they mean is that they have a certain image, a certain construct of that book in their heads.

Thus, for a large number of readers, rewritings and translations function, quite simply, as "originals"**.** This being the situation, it is not surprising that the issue of how information and events are "mediated" through rewriting has came at the forefront of much scholarly investigation (Ulrych and Anselmi, 2008: 259).

Literary systems appear to be under a twofold type of control: one coming from within the literary system itself, one form the outside. The first factor is represented by professionals such as critics, reviewers, teachers and of course translators, who decide on the poetics and ideology of the translated text. The second factor, on the other hand, is referred to by Lefevere as "patronage", that is "the powers (persons, institutions) that can further or hinder the reading, writing, and rewriting of literature" (1992a: 15). Patrons may include:

- influential individuals such as the Medici in the past;
- social, religious, political groups, the media or publishers;
- institutions such as universities, censorship bureaus, critical journals and the educational establishment.

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[85] Ulrych and Anselmi (2008) provide an overview of rewriting in relation to Jakobson's tripartite model of translation.

Patronage is further analysed as consisting of three elements:

a) the ideological component, understood not merely as a political concept, but more widely as a "grillwork of form, convention, and belief which orders our actions" (*ibid*: 16). Ideology limits the choice and development of both form and evolution;

b) the economic component, which refers to the payment of writers and rewriters;

c) the status component, which dictates the compliance towards the patrons' expectations and imply acceptance of their established parameters.

Patronage is undifferentiated when its three components are dispensed by the same person; on the other hand, it is differentiated when the three components do not depend on each other.

Moving to the level of the translation process, Lefevere is once again concerned with the interaction between ideological and poetological elements and how they impinge on the translated text. Of the two sets of consideration, the most important is the ideological one, which in this case not only refers to the ideology imposed by the patronage, but also to the translator's own ideology. This, added to poetics, is what

> dictates the basic strategy the translator is going to use and therefore also dictates the solutions to problems concerned with both the "universe of discourse" expressed in the original (objects, concepts, customs belonging to the world that was familiar to the writer of the original) and the language the original itself is expressed in (1992a: 41).

Lefevere's linguistic analysis of specific instances of translated texts comes with an important proviso, which once again discloses the purely descriptive attitude behind a certain sector of translation studies coupled with a dismissal of limiting approaches:

> it is not my intention here to evaluate the different translations. Nor is it my task to do so: evaluation would simply reveal the hidden prescriptive assumptions with which I approach the translations. Since I have tried to describe, not prescribe, there is no reason why I should evaluate. The task is better left to the reader (1992a: 109).

Lefevere (*ibid*: 109) aims to show "that a descriptive analysis of translations on the linguistic level can be productive in terms of translator training" and "that a descriptive analysis of translations on the mere linguistic level does not even begin to do justice to the complexity of the phenomenon". In line with his stance, translation as rewriting can be essentially interpreted as a broad "socialization process" (Ulrych and Anselmi, 2008: 258; Gentzler, 1998: ix) subject to powerful ideological and

poetological constraints through which texts are made more accessible to given audiences. Never has this socialization function of translation been more evident than today, both generally across cultures and, most relevantly, in embassy translation practice. This issue will therefore occupy the first part of the next chapter, where it will be discussed within the framework of globalization *vs*. localization discourse.

2.5 Concluding remarks

In discussing the development of Translation Studies, Roberts (2002: 440) aptly identifies in 'diversity' and 'openness' the main features characterizing recent translation research:

> diversity is evident in the methods used, in the topics examined and in the subjects and/or texts studied. The new openness with regard to borrowing approaches and methods form other disciplines, such as literary studies, corpus linguistics, and psychology, contrasts sharply with the dismissal, for example, of linguistically oriented traditions within translation studies in the 1970s and early 1980s […] when translation was still trying to establish itself as a separate discipline.

Roberts captures at the same time the interdisciplinary evolution and the multidisciplinary nature which have motivated scholarly interest since Holmes' mapping of the new field in the 1970s.

The variety of conceptual and methodological frameworks which have been brought to bear on the study of translation in the past decades can be revisited within the two broad orientations identified by Toury (1995: 17), namely prospective and retrospective. The former is essentially process-oriented, takes the ST as its starting point of comparative investigations and evaluates the TT on the basis of the features it 'should' or 'must' reproduce to qualify as a translation. Retrospective theoretical views, on the other hand, are product-oriented in that they take the TT and its socio-cultural context as the point of departure for enquiry, with the ST assuming a subsidiary role (Ulrych, 2001: 42).

Retrospective orientations embody the major shift of paradigm undergone by the discipline, with a number of far-reaching implications. Indeed, some of the guiding concepts and insights introduced by DTS have become common currency among scholars (Hermans, 1999: 15). Among them are priority of the target side, systemic

conditioning of reception, exclusion of evaluation; patterning of translational behaviour (Pym, 2001: 277).

In recent years, however, the marked descriptive orientedness taken by the discipline under the impulse of Toury and the Manipulation School has come in for sharp criticism by some quarters, worried by the violent rejection of an evaluative slant. In 1988, Snell-Hornby (1988: 25-6) was "left wondering whether the element of evaluation and judgment can ever be completely dispensed with" and aired a preoccupation that insistence on descriptive models might turn scholars' writings into "mere exercises in exercises in literary history devoid of that hermeneutic component which relates past writings to modern thinking and hence make them alive". A few years later, Newmark (1991: 54) was even more critical in dismissing the Manipulation approach for their lack of interest in translation criticism and value-judgements, and although he considered the approach interesting he viewed descriptivism as meaning "that the importance of accuracy and truth in translation is a question to be ignored, or 'simply dissolved' and all that matters is the function of the translation in its 'new' setting" (*ibid*: 54).

More recently, albeit from a different viewpoint, Venuti (1998: 29-30) has strongly attacked the value-free trend in translation studies which not only fails to recognize the unavoidability of judgments, but also

> prevents the discipline from being self-critical, from acknowledging and examining its dependence on other, related disciplines, from considering the wider cultural impact that translation research might have (*ibid*: 29).

In Venuti's view, the major drawback of descriptivism lies in the claim of science, as voiced especially by Toury. Toury's main concern was having Translation Studies accepted as an academic discipline; yet, by refraining "from value judgements in selecting subject matter or in presenting findings, and/or refuse to draw any conclusions in the form of recommendations for 'proper' behaviour" (Toury, 1995: 2), Toury is "repressing his own disciplinary interests" (Venuti, 1998: 28):

> the target emphasis isn't merely necessary to conduct translation research; it is also implicated in academic empire-building insofar as Toury imagines his audience to be scholars, not translators, and expects his theory to prevail over other s that are not scientific (*ibid*: 28).

In this sense, DTS has come close to early linguistic-oriented approaches, with their promotion of scientific models as a way to raise the academic status of the discipline. In view of the current professional scenario in which translation takes place and considering its key role in intercultural communication, it is no longer tenable to hold onto arguments that risk isolating "translation studies from precisely the theoretical discourses that would enable scholars to draw incisive conclusions from their data while recognizing the constraints of their own cultural situation" (Venuti, 1998: 29).

In sum, the way of the present and even more so that of the future lies in the integration of both prospective and retrospective views, with a view to enhancing the discipline's potential and bringing the lessons learned so far to bear their fruits:

> translation uses language as an instrument for communication, focussing on the addressee and the target text. If Translation Studies is really "destined to continue developing well into the 21st century", as predicted by Bassnett and Lefevere in 1990, its concrete influence and impact must be more clearly felt, both in other academic disciplines and in the world around – and it is up to translation scholars to make the message clear. And then its really great asset must be consolidated: a uniquely fruitful position as an interdiscipline among the plurality of languages and cultures in the world of today with a greater need than ever for international and intercultural dialogue (Snell-Hornby, 2006: 169).

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

3.1 Introduction

The discussion conducted so far has brought to light a number of key developments in the fields of diplomacy (Chapter 1) and translation (Chapter 2), with a particular focus on the decades following the end of the Second World War. Since both disciplines revolve around mechanisms of interlingual and intercultural communication, any change or emerging factor affecting society has a related impact on both areas. As Wilss (1999: 51) argues,

> the distinctive feature of language mediation since the Second World War has been the complexity of the systems, structures and mechanisms of international communication. This complexity is most visible in the fields of politics, business industry, administration, in science and technology, in military affairs and culture.

As a result of such developments, Wilss (*ibid*: 51) goes on, society has come to be faced with the task of "effectively coordinating its requirements and possibilities in the field of communication".

As it will be recalled from Chapter 1 (§1.4.3), the setting in which contemporary diplomacy operates has changed significantly, mainly as a result of the entry of multiple state entities into the diplomatic practice of countries and of non-state actors into the external relationship of each country. The combined effect of these as well as other factors has been summed up by Rana (2001: 111) in a single word: "democratisation" of the diplomatic process and its actors.

In this process, communicating with the "demos" has gradually become ever more important (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 90). To this end, foreign ministries have discovered the potential of the Internet as an invaluable medium for the international dissemination of information. At the same time, embassies have increasingly recognized websites as an indispensable tool for bilateral relations, economic diplomacy, public outreach and country image building (§1.5.2.3).

Websites can be said to exemplify the long-standing recognition that diplomatic communication is essentially both verbal and non-verbal and rests on the creative combination of the two dimensions (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 96). For the purpose of the

present research, it is postulated that embassy websites' visuality has meaning potential endowed with diplomatic value.

The importance of the verbal and non-verbal (visual) dimension of websites as constitutive aspects of diplomatic communication informs the twofold analytical approach adopted by the present work. In keeping with the fact that the embassy websites under investigation present a bilingual version, their verbal component will be addressed in a translational perspective, while their non-verbal dimension will be analysed in a visual social semiotics perspective.

From a translational point of view, the analysis of websites will be framed against some crucial issues facing translation today, as they have emerged from the discussion conducted in Chapter 2 (§ 2.3.3 and 2.3.4). These include, in particular, the combined impact of globalization, localization, multimedia and multimodal technologization on the profession; the enhanced "visibility" of translation, both as a process and a product, as a result of the translator's mediating activity and the need to reconcile culturally targeted strategies with source text-bound rules and constraints. Multimediality and multimodality will also constitute the specific theoretical framework for the visual analysis of websites.

Against this background, the present Chapter is organized as follows: section 3.2 discusses the relationship of translation with globalization and the related phenomenon of localization; section 3.3 attempts to define a working field for the study of embassy websites within the context of multimodality. Finally, section 3.3.2 expounds the analytical categories identified by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) in their work on visual grammar.

3.2 Issues of globalization and localization

Globalization has become somewhat of a buzz word in scholarly circles. As acknowledged by Wilss (1999: 181) and O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: 1) among others, the phenomenon has now been going on for quite some time, with profound implications for human interactions involving the three levels identified by Jakobson in his tripartite model of intralingual, interlingual and intersemiotic translation (§ 2.2). Wilss (*ibid*: 181) illustrates how language use, both intralingual and interlingual, has

been subject to a twofold strategy, operating centripetally and centrifugally at the same time:

> centripetal use is evident in the fact that communication is increasingly taking place in English, the global language. The centrifugal effect can be seen in the fact that individual language communities are basically not prepared, despite their new global economic orientation, to give up their individual sociocultural identity, and will presumably not be prepared to do so in future, either.

Thanks to the recent emergence of the Internet as a context for international communication, a significant part of globalization is taking place on the web (Esselink, 2003a: 68; O'Hagan and Ashworth, 2002: 67), with a direct impact on localization and, consequently, on translation. Globalization, therefore, has increased rather than diminishing the need for translation, contrary to initial fears and forecasts that it would impose sameness at the expense of linguistic creativity and flexibility, (Crystal, 2001: 2; Kingscott, 1996: 298; Sprung, 2000: ix)[86].

From an intersemiotic perspective, the spread of globalization afforded by the new communication technologies has been accompanied by the spawn of new multimedia and multimodal genres, as ways of conveying meaning that involve more than one semiotic system. Such developments have been impacting on the kind of translational material in hand and, consequently, on the translator's professional requirements[87].

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[86] Crystal (2001: 2) remarks that there is nothing new about fears accompanying the emergence of a new communication technology as evidenced by historical examples. In the 15th century, for instance, the Church considered printing an invention of Satan and established a system of censorship to keep social order and protect souls from damnation. The arrival of the telegraph, the telephone and broadcasting technology unleashed similar concerns with censorship and control. As Crystal (*ibid*: 2) argues: "the telegraph would destroy the family and promote crime. The telephone would undermine society. Broadcasting would be the voice of propaganda. In each case, the anxiety generated specific linguistic controversy. Printing enabled vernacular translations of the Bible to be placed before thousands, adding fuel to an argument about the use of local languages in religious settings which continues to resonate today. And when broadcasting enabled selected voices to be heard by millions, there was an immediate debate over which norms to use as correct pronunciation, how to achieve clarity and intelligibility, and whether to permit local accents and dialects, which remains as lively a debate in the twenty-first century as it was in the twentieth".
Fears related to the impact of the new technologies on diplomatic practice have been reviewed in Chapter 1 of this work (§1.4.3)
[87] O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: 37-50) overview the ways in which technology impacts on translation. In particular the scholars highlight the fact that technology can provide new tools to support the translation process and form the basis for the birth of new literacies, mainly involving a shift from exclusive reliance on the printed word and paper media and on analog media such as radio and tv to the digital age in which documents may appear only in electronic form and include graphics, animation, voice and video as well as text.

Websites, in particular those published in bilingual or multilingual versions, represent one of the most evident instances of such changes. They provide an interesting focal point where source and target oriented interests converge and where, in keeping with a broad concept of translation (§2.2), linguistic, cultural and visual phenomena are integral parts of both its process and product. Moreover, the visibility they offer is crucial for both diplomacy and translation. Indeed, as observed by O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: ix), "by creating a website or a webpage, an individual or an institution automatically establishes a visibility to an international public". However, if the institution wishes to reach speakers of other languages, then the contents of its website must be translated. Thus,

> the web creates a demand for translation from essentially 2 sources: the readers and the providers of Web sites. Readers, or what we call Receivers of the Message, require a given Web page to be in their language to allow for real-time browsing and information gathering. Site providers or 'Senders of the message' target specific audiences by localizing their sites into the Receiver's language and cultural conventions (O'Hagan and Ashworth 2002: 52-3).

The process of recreating websites in specific language versions is known as web localization and it is itself "a kind of intersemiotic or 'cross-medium translation' as it is a transfer that involves more than one language, but also more than one medium" (Valdés, 2008: 227-8). At present it is considered the fastest growing area within the translation sector (Lockwood, 1999 quoted in O'Hagan and Ashworth, 2002: 12).

The word "globalization" immediately evokes a kind of "economy without frontiers", a logical, economically normal and, after the collapse of socialism, predictable, development of liberalization (Wilss, 1999: 183-4)[88]. The abolition of trade barriers around the globe, the merger of companies, the removal of border control have all had tremendous impact at every level of society, be it economic, political, technological, social and linguistic to the extent that in 1999 UN Secretary General Kofi

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[88] For a critical overview of key factors driving the development of globalization starting the late 1980 see the LISA Globalization Industry Planner (2007: 4-5). LISA stands for the Localization Industry Standards Association. It was founded in 1990 to enable companies and individuals share experience and build a community of those involved with the processes needed to adapt products for local markets. It is made up of mostly software publishers and localization service providers (Esselink, 2000: 471; LISA Primer, 2007: 7-8).

Annan (1999: online)[89] stated that "globalization is an irreversible process, not an option" [90].

The changes that the world has been experiencing as a result of the globalization process suggest that not only capital, technology and products, but also information are able to cross frontiers with an unprecedented ease and speed. Things, however, are not so simple as they may first appear, since globalization in itself is a rather complex phenomenon. The LISA Primer (2007: 6-7) traces the origin of the industry in the following terms:

> globalization is not an easy task. As a result, a distinct industry has grown to facilitate product and service globalization. This industry (often called the *localization industry* because of the importance of localization in any globalization effort) arose in the 1980s from roots in the computer software industry. Unlike most physical products, software was easily portable around the world and relied heavily on textual content, meaning that it had to be adapted for local languages. While other industries did make use of translation services and sell into other markets, there was no industry specifically devoted to business globalization issues prior to the rise of the software industry.

Over the intervening two decades the industry has grown exponentially, both in number and complexity, to include a variety of larger projects ranging from the localization of hardware, documentation and web content to many other components (LISA Primer, 2007: 8)[91].

Successful product localization is envisaged as a cycle featuring the two related processes of internationalization and localization and visually represented as follows:

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[89] Source: http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/54/plenary/a54-358.htm, last accessed 16 November, 2008.

[90] McKethan (2005: online at http://www.lisa.org/globalizationinsider/2005/03/why_globalizati.html, last accessed 25 November, 2008) warns against confusing economic globalization – that is the trend toward an integrated worldwide economy – with software globalization, which implies a more technical and marketing perspective. The extent to which the two are linked can be inferred from Cronin's (2003: 11) statement concerning the concept of a global economy and society: "new economy is global because the central activities of production, consumption and circulation, as well as their components (capital, labour, raw materials, management, information, technology, markets), are organized on a global scale, either directly or through a network of connections between different economic agents".

[91] Folaron (2006: 198-9) identifies two phases in the history of the localization industry. The first, lasting for the first ten to fifteen years, was restricted primarily to the area of software applications and accompanying technical documentation. In its second phase, starting in the late 1990s, localization moved into the domain of web sites and web-based applications, as a result of the commercial explosion of the internet, World Wide Web, online services and high-speed communication infrastructure. Esselink (2003b: 4-7) and Wilson (1997: online at http://www.japaninc.com/cpj/magazine/issues/1997/jan97/newage.html, last accessed 22 November, 2008) also discuss the evolving nature of localization projects.

Figure 3.1 The Global Product Development Cycle
Source: http://www.lisa.org/What-Is-Globalizatio.48.0.html

The much quoted standard definition of globalization and its related processes comes again from LISA, more specifically from the Education Initiative Task Force (2003: online)[92]:

> **Globalization** addresses the business issues associated with taking a product global. In the globalization of high-tech products this involves integrating localization throughout a company, after proper internationalization and product design, as well as marketing, sales, and support in the world market.
> **Internationalization** is the process of generalizing a product so that it can handle multiple languages and cultural conventions without the need for re-design. Internationalization takes place at the level of program design and document development.
> **Localization** involves taking a product and making it linguistically and culturally appropriate to the target locale (country/region and language) where it will be used and sold.

The processes are collectively referred to by the acronym GILT (Globalization, Internationalization, Localization, Translation). As noted by Pym (2005: online)

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[92] Source: http://leit.lisa.org/, last accessed 25 November, 2008.

however, "the terms are by no means as standard as they may appear (Microsoft uses them differently). Yet they encapsulate a very rudimentary mode of thought"[93].

Notwithstanding the importance of dealing with these terminological considerations, what is of immediate interest to us here is to notice that, although globalization and localization are originally marketing phenomena, linguistic and cultural issues are at the heart of both processes, as globalizing a product necessarily implies localizing it with all its related documentation. With Ulrych (1999: 6) we can state that globalization and localization are "simply two sides of the same coin and both make abundant use of translation".

3.2.1 The linguistic paradox of globalization

The fact that globalization, and even more so localization, goes hand in hand with translation is at the interface of the centripetal and centrifugal tendencies identified by

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[93] Not only the definitions, but also the relationship between these different processes is a matter of dispute among scholars, who thus feel the need to clarify their own understanding of the terms. Pym (2004a: 30) specifies that Microsoft seems to describe "internationalization" as "globalization" and the first edition of LISA's *Localization Industry Primer* similarly did not differentiate the two processes enough. O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: 66) note that the variety of definitions attached to globalisation depends on the particular framework from which it is observed, be it commercial, political, social and technical. In this sense, it reflects the complexity involved in the globalization process and the large number of areas involved. For the purpose of their own investigation, they define globalization in relation to translation-mediated communication (TMC) as "a process to enable the Message to be adaptable to the condition that may be imposed by Receivers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds as the Sender. O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: 69-71) further discuss the internationalization process in relation to TMC, stating that "the most significant point about internationalization from the perspective of translation is that it places concern for translation right at the outset of globalization planning – a clear contrast with the traditional attitude towards translation as an after-thought and an isolated activity". They thus seem to adhere to the linear mode of thought embedded in the GILT acronym. By contrast, Dunne (2006: 4-5) contends that it would be more logical to reverse the acronym into TLIG, as it would reflect more accurately the historical evolution of the industry and the sequential growth in awareness of the relative importance of these processes. Finally, Pym (2004a: xv) places both localization and translation within a more general conceptual framework than globalization, that of material distribution.
Cadieux (2002: online at http://www.i18n.ca/publications/GenericInternationalization.htm, last accessed 16 November, 2008) and Pym (2004a: 51-65) further attempt at clarifying the relationship among the GILT components; McKethan (2005) discusses at length the various senses in which the term globalization is used; the process of internationalization has been explored by Cadieux (2002) and that of localization by Austermühl (2003: online at http://isg.urv.es/seminars/2003_localization_online/austermuehl.html, last accessed 16 November, 2008), Dürst (2003: online at http://www.w3.org/2003/Talks/0324WWL/paper.html, last accessed 16 November, 2008) and Sturz (1998: online at http://www.tc-forum.org/topictr/tr8local.htm, last accessed 16 November, 2008). The relationship between localization and translation will be further explored in the section to follow.

Wilss (1999: 181) and gives rise to an apparent contradiction described by Pym (2008: online)[94] as a true paradox:

> the more cross-cultural communication is dominated by English as the international lingua franca, the less one might expect to find the use of translation for cross-cultural communication. […] However, what we find in the past few decades, according to all statistics, is a constant expansion of the translation market, running in parallel with the rise of English as the international lingua franca. This constitutes what we will call the diversity paradox: *the lingua franca would appear to be reducing linguistic diversity, translation should ideally be increasing linguistic diversity, and both are happening at the same time* (italics in the original)[95].

The presence of multilingual situations where translation finds its place side by side to that of a *lingua franca* seems to pervade the history of diplomatic relations, though in varying, and certainly, minor degrees compared to the present. This could be related to the fact that globalisation in itself is not a new phenomenon, if we consider that "even in antiquity, and certainly during the exploratory voyages around the world, there was a form of "mondialisation", as it is (and was) known in the Romance languages" (Wilss, 1999: 182). Alternatively, it could be seen as the natural consequence of the fact that "the problem of achieving shared meanings has been central to diplomatic communication throughout the ages" (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 69). Given that diplomacy usually involves different language speakers, then the search for shared meanings is facilitated by the existence of a common language as well as by translation and interpreting (Jönsson and Hall, *ibid*: 69-70).

As already mentioned in Chapter 1 (§1.4.1.1), Cohen (1999: 9) praises the use of a common language as a key factor in the high degree of sophistication reached by Amarna diplomacy, "a virtual condition of civilized diplomatic activity". Similarly Mosley (1973: 95) highlights the lack of significant linguistic differences and obstacles as an important element facilitating Greek diplomacy:

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[94] Source: http://www.tinet.org/~apym/on-line/translation/2008_diversity_paradox.pdf, last accessed 16 November, 2008.
[95] Gotti (2006: 9) highlights the same contradiction when stating: "it is a paradox of the age of globalization that the demand for translation has grown despite the spread and dominance of English". Ulrych (1999: 6-7) too draws attention to such situation by contrasting the homogenising power of translation, on the one hand, and its heterogeneity drive on the other.

a common language was a distinct advantage, for envoys were enabled regularly to address public audiences and assemblies in other states and so to influence public opinion without hindrance or fear of misrepresentation. Even when Greek was dealing with non-Greek, difference of mother-tongue was never a serious hindrance to communication. The traders and men of letters had done their task well. There was no shortage of interpreters, and many communities around the Mediterranean basin were multi-lingual.

History supplies a wide range of examples of the emergence, recognition and disappearance of diplomatic languages (Ostrower, 1967: 382). Jönsson and Hall (2005: 69-72) and Ostrower (1967: 128-151) provide interesting reviews of the various languages that have historically served as diplomatic means of interstate communication. These were however usually limited to certain geographical areas or political groups of countries (Nick, 2001: 41). In addition to Akkadian and ancient Greek, they included: Sumerian, considered to be the first known linguistic means of culture and civilization in the Tigris-Euphrate valley; Aramaic, which became the *lingua franca* in the Mesopotamia area during the Assyrian and Babylonian dominions; Chinese, which was instrumental in the building of the Asian empire; Medieval Greek, Latin and more recently French and English. The historical role of translation-interpreting in diplomacy has likewise been discussed extensively (Bowen et. al, 1995: 245-273; Hamilton and Langhorne, 1996: 13; 73-8; Ostrower, 1967: 493- 528; Wilss, 1999: 30-6) with a focus on the exponential growth in significance and extension acquired by the profession until today's peak. As evidence by this brief historical outline, the use of a common language and the parallel importance of translation have historical foundations, but the contemporary situation is unique, reflecting the complexities and the multifaceted faceted nature of both fields of study.

The rise of English as the *lingua franca* of diplomatic communication is relatively recent, dating back to the end of the First World War, although in the 19th century clear efforts had already been made to undermine the supremacy of French. As reported by Satow (1979: 40), in 1800 Lord Grenville started the practice of conducting his relations with foreign diplomatists accredited to the Court of St James's in English rather than French. In 1823, British Foreign Secretary George Canning instructed his British representatives abroad to use English in foreign affairs. And in 1851, Lord Palmerston further instructed that every government was entitled to use its own language in official communications. However, despite these attempts, it was only the international

gatherings of the 20th century that "offered the English language its first real opportunity to oppose French linguistic supremacy" (Ostrower, 1967: 356). This happened mainly thanks to President Wilson who, at the drafting of the Covenant of the League of Nations in 1919, demanded and obtained that English be used as a second and official language in negotiations. Ostrower (1967: 363-4) summarizes the situation as follows:

> President Wilson took [a] determined stand to advance the English language when, after paying tribute to the historical past of France and the precision of her language, he insisted upon the recognition of English as an official language because it is the diplomatic medium of the Pacific and the preponderant language of the world. […] Eventually, French and English became the official languages of the Conference of the Treaty of Versailles, of which Articles 1 to 26 constitute the Covenant of the League of Nations. The authenticity of both texts, the French and English, was recognized (les texts français et anglais feront foi), indicating a departure from an international custom which prevailed for almost two centuries.

Thus English/French political bilingualism became established, but it was not to last long, since the San Francisco Peace Conference of 1945, when the UN charter was adopted, established the principal of multilingualism (Wilss, 1999: ix)[96]. In particular a distinction was made between *working* and *official* languages: English, French, Russian, Chinese and Spanish were all recognized official languages, but English and French were designated working languages. This established a precedent for future linguistic usages in official international organizations, setting off at the same time the official international need for translation (Ostrower, 1967: 405-411)[97].

The exponential evolution undergone by the use of English as the language of diplomacy fits in well with Pym's (2008: online)[98] devised strategy to explain the

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[96] Speaking at the Inter-Asiatic Relations Conference in 1947, Gandhi (1947: online at http://avoicomunicare.myblog.it/images/gandhi_speech.pdf, last accessed 16 November, 2008) interestingly comments on the English/French diplomatic bilingualism as follows: "For international commerce, undoubtedly English occupies the first place, for diplomatic speech and correspondence, I used to hear when I was studying in my boyhood, that French was the language of diplomacy and if you wanted to go from one end of Europe to the other end, you must try to pick up French, and so I tried to pick up a few words of French in order that I might be able to make myself understood. Anyway, if there is any rivalry at all, rivalry might arise between French and English. Therefore, having been taught English naturally I have to resort in speaking to you in that international speech".

[97] Ostrower (1967: 128) also makes a fundamental distinction between diplomatic and international language, stating that "any diplomatic language must be necessarily international in nature and acceptance". He further reviews (*ibid*: 128-151) the factors that contributed or impeded the ascendancy of various diplomatic languages through history, concluding that "popularity, cultural achievements, and political power have as a rule assisted national languages in becoming either universal or diplomatic".

[98] Source: http://www.tinet.org/~apym/on-line/translation/2008_diversity_paradox.pdf, last accessed 16 November, 2008.

apparent contradiction between the growth of a *lingua franca* and the growth of translation. Pym considers that between a situation where an institution may choose one or two official languages, having speakers learn and operate in them, and a situation of multilateral translation lies a third strategy involving what he envisages as translation from a central language:

> criteria of efficiency mean that multilingual ideals are reduced by introducing a division between what happens within the central agencies of an institution (within its professional interculture) and what happens in relations with what might be termed client cultures (the relative monocultures whose languages are accorded official status by the institution). This division opens the way for one or two languages to be used on the inside, with translation limited to communication between the interculture and the monocultures. This is what we find in the major systems that nevertheless claim to have a multilingual policy, especially those of the European Union.

The localization discourse appears to rely on the same strategy, as it involves production in a central language, mainly English, which is then translated in a variety of target languages. In sum, while "the lingua franca is growing within intercultures, translation is reaching out beyond them" and is thus compatible with the expansion of the global market for translation.

3.2.2 Localization and translation

The term 'localization' was coined in the late 1980s by software developers to reflect the introduction of 'foreign' linguistic-cultural elements to the original source code, content and display in U.S./American English (Folaron, 2006: 198). It has therefore been in use only since the early 1990s when localization started to be recognized as an industry and a profession related to, and yet distinct from, translation (Dunne, 2006: 1; Lieu, 1997: online[99]). This might explain why "Translation Studies has met the concepts of localization rather late, starting in the late 1990s" (Pym, 2004b: online)[100] and that these first encounters

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[99] Source: http://www.japaninc.com/cpj/magazine/issues/1997/dec97/local.htm, last accessed 16 November 2008.
[100] Source: http://www.elda.org/en/proj/scalla/SCALLA2004/Pymv2.pdf, last accessed 16 November 2008.
Pym (2004a: 29) further substantiates his claim by pointing out that the term "localization" does not appear in Shuttleworth and Cowie's *Dictionary of Translation Studies* (1997) nor does in the *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Translation Studies* (1998).

were not especially academic, since localization was and largely remains an industry discourse, with some technical rigour but few humanistic preoccupations. Translation studies has instead met localization through the training institutions, particularly through the need to prepare students for real-world employment[101].

In discussing the coming of age of what she considers a new academic discipline, Folaron (2006: 195) highlights how "the field of localization has experienced initial growth pangs", one of these stemming from the fundamental need to provide a clear definition of its scope of concern. Given that the field has so far been mainly defined through its complex, multi-disciplinary and technology-bound practice, consensus as to what precisely constitutes localization has often proved elusive, with the result that definitions have tended to vary according to the perspective of those who formulate them (Dunne 2006: 1; Folaron, 2006: 196-7)[102].

From a translational point of view, scholars' definitions a general tendency to "periodically distil the essence of the term" (Folaron, 2006: 198). O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: 66-7) quite broadly depict 'localization'

> as a process to facilitate globalization by addressing linguistic and cultural barriers specific to the Receiver who does not share the same linguistic and cultural backgrounds as the Sender.

