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BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES – THE STORY OF “TO BE” AND “TO BE LIKE”. ON THE BASIS OF EXCERPTS FROM CLASSIC READINGS IN TRANSLATION STUDIES

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Abstract

This paper is generally about the two fundamental ways of expressing ideas in academic discourse, i.e. either through stating things in terms of the conceptual pattern: X IS Y, or in terms the pattern X IS LIKE Y. The former, though much widespread in the said discourse is argued to be fundamentally false as it produces statements of the predicative (absolute) type, which as the article shows, is not within the grasp of human reasonable mind. Instead, what is suggested is the pattern X IS LIKE Y, which by containing a pivotal element “like” guarantees the discourse to be at most approximative rather than predicative of the Truth. The general claim is that academic discourse, being essentially speculative, should stylistically reflect the aforementioned “be like” strategy in the description of things rather than “to be” strategy. The latter, as argued below, does a lot of harm to academic discussion as it is groundlessly authoritarian and as such appears as inadequate vehicle in the description of the world. This proviso applies both to sciences and humanities, contrary to the common stereotype. The claim in this paper is that both sciences and humanities operate at the level of facts. This stands in opposition to a popular belief, where facts are the realm of sciences, while non-facts the prerogative of the humanities.

The overall argument is contextualized in relation to the discussion of the selected excerpts of classic monographs within Translation Studies, which in its history aspired to be both “scientific” and “scholarly”. The analysis of the excerpts will demonstrate the pitfalls of the academic narrative, where the formulation of the ideas in a non-speculative way may disturb the reception of the argument in a sense that it is received as the only

indisputable “truth”. This may, in turn, lead, to the suppression of the academic debate in which the two options emerge, i.e. either to accept a given view or reject it (as implicated in the formula X IS Y or X IS NOT Y, respectively). This yields no room for academic speculation. If this academic speculation is to survive, it should be implicated in the formula X IS LIKE Y, which as the claim goes, is the only intellectual tool upon which humans should rely in the process of approximating the Truth.

1. Narrative in view of Truth/fact divorce

Facts are understood in this paper as nothing but mere approximation of the Truth – the domain understood strictly as outside the reach of human cognition,¹ which we call the Domain of Truth. The Domain of Truth is not viewed here as unwanted metaphysical concept but rather argued as integral to any type of human intellectual activity. Evoking the Domain of Truth into our consideration is an ultimate expression of necessity dictated by Reason, as it may, on the one hand, serve as reference area designating the ideal of the scientific or scholarly entrepreneurship, while on the other, play the role of the source motivating higher human actions such as those connected with academic practice.

The claim advanced in this paper is certainly not new in itself,² yet it is presented against the philosophical spectrum, which may shed some new light upon the constraints of academic enterprise, whatever its provenance. The problem is linked to the science/humanities dichotomy, which has its roots in the 17th century birth of the notion of “fact” as applicable to academia with the consequent dismissal of the notion of “truth” as applicable to non-academia.³ At the same time, “factuality” has begun to be popularly associated with science, whereas “speculativity” with humanities. Practically, then, this split has led to the reinforcement of the still contemporarily binding stereotype, whereby facts are the domain of sciences, while speculations are the domain of humanities. The notion of “truth” – the relic of the unwanted metaphysics – has been gradually withdrawn from within the focal scope of academic enterprise.

To understand this 17th century pressure whereby “facts” and “truth” started to be viewed as dichotomized into antagonist rather than synergistic relationship, we need specifically to return to the key split in ontology and epistemology of the universe that marked the 17th century discourse in the philosophy of science. The split concerned the fundamental division of thought into two distinct modalities supported by two conflicting models of the natural world: 1) the so-called pre-scientific also

¹ “Ultra intelligentiam rationabilis naturae” (Eriugena, *Periphyseon* III: 723 B., in Siemieniowski 2012: 26).

² See, for example, David Hume’s epistemic scepticism concerning the possibilities of human cognition as expressly evoked in *A Treatise on Human Nature* (in Wendland 2009).

