

Wojciech Parchem
Faculty of Modern Languages
University of Warsaw

Dissertation abstract

**Towards a Participation Theory. Explorations in the Theory and Practice
of Drama and Theatre Translation**

written under the supervision of dr hab. Aniela Korzeniowska, prof. UW

The doctoral dissertation *Towards a Participation Theory: Explorations in the Theory and Practice of Drama and Theatre Translation* examines the intricate and multi-dimensional relationships between contemporary translation studies and theatre translation. It presents the challenges inherent in translating for the stage and emphasises the significance of theatre practice within translation studies. The primary aim is to establish a theoretical framework that accurately describes the working environment of a theatre translator and the variability associated with the translation and staging of a play. This framework leverages advancements in theatrical semiotics, particularly the concept of theatrical signs and the dynamics of their production and reception during the phases of translating the dramatic text, of rehearsals, and of the final performance.

The initial two chapters trace the evolution of translation theory concerning theatre translation from the late 1950s to the present day. The first chapter covers two distinct periods: from the end of World War II to 1979, and the 1980s and 1990s. The second chapter addresses theatre translation studies over the first twenty years of the new millennium, and, subsequently, the research achievements in the early third decade of the 21st century. The conclusions drawn from these chapters form the foundation for further exploration of the subject.

Chapter Three details the development of the concept of a theatrical sign and outlines the typology employed in subsequent stages of the work. This chapter continues by describing the dynamics of the development of theatrical signs during the written translation process of the play, the production of the performance, and the preparation of its audiovisual translation from the perspective of their reception. Chapter Four mirrors the structure of the previous chapter, but focuses on the production of theatrical signs, presenting them in both their potential and real forms.

Chapter Five delves into the theatre production process, isolating and describing its critical stages: conceptual discussions, analytical and stage rehearsals, and the preparation of audiovisual translation in the form of subtitles or oral translation.

In Chapter Six, a model based on four variables derived from the earlier discussions is proposed to illustrate the working environment of a theatre translator. These variables include the stages of translating the drama and producing the performance, the type of theatrical sign, the phase of their production or reception, and their manifestation in potential or real form. This model depicts the fluctuating environment of a theatre translator in relation to the progress of the performance and the semiotic data available at different stages of the staging process.

The findings presented highlight that a theatre translator operates within a dynamic and ever-changing environment, intricately connected to the process of producing a theatre performance. This involvement necessitates active participation in the development of the dramatic text's theatrical potential, rather than merely focusing on the linguistic aspects, allowing for the translation to be shaped and modified according to the progress of the staging.