Esselink (2003a: 4) states that "localization revolves around combining language and technology to produce a product that can cross cultural and language barriers. No more, no less", which has been praised by Folaron (2006: 197) for establishing the link between language and technology at the heart of the process and noting that it seems to be the continuing defining feature of the changing scope of localization. Dunne (2006: 4) describes localization in slightly more technical terms as

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[101] Similarly, Folaron (2006: 195) reports the call for more localization professionals coming from industry over the past few years. In her essay, she addresses at length some key general issues emerging from the dialogue on professional localization training and academic education.

[102] More specifically, Folaron (2006: 197) explains that descriptions and perspectives on localization have varied according to five factors: (1) one's position in the localization chain; (2) training; (3) experience; (4) geographical region; (5) the needs of projects and the client localization infrastructure in place. Dunne (2006: 1-2) also reviews a range of definitions provided by experts in various fields and quite critically asserts that such existing variety of formulations, as well as their contextually-bound nature provides "greater insight into the perspectives of those who formulate them than they do into the phenomenon of localization itself". She however concedes that this fragmented perspective is instrumental in shedding light on the structural barriers to a comprehensive view of localization.

the process by which digital content and products developed in one locale (defined in terms of geographical area, language and culture) are adapted for sale and use in another locale[103],

while Gouadec (2007: 37) views it as

the adaptation of a product/concept/process to the particular physical, technical, linguistic, cultural, ethic, religious, philosophical, commercial, marketing etc, conditions and requirements of an audience or users belonging to a specific 'locale', defined as the delimitation of a geographical-cultural area and the particular variety of language that the people concerned use.

It is noteworthy that "translation" does not feature explicitly in any of the above definitions, which is in itself indicative of the still unclear relationship existing between the two fields. The situation has been lamented most notably by Pym (2004a: xv), who states that while localization has been widely associated with one of the most successful language industries of the past two decades, particularly in the areas of software, product documentation and e-commerce, translation on the other hand has often been seen as a small part of localization, to the extent that some translation scholars have questioned whether localization really introduces something new. Similarly, on the part of the localization industry, translation has long been considered a question of routine, and has even come to be dismissed as "just a linguistic problem" (Brooks, 2000: 43)[104].

Cadieux and Esselink (2002: online)[105] help clarify the roots of this state of affairs:

when people started translating software, some of the changes required were not, strictly speaking, translation: changes to character encodings, date and time formats, sorting rules, etc. The term localization was used to more generally describe any changes

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[103] The term "locale", itself subject to a variety of perspectives, has been widely explored by Esselink (2003: 67) and Pym (2002: 1-3; 2005).

[104] Pym (2004: 52) interestingly argues that in so doing the localization industry has purported a restrictive concept of translation, seemingly returning to the narrow linguistic view based on the replacement of natural-language strings, often in a very literal way. The narrow conception of translation spread by the localization industry contrasts with the direction taken by Translation Studies for the past 20 years or so, where insights into text linguistics, discourse analysis and cultural issues have crucially contributed to widen the concept of translation. Thus, in Pym's view, localization discourse threatens to invalidate two decades of academic debate and research.

[105] Source: http://www.lisa.org/globalizationinsider/2002/03/gilt_globalizat.html, last accessed 28 October, 2008.

required to adapt a product to the needs of a particular group of people generally in the same physical location or locale[106].

The description is echoed in the LISA Primer (2007: 11) where it is argued that

> localization is often treated as nothing more than "high-tech translation"[107], but this view does not capture its importance, its complexity, or what actually takes place during localization. It also hides the fact that localization must be integrated with other business processes if it is to be effective[108].

A viable approach seems to be considering translation an integral and central part of localization, but also considering localization to be more than translation (O'Hagan and Ashworth, 2002: 69), with the awareness that boundaries, between translator tasks and localizer tasks are rather fuzzy (Austermühl, 2003: online)[109]. In tune with this attitude Esselink (2003a: 69-70) provides a fourfold categorization of the differences between translation and localization:

(a) **activities**: translation entails the transferring of material from one language to another and is traditionally one of the activities carried out in projects, with terminology research, editing, proofreading and page layout. In localization, on the other hand, a greater number of activities can be identified, including multilingual project management, software and online help engineering and testing, conversion of translated documentation to other formats, translation memory alignment and management, multilingual product support and translation strategy consulting;

(b) **complexity**: managing software or web localization projects is much more complex than traditional translation projects. Due to large volumes and tight deadlines

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[106] See also O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: 71) who state that "when text for translation moved from a paper-base to a digital medium such as computer software, the process came to be called localization, as it required special engineering adjustments in addition to translation of texts"

[107] See for instance Gouadec (2007: 38) who considers localization "technically a variety of translation".

[108] Dunne (2006: 2) identifies the following broad processes: development and authoring of the functional features of a product; sales; marketing; corporate legal counsel and management. Esselink (2000 quoted in Pym, 2002: 4) provides his own business-process model for the localization of software, which involves: analysis of received material; scheduling and budgeting; terminology set up or glossary translation; preparation of localization kit; translation of software; translation of help and documentation; processing updates; testing of software; testing of help and publishing of documentation; product QA and delivery; post-mortem with client. Esselink (2003a: 70-9) further discusses at length the standard components of software localization projects (i.e. software, online help and documentation) and the team of people usually involved in a localization project (i.e. project manager, localization engineer, language manager, translators and others).

[109] Source: http://isg.urv.es/seminars/2003_localization_online/austermuehl.html, last accessed 16 November 2008.

usually a team of translators is needed and many tasks rely on the completion of previous tasks;

(c) **adaptation level**: software localization projects require the implementation of all local characteristics of the target market in the final product:

(d) **technology used**: software localization features a more prominent use of translation technology than traditional translation, mainly on account of the highly repetitive nature of software products and web sites and on the need for constant updates. In this context, the use of translation memory (TM), computer-aided translation (CAT) and machine translation (MT) has become a must[110].

The most updated and detailed attempt to differentiate the two areas of activity with the aim of contributing towards a correct use of both terms comes from Gouadec (2007: 37-43), who analyses at length the three domains and cycles of localization – i.e. software localization, web site localization, videogame localization. Of these, only website localization falls within the scope of our work. However, given that website localization is usually considered more akin to software localization than conventional translation work (O'Hagan and Ashworth, 2002: 12; Esselink, 2000: 13) the two areas will be compared and contrasted here, while videogame localization will not be taken into account. The following table aims to clarify the steps involved in both processes; the parts in bold identify what translators would do as a matter of course:

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[110] See also Lieu (1997: online at http://www.japaninc.com/cpj/magazine/issues/1997/dec97/local.htm, last accessed 16 November 2008) who reports how Michael Shannon, sales manager, Asia, of International Translation & Publishing Japan, opposes the narrow definition of localization when he contends that "the main part of localization is translation in all cases: the translation and adaptation of online help and documentation, and preserving consistency across all three". Lieu herself describes the job of localizing a product as usually divided into three areas, the first two of which consisting of translation activities. Even the LISA literature has over the years refined the analysis of localization to the extent that the latest edition of its Primer (2007: 12) recognizes that "translation of text generally constitute the bulk of a localization project".

Software localization	Website localization
Analysing the structure of the application and its documentation	Setting up the localization environment
Project planning	Retrieving site contents and architecture
Specifying the service required by the work provider	Analysing the site functions and operation
Breaking down of the product into its various components (e.g. source code, text and messages, menus, dialogue boxes, sound etc.), which may be stored in different files	Defining the localization project
Pre-translation, which includes: tag processing, format conversions, setting up of the files and materials in the translation environment; acquiring the relevant terminology and phraseology resources; doing the necessary research into the subject as required	Identifying the adaptations required for the target market, work specifications and the overall work schedule
Translation of the various elements, which includes: - actual contents (databases, text, downloadable files, access protocols, runtimes, scripts and related sites); - user interfaces (messages, buttons, icons, dialogue boxes, menu bars etc); - online help files, product documentation, packaging, disk covers and any marketing literature needed for the product launch on the relevant foreign market.	Breaking down the site into components
Quality controls related to the translation, the language use, technical and functional quality and overall coherence	Choosing the future site architecture
Further processing of interfaces	Preparing all the different items for translation (e.g. tagging, conversion, setting up the translatable material within the appropriate hardware and software environment etc)
Re-assembling of the application	Creating the international files (e.g. international images plus anything that is fit for all languages)
Integrating the various components and modules into the software package	Creating the "images" directories
Integrating the relevant accessories and tools needed in the particular target market	Updating and upgrading addresses
Compiling the application	Duplicating (or cloning) the site
Integrating the online help	Creating the links enabling circulation between the various language versions
Final quality controls and tests, comprehensive of any necessary changes and corrections	Assembling same-type components into homogenous sets of text or code, scripts, frames, bars, pop-ups, titles, sound files
Creating a user runtime	**Preparing the various components for translation** (tagging, conversions, formatting, setting up into localization environment etc)
Installing, executing and usability testing	Collecting the terminological and phraseological raw material. Subject or topic

	studies are carried out as required
Final QC and validation	**Translating-localising the site contents.** This includes: - text components (pages, pop ups, titles, interface messages, database tables etc) - software components - audiovisual components
Creating and testing a master	Adapting and reprocessing of the non-text items (graphics, animated and still images)
Reassembling the application's documentation	**Proofreading and checking the translation**
Building the package	**Carrying out functional quality tests**
Disseminating the application	Reintegrating the translated (i.e. localised) elements into the site structure. This entails: - integrating translated code or text - integrating the frame files - integrating the titles - changing the necessary links within the translated files - checking the image source files in the translated files - re-integrating the legends - re-integrating the pop-ups - creating new links when required - adapting colours and user-interface if required
	Integrating all elements that were not present in the original but are deemed necessary for the target users and testing functional quality
	Off-line quality controls
	Making corrections, modifications, adaptations, followed by conformation of the changes
	Creating a web-ready version
	Testing cultural acceptability and efficiency and making all necessary adaptations
	Online quality control and validation
	(as the case may be) **Identifying the main keywords that will make sure that the site will be referenced by the main search engines.**

Table 3.1 Software localization vs. website localization (adapted from Gouadec (2007: 38-43)

The picture emerging from Gouadec's description is one where the translator carries out expanded and enhanced tasks and where translating processes are becoming increasingly complex and more integrated in a comprehensive workflow between other layers of preceding and following task (Sturz, 1998: online)[111]. Two crucial factors seem to impinge on the translating process and essentially distinguish it from 'traditional' translation: the *skopos* of the various tasks (§2.2) and the medium in which the final product will be embedded. The former factor is what informs the use of the expression "linguistic localisers" to refer to translators:

> […] linguistic localisers (translators) are people who translate (meaning, of course, that they adapt) the linguistic component of the product (software, videogame, Web site) to *be localised* and whatever 'tools' and documentary material go with that product, for whatever purpose. In that perspective, linguistic-cultural localization is translation in a special situation and context (Gouadec, 2007: 46) (my emphasis)

Localizers, in Gouadec's view, have a profile that lies in-between the ordinary translator and the webmaster, and in some cases even take on managerial responsibilities. At the same time, it is suggested that the particular medium in which the translated material is embedded entails particular constraints which greatly contribute towards the specificity of the finished product.

On a broader level, localization itself is subject to a host of factors which make rather a complex endeavour. As stated in the LISA Primer (2007: 15)

> localizing a product is not a trivial task. In practice, not all products are localized to the same extent. Some products require extensive localization, while others require less.

Factors influencing the extent of localization may range from the nature and scope of the product concerned to the size of the target market and audience, the organization's specific business priorities and needs and so. In sum, localization is not "a task done for its own sake" (LISA Primer, *ibid*: 15), but an integral element embedded in a greater force which is partly global (i.e. globalization itself) and partly adjusted to the given organization's or institution's globalization strategies (O'Hagan and Ashworth, 2002: 76).

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[111] Source: http://www.tc-forum.org/topictr/tr8local.htm, last accessed 16 November, 2008.

3.2.3 Website localization

In O'Hagan and Ashworth's view (2002: 12), website localization is "probably the most direct and prominent impact of the Internet so far on translation demand"[112]. Although the web dates back only to 1992, in a few years it has expanded so successfully to bring us "into immediate contact with a world of global information of gigantic dimensions, particularly when being addressed in the local 'language' of the target audience" (Valdés, 2008: 233-4). In the words of its inventor; Tim Berners-Lee (1999) "the web is more a social creation than a technical one" (quoted in Crystal, 2001: vii), which explains why it has shifted from being a mere purveyor of information to being a major communication tool (Burnett & Marshall, 2003; Valdés, 2008) with immense outreach potential.

Generally speaking, having a web presence involves two crucial factors: the organization or institution's visibility and its potential for image building. Localized websites enhance both these factors, as they become a vehicle for the organization or institution to reach foreign audiences and at the same time express "a desire to show the consumers that the organisation is willing to accommodate their needs" (Gillham and Maroto, 2003: online)[113]. Besides being a complex task in itself, therefore, web localization is a delicate matter, having a stake in the success or failure of a product – in the case of corporate websites – or impinging on the diplomatic profile of country – in the case of embassies.

Cross cultural communications consultant Neil Payne (online)[114] has highlighted three major benefits of web site localization:
- it crosses language barriers
- it builds credibility and,
- in the specific case of companies wanting to sell to international customers it increases revenue[115].

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[112] Web localization has so far been discussed or researched mainly in relation to corporate websites (Gillham and Maroto, 2003: online at http://www.nmk.co.uk/article/2003/9/1/cross-cultural-interactive-marketing, last accessed 29 November 2008; Esselink, 2000; 2003a; Sprung, 2000; Valdés, 2008;). Most of the insights gained from these studies are however relevant to our investigation into embassy websites.
[113] Source: http://www.nmk.co.uk/article/2003/9/1/cross-cultural-interactive-marketing, last accessed 29 November 2008.
[114] Source: http://www.sideroad.com/Web_Writing/web-site-localization.html, last accessed 16 November 2008.

Seen in this light, then, translation acquires a key role in enhancing credibility and image. As Payne further explains,

> localization of your web site demonstrates that you are a truly international player. In addition, through localization it shows that you understand, value and have respect for that particular country or region[116].

Gouadec's breakdown of tasks as presented in the previous section indicates that web localization essentially covers two broad areas: (a) translation of textual content and (b) adaptation of non-textual content (Dunne, 2006: 4) or, in the words of O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: 67), it

> has come to involve not only the content of the Message but also that of the Package – such as the general design of the home page, the layout, the font, the colour scheme, the icon design and the positions of buttons.

In other words, the aim of web localization is to "recreate the Message, to give it the look and feel of the equivalent local product" (O'Hagan and Ashworth, *ibid*: 67).

Within the two broad areas of adjustment essential in any localization projects, degrees of localization can be identified. Brooks (2000: 49) distinguishes three incremental levels:

- *enabled:* users can compose documents in their own language, but the user-interface and documentation remain in English;

- *localized:* the user-interface and documentation are translated, but language-specific tools and content remain in English;

- *adapted:* the linguistic tools, content and functions are revised or re-created to suit the target market[117].

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[115] Source: http://www.sideroad.com/Web_Writing/web-site-localization.html

[116] Esselink (2000: 39) makes an interesting difference between "web sites that contain a lot of *local* content, as opposed to localized or translated information". Local content, involving the addition of target-culture relevant information, seems to be crucial in increasing the comfort level of international visitors.

[117] Esselink (2000: 38-9) devises a different classification of pages on the web site under the following headings:
- pages that require heavy cultural or regional adaptation
- pages that require straight translation
- pages that require no translation.
To these, he also adds pages that require "real" localization i.e. many adaptations to regional standards and conventions, which may need to be rewritten by local authors. For this type of content, localization goes way beyond translation because it is an integral part of a company's global branding initiative.

The extent to which a message is adapted in a target-language and culture can be related to Venuti's twofold strategy involving "domestication" as opposed to "foreignization" (§2.4), whereby more sophisticated localized site seem to follow a full domestication approach, while others prefer to adopt a mixed approach and retain a certain amount of foreignness. Research conducted by the LISA Primer (2007: 15) indicates that

> in general, the more important textual information is to the function of a product and the more the user must interact with the product, the more localization it will require. […] In contrast, a back-end system that requires little interaction with users will generally require less localization.

In sum, the degree of localization and translation visible on a website may enable us to explore the organization or institution's overall communication strategy and to weigh source-oriented bias as opposed to target-driven interests. Furthermore the digital environment proper of web sites touches on design issues. With regard to our work, their explicit analysis as meaning-making resources can shed light on the diplomatic attitude of a particular country. For this reason they will be addressed in the following section within the wider framework of multimodal and multimedia communication.

3.3 Websites as instances of multimodal and multimedia communication

The scope of concern of web localization points to a key feature of the contemporary media age: the integration of the verbal and the visual within the medium of the computer screen, with far-reaching implications for communication and literacy. As Kress (2003: 24) explains,

> to use both modes, image and writing, together, as is ever more frequently the case with the new technologies, is to be involved in the *use* of the resources of visual composition (layout), in the *use of the visual mode of image*, in the *use of the mode of writing*, and all in ways which both draw on the existing knowledges and resources and yet are also quite new.

The co-deployment of diverse semiotic resources within a single communicative event is referred to as multimodality (Baldry, 2000: 21; Garzone et al., 2007: 21) or, more specifically, as

the use of several semiotic modes in the design of a semiotic product or event, together with the particular way in which these modes are combined (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001: 20)

In the age of "digitally afforded multimodality" (Hull and Nelson, 2005: 224), the concept has become strictly connected with that of multimediality (Baldry, 2000; Levine and Scollon, 2004), that is "the processing and presentation of information in two or more media simultaneously" (Cattrysse, 2001: 1)[118].

As is evident from the above definitions, multimodality and multimediality imply a number of key informing tenets which need defining. These include the notion of mode, medium and design. Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 21-2) view **modes** as "semiotic resources which allow the simultaneous realisation of discourses and types of (inter)action"[119] and **media** as "the material resources used in the production of semiotic

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[118] As Remael (2001: 13) highlights, "*multimedia* has become somewhat of a catch-all phrase for a large array of new communication technologies", but its precise definition and area of concern still seem to be elusive. The wide sense indicated by Cattrysse is gradually losing ground in favour of a more narrow sense referred to "when speaking of the processing and presentation of texts, graphics and pictures, if not animation and motion video" (Cattrysse, 2001: 1). Ulrych (1999: 36) also notes the co-existence of maximalist and minimalist interpretations of the object of study among translation scholars: "the maximalist view is that the term "multimedia" covers any way of conveying meaning that involves more than one semiotic system, from translating the theatre to film translation, translating cartoons and comic strips to translating an illustrated user's manual. The interpretation also
includes the use of multimedia techniques as a research tool in accessing and integrating texts (e.g. hypertexts, computer-based corpora studies, and so on). The minimalist view holds that multimedia translation only refers to the conversion of electronic material from one language to another, which essentially means the localization of software packages or web sites". In contrast to Cattrysse's claim, Ulrych (1999: 36) argues that recent developments in the study of translation seem to favour the broader interpretation of multimedia.

[119] There seems to be an overlap in meaning and interchangeable use of the terms *modes* and *semiotic resources* among scholars. The definition of modes as semiotic resources signals the strong social semiotic perspective in which the study of multimodality has been embedded mainly through the work of Kress (2003) and Kress and Van Leeuwen (2001; 2006). Kress (2003: 45) describes *mode* as "a culturally and socially fashioned resource for representation and communication" and makes a conceptual distinction between time-based modes – speech, dance, gesture, action, music- and space-based modes – image, sculpture, layout, architectural arrangement etc. Stöckl (2004: 12) speaks of core modes (e.g. image) and sub-modes (e.g. elements, vectors, colour), both embedded within the broader category of sensory channel (in this case visual). Baldry and Thibault (2006: 18) define a semiotic resource as something used to make meaning and which accordingly functions in the texts where these resources are used to this end and generally refer to gesture, gaze, space, language and so on as semiotic modalities.
Alternatively gesture, gaze and the like can be considered resources proper to the visual mode, while language is proper to the written mode. Layout then would need to be considered as a resource common to both modes.
It follows that mode and resource would appear to have a narrower and broader sense, whose precise conceptual distinction – if at all possible to establish – is beyond the scope of the present research. This work therefore will limit itself to point to the issue, although the analysis conducted will reveal an inclination towards a working distinction between a broader notion of mode comprising a "constellation" (Kress, 2003: 9) of relevant semiotic resources.

products and events, including both the tools and the materials used". In other words, media are specific material forms enabling modes to be realised (e.g. pictures, computer screens, books, walls, ink, camera, the vocal apparatus and so on). Although they are sometimes difficult to separate (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001: 7), generally speaking it can be argued that modes are on the 'content' side, while media on the 'expression' side (*ibid*: 21). **Design** is envisaged as standing midway between content and expression:

> it is the conceptual side of expression, and the expression side of conception. Designs are (uses of) semiotic resources, in all semiotic modes and combinations of semiotic modes (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2001: 7)

In using and combining semiotic modes, design then selects from the options made available by these resources according to the interests of a particular situation (Kress and van Leeuwen *ibid*: 22)[120].

As a property of texts, multimodality is deeply rooted in cultural practices the world over (Hull and Nelson, 2005: 227). As Stöckl (2004: 9) explains,

> it addresses a phenomenon which is as old as representation itself and as crucial to an understanding of almost all forms of communication. […] Spontaneous face-to-face talk relies heavily on non-verbal means (e.g. gesture, posture, body language) and has our visually perceptible environment as a constant topic of communication. Often it even has the immediate manipulation of objects as its target. Written language, on the other hand, incorporates images and – through typography and layout – wields strong pictorial powers.

The new media have accelerated the process of integration of semiotic resources by combing moving images, written and spoken language, sound and music. As a result "contemporary texts tend to be more obviously multimodal" than many of those

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Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 112-114) and van Leeuwen (2005) provide further discussion of the term *semiotic resource*. Van Leeuwen (2005: 285) defines semiotic resources as "the actions, materials and artefacts we use for communicative purposes, whether produced physiologically – for example with our vocal apparatus, the muscles we use to make facial expressions and gestures – or technologically – for example, with pen and ink, or computer hardware and software – together with the ways in which these resources can be organized".

[120] The importance of the concept of design has been emphasized by a number of scholars. Kress (2003: 36-7) envisages the contemporary world of communication as "constituted in ways that make it imperative to highlight the concept of design". For him, in multimodal communication design is "a sine qua non of informed, reflective and productive practice". Hull and Nelson (2005: 229) point out the usefulness of the notion "as a way to conceptualize the suddenly increased array of choices about semiotic features that an author confronts". For an in-depth exploration of design, see Kress and van Leeuwen (2001: 45-66). Kress (2003: 45-51) also explore the crucial issue of choice of mode.

associated with the printed word (Baldry, 2000: 21-2), thus bringing to the fore a long-neglected area of academic interest. In this sense, then, the age of multimedia has made multimodality perceivable again (Baldry, 2000: 21; Kress, 2003: 5-7; Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 39; Stöckl, 2004: 9-10) and has forced "scholars to think about the particular characteristics of [communication] modes and the way they semiotically function and combine in the modern discourse world" (Ventola et. al, 2004: 1)[121].

Bearing in mind that multimodality "is nothing new, nor is it exclusive to the Web" (Garzone, 2007: 21), websites can be seen to be instances of multimodal communication insofar as they

> involve a complex interplay of written text, images and other graphic or sound elements, designed as coherent (often at the first level visual rather than verbal) entities by means of layout (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 17).

Further, by their very nature they have both 'pagey' and 'screeny' properties, as well as "a dynamic and interactive interface" (Baldry and Thibault, 2006: 105), thus partaking features belonging to different media.

Devised as such, websites epitomise the fundamental change characterizing contemporary communication, that is the swing away from the centuries-long dominance of the mode of writing to the dominance of the mode of image into the domain of public communication, coupled with the switch to the dominance of the

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[121] The inherent multimodality of texts is a widely accepted tenet among scholars. As Baldry (2000: 25) argues "*all* texts are by definition multimodal, regardless of whether they are instantiated in written, spoken or other form". Both Remael (2001: 14) and Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 39) further specify that that even a simple written text without any additional pictorial elements involves more than language, insofar as it is written on and with something, it displays letters formed as types of font influenced by aesthetic, psychological, pragmatic and other considerations and have a layout. Baldry and Thibault (2006: 19) explain that "monomodality is the result of a certain way of thinking of separate, distinct semiotic resources, abstracted from use, as existing in their own right". Stöckl (2004: 10) even goes so far as to claim that "the purely mono-modal text has always been an exception while the core practice in communication has essentially been multimodal all along". He considers the dominance of linguistics and the concentration on language as the central mode, combined with a lack of adequate models for the analysis of non-verbal modes, what made verbal mono-modality appear to be the standard and prevailing form of communication. Within the field of translation studies, notes Cattrysse (2001: 2), scholars too have progressively learned that even so-called verbal translation is never purely so, as "through the words, other codes such as cultural (e.g. politeness codes), political, and economic codes are translated at the same time".

screen as opposed to that of the book[122]. Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 23) have envisaged this shift as a fundamental opposition between two kinds of visual literacy[123]:

> one in which visual communication has been made subservient to language and in which images have come to be regarded as unstructured replicas of reality (the 'old visual literacy', in our terms); and another in which (spoken) language exists side by side with, and independent of, forms of visual representation which are openly structured, rather than viewed as more or less faithful duplicates of reality (the 'new' in our terms).

The renewed emphasis on the dominance of image is not to deny its historic role "even in the book as illustration" (Kress, 2003: 20); rather it is intended to emphasize the fact that "image is coming ever more insistently into the domain of everyday communication as a full means of representing ideas, information and knowledge" (*ibid*: 20), which in turn is making writing shift from being 'the' unchallenged mode of communication to being one mode among others (Kress, 2003: 21; Kress and van Leuuwen, 2006: 34).

The two modes of writing and image are informed by distinct logics and have distinct affordances:

> the organisation of writing – still leaning on the logic of speech – is governed by the logic of time, and by the logic of sequence of its elements in time, in temporally governed arrangements. The organisation of the image, by contrast, is governed by the logic of space and by the logic of simultaneity of its visual/depicted elements in spatially organised arrangements (Kress, 2003: 1-2).

Meaning depends on the possibilities afforded by each mode. If in writing it largely results from the linear arrangement of syntax, in images it is apprehended according to a spatial and simultaneous ordering principle. For Kress (2003: 1-2) the *narrative* is the most representative genre of the world told, while the *display* is the most powerful expression of the world shown.

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[122] Kress (2003: 6) points out that the screen – the preferred site for the image - is the currently most potent medium of representation and communication, which "means that it is these practices and these conception which hold sway, and not only on the screen but also in all domains of communication".

[123] Kress (2003) provides an in-depth discussion of the meaning of the term literacy in the light of the changes in conditions surrounding literacy itself. For Kress (2003: 24) "literacy remains the term which refers to (the knowledge of) the resource of writing", thus separating the issue from the "further set of metaphoric extensions, as in *cultural, emotional, sexual, social* literacy, and many more" (italics in the original).

The co-deployment of mixed logics proper of multimodal texts leads to a changed distribution of semiotic power, accounting for the partial meaning-making potential and the difference communicative purpose of a given mode. As Kress illustrates (2003: 20-1),

> if two modes – say, image and writing - are available and are being used for representing and communicating, it is most likely that they will be used for distinct purposes: each will be used for that which it does best and is therefore best used for. Two consequences arise: one, each mode carries only a part of the informational 'load'; no mode fully carries all the meaning. Two, each of the two modes will be used for specialised tasks, the tasks which are best done with that mode (Kress, 2003: 20-1)[124].

The overall meaning of a multimodal text, however, is not to be intended as an additive operation of distinct semiotic resources; rather it is informed by what Baldry and Thibault (2006: 18) refer to as the "resource integration principle", whereby

> resources are not simply juxtaposed as separate modes of meaning making but are combined and integrated to form a complex whole which cannot be reduced to, or explained in terms of the mere sum of its separate parts. The organizational principle of the whole – e.g. the page as a visual unit – cannot be understood in terms of different resources used, taken separately.

The notion of integration is precisely what enables texts to be something more than a "by-chance combination of written text and visual supports" (Baldry, 2000: 22)[125].

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[124] Kress's key argument is echoed by Hull and Nelson (2005: 229) in claiming that "images, written text, music, and so on each respectively impart certain kinds of meanings more easily and naturally than others", without however denying that different modalities can in fact convey the same kind of meaning. In Hull and Nelson's view, this idea is the most central conceptual tool that can be brought to bear on the understanding of the workings and meanings of multimodal texts and can be related to the key notion of the *aptness* of the semiotic sign (§ 3.3.2).
Stöckl (2004: 9-22) explores mode integration premised on the idea of an innate tie between language and image, see.

[125] The idea that multimodal meaning is not the result of an additive process has been emphasized by a number of authors. Lemke (1998) uses the term *multiplicative* to describe multimodal meaning. Quoting him, Thibault (2000: 312) explains that for instance "the predominantly typological nature of language is very good at making categorical distinctions, although it is not so well adapted for construing the topological characteristics of visual phenomena. Their integration in the one text can, thus, lead to new meaning-making possibilities and combinations that are different from the two modalities considered separately". Hull and Nelson (2005: 225) likewise argue that multimodal composing "is not simply an additive art whereby images, words and music, by virtue of being juxtaposed, increase the meaning-making potential of a text". Rather, they demonstrate how "a multimodal text can create a different system of signification, one that transcends the collective contribution of its constituents parts". Finally, the resource integration principle is in line with Kress and van Leeuwen's hypothesis (2006: 39) that "the different modes of representation are not held discretely, separately, as strongly bounded autonomous

Given the renewed importance of multimodality, Kress (2003: 24) advocates a precise and explicit understanding of the meaning potentials of the various semiotic resources. As he (*ibid*: 24) explains,

> when we see the finished message, it seems as though the maker of the message has simply made use of everything that was there to use, that she or he has drawn on whatever resources were available and serviceable, without distinguishing between resources. Yet even now, in this situation of change and flux, we can tell the differences: between the use of the mode of writing and that of image, between the page that works, the screen that looks good, and those which don't.

In line with a prospective orientation, his call draws on the assumption that having "the means, the knowledge, however implicit, for making discriminations" implies in the first place having the means "for making the complex design decisions also" (*ibid*: 24).

Most relevant to our analysis is the complementary retrospective orientation, whereby explicit knowledge of the meaning-potentials afforded by various semiotic resources will be instrumental in decoding the 'diplomatic' meaning conveyed by a given embassy's website. If we accept Kress' (2003: 3) contention that

> language-as-speech will remain the major mode of communication; language-as-writing will increasingly be displaced by image in many domains of public communication, though writing will remain the preferred mode of the political and cultural elites[126],

then it becomes vital to account both for the visual and the written component of Embassy websites. To this end, the next section will underpin the methodological framework for the visual analysis of websites.