³ The rejection of the metaphysical in favour of the empirical, fact-finding type of intellectual activity has been particularly observed in the writings of Francis Bacon or John Locke (cf. Wendland 2009).

known as non-expert conception of reality as epitomized in Ptolemy’s model of the universe and 2) the scientific (expert) view as epitomized in Copernicus’ model of the world.⁴ The non-expert and expert modalities of thought were most conspicuously divorced as a result of the said 17th century revolution in science which focused on the re-analysis of the notion of “truth”.

This re-analysis led to the gradual dismissal of “truth” as metaphysical notion with the consequent promotion of the concept of “fact” as operative in scientific discourse. This has had dramatic consequences for the contemporary philosophy of science understood as an overarching domain of human intellectual activity. The search for “truth” has begun to be viewed as irrelevant to human scientific investigations due to its foundation in the speculative, associated with the irrational (further collated with the domain of “fides”). Instead the search for “fact” has become the human-scale substitute for the divine, the kind of “holy grail” of the contemporary scientific thinking due to its entrenchment in the empirical [further collated with the domain of “ratio”].⁵

Practically then, “science” has essentially started to deal with establishing facts of reality through recourse to experiment, whereas “non-science” has been assigned the role of a “vacuum-cleaner”, accommodating all that is unwanted by the contemporarily triumphant embodiment of scientific enterprise, i.e. materialist reductionism. This materialist, fact-driven perspective is consequentially visible in mainly linguistic-oriented Translation Studies which attempt to validate its position as “scientific” by establishing “facts”. This, in turn, results in the proliferation of binary distinctions based on the rhetoric of “to be or not to be” as grounded in the epistemic-ontological formula X IS Y as opposed to the rhetoric of “[it seems] to be or not to be” as grounded in the non-expert X IS LIKE Y.

In view of the above, both so-called scientific and scholarly types of academic activity are quintessentially speculative. It follows, then, that predicating how things are truly in the world is not accessible to humans. If such predication occurs in academic discourse, this leads to various misunderstandings or evokes emotional yet “dry” heated debates. If, however, the care is given to attune the style of the academic discourse to reflect the limitations inscribed in the ontological-epistemic matrix (see Table 1 below), then the ground for the appropriate academic discussion opens. It should be remarked that the discursive constraints are naturally binding on academic discourse, seen here as a peculiar higher-level type of human symbolic expression about the world. In lower-level types of discourses, where persuasive rather than descriptive goals are to be achieved, the said limitations are suspended, but are still ontologically applicable. All in all, even here as Table 1. shows, the discourse represents nothing but the essential distortion of the Truth, regardless of whether this is journalist talk, marketing communicative strategy or ordinary everyday argument.

⁴ For detailed discussion see Kuźniak (2009).

⁵ It must be, however, reminded that on the level of non-academic discourse, the notions of “truth” and “fact” are interchangeable. This “practical” ontology is not the subject-matter of the presented argument.

No escape from that. This is guaranteed by the “symbolicity” of language and consequently indirect access to the world as mediated by the conceptualization mechanisms, the physical substratum of which are the so-called mirror neurons.⁶

1.1. Epistemic-ontological matrix

There are thus essentially two levels within the epistemic-ontological matrix suggested. Level 1- the topmost order – is *absolute* by nature. This level is bound up with the Domain of Truth.⁷ This area is governed by the epistemic-ontological principle whereby X is predicated to be Y. The inherent property is thus predicative. Realization of this formula, i.e. expression of *absolute* judgements about the world is therefore non-human scaled, i.e. beyond human capacities of whatever kind they are. Such statements are thus the sole prerogative of the divine. It follows thus that humans, although aware of the existence of the topmost epistemic-ontological level, have no access to it in the sense of being able to make interferences by issuing irrevocable predications about things in the world. Religious beliefs aside, this level makes sense to humans insofar as it constitutes the ideal against which humans aspirations to strive for the Truth are realized. X IS Y formula is also substantiated in that it motivates a human ontological-epistemic formula, where X can be discussed in terms of Y, but only within the bounds of approximation rather than definiteness, hence the presence of the approximative conjunction LIKE. Thus X IS LIKE Y is viewed here as naturally conjoined with its “mother” source – X IS Y formula.