3.3.1 Methodological foundations for the visual analysis of websites

Echoing the idea discussed in the previous section that multimodality is an inherent property of texts, Stöckl (2004: 9) describes the blooming research in this field as "the late discovery of the obvious". Kaltenbacher (2004: 190) also subscribes to this perspective and states that it is

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domains in the brain, or as autonomous communicational resources in culture, nor are they deployed discretely, either in representation or in communication".

[126] Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 34) envisage that language has mainly become a mode for comment, for ratification, or for labelling.

despite or probably because of its obviousness [that] multimodality research is a very young discipline or, as we should perhaps more correctly say, has only recently seen a rebirth that has long been overdue.

Baldry (2000: 21) traces the origin of multimodality research to the pioneering work of scholars such as Gregory Bateson, Ray Birdwhistell, E. T. Hall, A. E. Scheflen back in the 1950s and 1960s, but it is only recently that the work of these authors has been developed in and integrated with functional linguistics and social semiotics. The social semiotic school has indeed been one major driving force behind multimodality research (Stöckl, 2004: 10).

Broadly speaking, *semiotics* is concerned with forms of meaning-making and representation; more specifically it can be glossed as

> the general study of *semiosis*, that is the processes and effects of the production and reproduction, reception and circulation of meaning in all forms, used by all kinds of agent of communication (Hodge and Kress, 1988: 261)[127].

Within this large framework, social semiotics is chiefly concerned with

> human semiosis as an inherently social phenomenon in its sources, functions, contexts and effects. It is also concerned with the social meanings constructed through the full range of semiotic forms, through semiotic texts and semiotic practices, in all kinds of human society at all periods of human history (Hodge and Kress, *ibid*: 261).

Semiotics has been the domain of two divergent traditions, one stemming from the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, the other from the work of the American pragmatist philosopher, Charles Sanders Peirce. Saussure, who explicitly placed linguistics within the discipline of semiotics, used the term "*semiology* (from the Greek sēmeîon, 'sign')" to designate the science "which studies the role of signs as part of social life" and aims to investigate their nature and the laws governing them (Saussure, 1983: 15-6 quoted in Chandler, 2002: 5-6). Peirce, on the other hand, named 'semiotic' the field of study which he envisaged as the "formal doctrine of sign"[128]. Saussure's semiotics is essentially structural, based on the notion of language as a code, whereas

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[127] As the authors (1988: 261) further specify, the adjective *semiotic* refers to the range of objects coming under the study of semiotics, while *semiosis* refers specifically to the process itself.
[128] Chandler (2002: 6) and Gorlée (1995: 32-39) clarify the uses of the two terms – *semiology* and *semiotics*.

Peirce's approach is interpretative, providing instructions on how to interpret terms according to the sense they acquire in a particular context of production and reception, according to intertextual relations and so on (Gorlée, 1995: 13).

Saussure considered the nature of the sign dyadic, consisting in the relation between a concept - the *signified* - and an acoustic noise or a graphic form standing for the concept - the *signifier*. He maintained that the link between the signified and the signifier is absolutely arbitrary. Pierce, instead, focused less on the internal constitution of the sign than on what it represented and on its uses. He conceived of the sign as triadic, consisting of a *representamen* – the form which the sign takes, an *interpretant* – the sense made of the sign and an *object* – or referent of the sign. He distinguished between three types of signs: *iconic*, meaning that the form of the sign is perceived as resembling or imitating the signified; *indexical*, in which the signifier is not arbitrary, but directly connected to the signified and *symbolic*, where the relation between the signifier and the signified is largely sustained by convention. Although there is a difference in focus between the Saussure's and Peirce's approach, for Kress (2003: 42) "in fact the two theories are compatible and complementary".

Three major schools of semiotics have flourished in Europe that applied ideas from linguistics to non-linguistic modes of communication: the Prague School of the 1930s and early 1940s; the Paris School of the 1960s and 1970s and a movement with two sources both drawing on the ideas of Michael Halliday: one growing out of the 'Critical Linguistics' elaborated in the 1970s at the University of East Anglia and the other devised in the later 1980s as a development of Hallidayan systemic-functional linguistics in Australia (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 6)[129].

Halliday introduced the term "social semiotics" into linguistics in 1978. For him, the formulation "language as a social semiotics" means "interpreting language within a socio-cultural context, in which the language itself is interpreted is semiotic terms" (1978: 72). Hodge (2003: online)[130] summarizes the key premises of his linguistic theory, equally valid for social semiotics, as follows:

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[129] Kress (2003: 36), a leading theorist in multimodality, views in the theoretical change from linguistics to semiotics first and foremost a move "from a theory that accounted for language alone to a theory that can account as well for gesture, speech image, writing, 3D objects, colour, music and no doubt others".
[130] Source: http://www.semioticon.com/seo/S/social_semiotics.html#, last accessed 16 November, 2008.

1. "language is a social fact" (1978: 1): language is made up of social relationships. This is valid for all semiotic codes;

2. "we shall not come to understand the nature of language if we pursue only the kinds of question about language that are formulated by linguists" (1978: 3): thus autonomous linguistics and semiotics working in isolation cannot understand the full nature of their object;

3. "language is as it is because of the functions it has evolved to serve in people's lives" (1978: 4): with this contention, Halliday establishes a functional perspective as a key to the indissoluble relationship between semiotics and society, structure and function;

4. there are three functions, or 'metafunctions', of language: *ideational* – "expressing the speaker's experience of the external world, and of his internal world, that of his own consciousness" (1978: 45); *interpersonal* – "expressing relations among participants in the situation, and the speaker's own intrusion into it" (1978: 46) and *textual* – "the function that language has of creating text, of relating itself to the context – to the situation and the preceding text" (1978: 48).

5. language is constituted as " discrete network of options" (1978: 113). As noted by Kress (2001, online)[131] this network of options are sets of semiotics alternatives, which are realised in sets of options of formal/material means.

Halliday's insights have first been applied to a semiotic mode other than language by Kress and van Leeuwen, to the extent that, as remarked by Kaltenbacher (2004: 191), many linguists see in their groundbreaking books *Reading Images* (1990) and *Reading Images: the Grammar of Visual Design* (1996/2006) the real birth of multimodality research. The scholars provide an in-depth exploration of the semiotics of images and, as they themselves admit (2006: vii), have attempted to use Hallidayan theory's "general semiotics aspects rather than its specific linguistically focused features" [132].

Although their insights have not been specifically devised for web pages, they are nonetheless applicable to all forms of visual communication, ranging from magazines

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[131] Source: http://www.ched.uct.ac.za/literacy/Papers/KressPaper.html, last accessed 16 November, 2008.
[132] As reported by Kaltenbacher (2004: 193), at the same time as Kress and van Leeuwen devised their semiotic framework, O'Toole (1994) adapted the systemic functional view of language for the semiotics of displayed art. In his theory of semiotics, the three meta-functions are: the modal (interpersonal), the representational (ideational) and the compositional (textual).

articles, advertisements, textbooks to websites (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 4). Further, the fact that they see "in images not only the aesthetic and expressive, but also the structured social, political and communicative dimensions" (Kress and van Leeuwen, *ibid*: 20) lends itself well to explore the diplomatic communicative potential of embassy websites. The next section will therefore describe in detail the core of Kress and van Leeuwen's grammar[133] of visual design[134].

3.3.2 Kress and van Leuuwen's visual grammar

Kress and Van Leeuwen start from the premise that "visual language is not – despite assumptions to the contrary – transparent and universally understood; it is culturally specific" (2006: 4). Consequently, dimensions and elements of visual space come with different values and meanings, which exert their influence beyond writing and at the same time contribute towards meaning itself accorded to different compositional patterns, the extent of their use and so on. The scholars' proposed grammar is mainly confined to what is commonly perceived as 'Western' visual

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[133] Stöckl (2004: 10) points out that the devising of various 'grammars' of individual non-linguistic modes has been a highly fertile strand in multimodal research, compared to the study of the interrelations between the various modes, which is still an underrepresented area. For a broader historical overview of the field of multimodal analysis from its early beginnings to the present day and future perspectives see Kaltenbacher (2004).

[134] It must be noted that, alongside social semiotics, the field of visual representation offers a variety of perspectives and research methodologies that can be applied to the analysis of websites. Van Leeuven and Jewitt (1997) offer an interesting array of research projects, each informed by a different approach, including content analysis, visual anthropology, cultural studies, psychoanalytical image analysis, conversation analysis and ethnomethodology. In weighing the merits and limits of the various perspectives, Van Leeuven and Jewitt (*ibid*: 8-9) show how some methods are more methodical than others, laying down very precise criteria for analysis. Those tending most clearly in this direction are content analysis – i.e. an empirical and objective procedure for quantifying recorded 'audio-visual' (including verbal) representation by means of reliable, explicitly defined categories ('values' on independent 'variables') (Bell: 1997: 13) - and social semiotics itself. By contrast, others such as cultural studies and ethnomethodology provide less precise rules for conducting the analysis, nor do they explicitly conduct research through a 'step-by-step procedure'.

On the negative side, van Leeuven and Jewitt (1997: 8) point out that both "content analysis, with its more or less mechanical statistical processing of data, and social semiotics analysis, with its proliferation of feature and precise criteria for analysing them" may give the impression that "visual analysis can be done 'by rote', and described as a kind of recipe, a procedure to be followed step by step, without the need for any form of initiative, let alone inspiration". These limitations are counteracted by the authors themselves when stating that "anyone who has actually tried these methods knows that there is a great deal more room for initiative and, indeed, inspiration than is sometimes acknowledged in the way these methods are described. These methods remain an art of interpretation, but one that follows certain rules of accountability".

communication[135]. Within this "unity" (Kress and van Leeuwen, *ibid*: 4), however, variations exist as to the overall organization of non-verbal items[136]. In this sense, visuality partakes the same dialectical relationship between a universalizing force and a particularizing drive which informs localization:

> the 'universal' aspect of meaning lies in semiotic principles and processes, the culture-specific aspect lies in their application over history, and in specific instances of use (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2006: 4).

Despite the prescriptive bias that the term 'grammar' might suggest, Kress and van Leeuwen' s main concern is to describe how depicted elements – people, places and things - combine in more or less complex visual 'statements'. More specifically, they aim to provide an explicit and systematic account of "the meaning of regularities in the way image elements are used" (2006: 1). This voices the authors' perspective that

> even though the visual mode might seem to provide direct access to the world, it is amenable to realizing theoretical positions as the verbal (*ibid*: 30).

The fundamental notion of Kress and van Leeuwen's semiotics is the idea that signs are not **arbitrary** entities, but **motivated** conjunctions of forms (signifiers) and meanings (signified), which

> have arisen out of the interest of social groups which interact within the structures of power that define social life, and also interact across the systems produced by various groups within a society" (2006: 154) [137].

It follows that in the process of sign-making, signifier and signified are relatively independent of each other until they are brought together by the sign-makers, who "use

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[135] The authors (2006: 3-4) warn against considering "the unity of Western design" as an intrinsic feature of visuality. Rather they explicitly characterize it as resulting "from a long history of cultural connection and interchange, as well as now from the global power of the Western mass media and culture industries and their technologies".

[136] It is precisely the specificity of each website constituting our 'Western embassy corpus' that the comparative analysis of the next Chapter will attempt to emphasize.

[137] Here lies the major difference between semiology's and social semiotic's understanding of sign, explained by the authors (2006: 8) as follows: "in social semiotics the sign is not the pre-existing conjunction of a signifier and a signified, a ready-made sign to be recognized, chosen and used as it is, in the way that signs are usually thought to be 'available for use' in 'semiology'".

the forms they consider apt for the expression of their meaning, in any medium which they can make signs" (2006: 8)[138].

Against this premise, the scholars envisage that the visual, like any semiotic mode, has the potential of meeting three demands corresponding to Halliday's three metafunctions, which they gloss (2006: 40-1) as follows:

a. **(ideational) representational**: it refers to the ability of a given semiotic mode to represent aspects of the world as it is experienced by humans;

b. **(interpersonal) interactive**: it refers to the ability of a given mode to represent a particular social relation between the producer, the viewer and the object represented;

c. **(textual) compositional**: it refers to the ability of a given mode to form texts which are both internally and externally coherent.

Each function offers an array of representation choices or visual realization and their discussion is at the heart of Kress and van Leeuwen's theory.

3.3.2.1 Patterns of representation

Kress and van Leeuwen identify two major visual structures of representation: narrative and conceptual. Narrative patterns represent the world in terms of "doing" and "happening"; more specifically they present "unfolding actions and events, processes of change, transitory spatial arrangement", while conceptual patterns represent participants "in terms of their more generalized and more or less stable and timeless essence, in terms of class, structure or meaning" (2006: 79). In other words, they do not represent participants as doing something, but as being or meaning something, having certain characteristics or components[139].

Before exploring the nature of the various patterns, the authors provide an important methodological clarification:

> visual structures do not simply reproduce the structures of 'reality'. On the contrary, they produce images of reality which are bound up with the interests of the social institutions

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[138] Kress (2003: 42-5) gives further insights into the notion of aptness and its relation to Peirce's iconic sign.
[139] As remarked by Jewitt and Oyama (1997: 141), "the choice is important, since the decision to represent something in a narrative or conceptual way provides a key to understanding the discourses which mediate their representation".

within which the images are produced, circulated and read. They are ideological. Visual structures are never merely formal: they have a deeply important semantic dimension (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 47).

It is precisely this semantic dimension that makes sign-making a motivated process, calling into question the ideological dimension of the sign producer, on the one hand, and the contextually and culturally bound interpretative scope, on the other.

a. <u>Narrative patterns</u>

Every semiotic act involves participants and a series of processes that relate them. Kress and van Leeuwen distinguish two types of participants, which they call interactive and represented. **Interactive** participants are the participants in the act of communication, that is "the people who communicate with each other *through* images, the producers and viewers of images" (2006: 114); **represented participants** are those who make up the subject matter of the communication, that is

> the people, places and things (including abstract 'things') represented in and by the speech or writing or image, the participants about whom or which we are speaking or writing or producing images (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 48).

Narrative patterns are concerned with represented participants, while interactive participants are the focus of interaction patterns.

For Kress and van Leeuwen visual and verbal participants are interchangeable, involving naturalistic or schematic pictures; abstract shapes with or without verbal labels; words, either enclosed of not enclosed in boxes or other shapes and so on.

Before analysing the representation patterns in detail, Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 53-9) discuss at length participants represented through basic geometric shapes, focussing on the diverse values attached to **circles**, **squares** and **triangles**. The crucial difference between circles and squares is explained by Kress and van Leeuwen (Kress and van Leeuwen*, ibid*: 55) as follows:

> curved forms are […] the dominant choice of people who think in terms of organic growth rather than mechanical construction, in terms of what is natural rather than in terms of what is artificial.

Thus, essentially the signifier of 'natural' is attached to circles, while that of 'technological' is attached to squares. In its positive connotation, the technological can indicate a source of power and progress, but negatively it can connote a source of oppression. In addition, squares or rectangular shapes can be piled up to form other geometrical patterns, unlike circles which are "self-contained, complete in themselves" (Kress and van Leeuwen, *ibid*: 54). Similarly to the square, the triangle is viewed as an element of the mechanical and technological order, but differently from squared shapes it can point at things and thus convey a sense of directionality.

These basic shapes can also give rise to other geometrical shapes, being elongated either vertically or horizontally. In the case of **vertical elongation** a more marked distinction is created between top and bottom, which indicates

> a bias towards hierarchy, and towards 'opposition' generally (what is more important or otherwise dominant goes on the top, what is less important or dominant is relegated to the bottom) (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 57).

In the case of **horizontal elongation**, on the other hand, a shape is made to lean either towards the left or towards the right.

The narrative relation among participants is realized by the presence of **vectors.** These are usually diagonal depicted elements (e.g. lines, arrowheads, bodies, limbs, tools etc.) and represent the distinctive feature of narrative processes, functioning as indicators of directionality. They allow for a range of processes to be represented and though their meaning potential is broad, the context usually supply relevant clues as to their possible reading. The **actor** is the active participant from whom or which the vector emanates and or may be fused with the vector to varying degrees; the **goal** is the passive participant at which the vector is directed. When something is done by an actor to a goal the relation is fundamentally depicted in terms of a **transaction**.

On the basis of the kinds of vectors and the number and kind of participants involved, a series of narrative processes can be distinguished. The main ones are summarized diagrammatically as follows (figure 3.2)[140]:

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[140] The style of diagramming used by Kress and van Leeuwen is known as "system network" and is rooted in Halliday (1978).
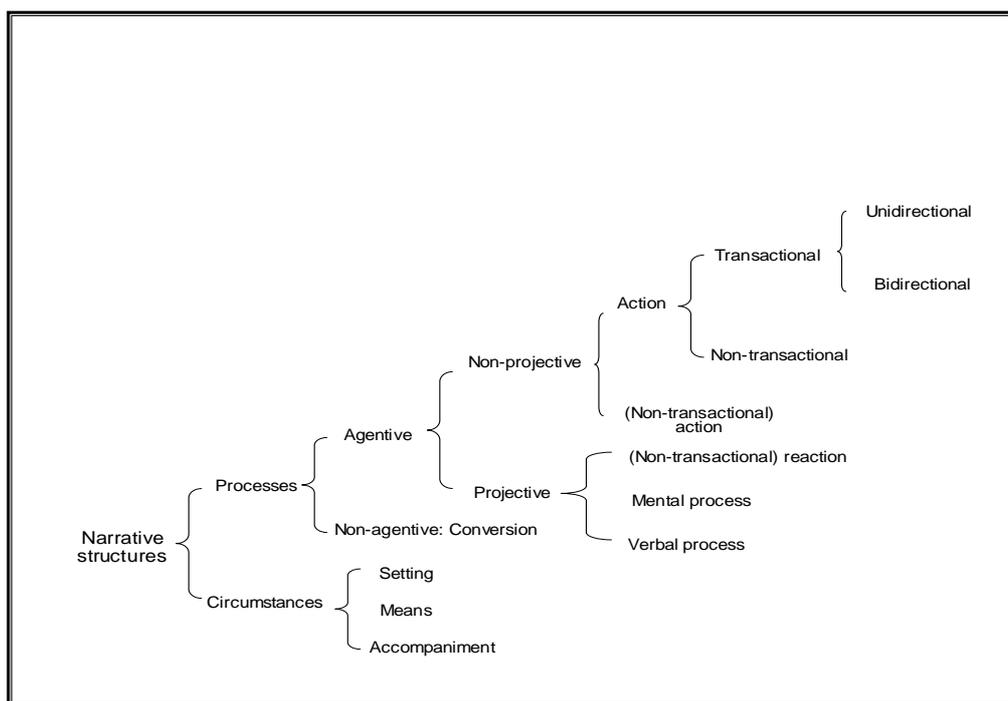
Figure 3.2 Narrative structures (adapted from Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 74)

Action processes can be non-transactional when only one participant is involved as an actor and a vector originates from it, but does not point at any other participant. In other words, the action has no goal. In other cases, there may be only a vector and a goal, while in the cases of **events** only the goal is represented. When the visual involves two participants the process is transactional, and can be further distinguished into a unidirectional action – where the vector connects two participants – and a bidirectional action – where a double-headed arrow connects two interactors, each playing the role of actor and goal.

Reactional processes involve an 'eyeline' vector connecting two participants, now being referred to as **reacter** and **phenomenon**. The reacter is the participant whose look creates the eyeline and must necessarily be human or human-like; the phenomenon is the passive participant (in a transactional reaction) at which the reacter's look is directed. Non-transactional reactions involve no phenomenon.

Speech and **mental processes** link a human (or animate) being to a 'content' (e.g. quotes in a textbook or the thought balloon in comic strips). In mental processes, the participant from whom the 'thought bubble' stems is called a **senser**; in verbal

processes the dialogue balloon stems from a **sayer** and the participant contained in such balloon is the **utterance**.

Conversion processes indicate a kind of process in which the participant – called the relay – is the goal of one action and the actor of another, with a change of state taking place. Common examples of conversion processes can be food chain diagrams or representations of some natural cycle.

Circumstances, finally, indicate those

> participants which could be left out without affecting the basic proposition realized by the narrative pattern, even though their deletion would of course entail a loss of information (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 72).

Circumstances consist of a **setting** – which can be partially obscured by overlapping participants in the foreground, or is de-emphasized, or still is contrasted through the use of colour; means – that is the tools with which the action is carried out, which often form the vector; **accompaniment** – that it the participant which has no vectorial relation with other participants.

b. Conceptual patterns

Kress and van Leeuwen identify three major areas of conceptual representations classificational, analytical and symbolic processes.

Classificational processes connect participants in taxonomical terms, expressing a 'kind of' relation. Given the nature of the processes, at least one set of participants is subordinate to another superordinate set. A **taxonomy** is said **covert** when the superordinate participant is inferred from the similarities that the viewer may perceive to exist among the subordinates. The relation between the subordinates is visually conveyed through a symmetrical composition, which involves placing them at equal distance from each other, giving them equal size and the same orientation towards the vertical and horizontal axes. The participants may be realized verbally, visually or both instances, but the process is always visual. An **overt taxonomy**, on the other hand, is usually chained and thus involves the presence of 'interordinates' (2006: 80) or participants that are superodinates with respect to some and subordinate with respect to

others. In this case the taxonomy is multi-levelled as opposed to the single-levelled one that features two levels only.

Classificational diagrams in the form of taxonomies imply knowledge moving from the general to the specific, similar to a social hierarchy where the more general idea corresponds to greater power (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 82). By contrast, **flowcharts** describe the world in terms of "an actively pursued process with a clear beginning and an end" and are modelled "on the principle of authoritatively prescribed, structured, goal-oriented activity" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 84). A third model of representation, which has become common recently, is the **network**. It entails

> a form of social organization which is a vast labyrinth of intersecting local relations in which each node is related in many different ways to other nodes in its immediate environment, but in which it is difficult, if not impossible, to form a coherent view of the whole (*ibid*: 85).

Analytical processes involve two kinds of participants, referred to as **carrier** (whole) and **possessive attributes** (parts). Analytical processes can be see at work in both naturalistic and abstract visuals, their defining characteristic being the absence of vectors and the absence of compositional symmetry and/or tree structures.

A range of analytical processes can be identified and summarized visually as follows(figure 3.3):
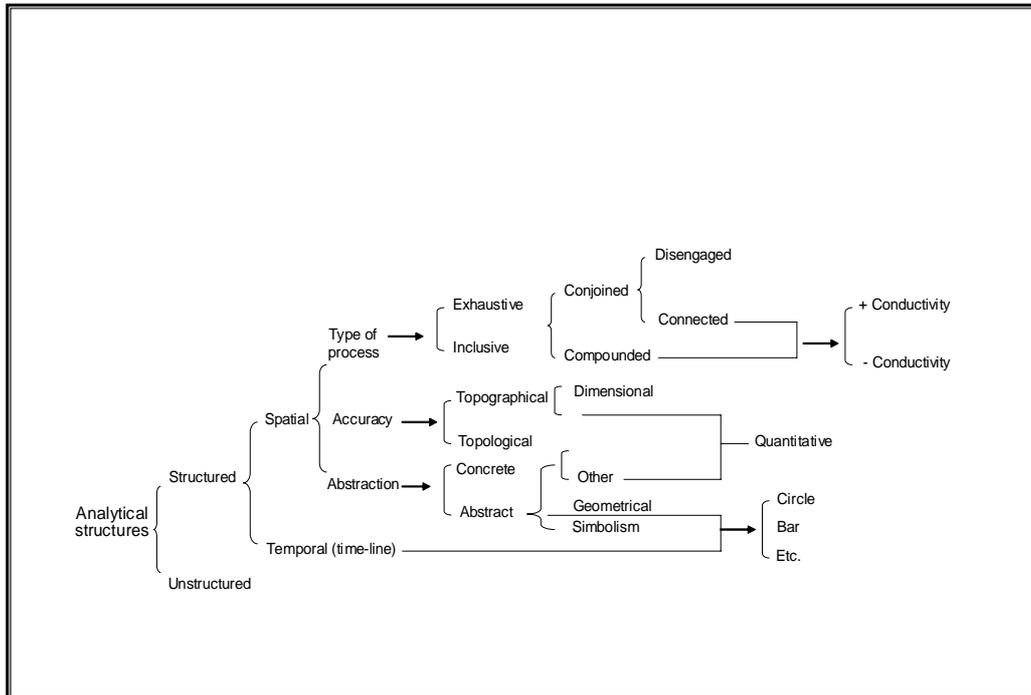
Figure 3.3 Analytical structures (adapted from Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 104)

Unstructured processes show us an unordered set of possessive attributes, but not the way the parts fit together to make up the whole. **Temporal** analytical processes realize a set of participants (possessive attributes) which are ordered linearly on a horizontal or vertical timeline and interpreted as a set of succeeding stages of a temporally unfolding process. The timeline may by topographical (i.e. drawn to scale) or topological (i.e. drawing the time intervals to scale).

Spatial processes can be exhaustive or inclusive. **Exhaustive** processes account for all the possessive attributes of a carrier; they are joined together to make up a complex shape. The structure is interpreted as showing all the parts constituting the whole (e.g. maps). **Inclusive** processes represent the attributes as contained within the carrier, taking up part of its space, but not all. In other words,

> where exhaustive structures are formed by the welding together of Possessive Attributes, inclusive structures are formed by the full or partial overlapping of the participants. And the structure is recursive: a Possessive Attribute can become the Carrier of other Possessive Attributes (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 96).

Exhaustive structures can be further conjoined or compounded. **Conjoined** structures represent possessive attributes either as **connected** by a line lacking a feature of directionality, or **disengaged** through a layout separating the possessive attributes

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and yet clearly showing how they fit together. **Compounded** structures on the other hand represent attributes as welded together while retaining their distinct identities (e.g. technical drawings). The difference between topographical and topological structures is at work in spatial processes too: in the former case the carrier and the attributes are drawn to scale, while in the latter they are not drawn to scale, but the way they are interconnected is represented accurately.

The last area of conceptual representation discussed by Kress and van Leeuwen concerns **symbolic processes**, whose function is to represent "what a participant *means* or *is*" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 105). Symbolic structures are of two types (figure 3.4):
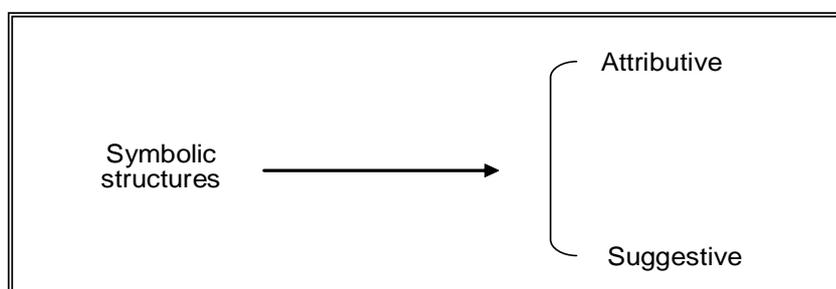
Figure 3.4 Symbolic structures (dapted from Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 105)

Symbolic attributive involves two participants: the carrier, whose meaning or identity is established in the relation, and the symbolic attribute, which represents the meaning or identity itself. Symbolic suggestive involves only the carrier. The main difference between the two lies in the fact that

> symbolic suggestive processes represent meaning and identity as coming from within, as deriving from qualities of the Carrier themselves, whereas Symbolic Attributive processes represent meaning and identity as being conferred to the carrier (2006: 106).

More specifically, symbolic suggestive rely on de-emphasized details resulting from soft focus, blended colours, extreme lighting and so on. By contrast, symbolic attributes are characterized by the following:
- they are made salient in the representation through foregrounding, size, light, colour, focus or tone;
- they are pointed at by means of a gesture or arrow;
- they look out of place in the whole;

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- they are conventionally associated with symbolic values.

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3.3.2.2 Patterns of interaction

Patterns of interaction fulfil Halliday's interpersonal function and centre on three types of relations:

1. between represented participants;

2. between interactive and represented participants

3. between interactive participants.

Thus, interactive participants are

> real people who produce and make sense of images in the context of social institutions which, to different degrees and in different ways, regulate what may be 'said' with images, how it should be said, and how it should be interpreted (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 114).

Unlike face-to-face communication, images (and websites) display no direct and immediate interaction; rather a **disjunction** between the context of production and the context of reception occurs, causing "social relations to be *represented rather than enacted*" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 116, italics in the original). As Kress and van Leeuwen (*ibid*: 116) further explain

> in face-to-face communication, we must respond to a friendly smile with friendly smile, to an arrogant stare with a deferential lowering of the eyes, and such obligations cannot be easily avoided without appearing impolite, unfriendly or impudent. When images confront us with friendly smiles or arrogant stares, we are not obliged to respond, even though we do recognize how we are addressed. The relation is only represented. We are *imaginarily* rather than really put in the position of the friend, the customer, the lay person who must defer to the expert. […] whether or not we identify with the way we are addressed, we do understand how we are addressed, because we do understand the way images represent social interactions and social relations (italics in the original).

Kress and van Leeuwen's analysis of interactive patterns is precisely aimed at making those understandings explicit.

The main kinds of interactive meanings explored by the authors can be summarized as follows (figure 3.5):
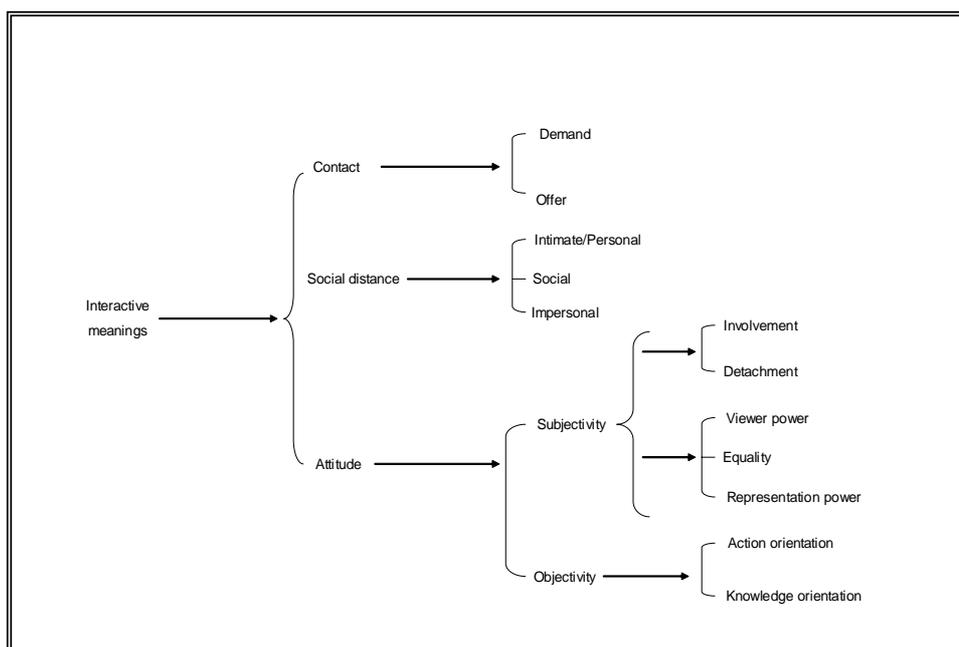
Figure 3.5 Interactive meaning (adapted from Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 139)

The main semiotic resources realizing interactive meaning as explored by Kress and van Leeuwen are gaze, size of frame and perspective. **Gaze** can be direct or indirect, that is participants can look directly at the viewers' eyes, thus establishing a contact with them, or not. The choice between visuals addressing viewers directly or indirectly imply a choice between *demand* or *offer*, suggesting "different relations with different 'others', to make viewers engage with some and remain detached from others" (Kress and van Leeuwen*, ibid*: 120). 'Demand' visuals ask viewers to do something (e.g. come closer or stay at a distance), while 'offer' visuals – where the represented participant is the object of the viewer's scrutiny – erect a barrier and convey a sense of disengagement.