The mid-order area is *relativist* as opposed to the absolute area pertinent to topmost level. Its inherent property is descriptive, i.e. approximative of X IS Y formula. The relativist level contains the epistemic-ontological pattern proper to all scientific and scholarly intellectual enterprise, which is governed by the principle whereby X is likened to Y. Realization of such formula, i.e. expression of *approximative* judgments about the world is human-scaled, i.e. within human capacities of whatever kind they are. It is intrinsically bound up with the Domain of Fact, however, its *raison d'être* is directed, as already argued above, by the idealist nature of the topmost epistemic-ontological level. This is illustrated by the use of the arrow pointed upwards in Table 1. It thus appears that X IS LIKE Y formula is the actual direct benchmark against which human discourse is conducted, whereas X IS Y pattern remains inherently indirect. The precision with which verbal correlates of X IS LIKE Y formula are selected from the axis along which higher and lower discourses are differentiated. That is, the more stylistic care is given to reflect the approximative nature of human intellectual capacities, the higher the discourse.

The lower-order area is *practical*. It is the area proper to human realization of epistemic-ontological X IS LIKE Y formula. Its property is descriptive-persuasive.

⁶ See e.g. Ogden and Richard's (1923/1952) semiotic triangle for one of the classic evocation of this inherent indirectness of the symbolic sign.

⁷ This domain can at most be materially accessed through the contemplation of the numinous (through revelation, mystical experience). This is beyond the scope of human intellectual capacities, and hence of no relevance to academia.

It does not contain its own formula, being just a linguistic derivative of the mid-order X IS LIKE Y formula. This is noted by the use of double inverted commas alongside either of the two sub-levels, which entails that this area is proper residue of narratives, whether academic or non-academic. There are thus two subareas distinguished at this level, i.e. higher practical and lower practical. The former is proper to the praxis of the model-theoretic undertakings [academic discourse (shaded in Table 1)], whereas the latter is proper to everyday judgements and opinions about the world (non-academic discourse).⁸ Practical level differs from the absolute and relativist ones in that the governing formulas are of discursive nature, i.e. they constitute the verbal expression of the human-scaled X IS LIKE Y. This is annotated, as already said above, by the use of the inverted commas in Table 1. below.

This twofold epistemic-ontological model is fundamentally sceptical (realistic). It implicates the quintessentially dualist perspective where the Domain of Truth (God’s Mind) is clearly delineated from the Domain of Fact (Human Mind). Within this proposal, the human being is intellectually capable of establishing relations based on the principle of likelihood of things occurring in the world, whether in systematic ways (higher practical area) or non-systematic ways (lower practical area), but in either case the human being is essentially incapable of predicating about the world in the sense of realization of X IS Y formula. This recalls Plato’s cave in which the prisoners, who occupy the cave, have no direct access to the light from the outside, and only need to rest on the shadows that form the nothing but mere reflections of the true light.

Now, we are at the point where the correlations between the essence of this philosophical argument and its implications for human undertakings can be indicated. This is done only with respect to the “higher practical” area, specifically the stylistics of the academic narrative as instantiated by the linguistics-oriented Translation Studies.

2. Epistemic-ontological “razor”. Linguistic approaches to translation revisited

Linguistic approach may be relevant for the contemporary non-linguistic contributions to translation theory on the proviso that the shift from the underlying X IS Y formula to the underlying X IS LIKE Y modality of thought occurs in the narrative. The discussion is meant to yield general conclusions regarding the status of Translation Studies as a discipline within the modified taxonomy of sciences (Kuźniak, forthcoming).

The case in this study are the aforementioned linguistic approaches to translation theory, whose import into the thought over the nature of translation is as equally appreciated as criticised on the point of formulating objectivist, absolute statements

⁸ The division into academic and non-academic areas of discursive activity is by no means exhaustive. However, it is argued as sufficient for the sake of the argument advanced in this paper.