The interactive dimension related to the **size of frame** involves a basic choice between close, medium and long shots, with a range of intermediate degrees. The size of frame of shots 'translates' the distance we socially keep from each other and, once again, suggests different relations between represented participants and viewers. Close shots, showing heads and shoulders of the subject, are related to personal distance, at which people are intimate with each other; medium shots, cutting off the subject approximately at the waist/knees, indicate a social distance; long shots, showing the full figure, are related to public distance, with a highly impersonal character.

The system of social distance can also be extended to objects and the environment, leading to the following threefold representation:

- close distance: the object is shown only in part and as if the viewer is engaged with it;

- medium distance: the object is shown in full and is depicted as within the viewer's reach, but not in use;

- long distance: the object is placed out of reach, for our contemplation only.

Finally, the interactive dimension related to **perspective** involves "the selection of an angle, a 'point of view', and this implies the possibility of expressing subjective attitudes towards represented participants, human or otherwise" (2006: 129). More specifically, Kress and van Leeuwen makes a distinction between subjective images – having (central) perspective and therefore an in-built point of view, and objective images – without (central) perspective and an in-built point of view. Subjective images enables the viewer to see what there is to see by selecting the perspectival angle for him/her[141]; while objective images reveal what there is to know about the represented participants, disregarding the viewer.

Images can have either a frontal or an oblique angle point of view, implying a difference between involvement and detachment. High or top-down angle puts the viewer in a position of great power, while eye-level angle creates equality.

<u>Modality</u>

A further key dimension of interpersonal meaning is modality. The term comes from linguistics and designates "the truth value or credibility of (linguistically realized) statements about the world" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 155). Its interpersonal quality lies in the fact that

> it does not express absolute truths or falsehoods; it *produces* shared truths aligning readers or listeners with some statements and distancing them from others (italics in the original) (*ibid*: 155).

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[141] In this regard, Kress and van Leewen (2006: 131) explain that the viewer's subjectivity must be intended in the original sense of the term, that of "being subjected to something or someone".

The concept of modality is likewise essential in language and in visual communication, where it is realized by a complex and finely graded interplay of visual clues. The truth value or reality of a visual is judged against the standard of naturalism as opposed to abstractness in terms of a series of **modality markers**, which include: colour, contextualization, representation, depth, illumination and brightness.

The role of **colour** is analysed on the basis of three scales:

1. colour saturation – a scale running from full colour saturation to the absence of colour (black and white);

2. colour differentiation – a scale running from a maximally diversified range of colours to monochrome;

3. colour modulation – a scale running from fully modulated colour to plain, unmodulated colour.

In each of the cases, the greater the abstraction, that is the move away from saturation, differentiation and modulation, the lower the modality.

Contextualization refers to a scale going from the absence of background to the most fully articulated and detailed background. The absence of setting lowers modality. As the authors explain (2006: 160),

> by being 'decontextualized', shown in a void, represented participants become generic, a 'typical example', rather than particular, and connected with a particular location and a specific moment in time.

Representation is a scale going from maximum abstraction to maximum representation of pictorial detail. Similarly to contextualization, modality can be achieved through reduced representation of detail or an exaggerated increase of detail, which from the point of view of naturalism becomes "hyper-real".

Depth is a scale going from the absence of depth to maximally deep perspective, with central perspective having the highest modality. **Illumination** is a scale going from the fullest representation of the play of light and shade to its absence and **brightness** is a scale going from a maximum number of different degrees of brightness to just two degrees (black and white or two brightness values of the same colour).

3.3.2.3 Patterns of composition

The way in which representational and interactive elements are integrated into a meaningful whole gives visuals a compositional value which adds to the various semiotic dimensions inherent in multimodal texts. In Kress and van Leeuwen's view,

> the integration of different semiotic modes is the work of an overarching code whose rules and meanings provide the multimodal text with the logic of its integration (2006: 177).

The authors identify two such integration codes: the mode of spatial composition and the mode of temporal composition (rhythm). The former operates in texts where all elements are spatially co-present, such as paintings, magazines pages and so on; while the latter is evident in texts which unfold over time, such as speech, music or dance. The textual patterns discussed by Kress and van Leeuwen concern the mode of spatial composition and are informed by principles which apply not only to single images or pictures, but also to composite texts such as layouts.

Three interrelated systems are identified which relate the representational and interactive meanings of composition: information value, salience and framing. **Information value** refers to the specific informational values acquired by elements according to their placement in the various 'zones' of the visual: left and right, top and bottom, centre and margin. The contrast between **left** and **right** on the horizontal axis implies a contrast between what is *given* and what is *new*. As Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 181) explain,

> for something to be Given means that is presented as something the viewer already knows, as a familiar and agreed-upon point of departure for the message. For something to be New means that it is presented as something which is not yet known, or perhaps not yet agreed upon by the viewer, hence as something to which the viewer must pay special attention. Broadly speaking, the meaning of the New is therefore 'problematic', 'contestable', 'the information "at issue", while the Given is presented as commonsensical, self-evident

Clearly, the given-new relation acquires an ideological meaning which reflects two important factors: on a broad level, the values attached to the structure are

culturally bound to the left-to-right writing (and hence reading) direction[142]; on a more specific level such values are to be interpreted within the structure given to them by the producer of the visual, "even if that valuation may then be rejected by the reader" (*ibid*: 181).

If horizontal structuring conveys a sense of "connection" and "ongoing movement" (*ibid*: 187), vertical structuring implies a greater sense of contrast, placing what is presented as the *ideal* on the **top** and the *real* on the **bottom** with strongly emphasized informational value:

> for something to be ideal means that it is presented as the idealized or generalized essence of the information, hence also as its, ostensibly, most salient part. The Real is then opposed to this in that it presents more specific information (e.g. details), more 'down-to-earth' information (e.g. photographs as documentary evidence, or maps or charts), or more practical information (e.g. practical consequences, directions for action) (*ibid*: 186-7).

The top, then, is envisaged by Kress and van Leeuwen as the ideologically foregrounded part of the message, while the bottom is its evidential elaboration.

The third spatial structuring of visual composition analyzed by Kress and van Leeuwen is structured along the centre-margin poles and its informational value is quite intuitive:

> for something to be presented as Centre means that it is presented as the nucleus of the information to which all the other elements are in some sense subservient. The Margins are these ancillary, dependent elements. In many cases, the Margins are identical or at least very similar to each other, so that there is no sense of a division between Given and New ad/or Ideal and Real elements among them (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 196).

Thus, to sum up, the combination of Given-New, Ideal-Real and Centre-Margin divide visual space and can be diagrammatically represented as follows (figure 3.6):

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[142] The workings of directionality reflect once more the dialectics between universality and specifity (§ 3.3.2) insofar as directionality is a semiotic resource of all cultures, but the meanings accorded to these values are deeply embedded in cultural systems.

Margin Ideal Given	Margin Ideal New
Margin Real Given	Margin Real New
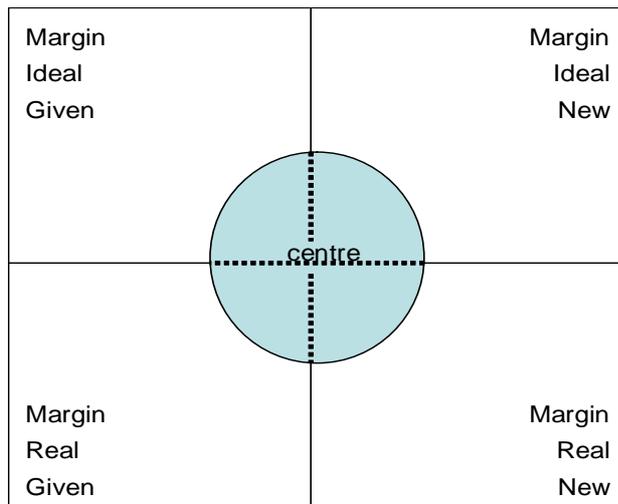
Figure 3.6 Dimensions of visual space (adapted from Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 197)

A widespread mode of combining given-new with centre-margin is the triptych. Its layout can be polarized with a centre acting as a mediator between given and new of between ideal and real, or it can be a simple and symmetrical margin-centre-margin Vertical triptychs of this kind are common in websites.

Alongside the positioning of elements, composition also involves different degrees of **salience**, which creates "a hierarchy of importance among the elements, selecting some as more important, more worthy of attention than others" (*ibid*: 201). Salience, for Kress and van Leewuen, is not objectively measurable, but results from the complex interaction of a number of factors, including placement in the foreground and background, relative size, colour contrast, tonal contrast, difference in sharpness as well as cultural factors such as human figures or symbols.

The third and final element in composition is **framing**, whereby the presence or lack of devices such as dividing lines or actual frame lines either connects or disconnects elements of the visual, signifying that they belong or do not belong together in some sense. Like salience, framing too involves degrees, so that "the stronger the framing of an element, the more it is presented as a separate unit of information" and viceversa "the more the elements of the spatial composition are connected, the more they are presented as belonging together, as a single unit of information" (2006: 2003-4). Framing can be achieved by dividing lines, white space between elements, discontinuity of colour and so on; connectedness on the other hand, can be emphasized by vectors, depicted elements or abstract graphic elements leading the viewer's eyes

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form one element to another, usually starting from the most salient and gradually moving to the others.

The key elements of textual composition can be summarized as follows (figure 3.7):
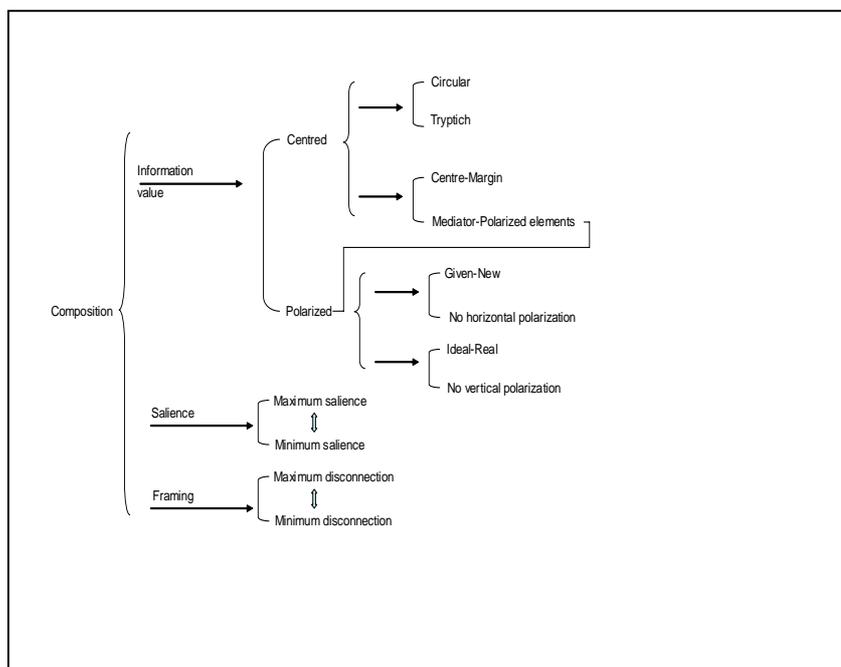
Figure 3.7 Key elements of textual composition (adapted from Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 210)

<u>Summary</u>

Given the complexity of Kress and van Leeuwen's visual grammar, a schematic summary of all the relevant categories is provided in the following tables:

REPRESENTATIONAL MEANING

NARRATIVE PATTERNS	REALIZATIONS
UNIDIRECTIONAL TRANSACTIONAL ACTION	A vector connects two participants – Actor and Goal
BIDIRECTIONAL TRANSACTIONAL ACTION	A vector connects two Interactors
NON-TRANSACTIONAL ACTION	A vector emanates from the participants – the Actor- but does not point at any other participant
ACTOR	The active participant in an action process from which the vector emanates or which is fused with the vector
GOAL	The passive participant in an action process at which the vector is directed
INTERACTORS	The participants in a transactional action where the vector emanates from and is directed at both participants
TRANSACTIONAL REACTION	An eyeline vector connects two participants, a Reacter and a Phenomenon
NON-TRANSACTIONAL REACTION	An eyeline vector emanates from a participant – the Reacter, but does not point at another participant
REACTER	The active participant in a reaction process whose look creates the eyeline
PHENOMENON	The passive participant in an (transactional) action at which the eyeline is directed
CONVERSION	A process in which a participant – the Relay – is the Goal of an action and the Actor of another
MENTAL PROCESS	A vector connects two participants – the Senser and the Phenomenon
SENSER	The participant from which the 'thought bubble' vector emanates
VERBAL PROCESS	A vector connects two participants – the Sayer and the Utterance
SAYER	The participants in a verbal process from which the 'dialogue balloon' emanates
UTTERANCE	The (verbal) participant enclosed in the dialogue balloon
SETTING	It is recognizable because it is obscured by the participants in the foreground
MEANS	The tools with which the action is carried out
ACCOMPANIMENT	A participant with no vectorial relation with other participants

Table 3.2 Narrative patterns: realizations

CONCEPTUAL PATTERNS	REALIZATIONS
UNSTRUCTURED ANALYTICAL PROCESSES	An unordered set of participants (Possessive Attributes) is interpreted as the set of parts of a whole which is not represented
TEMPORAL ANALYTICAL PROCESSES	A set of participants (Possessive Attributes) is ordered linearly on a timeline and interpreted as the set of successive stages of a temporally unfolding process
EXHAUSTIVE ANALYTICAL PROCESSES	A participant (Carrier) is represented as made up of a number of parts (Possessive Attributes) and the structure is interpreted as showing all the parts from which the whole is made up
DIMENSIONAL TOPOGRAPHICAL ACCURACY	The Carrier and the Possessive Attributes of an analytical process are drawn to scale
QUANTITATIVE TOPOGRAPHICAL ACCURACY	The size of the Possessive Attributes in an analytical process accurately represents the number or some other quantitative attribute of the Possessive Attributes
TOPOLOGICAL ACCURACY	The Carrier and the Possessive Attributes of an analytical process are not drawn to scale, but the way they are interconnected is drawn accurately
ABSTRACTION	The participants in an analytical process may be concrete

Table 3.3 Conceptual patterns: realizations

INTERACTIONAL MEANING

INTERACTIVE MEANING	REALIZATIONS
DEMAND	Gaze at the viewer
OFFER	Absence of gaze at the viewer
INTIMATE/PERSONAL	Close shot
SOCIAL	Medium shot
IMPERSONAL	Long shot
INVOLVEMENT	Frontal angle
DETACHMENT	Oblique angle
VIEWER POWER	High angle
EQUALITY	Eye-level angle
REPRESENTED PARTICIPANT POWER	Low angle

Table 3.4 Interactive meaning: realizations

COMPOSITIONAL MEANING	REALIZATIONS
CENTRED	An element is placed in the centre of the composition
POLARIZED	There is no element in the centre of the composition
TRIPTYCH	The non-central elements in a centred composition are placed either on the right and left or above and below the Centre
CIRCULAR	The non-central elements in a centred composition are placed both above and below and to the sides of the Centre, and further elements may be placed in between these polarized positions
MARGIN	The non-central elements in a centred composition are identical or near-identical , so creating symmetry in the composition
MEDIATOR	The Centre of polarized centred composition forms a bridge between Given and New and/or Ideal and Real, so reconciling polarized elements to each other in some
GIVEN	The left element
NEW	The right element
IDEAL	The top element
REAL	The bottom element

Table 3.5 Compositional meaning: realizations

3.4 Concluding remarks

The aim of this Chapter was to lay the theoretical and methodological foundations for the analysis to be conducted in Chapter 4. It was highlighted that websites are now powerful media on which embassies increasingly rely to communicate with the 'demos' (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 90) of their host countries as well as to reinforce bilateral relationships, promote their economic diplomacy and, in general, build their own country image. It was also suggested that websites currently epitomise the relevance of both verbal and non-verbal elements to diplomatic communication and this was taken as the informing assumption underlying the translational and visual analytical perspective adopted by the present work.

The first part of this Chapter has attempted to show how in the website localization industry translation has acquired an increasingly recognized key role at the interface of a given organization or institution's visibility, information and communication needs and its desire to meet the target audiences' needs. It was suggested that, in this process, the *skopos* of the various tasks and the medium in which

the translation will be embedded impinge not only on the translating process, but also on the finished product.

The second part of the Chapter has been devoted to a discussion of websites as instances of multimodality, within the wider framework of visual social semiotics. The analytical categories provided by Kress and van Leeuwen (2006) have been presented in detail as they will form the basis for the investigation of the visual specificity of embassy websites. Thus, against the theoretical and methodological premises laid out in this Chapter, it is now possible to turn to the applied part of this work, with a view to establishing how and to what extent both translation and visual composing contribute towards fulfilling specific diplomatic functions.

CHAPTER 4

ANALSYING EMBASSY WEBSITES

4.1 Introduction

The aim of this Chapter is to provide an in-depth investigation of the selected websites from a twofold perspective: visual and translational. The theoretical and methodological foundations for the analysis were laid down in Chapter 2 and 3. The approach adopted is retrospective and considers description as the foundation for both interpretation and evaluation. In line with this approach, the Chapter is structured as follows: section 4.2 provides an overview of the corpus; section 4.3 describes the websites in terms of content and semiotic design applying the compositional, interactional and representational semiotic categories indentified by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) in their work in visual grammar; on this basis the overall diplomatic meaning conveyed by each website is assessed; section 4.4 situates diplomatic translation within Embassies in the broader context of contemporary translating practice and describes each translated website against its original, with a view to establishing what has been translated and what has not been translated and describing the main translation strategies involved. On this basis the extent to which the translated texts reflect the diplomatic priorities accorded by each website is assessed.

4.2 Overview of the corpus

The corpus of websites taken into consideration for the present analysis consists of the following five Embassy websites:

- the Embassy website of the UK;
- the Embassy website of Canada;
- the Embassy website of Australia;
- the Embassy website of the U.S.A. and
- the Embassy website of New Zealand.

The aim of the present research is not to represent the full variety of diplomatic discourse, nor to analyse the full range of English websites of Embassies accredited to Italy. Rather, it is to investigate the diplomatic value of visual resources and translation for image building and the promotion of bilateral relations between a foreign country

and Italy. On this basis, the selection criteria for the websites to be included in the present research were essentially restricted to the following three:

- official language of the home country: English;
- location of the Embassy: Rome;
- website presenting a bilingual version (English-Italian)[143].

Such criteria reflect the fact the

Embassy websites can be categorised as institutional information websites (Baldry and Thibault, 2005: 104). They typically feature the following core sections:

- Home
- About us
- About the country
- Consular services
- Visa and Immigration
- Business with the country
- Bilateral relationships
- Press and Public Affairs.

Due to the variety of activities an Embassy is engaged in, the macro-field of Embassy discourse typically comprises a host of text types and genres each fulfilling a different communicative function:

- Ambassadors' speeches
- Articles
- General information giving texts
- Interviews
- News
- Press releases

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[143] At the time of the selection of the websites to be included in the present analysis, only the five websites indicated fully corresponded to the three criteria mentioned. A subsequent check conducted towards the end of the analysis revealed that two further websites, previously inaccessible for technical reasons or not fully developed, had in the meantime been predisposed so as to meet the three selection criteria, namely the website of the Embassy of Ireland in Italy (http://www.ambasciata-irlanda.it) and the website of the Republic of South Africa (http://www.sudafrica.it). Both the websites of the Embassy of Ireland in Italy and the website of the Republic of South Africa to Italy will be therefore the object of further analysis.

4.3 The visual social semiotic analysis of Embassy websites

In the wake of the upsurge of interest in multimodal texts and multimodal meaning-making practices (§3.3 and 3.3.1), websites have recently become proper objects of scholarly investigation with a focus on multimodal interaction (Baldry and Thibault, 2005; Djonov, 2005; Kok, 2004; Lemke, 2002). These studies integrate insights from the field of visual social semiotics with insights related to the website's hypertextual nature and their hypermedia environment[144]. The present research shares the visual social semiotics theoretical perspective in which these studies are embedded. It differs from them, however, in that it will focus mainly on the description and comparison of the website's semiotic design, with a view to uncovering the diplomatic value of the displayed resources, rather than on hypertextuality or hypermedia design issues[145].

The present analysis will describe and compare in particular the homepages of the selected websites. Webpages are the fundamental building blocks of websites, within which the home page has special significance:

> a home page is *home* to the other pages in a website; it provides the links which enable users to access the other pages in the website. The home page is the *gateway*, and therefore the user's point of entry, to a website and its meanings. For these reasons, the designers of web pages place a lot of emphasis on the construction of the semiotic space in which textual objects are displayed and arranged in relation to each other, as well as in relation to the viewer (Baldry and Thibault, 2005: 119) (emphasis in the original).

Each of the following sections will be structured as follows:

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[144] Lemke (2002) explores how multimodal semiotics interacts with hypertext semantics to produce the semiotic affordances of hypermedia within the institutional NASA website. Kok (2004) analyses the homepage of the Singaporean Ministry of education with a view to establishing how an institution and its objectives are "translated, transmitted and received through the hypertext medium" (2004: 131). He extends the semiotic functional frameworks of Halliday (1994), Kress and van Leeuwen (1996) and O'Toole (1994). Drawing on insights from hypermedia design and principles of systemic functional discourse analysis, Djonov (2005) analyses the organisation of information in children's websites and the role of the interaction of hypertextuality and multimodality. Baldry and Thibault (2005) present a ground-breaking analysis of the way web pages and websites typically make their meanings, applying the technique of multimodal transcription and text analysis. Their concern is "with how textual resources function in distinctive ways to create web pages and, in the process, make it possible to distinguish a web page from a printed page and from other kinds of multimodal texts such as films" (2005: 104).
[145] Djonov (2005: 111-171) offers a comprehensive discussion and evaluation of existing concepts of information architecture for the web, website interface design and web usability. From a technical perspective, she (*ibid*: 112-3)defines a website as "a group of webpages or hypertext mark-up language (HTML) documents within the same WWW domain. One of these documents must, due to HTML requirements, be designated as the site's homepage, or official entry gate".

a. first, a brief analysis of the content of the various sections in each website will be provided,

b. second, an in-depth analysis of the home page of each website will be carried out with a view to investigating the meaning of displayed semiotic resources at the compositional, interactional and representational level.

As it will be recalled from Chapter 3 (§3.3.2), Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 40-1) define compositional meaning as the ability of any given mode to form texts which are both internally and externally coherent; interactional meaning as the ability of a given mode to represent a particular social relation between the producer, the viewer and the object represented and representational meaning as the ability of a given semiotic mode to represent aspects of the world as it is experienced by humans.

4.3.1 The British Embassy website

The British Embassy regularly updates the look of its website (http://ukinitaly.fco.gov.uk/en); at the time of writing, it was modified at the end of August, as it was announced by the Embassy itself. Figure 4.1 presents the English and Italian announcements displayed by the Embassy on the related home pages of its website:
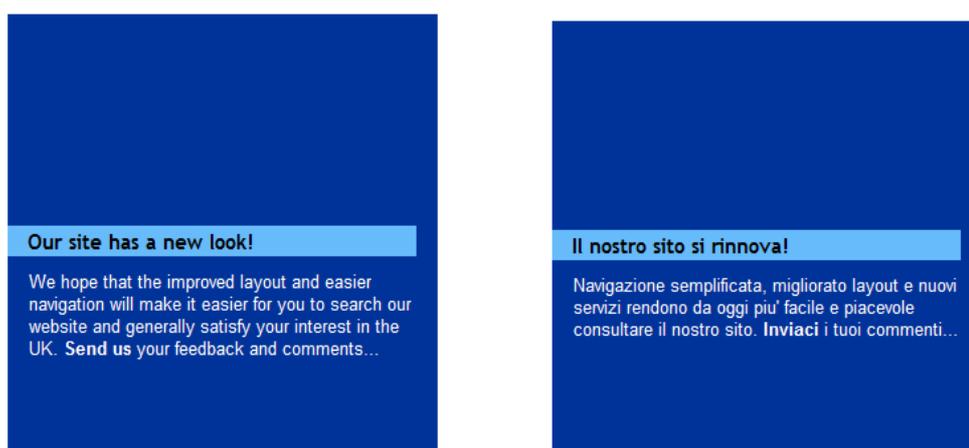
Figure 4.1 English and Italian announcement of the British Embassy renewed website displayed on the related home pages

A comparison of the two announcements reveals that the updating of the website aims to enhance its outreach potential by making it easier for people to search the site and satisfy their interest in the UK. It is interesting to note that the Italian translation of

the announcement features a more impersonal style: the personal pronouns *we* and *you* are indeed not rendered in the translated text. Further, the lexical addition of *piacevole* places more emphasis on the aesthetic pleasure resulting from the new look and site architecture as compared to the English announcement.

The website of the British Embassy provides news about Britain, details of the services offered by the Embassy for Britons in Italy, services for UK companies seeking opportunities in Italy and for Italian companies wishing to do business with the UK, and details of the regional network of British diplomatic missions in Italy. Figure 4.2 presents the various sections contained in the menu of the British Embassy website.

Figure 4.2 English and Italian menu of the British Embassy website

Our offices in Italy: offers the profile of the Ambassador, provides news about the Ambassador's residence and enables the viewers to go on a virtual tour of the Embassy and the Ambassador's residence. The section also provides links to the archive of the current Ambassador's articles and speeches as well as to a list of previous Ambassadors to Italy.

Working with Italy: provides information on UK's international policy priorities, among which feature support to the British economy and an active political commitment in tackling climate change. The section provides an in-depth description of the environment policy in the UK.

About the UK: primarily targets the Italian viewer. It gives a full picture of life in the UK, publicizing it as a country rich in professional and educational opportunities, cultural and artistic heritage and home to a vibrant and creative scientific and technological community.

Newsroom: provides information on British foreign policy and on events and seminars organized by the diplomatic mission in Italy. Noticeably, the section contains on overview of the Press and Communication team working in the British Embassy, among whom features an official translator and interpreter.

Help for British nationals: addresses British nationals moving to Italy and it is designed to provide general tips and information on living in Italy, legal and medical services, advice on travelling and safety issues.

Visa and **Passports**: provides all the necessary information regarding visa and a passport applications.

Doing Business: targets UK companies willing to trade with and invest in Italy as well as overseas companies. It promotes a range of services to provide UK-based companies with all the knowledge, advice and practical support necessary to start a business or move into a new market in Italy. Likewise, the section encourages overseas companies to look to the UK as their global partner of choice.

FAQs: contains a list of links offering assistance and information on a variety of topics, such as: help for British nationals, information about social, artistic, historic and geographic aspects of life in the UK, information on training opportunities for medical graduates from outside the UK and so on.

Figure 4.3 presents the English home page of the British Embassy website, while Figure 4.4 presents the Italian home page.

Contact us | Feedback | Sitemap | Search   UK 12:35 12 Jan 2009

UK in ITALY
FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Enter search criteria h Search
Advanced search

UK in Italy - the official website of the British Embassy in Italy

Our offices in Italy
Working with Italy
About the UK
Newsroom
Help for British nationals
Visas
Passports
Doing business
FAQs

Passport applications are changing
From 5th January 2009 you may require an interview when applying for a passport..

UK-Italy Business Awards
The British Government and UK Trade & Investment are pleased to announce the second UK-Italy Business Awards event to be held January 29, 2009.. (Information in italian only)

British design in Milan
The British Consulate-General of Milan is supporting a team of British designers at Macef trade fair.. (Information in italian only)

ITALY   UNITED KINGDOM

■ UK in Italy
Welcome to the website of the British Embassy. On our site you can find news about Britain, details of the services offered by the British Embassy for Britons in Italy, services for UK companies seeking opportunities in Italy and for Italian companies wishing to do business with the UK, details of the regional network of British diplomatic missions in Italy and information on job opportunities with us. You can even visit the Embassy and HM Ambassador's Residence!

■ First identity cards issued as points system goes live
From 25 November 2008 foreign nationals residing in the UK will begin applying for identity cards containing their facial image and fingerprints to securely lock them to one identity and help businesses crack down on illegal working. Read more...

■ LATEST NEWS
UN Security Council Resolution 1860 (2009)
9 January 2009
Foreign Secretary David Miliband addressed the UN Security Council after the vote on resolution 1860 (2009).

Figure 4.3 English home page of the British Embassy website

Contact us | Feedback | Sitemap | Search   UK 12:29 12 Gen 2009

UK in ITALY
FOREIGN & COMMONWEALTH OFFICE

Inserisci qui i criteri di Cerca
Ricerca avanzata

UK in Italia - il sito ufficiale dell'Ambasciata britannica in Italia

Chi e dove siamo
Cosa facciamo in Italia
Notizie
Informazioni sul Regno Unito
Business con il Regno Unito
Visti
Domande frequenti

Miliband all'ONU
Il Ministro degli Esteri britannico David Miliband commenta la Risoluzione del Consiglio di Sicurezza ONU sulla crisi a Gaza, sottolineando l'importanza di garantire dignità e sicurezza ai popoli israeliano e palestinese.

UK-Italy Business Awards 2009
Il Governo Britannico e UK Trade & Investment sono lieti di annunciare la seconda edizione degli UK-Italy Business Awards per il 29 gennaio 2009..

Design britannico a Milano
Il Consolato Generale Britannico di Milan organizza una collettiva di designer britannici in occasione del prossimo Ma

ITALIA   UNITED KINGD

■ UK in Italia
Benvenuto sul nuovo sito dell'Ambasciata britannica. Qui potrai trovare informazioni sul Regno Unito, i servizi alle imprese, la mappa delle nostre sedi in Italia e le opportunità di lavoro presso le nostre rappresentanze diplomatiche in Italia. Potrai inoltre vedere piu' da vicino l'Ambasciata e la Residenza dell'Ambasciatore e seguire i principali appuntamenti dell'agenda italo-britannica...

Notizie commerciali
Scoprite le ultime novità delle aziende britanniche e tenetevi informati sulle possibilità di investimento nel Regno Unito

Carte d'identità
Rilasciate le prime carte d'identità per cittadini stranieri residenti nel Regno Unito, con l'entrata in vigore del sistema a punti

■ Think Green, l'Ambasciata Pensa Verde
Nel 2004 alcuni dipendenti dell'Ambasciata si sono organizzati in un gruppo denominato Think Green , con l'obiettivo di intraprendere un cammino di maggiore sostenibilità ambientale e minore impatto ambientale sul territorio che ci ospita...

■ ULTIME NOTIZIE
Il Regno Unito stanzia 10 milioni di dollari in aiuti umanitari per Gaza
12 gennaio 2009
Il governo britannico ha agito rapidamente per contribuire a dare una risposta alle esigenze umanitarie a Gaza

Miliband all'ONU: "Garantire dignità e sicurezza a israeliani e palestinesi"
9 gennaio 2009
Il Ministro degli Esteri britannico interviene a conclusione del voto del Consiglio di Sicurezza delle Nazioni Unite sulla crisi in Medio Oriente

Figure 4.4 Italian home page of the British Embassy website

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The home page of the British Embassy website is particularly striking for its composite layout, which combines and integrates vertical and horizontal structuring, naturalistic and schematic pictures, squared boxes, lines and quite densely written sections. The top banner appears polarized, featuring the Italian flag and the logo of the British Embassy, followed by the inscription "UK in Italy", on the left hand side and an "advanced research" option followed by the image of the British flag, on the right hand side.

The logo cluster[146] points to a close relationship between the two countries. Visually, the Italian flag is placed as the very first given element, that is the "agreed-upon point of departure for the message" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 181), and the Embassy logo as the new one, hence as the element "to which the viewer must pay special attention" (Kress and van Leeuwen, *ibid*: 181); the verbal plan reverses this information structure by placing the UK as the given element and Italy as the new one, thus achieving a balance in the prominence accorded to both countries. Similarly, by placing the "advanced research" option on the right hand side of the banner as the new element, the sense that what the viewer is invited to look for is worthy to receive special attention is enhanced.

The bottom bar of the websites is separated from the main viewing area by a thin line and contains clickable information related to practical questions such as terms and conditions, freedom of information, privacy policy and website accessibility. These details complement the clickable information displayed on the top left corner above the Embassy logo cluster giving access to interpersonal functions such as contacting the Embassy, providing feedback and finding one's way through the website (sitemap and search option).

Looking at the whole of the English home page of the UK Embassy website (figure 4.3) and its Italian counterpart (figure 4.4) two things are noticeable: first, most of the viewing area is centrally occupied by boxes and written sections with the latest news and information. This is also the part of the home page which regularly changes

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[146] Baldry and Thibault (2005: 31) define the term *cluster* as "a local grouping of items, in particular, on a printed or web page (but also other texts such as manuscripts, paintings and films). The items in a particular cluster may be visual, verbal and so on and are spatially proximate thereby defining a specific region or subregion of the page as a whole. The items in a cluster are functionally related both to each other and to the whole to which they belong as parts".

its content. Second, the lower part of the Italian home page contains some information which is missing in the English version. This is the case, for instance, of the two information boxes contained in the Italian home page addressing issues which are relevant to Italian citizens.

The overall layout of the home page significantly relies on the compositional resources of salience and framing, which both contribute to giving the home page its high information density. Framing is mainly achieved through colour contrast, the use of boxes and thick lines, which neatly separate the various units of information and thus facilitate the viewer's navigation and selection process.

The most salient elements of the home page are the three dark blue boxes placed at the top centre of the viewing area. The information contained here is usually commercial in nature, which reveals the overall importance attached by the British Embassy to promoting its economic diplomacy.

Such importance is confirmed by a comparison of the English and Italian website menus, placed on the left panel of the Embassy home page (figure 4.5):

Figure 4.5 A comparison of the English and Italian menu of the British Embassy website

In the hierarchy of the displayed information, the Italian menu appears to give more prominence to the business section by placing it before the Visa section, while the

English menu places it in the second to last position. Thus, greater importance is given to this information with the host country in mind.

Another key factor in the image building of the country is the promotion of UK's environmental commitment. Indeed, as can be seen in figure 4.4, the Italian home page displays a written section entitled "Think Green. L'Ambasciata Pensa Verde", drawing the viewers' attention to the Embassy's environmental policy aimed at raising awareness of the importance of sustainable development among the host country. Although the information is not in the most salient position, it is still placed quite centrally in the main viewing area. By contrast, the English site does not display the information in the home page, which can only be accessed when entering the "Working with Italy" section in the left menu. This once again confirms the greater importance given by the Embassy to the promotion of its activities with the host country in mind.

Resources of interactional meaning appear to combine a sense of openness and closeness with the viewer and institutional distance, albeit with some differences between the English and the Italian home page. The information cluster represented in figure 4.6 for instance is featured in the English home page, but not in the Italian version:

Figure 4.6 'Useful information' cluster in the English home page of the British Embassy

As is evident, the cluster, which is placed in the bottom right margin of the page, combines images of people and objects with writing. The first and last picture offer an

interesting contrast between what Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 120) describe as 'demand' and 'offer' pictures (§3.3.2.2). In the first instance, the represented participant is not looking directly at the viewer, thus creating an 'offer' picture. An offer of information is indeed made here in relation to the visa application. In the second instance, on the other hand, the represented participant is directly gazing at the viewer, demanding that he or she take an interest in the job opportunities offered by the UK. Both pictures are close shots, showing heads and shoulders of the subjects and thus indicating a personal distance, a level at which people are intimate with each other and the viewer is engaged with the represented participant.

The interplay between viewer's closeness and institutional distance conveyed by the co-deployment of demand vs. offer pictures seems to be reflected in the overall use of colour. The dominant blue, which as argued by Baldry and Thibault (2005: 130) is a cool colour, appear to recede. Red and yellow, on the other hand, are warm colours and, as such, they tend to come towards the viewer (Baldry and Thibault, *ibid*: 130). Red has been chosen as the background colour of the passport section, while yellow has been used to depict the map of Italy.

In sum, it appears that the resources of interactional meaning exploited by the British Embassy website tend to keep a balance between viewers' closeness and distance, at the interface of the Embassy's desire to keep its institutional stance while at the same time going towards the home and host country nationals and meeting their specific needs.

At the representational level, the majority of represented participants in the British Embassy website involves abstract shapes with verbal labels and words, either enclosed in boxes or in sections separated by framing lines. The basic geometric shapes displayed are the square and the rectangle; given the Embassy's chief aims of promoting its economic diplomacy and projecting a committed image of the UK, it is assumed that such shapes are endowed with a positive connotation and, as Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 54; see section 3.3.2.2) note, they can be taken to indicate a source of institutional authority and progress forward.

Vectors, which are indicators of directionality, become visible when expanding the main sections of the page menu. The red arrowheads point to the various subsections and give a sense of directionality to the viewer's discovery of relevant information and

of the various activities in which the Embassy is engaged (see figure 4.5). The main sections of the menu can be considered the actor from which the vectors emanate, while the subsections are the goals. The narrative processes thus created are embedded within the broader conceptual structure formed by the unexpanded menu. The vector contained in the "Select" option located under the map of Italy on the right hand side of the viewing area point to an undefined goal which varies according to the choices made by the viewers.

A non-transactional reaction - whereby an eyeline vector emanates from a participant without being directed at another participant - is created by the eyeline emanating from the first human participant in figure 4.6. As stated above, the vector presumably points at the offer of information related to the visa application which the interested viewer is invited to read.

Both the English and the Italian home page include conceptual classificational processes in the form of covert taxonomies. The three foregrounded blue boxes are symmetrically displayed in the upper part of the viewing area (figures 4.3 and 4.4) and can be subsumed under the superordinate "Latest News". The covert taxonomy shown in figure 4.6 further constitutes a conceptual classificational process.

In sum, the home page can be said to have a composite, but well balanced layout. Compositional resources indicate that the Embassy praises the establishment and the maintenance of close relationships between the two countries. The home page also combines a sense of closeness to the viewer (e.g. through the use of warm colours or close shots) with a sense of institutional distance (e.g through the use of cool colours). Representational resources such as abstract shapes, finally, convey a sense of institutional authority as well as progress forward.

4.3.2 The Canadian Embassy website

The website of the Canadian Embassy (http://www.international.gc.ca/missions/italy-italie/menu.asp) features a welcome page (figure 4.7) with three clickable boxes giving access to the English, Italian and French version of the website. The page is dominated by a red rectangular shape. The choice of the colour red acquires a symbolic institutional significance if related to the colour of the Canadian flag. On the interpersonal level, however, its warmth conveys an

extremely open and welcoming attitude on the part of the Embassy. This, as shall be more fully discussed below, appears to be the chief feature of the entire website.

Figure 4.7 Welcome page of the Canadian Embassy website

Like the UK, the Canadian Embassy regularly updates the look of its website, as announced in its home page, dating mid-December 2008 (figures 4.8 and 4.9):

Figure 4.8 English home page of the Canadian Embassy website

Figure 4.9 Italian home page of the Canadian Embassy website

By clicking on the relevant box, the viewer can access the full article where the aims of the renewed websites are explicitly stated (figures 4.10 and 4.11):

Our Web site's new look!

If you think our Web site looks fresh and different, you are right! After many years, we are pleased to present you with a new look and feel, improved navigation and more of the information and service you would hope to find.

Anticipating your information needs, we have updated the content and improved its presentation to target the specific areas you may be interested in - be it studying in Canada or doing business with Canada.

Improvements and new features will continue to come in the months ahead. We hope you enjoy your online experience.

Figure 4.10 English announcement of the Canadian Embassy renewed website

Il nostro nuovo look!

Il nostro sito ha un nuovo look!

Se pensate che il nostro sito abbia un'aria diversa, avete ragione!

Dopo tanto tempo, siamo lieti di presentarvi il nostro nuovo look, che offre una più agevole navigazione, più informazioni e servizi come li volete voi.

Abbiamo cercato di individuare i vostri bisogni aggiornando il contenuto delle pagine e migliorandone la presentazione, in modo da presentare gli argomenti specifici che potrebbero interessarvi - dallo studio in Canada al business in Canada.

Continueremo ad apportare miglioramenti ed inserire nuovi contenuti nei mesi a venire.

Buona navigazione!

Figure 4.11 Italian announcement of the Canadian Embassy renewed website

As was the case with the British Embassy, the main purpose for updating the website is the desire to meet the viewers' information needs and facilitating their navigation throughout the site.

The home page of the Embassy of Canada to Italy depicts bilateral relations with Italy as characterized by similar values, shared responsibilities and frequently common positions in multilateral institutions. The website provides information about a number of services offered by the Embassy to both Canadians and Italian citizens and to the countries of Albania, Malta, and San Marino[147]. Figure 4.12 presents the various sections contained in the English and Italian menu of the Canadian Embassy website.

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[147] Canada's Ambassador in Rome is also accredited to Albania, Malta and San Marino.

Figure 4.12 Canadian Embassy website: English and Italian menu

Discover Canada. The section primarily targets the Italian public.

- "Visa and immigration": contains information about a range of services to residents of Albania, Greece, Italy, Malta, San Marino and the Vatican;

- "Studying in Canada": publicizes Canadian universities and colleges for their high quality of education, their multicultural context, the low tuition fees offered to international students and the valuable work experience students can gain through off campus employment;

- "Doing Business with Canada": offers information and services to help companies do business with Canada (e.g. information on controlled goods and instructions, on obtaining import and export permits, on Canadian trade policy, on Canadian actions, negotiations and agreements related to international trade and so on);

- "About Canada": highlights its triangular foundation - Aboriginal, Francophone and Anglophone – as a strength of its rich history; promotes Canada as a knowledge-based nation with world-class governance, corporations, culture and lifestyle; emphasizes the stunning natural attractions and vast open spaces offered by the country as well as the standard of living, life expectancy and educational level of its population; overviews Canada's role in the world and other important

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global issues, its legal and political organization, and significant facts about the national economy;

- "Working Holiday Program": publicizes this international exchange program between Canada and Italy, aimed at providing Canadian and Italian youth with the opportunity to combine periods of employment with time for leisure and exploration of these two countries.

Bilateral relations: overviews Canada's bilateral relations with Italy as well as with the countries of Albania, Malta, and San Marino. The section on "Canada-Italy Relations" calls attention to the close cooperation and the strong linkages between the two countries in the fields of politics, business and culture. Special emphasis is placed on the establishment of academic relations through the granting of post-doctoral research fellowships and other academic research awards open to Italian nationals. Reference is finally made to the Defence Programme in Italy, which is implemented with a view to establishing and maintaining effective contacts with the Italian Armed Forces and the Italian Ministry of Defence and to acting as the point of contact for defence and security matters of interest to Canada.

Our offices: contains contact details and information about the Embassy, latest news from the Government of Canada, a calendar of Canadian cultural events in Italy and a link to a publication on Canadian matters in Italian. A link is contained within the "Contact us" section which gives access to the Ambassador's welcome message and some brief biographical notes.

For Canadians: is exclusively addressed to Canadian citizens. It provides information on some difficult situations that Canadian travellers may encounter while abroad (e.g. arrest or detention, child abduction, transportation accidents and so on) and includes issue-specific recommendations to assist citizens in dealing with them. The section also provides export assistance, information on the negotiation and administering of trade agreements; it promotes Canada as a dynamic place in which to invest and do business, and enhance Canada's science and technology capacity, competitiveness and prosperity.

Proactive disclosure: overviews the measures taken by the Government of Canada to enhance transparency and oversight of public resources. One of these is the

proactive disclosure of financial - and human resources-related information by departments and agencies.

At the compositional level, compared to the British Embassy home page, the home page of the Canadian Embassy website (figures 4.8 and 4.9) immediately appears to be less composite and predominantly structured along the vertical axis, which creates a more marked distinction is created between top and bottom and indicate "a bias towards hierarchy" (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2006: 57, see section 3.3.2.1). The main viewing area is organized as a triptych and has a polarized layout: the centre features written sections and acts as a mediator between the website's menu placed on the left-hand side margin and the clickable boxes located on the right-hand side margin.

The first written section displayed in the centre of the triptych addresses Canada-Italy bilateral relations; below it, there is a series of clickable links to a number of services, useful information and assistance to both Canadians and other citizens.

Despite the predominance given to the vertical structuring, the horizontal dimension is nonetheless present, conveyed through the top banner. Its elongated rectangular shape made to lean towards the right conveys a sense of ongoing movement (Kress and van Leeuwen, *ibid*: 57, see section 3.3.2.1). The top banner is also the most salient element of the page. Its peculiarity, which distinguishes it from the other banners of the websites considered here, lies in the fact that it displays a number of images rotating at regular intervals. Further, the upper part of the banner mirrors the triptych structure of the main viewing area. As can be seen from figure 4.13, the central cluster, which combines a written inscription and the symbolic image of the leaf, separates the two margins. The left one portrays a human participant and the right one a verbal participant in the foreground. Although the images change, the template remains the same.

The lower part of the banner contains a series of clickable elements, among which is a link to the contact and search options.

Figure 4.13 Top banner of the Canadian Embassy home page

The horizontal dimension of the banner coupled with its dynamic nature can be assigned an important balancing function. The sense of ongoing movement and progress it conveys, as identified above, does indeed contrast with the rather strong sense of institutional hierarchy and authority embedded in the vertical structure of the triptych dominating the home page. The banner is also the element carrying the bulk of the interpersonal meaning realized by the website, as it will be discussed later on.

Salience is mainly achieved through colour and square-shaped boxes. As shown in figures 4.8 and 4.9, the "Highlights/Notizie di rilievo" are signalled by a red string, where a link to more news is also present on the right hand side. The main sections of the menu (figure 4.12) are contained within red boxes, while subsections are contained within grey boxes.

A comparison between the English and the Italian home page reveals an essential similarity of contents. The Italian menu, however, lacks, not surprisingly, the section addressed to Canadian citizens. For localization purposes, the Italian home page also replaces information specifically relevant to the Canadian public with information relevant to the Italian public. Top priority of the Embassy is the promotion of cultural diplomacy, as is evident from the displayed hierarchy of the website menu.

The bottom part of the home page, separated from the main viewing area by a light grey line, does not feature any significant information.

As anticipated above, the interpersonal dimension is prominently oriented towards the viewer and comes across particularly through the top banner, which combines foregrounded human participants, on the left hand side, and foregrounded verbal participants, on the right hand side. The 'given' position of the human participants conveys a sense of shared humanity and participation. As this is the "starting point" of the message, the viewer immediately feels involved in the Embassy dimension, reflecting him or herself in the image. Moving onto the right end of the banner – the position of the new information – it is then possible to notice that the verbal elements are action verbs and nouns such as

> play, support, prosper, learn, trade, assist, collaborate, prepare, represent, experience, partner, engage, innovate and explore,

which project a positive, fascinating and dynamic image of Canada aimed at enhancing the sense of involvement and attraction of the public, as do the Italian translated items:

giocare, collaborare, associarsi, rappresentare, assistere, preparare, scoprire, esplorare, commercio, sostegno, innovare, crescere, imparare, esportare, prosperare.
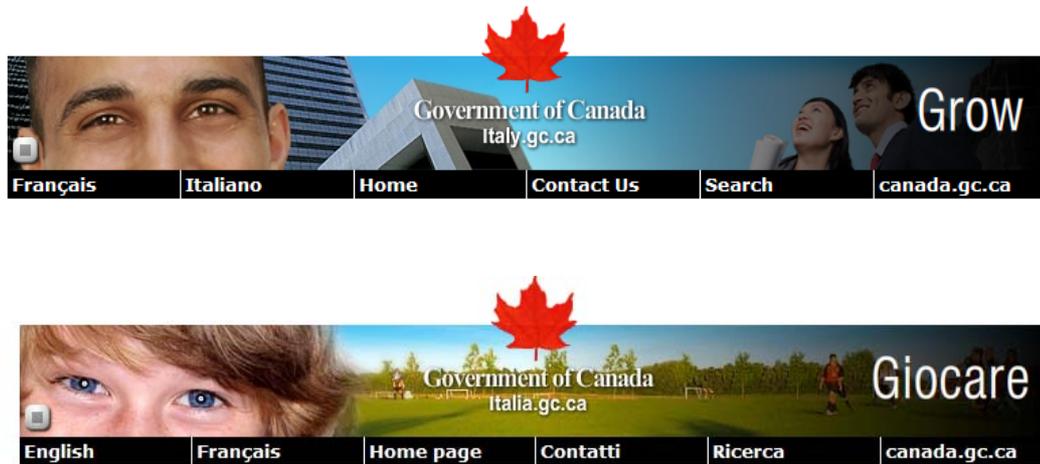
Figure 4.14 Examples of visual and verbal participants displayed in the top banner of the Canadian Embassy website

Figure 4.14 presents two examples of visual and verbal participants displayed in the top banner of the Embassy home page. The foregrounded image on the left is a very close shot of a human participant directly gazing at the viewer, thus establishing an intimate, direct contact with him or her. Moreover, the eye level angle of the image conveys a sense of equality. The images in the background, filled with naturalistic details, are usually represented in the far distance, and although the participants are placed out of the viewer's reach, the 'diplomatic' context in which they are embedded intends to create an unconfined space which the viewer is invited to explore.

Not surprisingly, the only instance in which the foregrounded human participant on the left hand side is looking away from the viewer is the "export" visual (figure 4.15): the eyeline vector – which is an indicator of directionality - is directed to undefined places and points to the international dimension of Canada.

Figure 4.15 "Export" visual displayed in the top banner of the Canadian Embassy home page

At the representational level, the main viewing area of the Canadian home page (figures 4.8 and 4.9) presents a number of abstract shapes with verbal labels and words, either enclosed in rectangular boxes or in sections separated by framing lines. As was already noted in the case of the home page of the British Embassy (figures 4.3 and 4.4) Kress and van Leeuwen (2006: 54; see section 3.3.2.2) assign these shape a meaning of institutional authority and progress forward. The Canadian home page, however, differs from the British one for a more marked interplay between the vertical and horizontal elongation of the various participants, and therefore enhances the contrast between hierarchy and movement of progress forward.

Vertical elongation is visible in the website's menu (figure 4.12), where the various sections are divided only by a very thin white space and are embedded in the abstract rectangular shape[148]. The fact that the menu is presented as a vertically elongated rectangle increases the distinction between top and bottom and therefore enhances the sense of hierarchical priority established by Canada. The menu confirms the fact that cultural diplomacy is top priority for Canada and promoting economic relations is part of this strategy.

The overall impression created by the Canadian Embassy website is one of great balance and harmony, which, coupled with the warmth of the dominant colour red and the dynamism conveyed by the top banner, once again appeals to attract and invite the viewer to approach the Canada country.

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[148] As no vector is present here indicating the directionality of the navigation between the various menu sections, the menu can be considered an instance of a classificational process (§3.3.2.1), forming a covert taxonomy where the "menu" itself is the superordinate participant. The three boxes on the right hand margin on the home page likewise represent a covert taxonomy where the participants are subordinate to the "latest news" category.

4.3.3 The Australian Embassy website

Unlike the UK and Canada, Australia does not give any indication that its Embassy website (http://www.italy.embassy.gov.au/) is regularly updated. Figure 4.16 presents the various sections contained in the menu of the Australian Embassy website.

Home		Home
About Us		Chi siamo
Visas and migration		Visti e Cittadinanza
Travelling to Australia		Visitare l'Australia
Doing business with Australia		Rapporti commerciali con l'Australia
Services for Australians		Services for Australians
Education in Australia		Studiare in Australia
Events		Eventi
Media centre		Media
Australia-Italy relationship		Australia in Generale
About Australia		Rapporti Australia-Italia
Italiano		**English**

Figure 4.16 Australian Embassy website: English and Italian menu

About us: contains contact details and information about the Embassy offices in Rome and a link to a brief biographical note about the Australian Ambassador to Italy.

Visa and Immigration: provides information regarding visa options, citizenship and frequently asked questions. The section also directs the viewer to the website of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship for comprehensive information on visas, migration and citizenship.

Travelling to Australia: contains a series of links to related websites, e.g. the *Official Tourism Australia*, available in nine languages, where the viewer can find a wide range of travel information and planning tools; the *Tourist Refund Scheme*; an information portal ranging from citizenship, health, settlement help for migrants, working conditions to buying a home in Australia and sites concerning customs and quarantine issues.

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Doing business with Australia: likewise contains a series of links to related websites, e.g. the *Australian Trade Commission* – the Government agency that helps Australian companies win overseas business for their products and services; an information and service portal about Australia for foreign business people and other service providers for both Australian organisations doing business in Italy and Italian organisations doing business with them or in Australia. The section also features a fact sheet on Australia's trade relationship with Italy and a search link to the Australian import conditions for more than 18,000 foreign plant, animal, mineral and human products.

Services for Australians: gives access to a variety of websites providing information for Australians travelling, living in Italy or returning to Australia.

Education in Australia: gives access to a variety of websites providing information about schooling, Australian universities, opportunities, scholarships and research awards for international students.

Events: informs about upcoming Australian artistic and cultural events in Italy.

Media Centre: contains links to all government agencies and services, Australian newspapers, magazines and journals, news releases and speeches from the Australian Foreign Minister and from the Australian Trade Minister.

Australia-Italy Relationship: contains links to websites mainly providing political and economic information on both countries. The bilateral relationship between Australia and Italy is described as a warm and long-standing relationship underpinned by strong community ties.

About Australia: gives access to websites providing information about Australia's trade, foreign relations, economy, environment, government, indigenous peoples, science, culture.

Figure 4.17 presents the English home page of the Australian Embassy website, while figure 4.18 presents the Italian version. The centre of the viewing area contains a message encouraging Australians who reside overseas or who are travelling for tourism or business to register with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. If compared to the home pages of the British (figure 4.3) and the Canadian (figure 4.8) Embassy websites, at the compositional level the Australian home page stands out for its simpler and slightly more asymmetrical structure.
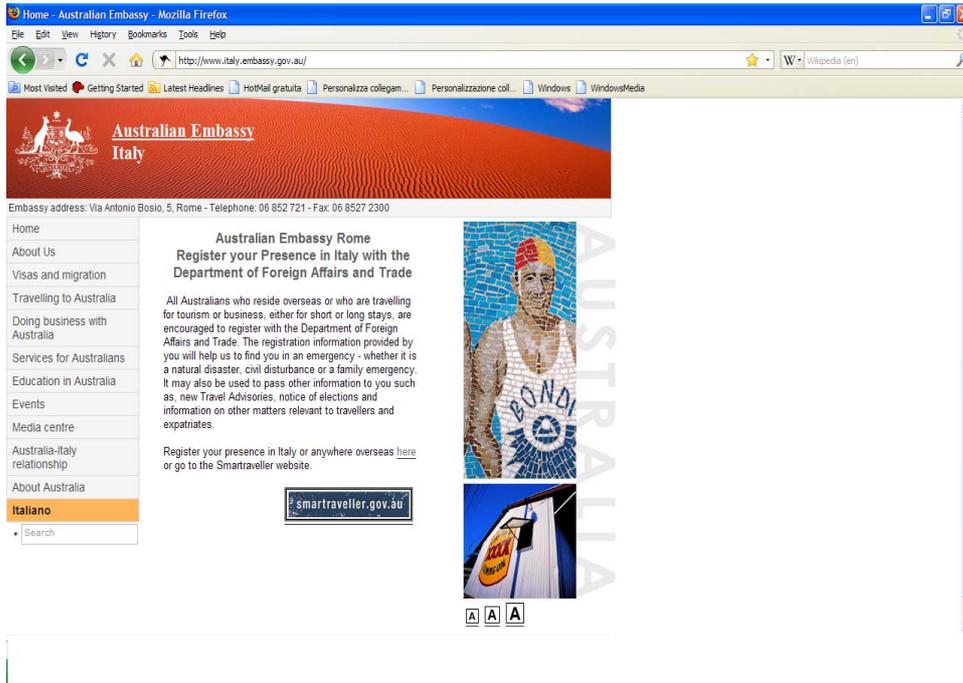
Figure 4.17 English home page of the Australian Embassy website
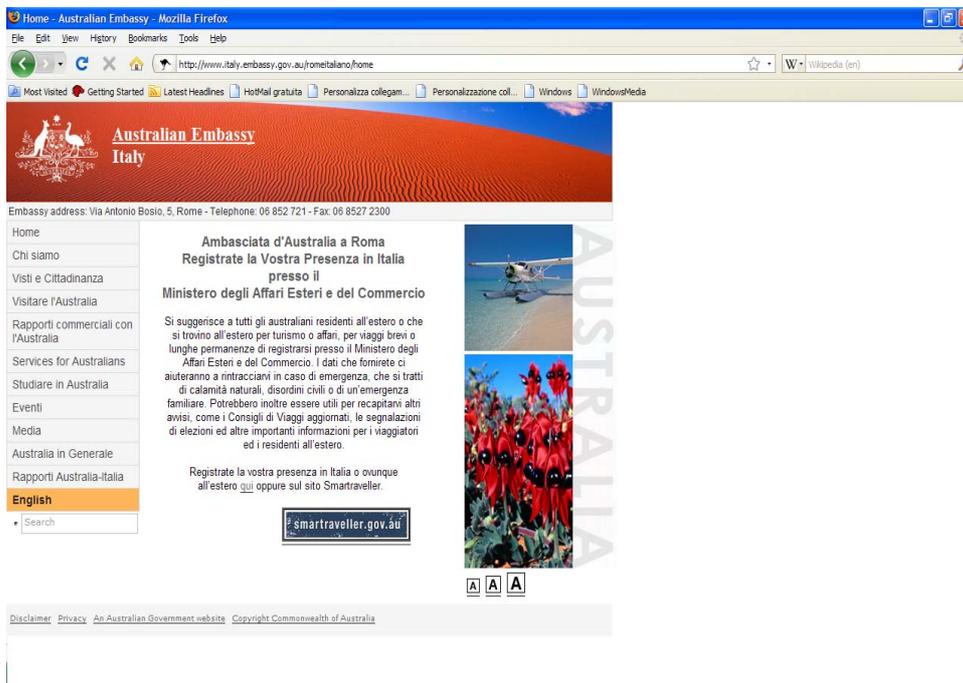
Figure 4.18 Italian home page of the Australian Embassy website

The overall layout of the page recalls that of the Canadian website, with a top horizontal banner and a polarized central triptych featuring one written section in-

between the two marginal visuals[149]. The bottom part of the viewing area contains a light grey string with clickable legal information about disclaimer, privacy and copyright issues. Although the banner displays the address and the telephone details of the Embassy offices, a link to a contact option is missing, leaving the viewer with the task of searching for it[150].

The top banner is the most salient element; its orange/red colour is eye-catching and warm, contrasting the predominantly cool and uninviting white background of the page. The dominant logo cluster on the left hand side combines the stylized image of the Australian Coat of Arms and an inscription of the Australian Embassy. Significantly, the white framing line separating the two countries, with Italy featuring below the line, might be perceived as an indication that the Australian Embassy wishes to maintain an institutional prominence over the host country, especially if compared with the British website's top banner where UK and Italy are placed on the same level above the framing line of the inscription (see figure 4.19):

Figure 4.19 Logo cluster of the Australian Embassy home page and of the British Embassy home page

The top right hand side of the banner – the position of the new information - contains a glimpse of the blue sky; the unconfined spatial dimension thus created

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[149] The clickable three squared boxes containing the letter "A" placed below the images in the right margin enables the viewer to change the font of the layout, from small to medium to large.
[150] The contact option can be accessed by clicking on the "About us" section in the left menu. As it will be recalled, both the British and the Canadian websites display the contact option in the top banner, thus facilitating the viewer's task of contacting the Embassy.

performs an inviting function, as do some of the visuals placed in the right margin below the banner.

Overall, the home page presents a vertical structuring which appears to reflect and enhance the sense of hierarchy conveyed by the logo cluster. The comparison of the English and Italian website menus (figure 4.16) reveals a substantial uniformity in the establishment of content priorities. It further shows that the promotion of cultural and economic diplomacy is given prominence over the establishment of bilateral political relations, which feature towards the end of the menu. Strikingly, in the Italian menu the section on "Australia-Italy Relationship" is displayed as the very last section:

The interactional dimension of the Australian website comes across as less engaging than in the British and Canadian websites. The use of warm colours is basically restricted to the top banner.

Another interactional resource of the home page is represented by the visuals placed on the right margin of the viewing area, with a series of naturalistic images that change at every access to the page. As is evident from figures 4.17 and 4.18 above and from the examples reproduced in figure 4.20 below, the images feature a variety of perspectives, size of frames and gaze conveying a sense of interplay between closeness and distance, involvement and detachment. This in turn confirms the initial impression of a lower degree of viewer's engagement established by the Australian website as compared to its British and Canadian counterparts.

Figure 4.20 Examples of images displayed in the right margin of the home page of the Australian Embassy website

The prevalence of rectangular shaped participants displayed in the main viewing area strengthens the overall sense of power and authority already established by the home page at the compositional level. Furthermore, the absence of vectors leading to menu subsections or articles within the website and the dominant presence of conceptual structures (e.g. the menu and the visuals located in the right hand margin) decrease the sense of directionality and movement for the viewer's navigation[151].