| Level | Domain | Scale | Order | Existential property | Formula | Mode of operation (linguistic/non-linguistic) | | | | | | | |
|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------|--------|---|-------------|---|-------------------|---|----------------------|---------------|-------------------|--|--|
| Level 1 | Domain of Truth | Divine | Higher | Absolutive Property: predicative | X IS Y | Higher non-discursive | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | GOD'S MIND | | | | | | |
| Level 2 | Domain of Fact | Human | Mid | Relativist Property: primarily descriptive | X IS LIKE Y | Lower non-discursive | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | HUMAN MIND | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | Lower | Practical Property: primarily persuasive | Higher (descriptive) | "X IS LIKE Y" | Higher discursive | | |
| Lower (persuasive) | "X IS Y" "X IS LIKE Y" | Lower discursive | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LANGUAGE | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Table 1. Epistemic-ontological matrix

of the “divine” type discussed in Table 1. Especially the critique of a linguistic insight into Translation Studies deserves attention, because as it appears, the contemporary academic training in some Western European universities does not see it necessary to include into TS program curricula courses such as theoretical linguistics. This article presents polemic with this tendency and proposes “exculpation” of linguistic-oriented translation theory as vital for translation theory in general. The argument in question must be reductionist and resonates around the notion of the symbolic assembly with its bi-polar (formal and semantic) constitution as the fundamental unit of reference in TS, no matter if the translation theory admits of linguistics as significant in the accumulation of translation theoretical input, or not. As indicated above, the paper builds on the critique of a notional architecture of the contemporary linguistic-oriented Translation Studies governed by higher non-discursive X IS Y formula as underlying its narrative.⁹

2.1 The scientific vs. the scholarly

Prior to having a close-up of the just signalled narrative of linguistic-oriented translation studies, it is necessary to refer to the existence of two stereotypical realizations of discourse within the contemporary academic narrative. One realization, characteristic of scientific discourse, may be argued as *falsely* believed to be governed by the formula X IS Y, which we reserved in this paper for the Domain of Truth – referentially existent, but practically non-manipulative by humans. The second realization, characteristic of scholarly discourse, is believed to be *rightly* hinged on X IS LIKE Y formula, which we reserved here for the Domain of Fact – both referentially existent and manipulative by humans, where facts are not to be established, but rather discussed, or confirmed at the utmost. This produces an informally working “division of labour” where:

- X IS Y pattern is stereotypically associated with science: fact-establishing enterprise
- X IS LIKE Y pattern is stereotypically associated with humanities: fact-confirmation enterprise

Practically it means that scientists are “eligible” to prove things and predicate about the world, whereas scholars are not. If scholars make definitive statements of the kind known in sciences, this practice is not viewed as academically acceptable. Put aside this falsely grounded dichotomy,¹⁰ the remainder of this article is devoted to how to tune the academic discourse (as exemplified by Translation Studies discourse) with the requirements imposed by the suggested tripartite ontological model.

⁹ The conclusions are, however, of more general nature and concern the validity of division of scientific v non-scientific forms of human activity. These will be discussed in a subsequent section.

¹⁰ The point is, however, that both groups of academics whether of scientific or scholarly provenance are argued to be led by the same descriptive principle, and there is no ontological difference between the statements made by physicists and artists, at least in the sense discussed in this paper. This problem is discussed elsewhere (Kuźniak, forthcoming).

2.2. The primordial sin

As it appears, linguistic-oriented translation studies (henceforth LOTS) always aspired to be “scientific”. The publications issued within this paradigm thus consequently employed the “X IS Y” narrative pattern to refer to X IS Y ontology, believing facts can be established rather than simply discussed. Such was at least the reception. As we argued in Table 1 this stylistics of discourse is not to be a part of academic discourse, where at least in written communication,¹¹ a care for the establishment of proper ontological order should be kept in mind. The critique of LOTS essentially hinges on this misguided X IS Y ontology of Translation Studies, the flagship of which is the accentuation of binary discrete opposites and the resulting problems that emerge from the argument elaborated along these lines:

Theorists of translation, however, have long acknowledged the difficulty of achieving total equivalence between languages and ensuring that what has meaning in one context will have the same meaning in another. From the earliest attempts to formulate theories of translation, distinctions have been made between a translation that closely follows the source text and a translation that diverges. (Bassnett 2011: 95)

The focus on the binary oppositions sustaining X IS Y ontology is also best viewed in the promotion of the terms such as: *belle infidèles*; *master/slave* (see Bassnett 2011: 96–97) in the assessment of translation products within LOTS. This calls for the allegations of the ultimate subjectivity behind such objectivist ambitions:

Perhaps the biggest bone of contention in the comparison of a ST and a TT is the so-called tertium comparationis, an invariant against the two segments can be measured to gauge variation. The problem of the inevitable subjectivity that the invariant entails has been tackled by many scholars from a range of theoretical backgrounds. (Munday 2001: 49, highlighting mine)

All in all, as already mentioned in Ft. 4, science and humanities essentially refer to X IS LIKE Y ontology, the Domain of Facts. X IS Y ontology relates, as argued above, to the Domain of Truth, outside the reach of the human intellectual capacity. This can be summarised as follows:

X IS LIKE Y
The overarching ontology for modelling the world in both sciences and humanities

| | |
|---|---|
| Science: $E=mc^2$ (X IS Y pattern is <i>de facto</i> used to refer to X IS LIKE Y ontology) | Humanities: <i>A term is equivalent to B term</i> (X IS Y pattern is <i>de facto</i> used to refer to X IS LIKE Y ontology) |
|---|---|

Table 2. X IS Y vs. X IS LIKE Y – summary

¹¹ This proviso is very important, because the statements of the kind „X IS Y” are in fact admissible in oral academic discourse as long as the awareness of lower-order practical ontology, at which such discourse is organised, is in some way overtly expressed. This can be done, for example, through explicit reference to a persuasive rather than descriptive focus of such productions.

2.3. Exculpation of linguistic approach to Translation Studies

Now, we are at the stage where practical stylistic solutions are suggested allow for the ontological argument advanced. They are meant to “exculpate” LOTS from the allegations of scientism, yet not deprive the paradigm of its valuable theoretical input into Translation Studies.

Thus, according to Table 2. “X IS Y” and “X IS LIKE Y” discursive patterns are viewed as *complementary* as long as they refer to X IS LIKE ontology with the reservation already indicated that the former is rather confined to oral academic discussions, whereas the latter to written academic texts. This has the stylistic consequences:

With regard to “X IS Y” pattern:

- the consistent use of conventional notation (e.g. single inverted commas) to designate figurative meanings: *A term is ‘equivalent’ to B*
- the use of explicit metaphorical language

With regard to “X IS LIKE Y” pattern:

- the use of similes: *A term is like B term*
- the use of partitive construction: *A term is kind of [sort of] B term*
- the use of something like, anything like: *A term is something like B term*

3. Case study

To further illustrate the problem, a few excerpts from the influential Translation Studies narrative will be shown with their simultaneous juxtaposition to the suggested modified versions construed along the lines of the discussed ontological argument.

Catford (1965/2000: 20–21)

| Original narrative | Modified |
|---|---|
| [On translation:] „the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL)”. | [On translation:] the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by apparently equivalent textual material in another language (TL). |
| „In a full translation ‘the entire text is submitted to the translation process’, whereas in partial translation some parts of the SL text are left untranslated” | In a maximally-viewed translation the entire text is submitted to the translation process, whereas in a restrictively-viewed translation some parts of the SL text are left untranslated. |

Gutt (1991/2000: 162) on how we can know that interpretative clues are identical, given the optimal translation:

| Original narrative | Modified |
|--|---|
| „by checking whether they give rise to the same interpretation when processes in | by checking whether they give rise to a similar interpretation when processes in the |

the same context, and this, in turn means that the notion of direct translation is dependent on interpretive use: it relies, in effect, on a relationship of complete interpretive resemblance between the original and its translation”

corresponding context, and this, in turn means that the notion of direct translation is dependent on interpretive use: it relies, in effect, on a relationship of ‘**complete**’ interpretive resemblance between the original and its translation

Munday (2001: 79)

Original narrative

Modified

„Skopos theory focuses above all on the purpose of the translation, which determines the translation methods and strategies that are to be employed in order to produce a functionally adequate result”.

Skopos theory focuses above all on the purpose of the translation, which **apparently influences** the translation methods and the **intended** strategies in order to produce a functionally desirable result.

Nida (1964: 159)

Original narrative

Modified

Dynamic equivalence: “the relationship between receptor and message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message”.

Dynamic equivalence: the relationship between receptor and message should have **close resemblance** to that which existed between the original receptors and the message.