The only vectors present are those created by the eyeline of the human participants displayed in the right hand side visuals and the one in the "search" option. Incidentally, the "search" option is placed on the left hand side, under the website menu and not on the right hand side position of the "new" information, as might be expected.

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[151] As it will be recalled from Chapter 3 (§3.3.2.1), narrative processes established by the presence of vectors represent the world in terms of "doing" and "happening" and are thus associated with an idea of unfolding actions and events and processes of change; on the other hand conceptual patterns represent participants in terms of their more generalized, stable and timeless essence. An abundant presence of conceptual structures could thus negatively affect the viewer's sense of engagement and power of attraction of the websites.

4.3.4 The United States Embassy website

Like Australia, the United States Embassy does not give any indication that its website (http://rome.usembassy.gov/english/) is regularly updated. Figure 4.21 presents the various sections contained in the menu of the USA Embassy website.
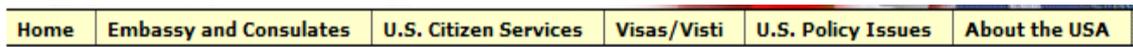
Figure 4.21 Menu of the United States Embassy website

Embassy and Consulates: overviews the overall United States Mission in Italy, which comprises the American Embassy in Rome the Consulates General in Milan, Florence and Naples. The section draws attention to the team-work and the active public diplomacy program carried out by these several Mission agencies as well as to the USA cooperation work with Italian counterparts to protect shared political, economic, and security interests through multilateral organizations including NATO, the United Nations, and a host of other important bodies.

U.S. Citizen Services: provides contact information and details for U.S. citizens travelling or living in Italy, information about non-emergency services, such as renewal of U.S. passports or Consular Reports of Birth Abroad and all necessary information on Visas for travelling to the United States. The section also contains a link to background notes on Italy.

Visas/Visti: gives access to the same content featured in the "U.S. Citizen Services" section.

U.S. Policy Issues: features a series of articles covering a variety of relevant matters.

About the USA: gives access to a series of institutional web pages providing information about American society, political processes, economic statistics, media, official U.S. policies and culture as well as to educational, cultural and travel resources.

Figure 4.22 presents the home page of the U.S. Embassy website. As the visual analysis will reveal, the home page has some features which differentiate it from the rest of the sites discussed here, contributing to both its complexity and uniqueness.

Figure 4.22 Home page of the U.S. Embassy website

Two things are noticeable right from the start: first, the homepage has an extremely composite layout, combining a series of images depicting human participants, densely written sections and large boxes offering a vast amount of contact information. Second, the website comes in an English version only, although the articles' abstracts displayed in the centre of the viewing area are mainly in Italian.

The Visas/Visti section in the top banner is the only section that can be accessed in a double version.

The overall layout of the home page is structured along the horizontal axis and presents a marked distinction between the top and the bottom banner. The top banner is in itself quite complex, combining a series of stylized, symbolic images. The "given" position on the left hand side – the starting point of the message - is occupied by the logo cluster, where it is possible to notice the emphasis given to the host country

(Rome–Italy). The "new'" information position on the right hand side displays a stylized picture of the Liberty Statue, the U.S. symbol *par excellence*.

Another distinguishing feature of the United States home page is the fact that the menu is displayed horizontally in the lower part of the top banner while the left hand side panel, the usual position of the menu, presents a number of links to the various Mission agencies (figure 4.23).
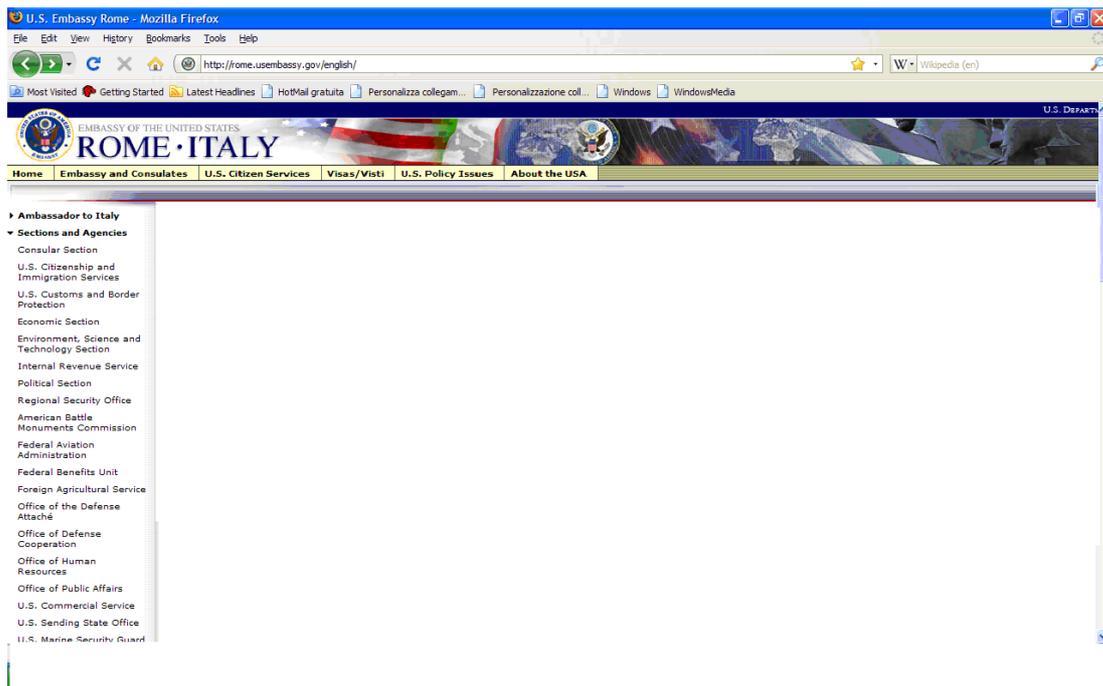
Figure 4.23 Menu of the U.S. Embassy website and links to the Mission agencies

Unlike the straightforward visual hierarchy established by the other menus, the organisation of the menu of the U.S. website does not facilitate an immediate recognition of the priorities of the Embassy, which can only be realized when navigating the various sections of the website. The last few links contained in the left panel give access to the latest news, press releases and useful information. However, due to the length of the page and of the list of agencies, they become visible only when moving down the vertical scrollbar on the right hand side.

The layout of the main viewing area is a triptych, but the two margins are evidently asymmetrical. The large-sized frames piled up along the right margin are the most salient elements; the first two contain links to the U.S. Mission websites and

contact details about the U.S. Embassy in Rome. Below them, is a series of highlights which, once again, become visible only by scrolling down the vertical bar on the right.

In the lower part of the viewing area two main sections can be distinguished: a rectangular framed area, where a number of clickable information is visible, and the bottom banner. The links in the framed area give access to information concerning the U.S. Department of State, Secretary of State and the U.S. Embassies in the World, but also job opportunities, e-journals and international programs. The bottom banner contains details about privacy, disclaimers and webmaster issues, but it also displays, quite unusually, the "Contact us" option.

The central part of the main viewing area is the largest and most dense information section of the whole home page. It features a series of article abstracts, mainly in Italian, with a link to the full text. The articles deal with significant events organized in Italy with the aim of promoting the political and economy diplomacy of the United States. Due to the composite layout of the page and its high information density, framing not surprisingly plays a dominant role.

In sum, it can be said that the overall layout of the USA Embassy home page presents some contradictory features, as is the case with the rather "hidden" placement of some participants conveying important information, news or highlights. Further, the absence of a neatly-defined Italian and English version might reduce the public outreach potential of the website and the abundant presence of framing devices could increase the sense of disconnection among the various units of information, leaving a sense of disorientation with the viewers with possible off-putting effects.

On the interpersonal level, the USA Embassy home page presents some interesting features. The white background of the page and the prevailing use of the cool colour blue convey an overall receding impression, which seems confirmed by the series of images placed on the left of each written section. These mainly depict human participants, the majority of whom are portrayed in the medium-close distance and with an oblique angle, thus enhancing the overall sense of detachment.

Counteracting such disengagement, however, the "Ambassador to Italy" link on the top of the left panel (figure 4.23) gives access to a video where the U.S. Ambassador directly addresses the Italian public. The video creates a powerful demand visual as the Ambassador, reproduced in a close up shot, is directly gazing at the viewer, thus greatly

reducing the distance between himself, the country he represents and the Italian public. It is worth pointing out that, although the video is not displayed in the home page, the USA embassy website is the only one to integrate such a diplomatically effective audio-visual resource.

At the representational level, the USA Embassy home page conveys an overall sense of power and central authority through the use of squared and rectangular shaped participants, in line with the other three websites analysed so far. A number of important narrative processes is realized by the vectors of the left panel menu pointing to the links to the various Mission agencies. The USA Embassy prides itself on the team-work and the active public diplomacy program carried out by these several Mission agencies.

Other narrative process are created by the vectors emanating from the human participants of the central images.

4.3.5 The New Zealand Embassy website

Like the Australian and the United States Embassy websites, the New Zealand Embassy does not give any indication that its website (http://www.nzembassy.com/home.cfm?c=7&l=43&CFID=9809&CFTOKEN=817640 81) is regularly updated. As the visual analysis will reveal, the home page differs in its layout, which lacks many of the resources present in the other websites.

Figure 4.24 presents the various sections contained in the menu of the New Zealand Embassy website.

> About This Embassy
> About New Zealand
> Useful Information
> New Zealand/Italian relations
> Visiting and Immigrating to New Zealand
> New Zealanders Overseas
> Online Registration

Figure 4.24 Menu of the New Zealand Embassy website

About this Embassy: contains contact information and details about the Embassy offices in Rome as well as consular offices. An external link gives access to the Ambassador's curriculum vitae.

About New Zealand: is a guide to the country's environment, economy, history, politics, arts administration, infrastructure and place in the world.

Useful Information: contains other general information on frequently asked questions about New Zealand, its other countries of accreditation and the Pacific.

New Zealand/Italian Relations: describes the relationship with Italy as warm and emphasizes the recent strengthening of links and awareness, on both sides, through publicity surrounding New Zealand's role in liberating Italy in the Second World War. Business information is highlighted, as is the increasing value that the commercial relationship is gaining for New Zealand. The section also emphasizes defence co-operation as an important element of the bilateral relationship between the two countries, in areas such as peace-keeping operations and humanitarian assistance.

Visiting and Immigrating to New Zealand: offers information about visitors' visas, work and student visas. The sections also provides general information on customs and other aspects of life in New Zealand (e.g. getting married, driving, buying properties, starting a business and so on).

New Zealanders Overseas: provides essential information for New Zealanders undertaking a short or long-term stay overseas

Online Registration: offers a registration service for New Zealanders visiting or residing in a foreign country.

Figure 4.25 presents the English home page of the New Zealand Embassy website and figure 4.26 its Italian counterpart. The overall layout of the home page is simple and predominantly organized along the horizontal axis.
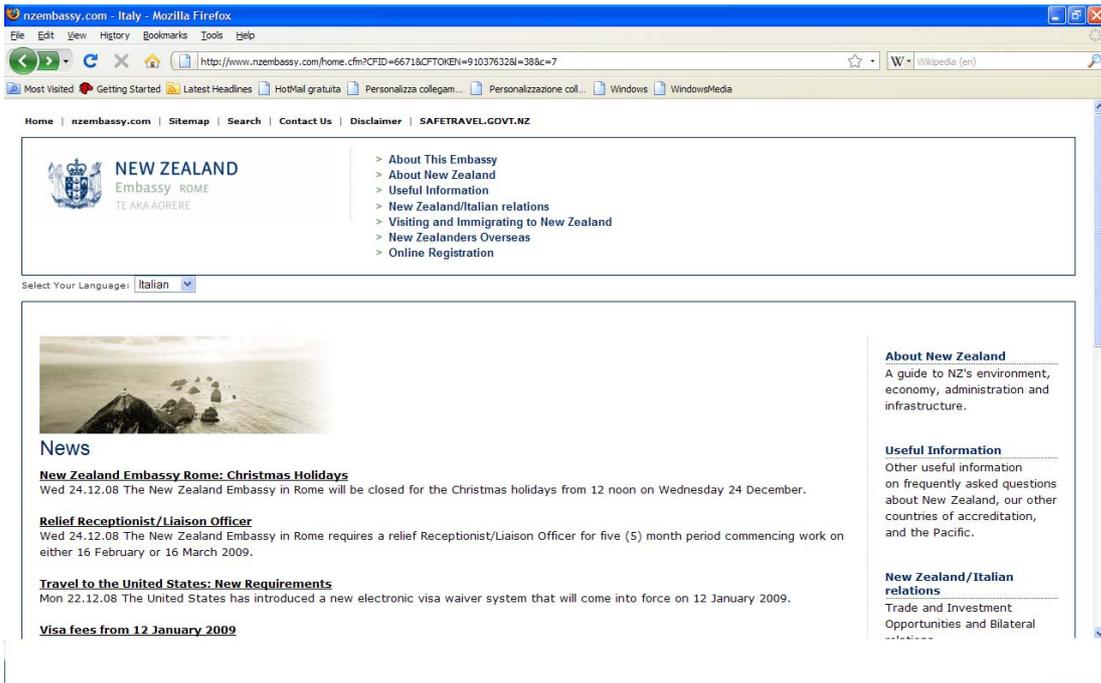
Figure 4.25 English home page of the New Zealand Embassy website
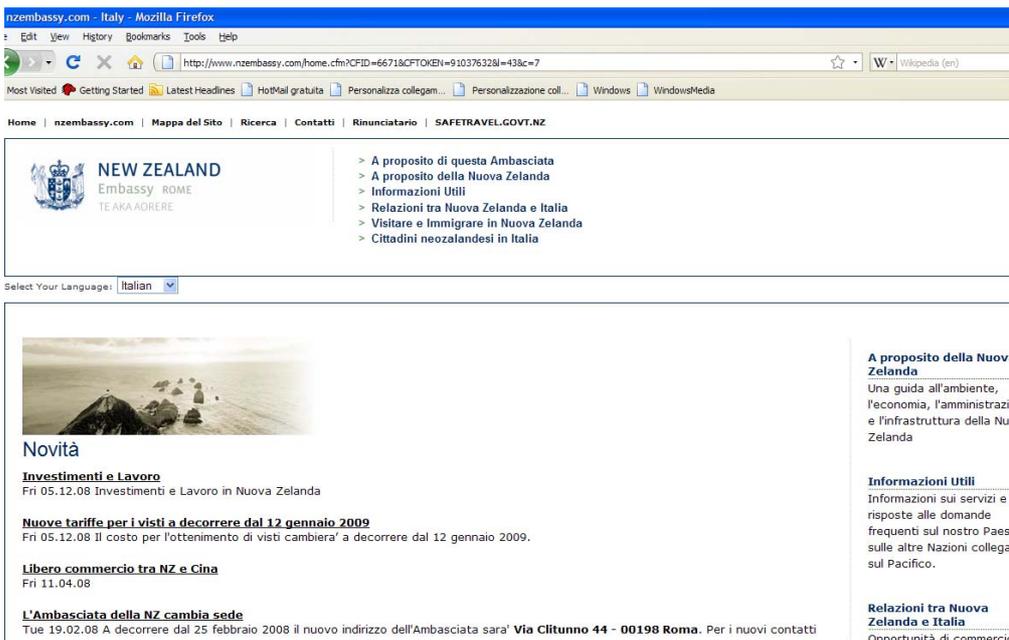
Figure 4.26 Italian home page of the New Zealand Embassy website

The top banner and the centre of the viewing area are enclosed within two rectangular drawings separated by a thin white space. The left hand side of the top banner features the logo cluster and the website menu. No participant has been placed on the right hand side of the banner.

The main viewing area is likewise simply organized. The visual on the top left side, displaying a naturalistic image from the country landscape, stands out as the most salient element of the page together with the blue links of the website menu contained in the top banner. The centre of the viewing contains a series of links to latest news, which are different in the English and Italian versions.

An interesting feature of the home page is the fact that in the right margin of the website the menu links are displayed again with an added introduction to the inside content of the related web pages. Providing an expanded version of the menu links and placing them in the right hand side position performs an important inviting and viewer's engaging function and facilitates the user's navigation.

On the basis of these elements, it therefore seems reasonable to argue that, despite an apparently inaccurate and hasty design, the home page of the New Zealand website is essentially user friendly, especially if compared to the rather dense and asymmetrical home page of the U.S. Embassy website.

The overall impression conveyed by the home page at the interactional level is less involving than the other websites analysed here. The only visual displayed contains elements in the medium and the long distance; no demand or offer pictures are present and the viewing area has a white background. The blue links leading to the inside sections, however, stand out, which may indicate that the Embassy predominantly relies on the written transmission of information as its main communication mode with the viewer.

At the representational level, the narrative processes created by the foregrounded vectors of the website menu links (figure 4.27) seemingly contributes to substantiating the importance attached by the Embassy to the verbal transmission of information and increase the sense of directionality leading the viewer to the discovery of the website content.

> About This Embassy
> About New Zealand
> Useful Information
> New Zealand/Italian relations
> Visiting and Immigrating to New Zealand
> New Zealanders Overseas
> Online Registration

> A proposito di questa Ambasciata
> A proposito della Nuova Zelanda
> Informazioni Utili
> Relazioni tra Nuova Zelanda e Italia
> Visitare e Immigrare in Nuova Zelanda
> Cittadini neozelandesi in Italia

Figure 4.27 Italian and English menu links in the New Zealand Embassy website

4.3.6 Summing up

Table 4.1 summarizes the diplomatic value of core semiotic resources displayed by the five Embassy websites. The table will be followed by some concluding remarks on the overall diplomatic meaning conveyed by each website, taking into account also the content of the various sections. Section 4.4 proceeds to the translational analysis of the five Embassies websites.

TABLE 4.1 DIPLOMATIC VALUE OF CORE SEMIOTIC RESOURCES DISPLAYED BY THE FIVE EMBASSY WEBSITES ANALYSED

RESOURCES	DIPLOMATIC VALUE
TOP	The top banner typically features national and institutional symbols (such as the Embassy logo cluster, the home country and sometimes the host country flag).
BOTTOM	The bottom banner usually contains clickable information related to practical and legal questions such as terms and conditions, privacy policy, copyright and accessibility issues.
CENTRE	It usually contains significant verbal information, either enclosed in boxes or not, which constitutes a key factor in the image building of each country.
LEFT	In the top banner, the left hand side position is typically the place of the logo cluster. The left margin in the central viewing area, on the other hand, is usually occupied by the website menu.
RIGHT	Both in the top banner as well as in the central viewing area, the right hand side position typically features visuals, highlights or sometimes the "research" option. These participants energetically attract and invite the viewers to explore the website to discover new information about the various activities the Embassies engage in.
FRAMING	Depending on the context, framing can neatly separate the various units of information, thus facilitating the viewer's navigation and selection process; or it can increase the sense of disconnection among the various units of information, leaving a sense of disorientation with the viewer with possible off-putting effects.
COLOUR	Warm colours are associated with an open and welcoming attitude on the part of the Embassy with the ultimate aim of establishing a dialogue with the host country citizens. The use of cool receding colours, or absence of colour, is associated with a desire to emphasize the Embassy's institutional stance and authority.

RESOURCES	DIPLOMATIC VALUE
GAZE	Demand visuals perform an engaging function, asking the viewer to take an interest either in some specific section of the website (e.g. job opportunities) or, more generally, in the Embassy's activities and in the home country's views, positions and aspects of life. Offer picture are usually associated with an offer of information on the part of the Embassy (e.g. in relation to visa application) or point to an international dimension (e.g. Canada's "export" visual).
PERSPECTIVE	Close distance is likewise associated with an engaging function and a desire to establish a dialogue with the viewer (e.g. the welcoming video of the USA Ambassador addressing Italian nationals). As for long distance, depending on the context and the position of the visual it can either perform a disengaging function, with a distancing connotation, or an attracting and inviting function to explore the naturalistic beauties of the home country.
ABSTRACT SQUARED SHAPES	They are usually associated with a sense of institutional power and authority.
VERTICAL STRUCTURING AND ELONGATION	It typically enhances the hierarchical priority in those diplomatic factors on which each Embassy relies to build the image of its home country
HORIZONTAL STRUCTURING AND ELONGATION	It typically enhances the sense of directionality of the viewer's navigation, inviting him or her to discover the Embassy's activities and the home country's views, positions and aspects of life inside the website. Narrative processes created by vectors perform a similar function.

Table 4.1 Diplomatic value of core semiotic resources displayed by the five Embassy websites analysed

Concluding remarks

The British Embassy website

- The UK Embassy website creates a highly informed and balanced picture of the UK in the host country.

- It emphasizes the UK's interest in cultivating bilateral relationship primarily at an economic and political level. The UK's active environmental commitment coupled with an interest in exports as well as inward investments come across as key factors in the image building of the country, especially in the Italian version of the home page.

- The website also publicizes UK as a country rich in professional and educational opportunities, cultural and artistic heritage and home to a vibrant and creative scientific and technological community.
- The website finally promotes UK as a country that values the establishment of an ongoing dialogue with Italy.

The Canadian Embassy website

- The website energetically publicizes Canada as a culturally-thriving place and a dynamic location for business and investment.
- Promoting Canadian universities and colleges, establishing academic relations and implementing international exchange programs targeted to young population groups come across as key factors in the image building of the country.
- The interpersonal dimension of the website also projects the image of Canada as a naturalistically fascinating country worth exploring. The home page conveys an overall sense of power and central authority.
- The website finally promotes Canada as a country that values the close cooperation and the strong linkages with Italy.

The Australian Embassy website

- The website primarily performs an informative function, directing the viewer to a great variety of websites on all relevant matters. The layout of the home page is simpler and slightly more asymmetrical than the British and Canadian home pages
- Compositional resources indicate that the Australian Embassy tend to maintain an institutional prominence over the host country.
- Tourist promotion and servicing come across as important factors in the image building of the country, while the promotion of cultural and economic diplomacy is given prominence over the establishment of bilateral political relations, which feature towards the end of the menu, especially in the Italian version.
- At the interactional level, the degree of viewer's engagement established in the Australian home page is lower than in the British and Canadian websites.
- The website promotes Australia as a country that values institutional authority.

<u>The USA Embassy website</u>

- The website foregrounds the extensive and closely-knit diplomatic network of the mission to Italy, which relies on the team-work and the active public diplomacy carried out by the many Mission agencies.

- The home page conveys an overall sense of power and central authority.

- Presenting the USA's policy views and positions on important political matters and cooperating with Italian counterparts to protect shared political, economic, and security interests come across as key factors in the image building of the country.

- The website also promotes the USA as a country that welcomes a certain degree friendly dialogue with the Italian people.

<u>The New Zealand Embassy website</u>

- Like the Australian website, the New Zealand Embassy website primarily performs an informative function. The importance attached by the Embassy to the verbal transmission of information is emphasized as is the sense of directionality leading the viewer to the discovery of the website content.

- A fundamentally inviting attitude and a willingness to cultivate the recent strengthening of bilateral relationship with Italy come across as important factors in the image building of the country.

- The website overall promotes New Zealand as a place worth exploring from an environmental, cultural and historical point of view.

4.4 The translational analysis of Embassy websites: methodological considerations

The translational analysis of the five Embassy websites which lies at the basis of the present research has involved the following steps:

a. a preliminary comparative overview of the five Italian versions of the Embassy websites was undertaken so as to gain a fresh insight into relevant features;

b. a questionnaire was prepared and submitted to the five Embassies with the aim of acquiring some fundamental knowledge into the specifics of the daily profession, so as to have a more true-to-life picture of the processes involved;

c. a detailed analysis of the Italian versions of the Embassy websites was then carried out with a threefold purpose: describing what has been translated and what has not

been translated in each Embassy website, establishing how and to what extent the translated texts reflect the diplomatic priorities accorded by the   various embassies as they have emerged during the visual social semiotic analysis of their websites and evaluating their acceptability to the Italian public as original diplomatic texts.

Before discussing the various steps of the research methodology in greater detail, it is however necessary to provide a brief historical and professional overview of the wider context of diplomatic translation within Embassies.

4.4.1.A brief historical overview of the role of translation in diplomacy

As has been amply stated throughout this work (§2.1 and 3.2.1), translators have historically played a crucial role in the conduct of diplomatic relations, performing tasks which went far beyond the simple transfer of messages from one language to another. Ostrower (1967: 493-7)reports in the ancient past translators not only aided the king in the conduct of foreign affairs, but they also became the compilers of syllabaries or tables of reference to languages written in syllabic form. These syllabaries were the precursors of dictionaries in the days before the advent of the alphabet. Historical evidence suggests that the employment of translators in Greece and Rome was common practice and in Spain it became indispensable during the Reconquest period in dealing with the Moors. There is also proof that official translators were also commissioned as notaries and used to accompany the Spanish *conquistadores* in their expeditions in order to certify all transactions abroad.

In modern diplomatic intercourse, the practice of attaching translators to diplomatic missions can be traced back to the second half of the 18th century, when a translation office was set up in the French Foreign Ministry in the 1760s (Hamilton and Langhorne, 1995: 73-4; see also note 14 in Chapter 1). The provision of a translation service has gradually come to be recognized as a necessity and thus a trait of an efficient modern Foreign Office, as Gaselee (1939: 71) clearly illustrates:

> if a modern Foreign Office has to deal […] with treaty instruments and communications in many languages, it must clearly establish some kind of machinery to deal with them, as it is obvious that not every official can be familiar with all languages[152].

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[152] Gaselee (1939: 71-4) provides an interesting overview of how some European countries (namely the UK, France and Germany) and the USA managed the provision of translation services in the first half of

Contemporary bilateral settings, with Embassy websites increasingly becoming an essential means of communication, have further enhanced the significance and the visibility of translation as a crucial mediating activity in diplomatic communication.

Generally speaking however, despite its widely recognized need and importance, today's professional diplomatic translation carried out within Embassies is still an unknown world. The specifics of the day-to-day practice have so far remained largely uninvestigated. According to Fuentes Luque (1999: online)[153] – who to date seems to be the only source shedding some light on this field of research – this should come as no surprise if one considers that the diplomatic world is traditionally "a very closed one, extremely inaccessible to outsiders". It is only recently that the rising interest in public diplomacy[154] and the increased communicative possibilities afforded by the new multimedia technologies have started to bring diplomacy closer to the wider public.

Fuentes Luque's investigation is therefore a welcome contribution providing basic information about the most frequently translated genres, types of tasks and general professional requirements relevant to the Embassy context.

4.4.2 The broader context of contemporary Embassy translation practices

Fuentes Luque (1999) characterizes diplomatic translation carried out within Embassies as encompassing "a little of everything and a bit more" and sees this as one of its most attractive and at the same time difficult features:

> one has to reveal him/herself as a universal expert, as some sort of epitome of knowledge with all its nine letters in capitals, in order, for instance, to start the day with the translation of a health certificate for a licence to export crocodile meat, followed by a back translation of a dense and cryptic opinion article on macroeconomy and, to finish the day, an aide-mémoire on the treacheries of the common agricultural policy.

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the 20th century. Gaselee highlights that besides the translation of documents in foreign languages, often the translation departments were responsible for carrying a variety of related tasks. Thus, for instance, the "Translating and Miscellaneous Bureau" of the State Department at Washington – which in the in the 1930s was reported to produce one thousand pages of translation per month - undertook also the checking of foreign language texts of bilingual treaties before signature. Or still, the functions of the translation service accredited to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Berlin included interpretation, stenography in foreign languages and the training and examination of candidates for the service itself.

[153] Adrián Fuentes Luque works as a Sworn Translator of English, accredited by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and as a freelance translator for several international institutions.
Source: http://accurapid.com/journal/10dipl.htm, last accessed 16 November, 2008.
[154] The concept of public diplomacy has been defined in Chapter 1 (§1.3.2.1).

Within the context of diplomatic translation, then, he distinguishes between two broad types of documents:

- chancery documents, aimed to serve as a vehicle for diplomatic communication between a given diplomatic mission and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the host country and

- consular documents, which comprise a great variety of fields typically related to the area of legal and sworn translation.

The following table summarizes in greater detail the most commonly translated genres within each documentary area, their main *Skopos* or communicative function and their addressees:

CHANCERY DOCUMENTS	SKOPOS	COMMISSIONER AND ADDRESSEE
THIRD PERSON NOTE	It is used to inform or advise about a particular issue, to obtain the support of the government for an international body or agency, to communication the start or the termination of a person's functions as a diplomat etc. It is written in highly formulaic terms, with stereotyped beginnings and endings and always in the their person (hence its name).	It is the customary method of correspondence between a diplomatic Mission and an MFA. It is also the standard form of communication between diplomatic Missions.
THE OFFICIAL LETTER IN THE FIRST PERSON	The term *Exchange of Letters* in the first person refers to a particular exchange of information concerning a particular issue. It entails a less formal approach as it is a much more direct and personal means of diplomatic communication.	It is normally signed by the Ambassador and addressed to a Minister for Foreign Affairs.
NON-PAPER	It has no official nature and therefore it does not commit the issuing body.	It is issued by an official body (Embassy, Ministry, Directorate General etc.)

CHANCERY DOCUMENTS	SKOPOS	COMMISSIONER AND ADDRESSEE
CREDENTIALS	Credentials are characterized by a widespread use of French expressions, which have to be maintained in the translation.	It is handed over by the Ambassador to the President or Head of State of the host country
MEMORANDUM OR AIDE-MEMOIRE (one of the main documents diplomatic translators have to deal with most)	It is a detailed explanation of the situation of a given matter, including the position or views of the issuing country regarding a specific issue (e.g. international economy and commerce, farming, agriculture, environment etc.) making suggestions and so on. The document is written in an impersonal way.	It is typically presented by an Embassy to the MFA.
CONSULAR DOCUMENTS (constitute a great deal of the bulk of translation work in an Embassy)	Consular documents provide information on a variety of issues such as: birth, marriage and death certificates, divorce sentences, deeds, visa, passports, assistance to arrested nationals etc.	They are issued by the Embassy and are directed to both institutional bodies and citizens.

Table 4.2 Most frequently translated genres within an Embassy

Fuentes Luque recommends that the translation of these documents be accurate, thorough and careful, "as a mistake or a misinterpretation of the original meaning could compromise diplomacy and even lead to a diplomatic incident".

Tasks undertaken by a diplomatic translator typically go beyond strictly translation-related matters to include the following:

- interpreting: it is much less frequent than translation, but virtually all varieties of interpreting (simultaneous, consecutive, chuchotage) are dealt with in the course of diplomatic discussions;

- information and documentation: it is complementary to translation; and if today these tasks have been facilitated by more accessible sources of information and documentation thanks in particular to the Internet, the confidential nature of some issues may still make it difficult to find specific and thorough information about a particular topic;

- research and advisory function: sometimes the translator is required to write economic, political or other kinds of reports about the host country.