Nida (1964: 164)

Original narrative

Modified

The success of the translation depends above all on achieving equivalent response (Munday 2001: 42). It is one of the ‘four basic requirements of a translation’, which are:

1. making sense;
2. conveying the spirit and manner of the original;
3. having a natural and easy form of expression;
4. producing a similar response.

The success of the translation depends above all on achieving ‘equivalent’ response. It is one of the ‘**four mainstream paths**’ of a translation, which are:

1. making sense;
2. conveying **much of** the spirit and manner of the original;
3. having a **kind of** natural and easy form of expression;
4. producing a similar response.

Tyler ([1797] 1997: 208–212)

Original narrative

Modified

1. The translation should give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work.

1. The translation should give **as close** a transcript of the ideas of the original work **as possible**.
-

-
- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>2. The style and manner of writing should be of the same character with that of the original.</p> <p>3. The translation should have all the ease of the original composition.</p> | <p>2. The style and manner of writing should be of the similar character with that of the original.</p> <p>3. The translation should have much of the ease of the original composition.</p> |
|--|---|
-

Venuti (1995: 20, after Munday 2001: 146)

Original narrative

Modified

Domestication involves “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to [Anglo-American] target-language. This entails translating in a transparent, fluent, ‘invisible’ style in order to minimize the foreignness of the TT”

Domestication may be viewed as “an ethnocentric reduction of the foreign text to [Anglo-American] target-language. This **appears** to entail translating in a ‘**transparent**’, ‘**fluent**’, ‘**invisible**’ style in order to minimize the ‘**foreignness**’ of the TT.

Venuti (1997: 242)

Original narrative

Modified

Foreignization on the other hand, „entails choosing a foreign text developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target language”.

Foreignization on the other hand, is **like** choosing a foreign text developing a translation method along lines which are excluded by dominant cultural values in the target language.

Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1995: 36, 39)

Original narrative

Modified

Transposition: „replacing one word class with another without changing the meaning of the message”
 Adaptation: „the extreme limit of translation: it is used in those cases where the type of situation being referred to by the SL message is unknown in the TL culture. In such cases translators have to create a new situation that can be considered as being equivalent”.

Transposition: replacing one word class with another without a **great change** in the meaning of the message.
 Adaptation: the **extreme end of translation continuum**: it is used in those cases where the type of situation being referred to by the SL message is **perceived as unknown** in the TL culture. In such cases translators have to create a new situation that can be considered as being equivalent.

Wolff (2011: 230) on legal translation theory:

Original narrative

Modified

„Legal translation, in short, needs to break free of its ‘stretch and snap’ limitations. A free translation that respects the text’s contextual foundations should become the new norm”.

Legal translation, in short, needs to review its ‘stretch and snap’ limitations as a **continuum of decision-making points**. A free translation that respects the text’s contextual foundations should become the new **guideline**.

4. Stylistics of higher practical level

Below, some further language tools are offered that might be employed in the academic discourse of scientific and scholarly origin along with some contextual exemplifications based on Translation Studies narrative. They are just examples rather than an exhaustive catalogue of items.

- Verbalization of “X IS LIKE Y” discursive pattern: „In legalese, the Polish equivalent of the English term “judge” is something like ‘sędzia’”.
- The use of partitive constructions: *kind of, sort of*: „The Polish *województwo* is kind of English ‘province’”.
- The use of selected [modal] verbs: *seem, may[possibly], might[possibly], appear, suggest, propose, correspond, echo, mirror*: „This type corresponds to ‘interlingual translation’ and is one of the three categories of translation described by the Czech structuralist Roman Jakobson in his seminal paper ‘On linguistic aspects of translation’” (after Munday 2001: 5).
- The use of selected nouns: *similarity, resemblance, appearance, similitude*: “There is a similarity between Schleiermacher’s concept of alienation and Venuti’s concept of foreignization.”
- The use of selected adjectives: *alike, analogous, comparable*: “The terms naturalization and domestication are alike.”
- The use of selected adverbs: *seemingly, apparently, similarly, analogically*: “The concept of equivalence seemingly entails the identity or equality between ST and TT.”
- The use of punctuation marks: e.g. *inverted commas*: “The concept of ‘equivalence’ does not entail the identity or equality but similarity between ST and TT.”
- The use of comparative constructions: *as [long] as, in a similar way to; and the like, like that*: “The ‘dichotomous’ pairs: free/literal; dynamic/formal, unfaithful/faithful and the like.”
- The use of metaphors or metonymies:¹²
- **Much** of the debate over literal/free opposition was taken over by the 20th century Translation Studies.
- Nida is one of the **heads** of the 20th century “scientific” studies in translation.
- At times Steiner describes the aggression involves as “**penetration**” [on the components of the hermeneutic move].
- The “**sacramental intake**” or the “**infection**” describe the two ways in which the process of incorporation functions.