Confidentiality is of crucial importance in the field of diplomatic translation, as it involves the security of one or several countries. To this purpose, a hierarchy of diplomatic documents is usually established according to their confidential degree:

- unclassified: not compromising, available to anyone;
- classified;
- in confidence;
- confidential;
- secret;
- top secret (the translator seldom has access to these documents).

Although Fuentes Luque's overview does not take into consideration translating for an Embassy website, his insights are valuable in contributing to outline a fuller profile of the diplomatic translator. Of the variety of genres and tasks he describes, not surprisingly only consular documents feature on the website of an Embassy, as they are the only ones addressed to citizens. As indicated in the overview of the corpus, the types of texts typically provided by an Embassy website include ambassadors' speeches, articles, interviews and latest news. In this light, therefore, websites have created new demands for the diplomatic translator, who is now faced with an incredibly broadened range of topics, styles, communicative functions and heterogeneous readerships, requiring an enhanced flexibility and varied professional skills.

4.4.3 The specifics of diplomatic translation for Embassy websites: preliminary remarks

An initial comparative overview of the five Italian versions of the Embassy websites has yielded some interesting results concerning the global approach to translation taken by each Embassy. The most striking finding concerns the fact that the British and the United States Embassies make, in their websites, explicit reference to translation, although with very different modalities. The Australian, Canadian and New Zealand Embassy, on the other hand, contain no such reference. More specifically, the British Embassy website features the name of the official translator and interpreter working within the Press and Communication team of the Embassy, as illustrated in figure 4.28:

Who we are...

Pierluigi Puglia, Senior Press and Communications Officer

Giulia Riccio, Press and Communications Officer - Internet and Events

Noemi Coppola, Press and Communications Assistant - External Communications

John Purtell, Press and Communications Assistant - Internal Communications

Simone Ceccarelli, Press and Communications Assistant - Media Communications

Rita Bandinelli, Translator and Interpreter

Figure 4.28 British Embassy website: "Media Centre"

The United States Embassy website, on the other hand, does not contain any such explicit mention of the translator(s) working within the Embassy premises. It however signals the provision of translation in two main ways:

a. in the home page, where a series of articles are displayed mainly dealing with significant events organized in Italy promoting the political and economy diplomacy of the United States, the reader can access the full related translation through a clickable icon placed below the articles' abstract, as shown in figure 4.29:

Presidential Message on Independence Day 2008, July 4, 2008

[...] More than two centuries ago, bold and courageous visionaries pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor in signing the Declaration of Independence. Guided by ancient and eternal truths, our forefathers proclaimed to the world that liberty was the natural right of all mankind and in doing so began one of the greatest chapters in human history. On the Fourth of July, our country commemorates the great achievements of these heroes and reaffirms its unwavering confidence in the power of freedom. full text

Messaggio del Presidente, Independence Day 2008, July 4, 2008

[...] Piu' di duecento anni fa, un gruppo di coraggiosi idealisti impegnarono le proprie vite, le proprie fortune ed il proprio sacro onore firmando la Dichiarazione d'Indipendenza. Guidati da verità antiche ed eterne, i nostri antenati proclamarono al mondo che la libertà era un diritto naturale di tutta l'umanità e così facendo diedero inizio ad uno dei più grandi capitoli della storia umana. testo completo

Figure 4.29 Home page of USA Embassy website: example of a clickable icon leading to the full translated texts of the related article

b. when such articles are accessed, then, they are either preceded by a notice with the name of the translator, as in the case of previously published texts in Italian newspapers (figure 4.30).

Discorso del Presidente Bush, Abu Dhabi, Emirati Arabi Uniti, 13 gennaio 2008

Il seguente articolo è apparso sul quotidiano "Il Foglio" del 15 gennaio 2008
(traduzione Studio Brindani e Alan Patarga)
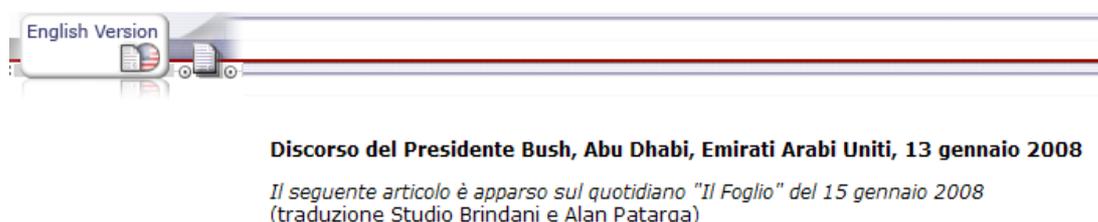
Figure 4.30 USA Embassy website: an example of a translation previously published in an Italian newspaper

or by a disclaimer on the official validity of the translated text, as can be seen from the example reported in figure 4.31:

TRADUZIONE INFORMALE, DA NON CONSIDERARE COME TESTO UFFICIALE

Estratto: Rapporto sul traffico di esseri umani – Italia, pubblicato nel mese di giugno 2008

(Rapporto sul traffico di esseri umani – pubblicato nel mese di giugno 2008)
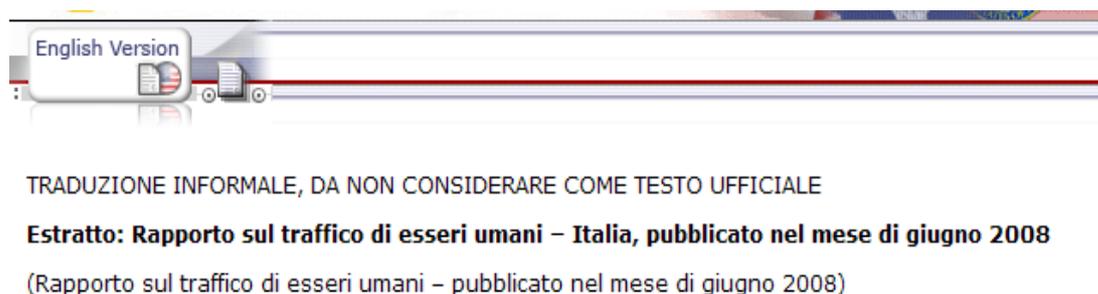
Figure 4.31 USA Embassy website: example of the disclaimer provided before a translated article

As noted by Kappeler (2001: 203), in bilateral relations a difference is made between authentic languages and unofficial translations, especially as regards the drafting of diplomatic documents, such as agreements and treaties:

> if two languages are both authentic, the interpretation problems have to be solved by reference to both. Unofficial translations on the other hand have no value of which is not used in international relations.

The fact, however, that the USA Embassy is the only one of the five analysed here to adopt such a disclaimer on its website indicates that to date this is not a customary or official practice in Embassy diplomatic intercourse and is therefore to be considered a peculiar trait of the USA diplomatic approach.

The initial comparison of the five Embassy websites further yielded interesting results in relation to their degree of localization. As the visual analysis conducted in the previous section already showed, all five websites substantially do not localize what O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002: 67) refer to as the package - that is the general design of the home page, the layout, the font, the colour scheme and the icon design (§3.2.3).The only exception to this trend concerns the position of some menu sections, which in a few cases have been noticed to be different in the English and Italian home pages in relation to the diplomatic priorities of each Embassy. By contrast, the textual content of each website is significantly translated, albeit with differences specific to the various Embassies which the more detailed analysis of the following sections aims to bring out.

4.4.4. The Questionnaire

The questionnaire submitted, in Italian, to the five Embassies investigated in the present research has only been returned by two of them: the Embassy of the UK and the Embassy of Australia. In the case of the UK, the official translator working at the Embassy was contacted directly via email. In the case of Australia, on the other hand, the general enquiry office was contacted and this, in turn, transmitted the questionnaire to the person involved. Appendix I presents both questionnaires complete with questions and answers.

Questions included concerned a range of key issues related to the daily professional practice. On the basis of the insights provided a few significant points and general considerations can be pointed out.

Professional issues: both Embassies rely on in-house professionals and freelance collaborators. More specifically, the British Embassy has one in-house translator and a restricted group of freelance translators and interpreters; the Australian Embassy, on the other hand has three in-house translators: two of them translate from English into Italian and one from Italian into English. Freelance translators are resorted to in case of particularly urgent translations. No official policy or statute regulates the work organization. Likewise there are no official guidelines concerning stylistic conventions to be adhered to while translating. As the translator of the British Embassy points out, with practice translators will familiarise themselves with the necessary type of diplomatic jargon.

The translating process: the bulk of texts displayed on an Embassy website is originally drafted in English. In a few cases, however, some are written in Italian, as is the case, for instance, of texts related to cultural events taking place in Italy.

The various phases of the translation process are not consistent, but seem to vary according to the types of texts to be translated, as do the criteria underlying the choice of texts.

In the case of the British Embassy, texts to be translated are typically issued by the various sections operating within a diplomatic Mission. The translator rarely takes part in the selection process. In some cases, it is the FCO in London that sends the texts to be translated for given Italian counterparts; while in other it is the diplomatic agents themselves working for the Embassy take this decision, following up some specific activity conducted either inside or outside the Embassy.

The choice of texts to be translated is also determined by internal needs, which includes the translation of texts for the Embassy website, as well as by external circumstances, such as the need to deal with issues relevant to the socio-political situation of a given moment.

In the case of the Australian Embassy, texts are mainly selected for translation according to the extent to which their topic is relevant to the conduct of the Embassy' public relations within the host country.

After the selection process, texts are transmitted to the translator, who finds him/herself having to be flexible in adopting a variety of translation strategies according to the topic in hand and often having to work under tight deadlines and a lack of adequate background information.

The use of translation memories or computer assisted translation tools is not deemed necessary for the kind of work carried out in an Embassy. It is thus basically restricted to some online glossaries and thesaurus.

Finally, the translator is also responsible for the revision and editing of the translation, especially as far as the British Embassy is concerned. The final content and layout of the target text is, however, finalised by the diplomatic personnel.

Localization of the website: specialized web developers working within the British Embassy's Press and Communication Office manage the Embassy website and, sometimes, they also carry out translations. The Australian questionnaire interestingly

highlights that, once again, it is the diplomatic personnel who decide which texts will be displayed on the website.

The questionnaires have provided invaluable insights into a professional sector - that of diplomatic translation for Embassies - which the field of Translation Studies is still fairly unfamiliar with. As Rita Bandinelli, the translator working for the British Embassy clearly asserts, the main distinguishing feature of Embassies is the great diversity in work practices and organization, with a direct bearing on the overall practice and organization of translation workload:

> ritengo che ogni Ambasciata abbia una situazione diversa. Le Ambasciate sono un ambiente del tutto peculiare. Anche nella stessa Amministrazione (ad es., le varie missioni all'estero del Regno Unito), ci sono grandi diversità. L'organizzazione dell'aspetto traduzioni, ad esempio, varia molto fra le diverse Ambasciate britanniche in Europa: ognuna segue criteri diversi. È in atto una strategia che punta addirittura all'*outsourcing* di questa attività (già applicata da alcune ambasciate britanniche in Europa) (in Appendix II).

Far from being a weakness, such diversity enhances the significance of the translator's work and contribution to the whole diplomatic machinery. In this respect Bandinelli's concluding remarks in relation to her own work within the British Embassy are illuminating:

> il traduttore non svolge solo un'attività prettamente traduttiva, ma è un punto di riferimento linguistico per il resto dello staff. Esegue revisioni di testi tradotti in italiano da altre fonti (che arrivano in Ambasciata da fonti esterne o addirittura da Londra, o sono brevi testi scritti direttamente da funzionari britannici dell'Ambasciata), risponde a quesiti linguistici, chiarisce alcuni punti non chiari a funzionari britannici che leggono documenti in italiano (ad es., chiarendo alcuni punti di testi legali o specialistici presenti sulla stampa o di altre fonti, o anche espressioni idiomatiche o create appositamente dai media in relazione a fatti o personaggi del momento), crea glossari di riferimento anche per colleghi che operano in altre sezioni (in Appendix I).

In sum, in line with what was already noted by Gaselee (1939: 71-4, see note 9 in this Chapter) in relation to the responsibilities of some translation departments accredited to diplomatic Missions in the first half of last century and more recently by Fuentes Luque (1999, § 4.4.2), translators are truly key mediating agents, endowed with responsibilities which go far beyond the mere written transfer of messages between two languages and, as such, make translation itself a crucial diplomatic tool.

4.4.5 Comparing the translation practices of the five Embassy websites

When considering Embassy websites from a translational point of view, two main points need to be borne in mind: the hybrid nature of websites as macro-genres encompassing a range of textual mini-genres (Djonov, 2005: 2; Baldry and Thibault, 2005: 113) and the ultimate diplomatic purpose each text has to serve, which, itself varies among the various Missions. In line with these factors, the five Embassy websites investigated here not surprisingly vary in the number and extent of translated sections, in their overall approach to translation practice and more specifically, in the kind of translation strategies adopted. This section aims to outline a general translational profile of each Embassy.

The British Embassy website:

The British Embassy website is wide-ranging in terms of the number of translated sections and subsections. By way of example, figure 4.32 compares the English and Italian page featuring the inside links within the first menu section, where the profile of the Ambassador, his residence, his main articles and speeches can be found:

Figure 4.32 British Embassy website: English and Italian page featuring the inside links within the first menu section

Three points are worth noting:

a. most of the Ambassador's articles, interviews with the press and speeches are originally drafted in Italian, and even in the English page this is the version which is given access to; in the Italian version of the website, where the need arises, a translation is usually provided;

b. some sections - such as the one on Consular help addressed to British nationals – are not included in the Italian version of the website;

c. the Italian section on Job Opportunities, on the other hand, contains a notice informing that most of the job opportunities with British government missions and other official British organisations operating in Italy require an excellent level of the English language and are therefore published only in English:

> Gran parte delle opportunità d'impiego presso le missioni diplomatiche britanniche richiedono un ottimo livello di conoscenza dell'inglese.
> Vengono pertanto pubblicate **unicamente sul nostro sito in lingua inglese**, alla pagina *job opportunities* - offerte di lavoro (emphasis in the original).

The same strategy is employed elsewhere too, namely in the page related to "Lavorare nella sanità nel Regno Unito" within the FAQs section (figure 4.33). Resort to such practice, coupled with the omission, in the Italian website, of sections

exclusively addressed to British nationals[155], indicates the Embassy's informed use of translation as a need-driven activity, at least as far as mainly informative sections are concerned:
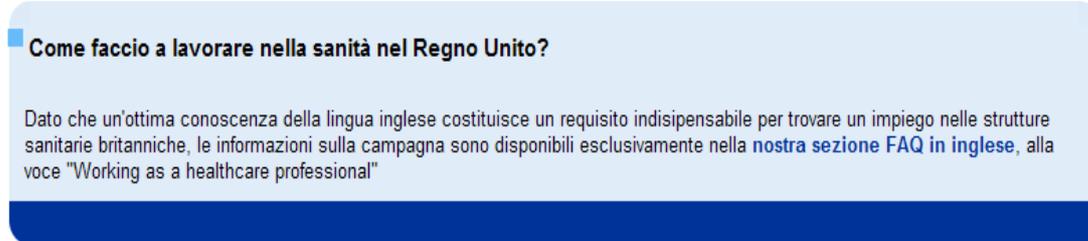
Figure 4.33 British Embassy Italian website: notice explaining why a section is featured only in English

The "Working with Italy/Cosa facciamo in Italia" section is where the diplomatic priorities of the British Embassy are mainly set out. As highlighted in section 4.3.1, these include the promotion of the UK's economic diplomacy and of its active environmental commitment. As can be inferred from figure 4.34, the three subsections contained in here are all translated into Italian. In addition to this, the Italian page "Think Green: eventi, premi e comunicazione" within the section "L'ambasciata pensa verde" features a greater number of texts describing events organized in Italy by the British Embassy to promote the UK's environmental policy. If this, on the one hand, reflects the Embassy's practice to draft some texts in Italian (as indicated by Bandinelli in her questionnaire – Appendix II), on the other it confirms the greater importance given by the Embassy to the promotion of the UK's international policy with the host country in mind, as had already been demonstrated at the visual level.

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[155] In addition to "Consular help" other sections which are not present in the Italian version of the Embassy website include: "Help for British Nationals", "Passports" and the sub-section "Help for UK companies" within "Doing Business".

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Figure 4.34 British Embassy website: "Working with Italy" vs. "Cosa facciamo in Italia"

The section "About UK" and its counterpart "Informazioni sul Regno Unito" (figure 4.35) present interesting features from a localization point of view, as both sections are targeted to suit the needs of different viewers. Thus, for instance, the Italian version features texts on moving to UK and all related areas of interest such as opening a bank account/getting married/learning English and so on which are not included in the English version. In this sense, not only is the Italian website localized, but it can be argued to provide a large amount of local content. As it will be recalled from Chapter 3 (§3.2.3 note 22), Esselink (2000: 39) makes an interesting difference between "web sites that contain a lot of *local* content, as opposed to localized or translated information" and states that the addition of target-culture relevant information is crucial in increasing the comfort level of international visitors. The same strategy is resorted to by the Embassy in other two key sections, that on FAQs and "Events" (within the "Newsroom" section), as well as in the page promoting business investments in the UK (within the "Doing Business" section, where a greater number of relevant business news and useful information relevant to Italian companies are present than in the English version of the website.

Figure 4.35 British Embassy website: "About the UK" vs. "Informazioni sul Regno Unito"

It is finally worth noting that the section on Visa/Visti is accurately and thoroughly translated, thus performing the same informative function in both version.

The Canadian Embassy website:

As is stated in the home page itself of its website (see figure 4.10 above), the Canadian Embassy to Italy not only targets Canadian nationals and Italian citizens, but also the large Italo-Canadian population interested in the cultural, social, economic and political aspects of the bilateral relationship between Canada and Italy. This might be the reason why the Canadian website displays a larger number of links to external websites in English as compared with the British Embassy website. This practice has been noticed in key areas of the website such as the "Highlights/Notizie di Rilievo" in the home page (figure 4.36),

Figure 4.36 Home page of the Canadian Embassy website: "Notizie di rilievo"

and, more visibly, in the Media Room section, where the viewer is faced with the notice that the page is not available in Italian and two links are provided to the related English and French pages, as shown in figure 4.37:

Figure 4.37 Italian website of the Canadian Embassy: "Sala Stampa" section

Likewise, the Ambassador's Message and Biography (figure 4.38) is not present in the Italian version.

Figure 4.38 Canadian Embassy website: Ambassador's Message and Biography

Generally speaking, however, translation plays a substantial and important role. As was the case with the British Embassy, the most thoroughly translated sections are the one related to the promotion of Canadian Embassy's top priority, namely cultural diplomacy, mainly entailing the publicizing of home universities and colleges and the presentation of international exchange program. Where necessary, additional information is further included to suit the specific needs of Italian viewers (e.g. table 4.3):

| Temporary Residence (tourists, temporary workers, students): the Visa Section of the Canadian Embassy in Rome will process temporary residence applications made by persons physically present and with legal status in Albania, Greece, Italy, Malta, San Marino or the Vatican. However, if you are not a national or a legal resident of any of those countries, the processing of your application may be lengthy and you may not be issued a visa in time for your proposed visit to Canada.

If you are not legally resident in one of those countries, you are strongly encouraged to submit your application at the Canadian visa office that is responsible for applications for your country of citizenship or legal residence. | Residenza Temporanea (turismo, lavoro temporaneo, studio): l'Ufficio Visti dell'Ambasciata del Canada a Roma esamina le domande di residenza temporanea presentate da individui fisicamente e legalmente presenti in Albania, Grecia, Italia, Malta, San Marino e Città del Vaticano. Tuttavia, se non siete cittadini o residenti legali di questi paesi, l'esame della vostra domanda potrebbe protrarsi e il visto potrebbe non essere rilasciato in tempo utile per il viaggio che avete programmato. Se non siete legalmente residenti in uno di questi paesi, vi consigliamo di presentare domanda presso l'Ufficio Visti canadese responsabile per il vostro paese di nazionalità o di residenza.

Per i formulari di domanda, consultate qui di seguito la categoria nella quale desiderate fare domanda. Vi preghiamo di non chiedere formulari via fax o posta. Il nostro ufficio non può rispondere a queste richieste. Tutta la modulistica può essere scaricata dal sito internet.

Le informazioni disponibili sul nostro sito internet dovrebbero essere esaurienti e rappresentano la fonte più completa di informazioni su visti e permessi per il Canada. |

Table 4.3 Canadian Embassy website: English and Italian notice on "Temporary Residence"

A similarity can therefore be noticed between the British and Canadian approach to translation, insofar as both Embassies resort to an extensive use of translation coupled with the addition of useful information or local content to suit the need of their Italian audiences and forcefully promote their diplomatic interests.

The Australian Embassy website:

As emerged in the visual analysis, the main feature of the Australian Embassy website is its greater simplicity compared to the British and Canadian Embassy

websites. Each section of the menu gives access to a page which, in turn, provides contact information and a variety of links to external websites, mostly in English. By way of example, figure 4. 39 displays the page that an Italian viewer is given access to when clicking on the section "Australia in Generale".

Figure 4.39 Australian Embassy website: "Informazioni sull'Australia"

Given the way the website has been conceived, as a sort of informative portal leading to a range of external links, accounts for the fact that translation mainly plays a servicing role, in line with the fact that, as the visual analysis demonstrated (section 4.3.3), servicing precisely comes across as an important factor in the image building of the country. The only two sections which are more substantial and therefore features a greater amount of translated content are the tourist visa page (within the Visa section) and the Events section.

The United States Embassy website:

As it was shown above (§ 4.3.4), the United States Embassy website comes in the English version only, although the articles displayed in the centre of the viewing area are featured mainly in Italian. Within this "unified" layout, translation plays a rather important role, despite the fact that accessibility to a large amount of translations

contained within the website is not so intuitive. The Visa section displayed in the horizontal menu banner (figure 4.21) provides a noticeable exception and gives access to a thoroughly and accurately translated Visti section (figure 4.40).

Figure 4.40 USA Embassy website: "Visa/Visti" section

Despite this exception and despite the fact that, as noticed before (§4.4.3), the articles contained in the main viewing area sometimes display a clickable icon leading to translated material, the rest of the translated content can only be accessed when clicking on "U.S. Policy Issues" in the menu bar, scrolling down the viewing area, and clicking again on the link located the left panel to the archive of translated documents in Italian (figure 4.41)

- ▶ Archives of Articles
- ▶ Archives of Events
- ▶ Documenti in italiano
- ▶ e-Journals
- ▶ CRS Reports

Figure 4.41 USA Embassy website: link to the archive of translated Italian documents

At this point the viewer is faced with a rather large archive, dating back to 2001, which includes a variety of texts ranging from the Ambassador's speeches, to reports on political and economic matters, to news releases about significant events of international or national interest and so on. Once again, thanks to the clickable icon on the right hand side of the article abstract the viewer can easily access the original English version (figure 4.42):

With the exception of Visa related information, the decision to include the rest of translated texts contained in the United States Embassy website under the "U.S. Policy Issues" must once again be related to the Embassy's key diplomatic factor in its public diplomacy, which in this case precisely relies on the presentation of the home country's views and positions on important policy issues of international significance (see section 4.3.4).

Figure 4.42 USA Embassy website: archive of translated Italian documents

The New Zealand Embassy website:

From a translational point of view, the New Zealand Embassy website is similar to the British Embassy website, insofar as it includes a large number of sections and subsections, most of which are thoroughly translated. Figure 4.43 compares the first

page included in the English "About New Zealand" section and its Italian counterpart. Both versions feature the same range of links with the aim of offering a full picture of the country's environment, economy, history, politics, arts administration, infrastructure and place in the world:
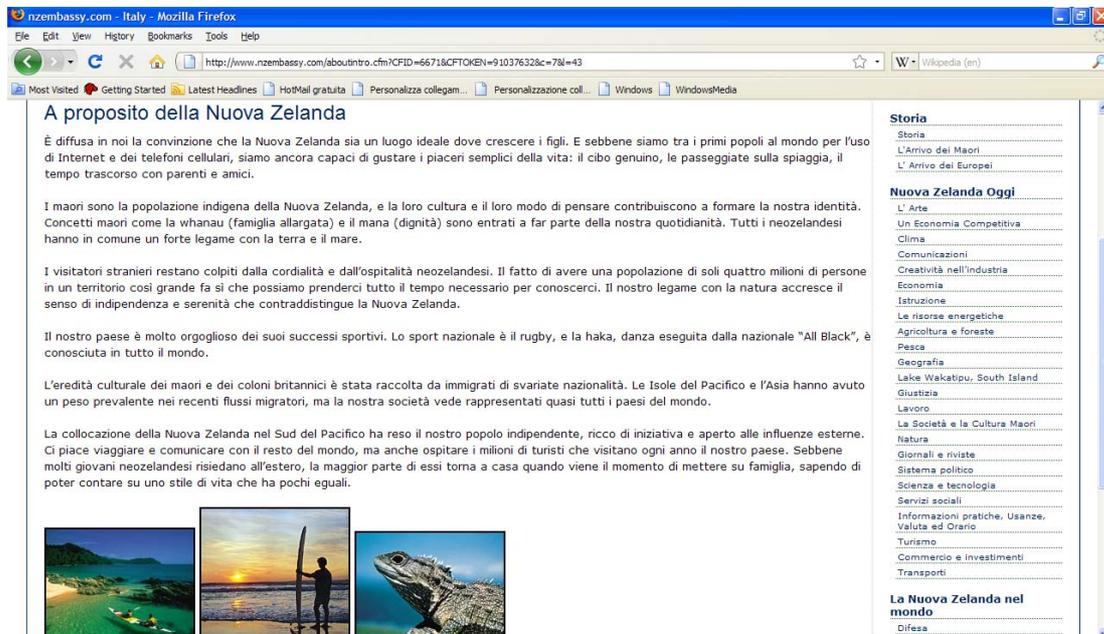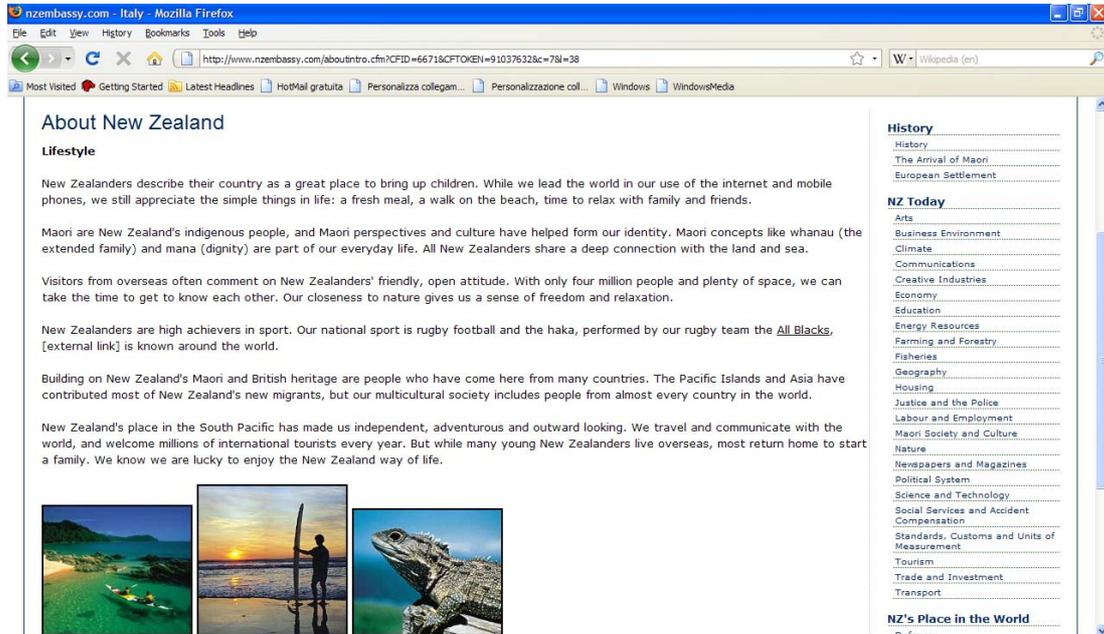
Figure 4.43 New Zealand Embassy website: "About New Zealand" vs. "A proposito della Nuova Zelanda"

Another feature which the New Zealand website shares with the British website is the localization of significant sections. Figure 4.44 compares the English and the Italian "Useful Information" section: as can be noticed, the Italian page differs in the type and number of subsections provided, and links such as "National flag, anthem, plants and animals" and "I'm doing a School Project" do not appear in the displayed menu:
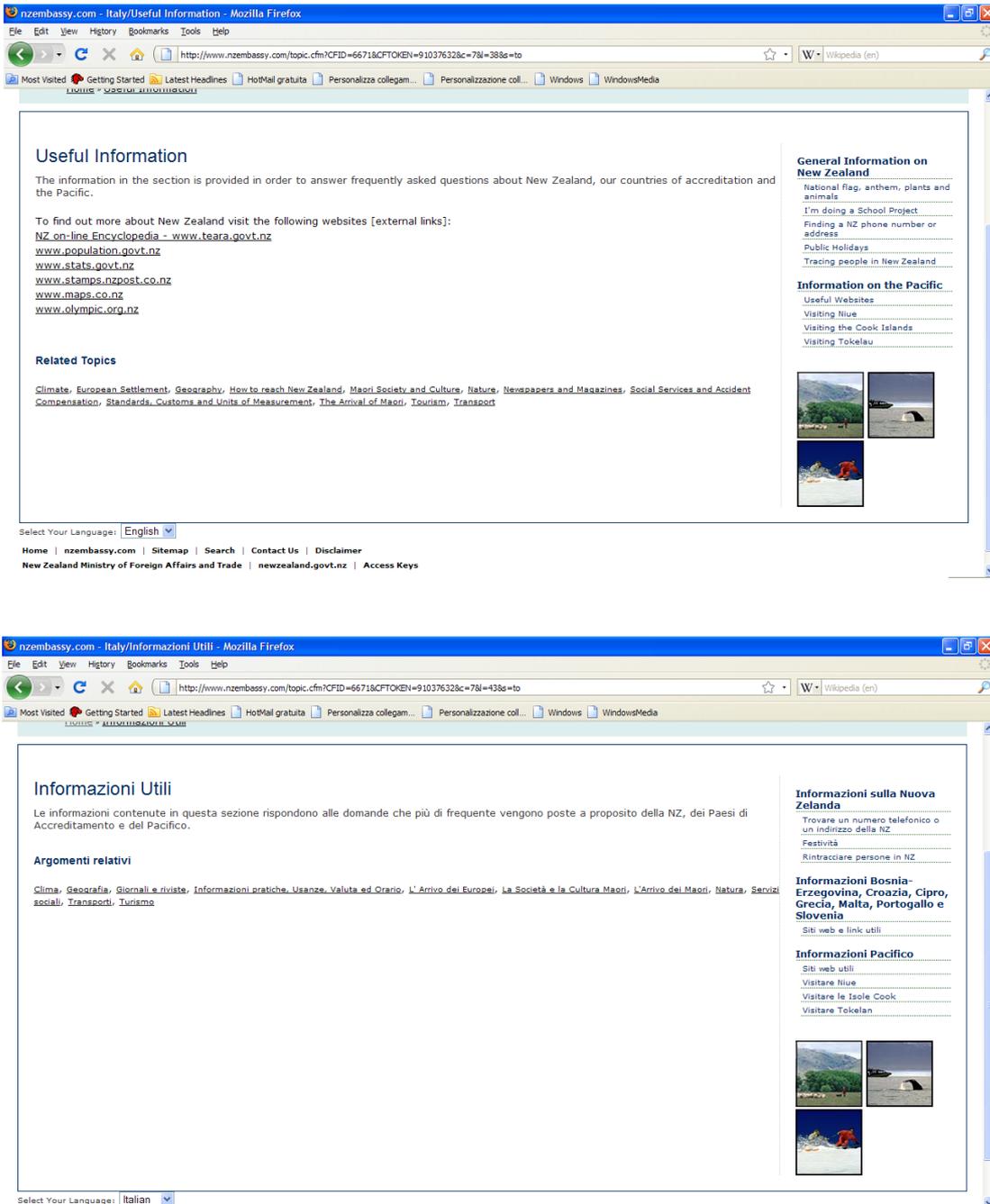
Figure 4.44 New Zealand Embassy website: "Useful Information" vs. "Informazioni Utili"

A further interesting instance of localization is provided by the section on climate (figure 4.435, where the Italian version is much more extended, providing more specific information to the unacquainted Italian viewer:

<div style="border:1px solid">

<u>Climate</u>

Because of its long, thin shape, the climate varies from north to south, with a sub-tropical climate north of Auckland, while the South Island mountains are snow-capped all year round. Many of the major towns are next to the sea, and the beach is an essential part of the New Zealand lifestyle.