4.1. Exemplary narrative

The following is a series of narratives in Translation Studies narrative, which are exemplary for the sake of the argument evolved here, i.e. they apparently satisfy the ontological requirements arising from the matrix discussed in section 1.1. Interestingly,

¹² The examples of metaphors and metonymies come from Munday (2001).

they also involve the authors whose production elsewhere was criticised on account of their failure to observe X IS LIKE Y principle.¹³

I thought fit to steer betwixt the two extremes of paraphrase and literal translation; to keep as near my author as I could, without losing all his graces, the most eminent of which are in the beauty of his words. (Dryden 1697/1992: 26)

Either the translator leaves the writer alone as much as possible and moves the reader toward the writer, or he [sic] leaves the reader alone as much as possible and moves the writer toward the reader. (Schleiermacher 1813/1992: 41–42)

Formal equivalence focuses attention on the message itself, in both form and content... One is concerned that the message in the receptor language should match as closely as possible the different elements in the source language. (Nida 1964: 159)

A formal correspondent is “any TL category (unit, class, element of structure, etc.) which can be said to occupy, as nearly as possible, the ‘same’ place in the ‘economy’ of the TL as the given SL category occupies in the SL.” (Catford 1965: 27)

A textual equivalent is “any TL text or portion of text which is observed on a particular occasion... to be the equivalent of a given SL text or portion of text.” (Catford 1965/2000: 27)

5. Conclusion. Towards complementary “non-oppressive” dialectics of higher and mid ontologies

On philosophical plane, the fundamental ontological dialects whereby X IS Y principle is carefully distinguished from X IS LIKE Y principle is not necessarily “bad news” for academic enterprises, whether scientific or scholarly. The split between Truth and Fact is realistic as emphasized by the continuous line demarcating the area of the Absolute and the Human (see Tab 1. above and Fig. 1 below). This, however, does not validate the necessity to annihilate the higher-order ontology as was heavily promoted in the Enlightenment period. Conversely, the relationship between higher order and mid-order ontology is synergistic, as the former constitutes the all-inspiring source of human undertakings, which has been best epitomised in the famous Einsteinian words:

Try and penetrate with our limited means the secrets of nature and you will find that, behind all the discernible laws and connections, there remains something subtle, intangible and inexplicable. Veneration for this force beyond anything that we can comprehend is my religion. To that extent I am, in fact, religious.¹

¹³ This stylistic inconsistency might be the source of various misunderstandings as to the interpretation of various arguments debated within Translation Studies.

¹⁴ Retrieved from: <http://www.faithstreet.com/onfaith/2007/04/27/einstein-and-the-mind-of-god/3763> (ED: 02.2015)

X IS Y
(the Absolute)

X IS LIKE Y
(the Human)

Fig. 1. The Human versus the Absolute

The solution proposed is conciliatory for the science/humanities tension in which traditionally conceived scientific and scholarly discourses are subsumed under the joint label of “academic” on account of their reference to the ontology of similarity (X IS LIKE Y) rather than sameness (X IS Y). It also tentatively offers a solution to the fundamental query whether academic discourse is primarily intended to describe or to primarily persuade. The answer lies in the focus of the ontological framework at which an academic operates. If they intend to primarily describe, they function at higher-level practical domain – deemed as the area proper of systematic intellectual enterprise. If they, however, choose to primarily persuade, they in fact operate at the level of lower practical ontology along with other similar persuasion-oriented activities such as marketing, politics, the contemporary journalism, or everyday talk.

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