Our seasons are opposite to those in the northern hemisphere. January is the warmest month with temperatures ranging from 19 degrees Celsius (66 degrees Fahrenheit) to 26 degrees C (79 degrees F). In July the winter temperatures range from 10 degrees C (50 degrees F) to 15 degrees C (59 degrees F).

</div>

<div style="border:1px solid">

<u>Clima</u>

Il clima della Nuova Zelanda ne riflette sia la posizione geografica che la topografia. Temperato dalla latitudine e dalla vicinanza dell'Oceano, esso non conosce né il caldo soffocante né il freddo troppo rigido.
Il clima in Nuova Zelanda muta con frequenza e rapidamente. Non è raro che una giornata piovosa lasci il posto ad un cielo soleggiato o a fortissimi venti.

Il clima marittimo fa sì che il vento soffi con grande frequenza, soprattutto da ovest. La dorsale montuosa del paese, specialmente nell'Isola del Sud, crea condizioni climatiche nettamente diverse sugli opposti versanti. La costa occidentale dell'Isola del Sud è tra le regioni più piovose del mondo, mentre le coste orientali sono assai più asciutte.

Le stagioni sono all'opposto di quelle dell'emisfero Nord. Il mese più caldo è gennaio, con temperature massime che vanno in media dai 26ºC dell'estremo nord ai 19ºC dell'estremo sud. Luglio è il mese più freddo, con temperature che durante il giorno variano dai 15ºC ai 10ºC.

Nel complesso il paese riceve abbondanti piogge, anche se le precipitazioni medie annue variano sensibilmente dai 380mm delle zone più secche fino a più di 6.000mm. La neve cade solo occasionalmente nelle zone non montuose e permane di rado per più di un giorno o due alle quote basse. Nella parte settentrionale dell'Isola del Nord la neve è del tutto sconosciuta.

</div>

Figure 4.45 From the New Zealand Embassy website: "Climate" vs. "Clima"

The ample presence of translation seems to confirm the Embassy's: preferred reliance on the written transmission of information as its main communication mode as was inferred earlier on in the Chapter from the analysis of interactional resources (§

4.3.5). In addition, the significant degree of localization displayed by some sections targeted to the specific information needs of Italian viewers enhances the inviting function performed by visual resources at the compositional and representational level. In the former instance, this was achieved by placing an expanded version of the menu links on the right hand side of the viewing area – the position of new information; in the latter instance, the narrative processes created by the foregrounded vectors of the website menu links (figure 4.27) were argued to increase the sense of directionality leading the viewer to the discovery of the website content.

4.4.6 The main translation strategies employed in Embassy websites: a purpose-oriented view

As observed in the above discussion on the broader context of contemporary Embassy translation practices (§ 4.4.2), in his overview of the main types of documents a diplomatic translator is daily faced with in an Embassy Fuentes Luque (1999) emphasized the crucial need for accuracy, thoroughness and care in the translation of such documents, "as a mistake or a misinterpretation of the original meaning could compromise diplomacy and even lead to a diplomatic incident". This view corresponds to what Newmark (1981: 39) has defined semantic translation, which "attempts to render, as closely as the semantic and syntactic structures of the second language allow, the exact contextual meaning of the original". Voicing the diplomats' point of view, Ambassador Stancko Nick (2001: 44) seemingly confirms the importance of an accurate rendering of diplomatic words, both in oral communication and written documents, aptly explaining the underlying reasons for such need:

> the choice of the right words is extremely important in diplomacy. Through the centuries a very carefully balanced, restrained, moderate vocabulary has been developed, ensuring a particular way of refined control over nuances in the meaning of words […] When a diplomat interprets his interlocutors' language and even single words used in a dialogue or correspondence, he always starts from the presumption that the choice of words and phrasing has been conscientious and deliberate. Nobody should nor indeed does assume that the words used are the result of insufficient knowledge of a language, inadequate translation or even less – a momentary bad mood.

Nick does not explain what he means by "inadequate translation"; his expounded arguments, however, seem to imply a mainly source-oriented view.

In the context of the Embassy websites investigated for the present research a close, accurate rendering of the source text is a prevailing translation strategy. It is particularly evident in highly informative texts such as those describing visa application procedures, where the main aim is a precise and clear transmission of information to the interested citizens. The following excerpts are taken from the Visa Section in the USA Embassy website and are offered here for comparison as evidence of the above mentioned strategy[156]:

> B1/B2 Visa
> The "B" Visitor Visa is a non-immigrant visa for persons desiring to enter the United States temporarily for business (B-1) or temporarily for pleasure (B-2). Persons planning to travel to the U.S. **for a different purpose** such as students, temporary workers crewmen, journalists, etc., must apply for a different visa in the appropriate category.

> http://italy.usembassy.gov/visa/vis/VIS-2-en.asp

> Visti di categoria B1, B2
> I visti del tipo "B", per affari o turismo, sono visti di non immigrazione destinati a coloro che desiderano recarsi negli Stati Uniti temporaneamente. **Più precisamente** il visto B-1 è destinato a chi viaggia per affari, il B-2 a chi viaggia per turismo. Coloro che si recano negli Stati Uniti per uno scopo diverso **da quello puramente turistico** o per affari, per esempio come studenti, per lavoro temporaneo, come membri di un equipaggio, come giornalisti etc., devono richiedere un visto della categoria appropriata.

> Source: http://italy.usembassy.gov/visa/vis/VIS-2-it.asp

A close reading of both excerpts, however, reveals something more. Not only is the Italian text precisely and fluently transmitting relevant information, thus fulfilling its communicative purpose, but it also features a higher degree of syntactic and lexical explicitation. The first main sentence in the English excerpt is indeed rendered with two main sentences in Italian, the second one of which openly aims to add specificity and clarity to the transmitted information, as signalled through the addition of the adverbial *più precisamente*. The addition of the prepositional phrase *da quello puramente turistico* fulfils the same purpose.

This first instance is indicative of a general tendency which has emerged within the context of the Embassy websites investigated, whereby translators often do not limit

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[156] The highlighted items in the excerpts are addressed in the translation criticism provided.

themselves to providing a close rendering of the source text, but often intervene by way of additions, clarifications and/or explicitations, with the aim of suiting specific needs of Italian readers and therefore making the text more accessible to them. For instance, in the following excerpts, taken from the "About Canada" section of the Canadian Embassy website, the Italian text features some extra contact details about the official tourist body which does not appear in the English text:

Plan your trip to Canada
Plan your trip by region, by province or territory (includes links to provincial/territorial tourism commissions) or by city.

Source: http://www.international.gc.ca/missions/italy-italie/about-apropos/discover-decouvrez-eng.asp

Pianificate il vostro viaggio in Canada
Ente Canadese del Turismo: la guida turistica ufficiale per il Canada, include una cartina interattiva.
Pianificate il vostro viaggio in base alla regione, provincia o territorio (con link agli enti turistici provinciali/territoriali) o per città.

Source: http://www.international.gc.ca/missions/italy-italie/about-apropos/discover-decouvrez-ita.asp

The same strategy can be noticed here, where the translator explains what the two main taxes in New Zealand are:

The main taxes in New Zealand are Income Tax and Goods and Services Tax (GST), a value added tax.

Le principali tasse in Nuova Zelanda sono la Income Tax (**tassa sul reddito**) e la Goods and Services Tax (GST) **una imposta sul valore aggiunto che si applica a beni e servizi**.

Even in the following pair of sample texts the translator's intervention is evident. They are taken from the British Ambassador's speech about foreign policy given on the occasion of the 40th anniversary of Circolo Italo Britannico Venezia, in October 2007:

"Lord Palmerston famously said we have no **permanent allies** and no **permanent enemies**, only **permanent interests**. Things look very different nowadays. We have permanent *alliances*, with the US, and the EU. We are proud of our role in the UN, on the Security Council, and the Commonwealth. These alliances are **founded on shared values and embedded in shared institutions**.

Source: http://ukinitaly.fco.gov.uk/en/newsroom/?view=News&id=2076

Nel suo intervento l'Ambasciatore ha affermato: "Lord Palmerston, **controversa figura della politica britannica della prima metà dell'Ottocento, disse che il Regno Unito** non aveva né alleati né nemici permanenti, ma solo interessi permanenti. Oggi le cose sono molto cambiate rispetto ad allora. Abbiamo alleanze consolidate basate su valori condivisi e siamo orgogliosi del nostro ruolo in organismi internazionali come le Nazioni Uniti, il G8 e l'Unione europea.

The English text has a prominent expressive function. Its main feature is the repetition of key words, in particular *permanent* and *shared*, which contributes to giving the text its balanced rhythm and pace and to making it highly cohesive. The parallelism between *permanent allies and permanent enemies* creates equivalence both at a syntactic and at a semantic level, with *allies/enemies* featuring as antonyms. A further syntactically equivalent structure is set up through the parallel of *founded on shared values and on shared institutions*. This sense of commonality is enhanced by the use of the personal pronoun *we* by the Ambassador, even when directly reporting Lord Palmerston's words.

From an initial reading of the translated text, it is clear that the expressive dimension of the speech is less prominent here. Lack of emphasis on the repetition of key words and resort to indirect speech add a reporting quality to the translation.

A close comparison between the two texts reveals that the translator has added some biographical details about Lord Palmerston to suit the information needs of the Italian reader, who may not be acquainted with British history. The parallelism set up by *permanent allies and permanent enemies* is partially reproduced through the use of the negative *né-né* construction, while the parallel structure *founded on shared values and on shared institutions* is not reproduced in the Italian *alleanze solide basate su valori condividisi*. Noticeable is also the omission of *Commonwealth* from the translated text.

The translator's choices are clearly informed by the need to make the text more accessible to the target reader. The translated text appears more factual and less empathic than the original and the omission of *Commonwealth* from the translation tones down an important element in the British history of foreign policy. In this sense, the Italian text seems to be diplomatically more interested in focusing the reader's

attention to the more relevant shared values and alliances between the two countries, with the aim of promoting more forcefully the country's image in the host country.

In the case of texts where the informative function greatly overlaps with the promotion of some significant diplomatic issue, the translator's intervention seems directed precisely at the fulfilment of the broader diplomatic purpose of the Embassy in which they operate. The following two extracts illustrate the point. They are taken from the "Think Green Project" page on the protection of the environment of the British Embassy website and publicize the Embassy's active political commitment, which, as it will be recalled, is one of the main international priorities of the Embassy. By adding details of the various activities the translator seemingly aims to more forcefully promote the Embassy's active commitment:

A)
Think Green: protection of the environment
The Embassy policy for the protection of the environment involves:
The choice of recycling paper: 9,000 Kg of paper, newspapers and magazines, equal to saving more than **150 trees and cutting CO2 gas emissions** (-11,770 Kg of CO2 gas mission);

Think Green: protezione dell'ambiente
La politica volta alla protezione dell'ambiente ha comportato:
La scelta di riciclaggio e uso della carta: ogni anno l'ambasciata ricicla 9 tonnellate di carta bianca e carta di giornali e riviste, "salvando" così l'equivalente di **oltre 150 alberi medi a fusto lungo e 24 metri cubi di scarti inerenti**, e abbattendo notevolmente le emissioni di anidride carbonica (-11.770 Kg di emissioni di CO2).

B)
Working to support the various Departmental Strategic Objectives of the British government, the British Embassy is actively committed to "achieving climate security, through the promotion of a transition to a sustainable, low-carbon global economy".
To this end, the Embassy's objective is to raise awareness of the importance of this challenge among the host country (Italy), **co-operating with partners, in accordance with the parameters established by the Kyoto Protocol**.

Nell'ambito delle diverse Priorità Strategiche che la animano, l'Ambasciata britannica è attivamente coinvolta nel "conseguimento della sicurezza climatica, attraverso la promozione di una transizione veloce ad un'economia globale sostenibile e a basso tenore di carbonio".
In tal senso, l'Ambasciata si pone l'obiettivo di sensibilizzare il Paese ospite (l'Italia) rispetto alla centralità di questa sfida, collaborando di volta in volta con **partner,**

istituzionali e non, al buon esito delle singole iniziative, sensibili ai parametri e ai requisiti del Protocollo di Kyoto.

Source: http://ukinitaly.fco.gov.uk/it/working-with-italy/think-green/

Also the promotion of the UK Embassy's economic diplomacy – another top priority of the country – appears to rely heavily on the same translation strategy of adding useful information to make the texts, and thus British economic diplomacy, more accessible to Italian readers:

One of the best ways to contact UK Trade & Investment about how they can help UK companies is by visiting the UKTI website.

Source: http://ukinitaly.fco.gov.uk/en/doing-business/contacts

Uno dei migliori modi per scoprire le ragioni per cui il Regno Unito è l'*investment location* numero 1 in Europa è visitare il **sito dedicato agli Investment Services** di UK Trade & Investment.
Il sito di UK Trade and Investment fornisce informazioni e servizi per le imprese straniere, illustrando i settori chiave come le biotecnologie, l'industria farmaceutica, la progettazione di software e i servizi informatici, nei quali il Regno Unito vanta un reputazione mondiale.

Source: http://ukinitaly.fco.gov.uk/it/doing-business/contacts

Addition of information to make texts more accessible to the reader is further evident in the USA Embassy website from where the following extracts are taken:

Assistance Agreements with Gulf States, Israel and Egypt, July 30, 2007
Statement by Secretary Condoleezza Rice Washington, DC
In advance of my trip to the Middle East with Secretary Gates, I am pleased to announce a renewed commitment to the security of our key strategic partners in the region.

Source: http://italy.usembassy.gov/viewer/article.asp?article=/file2007_07/alia/a7073005.htm

Dichiarazione sui Patti di Assistenza con gli Stati del Golfo, Israele, Egitto, 30 luglio 2007
(La Rice annuncia il rinnovato impegno per la sicurezza in Medio Oriente)
Dichiarazione del Segretario di Stato Condoleezza Rice
Accordi di Assistenza con gli Stati del Golfo, Israele ed Egitto
Prima del mio viaggio in Medio Oriente insieme al Segretario Gates, sono lieta di annunciare un rinnovato impegno per la sicurezza dei nostri principali partner strategici nella regione.

Source: http://italy.usembassy.gov/viewer/article.asp?article=/file2007_07/alia/a7073005it.htm

As is evident, the Italian translated text is preceded by a statement in bracket assisting the interested viewer's reading process and understanding by providing a concise summary of the article's topic.

Sometimes, omission of information can be argued to perform the same function. Below are two excerpts from the page on the "Working Holiday Program", an international exchange program between Canada and Italy sponsored by the Canadian Embassy website as part of its promotion of cultural diplomacy. The last sentence contained in the English text has been omitted in the translated Italian version plausibly not to risk discouraging the viewer to apply for the program. Greater emphasis on a positive action leaves the reader with an overall encouraging invitation:

> Do I need a medical examination?
> A medical examination is not normally a requirement, unless any intended employment is in the health services, teaching, child care or any similar or related occupation. If you intend to seek employment in these occupations, you should indicate that on your letter, in order that we may provide you the appropriate medical instructions once your application has been received. **You may not work in these occupations in Canada without having completed the relevant medical examinations.**
>
> Source: http://www.international.gc.ca/missions/italy-italie/work_prog_travail/menu-eng.asp

> È necessario un esame medico?
> Un esame medico non è normalmente richiesto, salvo per attività da svolgere nel campo medico, dell'insegnamento, dell'assistenza ai bambini o simili occupazioni. Se intendete lavorare in questi settori, dovrete indicarlo nella vostra lettera; a ricezione della domanda, vi invieremo le istruzioni relative all'esame medico.
> Source: http://www.international.gc.ca/missions/italy-italie/work_prog_travail/menu-ita.asp

4.4.8 Concluding remarks

The present Chapter has presented the applied visual and translational analysis of the selected Embassy websites. The first part has been devoted to investigating the diplomatic meaning of displayed semiotic resources at the compositional, interactional and representational level. On this basis, key factors in the image building and promotion of each country have been identified.

The second part has carried out a retrospective detailed comparison between the original and translated version of each website with the purpose to establish how and to what extent translation has impinged on the promotion of those key factors. What has emerged is that, albeit within a variety of translating practices, translation plays a

crucial role as a true diplomatic tool. Indeed, not only do websites thoroughly translate the most important sections related to the diplomacy of their Embassy, but typically they also display a range of translation strategies which are evidently aimed to make the texts more accessible, and therefore acceptable, to the Italian viewers to whom they are addressed. In doing so they fulfil both the specific communicative purpose of the various genres included in the websites as well as the ultimate diplomatic purpose that each text serves, thus enhancing the potential of strengthening the bilateral dialogue between countries.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The fields of diplomacy and translation are both rich and fascinating. Despite what one might think, they have many elements in common, the main one being the fact that they have always been essential mediating activities providing a vital link for different language groups to communicate with each other. As such, both diplomacy and translation have found themselves operating in constantly changing international scenarios throughout history, having to adapt to increasingly complex challenges and face the ever expanding informative and communicative needs of target audiences. Indeed, if in the past diplomacy had remained strictly enclosed within the realm of rulers, politicians and negotiators, the post-WWII advent of an internationalized and globalized society resulting from the entry of multiple state and non-state actors into the external relationships of countries has led to a sort of "democratisation" (Rana, 2001: 111) of the diplomatic process, enhancing the importance of communicating with the "demos" (Jönsson and Hall, 2005: 90). This rapidly evolving international context has similarly affected the practice of translation, with the consequence that the activity has shifted from being a means of communication restricted to men of letters and educated readerships, as it was in the past, into a full and multi-faceted profession. As amply illustrated in Chapter 2, the progressive broadening of translation methods and practices has not only altered the profile of the translator as a mediating agent, but it has also attracted an ever-increasing interest from scholarly research to the extent that, in a few decades only, the study of translation has constituted itself into a proper academic discipline, with an interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary nature.

The present work has aimed to contribute to the continuous growth in the scope of interest and research areas which characterize Translation Studies. It has done so by bringing an interdisciplinary approach to the still largely unexplored world of diplomatic translation within the multimodal context of Embassy websites. More specifically, it has integrated insights from the field of visual social semiotic analysis – drawing in particular on Kress and van Leeuwen's work in visual grammar – with a retrospective comparison of the translated version of the five selected Embassies websites against their original version.

The investigation has adopted a fundamentally descriptive approach and has then integrated it with evaluative considerations. Using the compositional, interactional and

representational categories indentified by Kress and Van Leeuwen (2006) websites have been described in terms of content and semiotic design. On this basis the overall diplomatic meaning conveyed by each website has been assessed and the diplomatic priorities accorded by each website have been identified. In line with the methodological foundations outlined by Toury (1995) the translated version of each website has been compared to its original to verify what has been transferred, what has been left out and what has been added. On this basis, the extent to which the translated versions reflect the diplomatic priorities accorded by the English websites has been assessed.

The investigation has shown that the choice of the visual resources displayed by the semiotic design proper of each website, the type of translated sections and the main translation strategies adopted all concur in promoting those key factors on which each Embassy relies to promote its diplomatic priorities. The study has also shown the crucial role played by the translator as a mediating agent, at the interface between the Embassy's institutional stance and the target audience's needs.

In sum, the present research has demonstrated that both visuality and translation are in themselves powerful diplomatic tools. As straightforward as this contention might sound, it is informed by a number of presuppositions whose explicit knowledge and understanding will add to a better decoding of the meaning embedded in diplomatic relations, in the service of improved dialogue and mutual understanding, both within the academic disciplines converging in Translation Studies and the field of diplomacy. This has been the wish that has inspired and sustained this work throughout and the main hope that arises at the end of it.

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APPENDIX I

<u>Questionario per traduttori d'ambasciata</u>

Ambasciata del Regno Unito

Il presente questionario fa parte di un progetto di ricerca dottorale incentrato sull'analisi dei siti web di alcune ambasciate di Paesi con lingua ufficiale inglese e con sede in Italia. In linea con l'approccio descrittivo della presente ricerca, il questionario è volto a ottenere alcuni chiarimenti relativi agli aspetti prettamente professionali del lavoro svolto da un traduttore all'interno di un'ambasciata.

1. Lei lavora come traduttrice in-house? L'ambasciata si avvale di collaboratori esterni freelance?

Sì, lavoro come traduttrice *in-house*. Abbiamo un ristretto *database* di traduttori ed interpreti esterni a cui ricorrere in caso di emergenza, ma a tutt'oggi non vi abbiamo fatto ricorso (per lo meno per le traduzioni scritte).

2. Tutti i testi da tradurre per il sito nonché il sito stesso sono originariamente redatti in lingua inglese?

Nella maggior parte dei casi sì. Alcune volte alcune parti o testi vengono creati direttamente in italiano. Talvolta delle parti del sito sono state curate direttamente anche dal punto di vista linguistico dalla persona preposta alla cura del sito stesso.

3. Potrebbe descrivere brevemente l'organizzazione del processo traduttivo a partire dalla selezione dei testi da tradurre fino al prodotto finito?

I testi da tradurre sono di tipo molto vario, provenienti da sezioni diverse con esigenze e contenuti diversi. Talvolta è Londra che invia testi da proporre poi a controparti italiane. Talvolta sono gli stessi funzionari che creano testi da tradurre a seguito di attività specifiche condotte all'interno e all'esterno dell'Ambasciata. Il traduttore quindi, nella quasi totalità dei casi, non partecipa al processo di selezione dei testi. Riceve la richiesta dalla persona interessata, spesso senza adeguato *background*, con l'indicazione della priorità della traduzione e del *deadline* entro cui consegnare il testo per permettere al traduttore di formarsi una lista di priorità ed organizzare bene il lavoro (qui stiamo

parlando di un 'mondo ideale', nel senso che questa è la procedura da seguire generalmente, ma spesso viene dimenticata dal funzionario che invia la richiesta di traduzione). Il traduttore provvede alla traduzione del testo, considerando che nei tempi richiesti deve rientrare anche la revisione del testo, che viene sempre eseguita dallo stesso traduttore. I ritmi sono molto intensi e le scadenze sono quasi sempre molto ristrette. Una volta consegnato il prodotto finito, in molti casi il traduttore ne perde ogni traccia.

4. C'è uno statuto o regolamento che regola la *policy* traduttiva o l'organizzazione del lavoro all'interno della vostra ambasciata? Se si da chi è stato redatto?

Dovrebbe esserci un documento che chiarisca tale *policy*. In quest'Ambasciata non c'è mai stato. Nel caso particolare, non è mai esistito un 'ufficio traduzioni', bensì la figura di un unico traduttore, che solo da circa un anno è affiancato per una piccola percentuale del lavoro da un'altra risorsa interna specializzata.

5. Ci sono dei criteri che determinano la scelta dei testi da tradurre? In tal caso da chi o in base a quali fattori vengono stabiliti?

I testi da tradurre vengono scelti da Londra (FCO o altri dipartimenti o agenzie o uffici che di volta in volta seguono determinati temi/politiche/attività) e/o dai funzionari interni delle varie Sezioni. Ci sono esigenze interne (ad es., manuali per le attività di *training* condotte, oppure molti testi per il sito o testi legati a visite ed eventi in Italia o nel Regno Unito) ed esterne (ad es., l'epidemia di BSE in passato, il *climate change* e la politica energetica ora, la guerra in Iraq, il G8, ecc.).

6. Ci sono linee guida ufficiali sulle convenzioni stilistiche da adottare? Se si da chi sono state redatte?

Non ci sono linee guida ufficiali. Ovviamente, c'è un 'gergo' dell'FCO e una sorta di 'diplomatichese' con cui si familiarizza con la pratica.

7. La sua strategia traduttiva cambia in base alla tipologia dei testi che traduce?

Sì. I testi sono molto eterogenei, vanno dai discorsi della Regina o dell'Ambasciatore alle norme tecniche per l'installazione di cavi telefonici. I ritmi e gli stili di traduzione cambiano per forza di cose, anche all'interno di *deadline* comunemente ristrette.

8. Usa qualche strumento di traduzione assistita?

Questi strumenti non sono necessari per il tipo di traduzioni svolte qui. Ho provato in passato ad ottenere l'autorizzazione all'uso della versione gratuita di *Wordfast*, ma devo dire di non aver mai avuto occasione di utilizzarla. Personalmente creo dei glossari per mio uso personale laddove ricorrono dei termini molto specifici che so di poter trovare anche in futuro (ad es., in fatto di *guidelines* ed altri documenti riguardanti il sistema di valutazione del personale, infarciti di termini e riferimenti propri dell'FCO), oppure mantengo come copie di riferimento alcune traduzioni con caratteristiche ricorrenti, inserendo alcune 'frasi fatte' nella funzione *Autotext* del computer (come nel caso delle Note Verbali, che di solito iniziano e finiscono sempre alla stessa maniera).

9. Chi si occupa dell'editing/revisione dei testi che traduce?

Io stessa, soprattutto per la revisione. Il formato finale viene spesso deciso altrove, soprattutto se si tratta di lettere ufficiali.

10. Chi si occupa della localizzazione/traduzione del sito web?

Nella Sezione Stampa ci sono due persone addette alla creazione, cura e sviluppo del sito. Affidano la massima parte delle traduzioni a me, ma a volte vi provvedono direttamente.

11. Considerazioni di carattere tecnico legate all'ambiente digitale in cui i testi tradotti andranno inseriti (es. la grandezza dello schermo del sito web ecc.) hanno qualche influenza sul testo tradotto?

No.

12. Altri commenti?

Ritengo che ogni Ambasciata abbia una situazione diversa. Le Ambasciate sono un ambiente del tutto peculiare. Anche nella stessa Amministrazione (ad es., le varie missioni all'estero del Regno Unito), ci sono grandi diversità. L'organizzazione dell'aspetto traduzioni, ad esempio, varia molto fra le diverse Ambasciate britanniche in Europa: ognuna segue criteri diversi. È in atto una strategia che punta addirittura

all'*outsourcing* di questa attività (già applicata da alcune ambasciate britanniche in Europa).

Nell'esempio specifico, il traduttore non svolge solo un'attività prettamente traduttiva, ma è un punto di riferimento linguistico per il resto dello staff. Esegue revisioni di testi tradotti in italiano da altre fonti (che arrivano in Ambasciata da fonti esterne o addirittura da Londra, o sono brevi testi scritti direttamente da funzionari britannici dell'Ambasciata), risponde a quesiti linguistici, chiarisce alcuni punti non chiari a funzionari britannici che leggono documenti in italiano (ad es., chiarendo alcuni punti di testi legali o specialistici presenti sulla stampa o di altre fonti, o anche espressioni idiomatiche o create appositamente dai media in relazione a fatti o personaggi del momento), crea glossari di riferimento anche per colleghi che operano in altre sezioni.

<u>Questionario per traduttori d'ambasciata</u>

Ambasciata dell'Australia

Il presente questionario fa parte di un progetto di ricerca dottorale incentrato sull'analisi dei siti web di alcune ambasciate di Paesi con lingua ufficiale inglese e con sede in Italia. In linea con l'approccio descrittivo della presente ricerca, il questionario è volto a ottenere alcuni chiarimenti relativi agli aspetti prettamente professionali del lavoro svolto da un traduttore all'interno di un'ambasciata.

1. Lei lavora come traduttrice/traduttore in-house? L'ambasciata si avvale di collaboratori esterni freelance?

I dipendenti dell'Ambasciata che effettuano traduzioni sono tre, due dei quali traducono verso l'italiano e uno verso l'inglese.

L'ambasciata si avvale di collaboratori esterni per traduzioni particolarmente tecniche o urgenti.

2. Tutti i testi da tradurre per il sito nonché il sito stesso sono originariamente redatti in lingua inglese?

Il sito e la maggior parte dei testi del sito sono redatti in inglese. Alcuni dei testi relativi ad eventi culturali che si svolgono in Italia sono redatti originariamente in italiano.

3. Potrebbe descrivere brevemente l'organizzazione del processo traduttivo a partire dalla selezione dei testi da tradurre fino al prodotto finito?

Risulta diverso, da caso a caso.

4. C'è uno statuto o regolamento che regola la *policy* traduttiva o l'organizzazione del lavoro all'interno della vostra ambasciata? Se si da chi è stato redatto?

No.

5. Ci sono dei criteri che determinano la scelta dei testi da tradurre? In tal caso da chi o in base a quali fattori vengono stabiliti?

I testi vengono scelti in base alla misura in cui l'argomento in questione risulta prioritario per le attività di relazioni pubbliche che l'Australia tiene in Italia.

6.Ci sono linee guida ufficiali sulle convenzioni stilistiche da adottare? Se si da chi sono state redatte?

No.

7. La sua strategia traduttiva cambia in base alla tipologia dei testi che traduce?

Sì.

8. Usa qualche strumento di traduzione assistita?

Il Thesaurus di Word e alcuni glossari on-line, soprattutto quello dell'Unione Europea.

9. Chi si occupa dell'editing/revisione dei testi che traduce?

Il personale diplomatico.

10. Chi si occupa della localizzazione/traduzione del sito web?

I traduttori dell'Ambasciata effettuano la traduzione, il personale diplomatico ne decide la localizzazione sul sito.

11. Considerazioni di carattere tecnico legate all'ambiente digitale in cui i testi tradotti andranno inseriti (es. la grandezza dello schermo del sito web ecc.) hanno qualche influenza sul testo tradotto?

No.

12.Altri commenti?