

Skopos

In brief



 **SPA Escopo**

origins

The term *Skopos* was introduced by Vermeer (1979: 100) to refer to the purpose of a translation as the main factor guiding the translation process. It comes from the Greek σκοπός, which means, among other things, “aim”, “purpose”.

other names

The terms “functionalism” and “functionalist theories” are sometimes used as synonyms for “skopos theory”, although the former encompass several approaches, including, above all, skopos theory and the theory of translational action of Holz-Mänttari (1984).

abstract

Skopos theory was developed in Germany in the late 1970s by Hans J. Vermeer. It is a deductive approach to translation and interpreting based mainly on action theory and cultural anthropology.

In 1989, Vermeer defined his approach as part of a theory of "translational action" (which included translation and interpreting), first formulated by Holz-Mänttari in 1984. The term *skopos* refers to the aim or purpose of a translation, and skopos theory was summarized by Vermeer (Reiß and Vermeer 1984) in a few axiomatic rules:


- By definition, any action has a purpose.
- Translating is an action.
- Every translation has a purpose (a *skopos*).
- The *skopos* of a translation depends on its addressees.
- The *skopos* is the most important factor determining the translator's decisions and the final form of the *translatum* (the outcome of translational action).

This entry sketches the development of skopos theory from its inception in the German-speaking academic community in the late 1970s to its wider dissemination and recognition in the international domain in the past three decades. It situates the evolution of skopos theory in the broader context of translation and interpreting studies, highlighting its innovative aspects in relation to more traditional views and the criticisms it raised concerning the definition of translation and the epistemological status of the theory. In this context, it discusses the concept of culture of skopos theory and approaches its ethical dimension and the concept of *loyalty* introduced by Christiane Nord. Finally, the entry also deals with the influence of skopos theory on translation and interpreting didactics and sketches its application on interpreting.



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Entry



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Introduction

Skopos theory (Vermeer 1978, 1986, 1989a, [1989b](#), 1990, 1996a, 1996b; Reiß & Vermeer 1984) was the starting point of German functionalism and, together with the theory of translational action (Holz-Mänttari 1984), it laid its theoretical foundations. Functionalist approaches brought about a change of perspective in German translation studies or “science of translation” (*Übersetzungswissenschaft*) and, more generally, in translation and interpreting studies (TIS). This change of perspective can be described as a zooming out movement that, by moving away from its object, was able to introduce into the picture essential elements that had tended to remain outside the scope of research. The focus shifted

from the differences between linguistic systems to the professional activity of translators and interpreters. The aim of functionalist approaches was to develop a general theory of translation (German *Translation*, which includes all forms of translation and interpreting), based on a theory of action.

Vermeer (1996a) presented the central ideas of skopos theory in the form of a series of theses (some of them axiomatic) describing the activity of translating based on the metaphor “PURPOSEFUL ACTION IS SELF-PROPELLED MOTION TO A DESTINATION” (Lakoff & Johnson 1999: 191; Martín de León 2005: 59). These theses depict the metaphorical structure of action as movement towards a goal, and come to the logical conclusion that translation, as a form of action, also shares this structure:

Thesis 1 (Axiom 1): All acting presupposes a "point of departure" [...]

Thesis 2 (Axiom 2): All acting is goal-oriented [...]

Thesis 3: From a variety of possibilities [...] that action will be chosen which one believes one has the best reason(s) for choosing under the prevailing circumstances.

Thesis 4: Given the prevailing circumstances, an actor tries to reach the intended goal by what seems to him the/an optimal way [...]

Thesis 5: Translating is acting, i.e. a goal-oriented procedure carried out in such a way as the translator deems optimal under the prevailing circumstances. (Vermeer 1996a: 12-13).

Skopos theory considers translation and interpreting as particular forms of action, that is, of intentional behavior (oriented towards a goal or skopos). This goal is considered the main factor determining the strategies adopted by translators as professionals responsible for producing translations that are appropriate to their functions and target audiences. Consequently, skopos theory does not see the translation product (the *translatum*) as a purely linguistic element, but as part of a situated communicative action. It can be said that skopos theory, as the starting point of functionalist theories, offered the first systematic view of translation as a dynamic process (Vermeer 1996b) and situated action, in a development parallel to that which took place in the cognitive sciences in the last decades of the last century (Risku 2002).



[Source]

Moreover, skopos theory, as it offered a broader view of translational activity than the linguistic theories prevailing up to that time, defined texts as “offers of information” (*Informationsangebot*, Reiß & Vermeer 1984) that are not only materialized through language, but also through non-verbal elements (such as gestures or clothing) and paraverbal elements (such as intonation) in oral communication, and through visual elements (typography, design, layout, illustrations, graphics, etc.) in written communication. In doing so, German functionalism soon turned its attention to the multimodal aspects of translation and interpreting, which are now receiving increasing attention in TIS.

The field that has been most influenced by skopos theory, however, has been didactics, where functionalist theories have been used as pedagogical models since the decade of 1990 (Kiraly 2012).



Among the most cited works on translation theory in the period 1991-2015 appears in first place *Translating as a Purposeful Activity* (Nord 1997), one of the works that has contributed the most to disseminate the central ideas of functionalism, in particular, of skopos theory (see Franco Aixelá 2016). The specification of plausible translation assignments and the formulation of translation goals in the classroom are some of the pedagogical practices that have been inspired by functionalist approaches.

[\[Source\]](#)

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Development

What does it mean to translate? Surely this much at least (or is it again a question of definition?): to have a skopos and accordingly transfer a text(em) from its source-culture surroundings to target-culture surroundings, which by definition are different from the former. Suppose you take a tree from a tropical climate to a temperate zone. Will it not need special care? Will it not be considered something out of the ordinary by whoever sees it? It will never be the same as before, neither in growth nor in the eyes of its observers (in their “evaluation”).

(Vermeer 1996a: 39)

Hans J. Vermeer presented his general theory of translation in 1977 in Germersheim (University of Mainz, Germany), in a series of lectures that were followed by lively discussions among the attending academics and that offered the breeding ground for functionalist approaches. A year later, Vermeer (1978) collected the reflections prompted by these discussions in an article outlining the general framework of his theory and proposing a model of Translation (translation and interpreting) based on a general model of action and interaction. In 1984, Katharina Reiß and Hans J. Vermeer published their *Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie* (translated by Christiane Nord into English in 2013 with the title *Towards a General Theory of Translational Action*), a work with which they disseminated the skopos theory among German-speaking scholars. This book, together with another one published in the same year by Justa Holz-Mänttari, where she presented her theory of translational action (*Translatorisches Handeln*), grounded German functionalism in the theory of action, thus distancing it to a large extent from linguistics, the discipline that until then had guided German science of translation.



Hans J. Vermeer.
[Source]

Reiß and Vermeer's (1984) work has a heterogeneous structure that reflects the contradictions inherent in the changes that were taking place in German translatology in those decades. In the first part of the book, Vermeer lays the groundwork for his general theory of

translation, which gives the skopos absolute priority among the factors that guide translators' decisions; in the second part, Reiß presents a model of translation based on her textual typology (Reiß 1971) and on the notion of equivalence, which she defines as the relationship between two texts that perform the same function in two different cultures. This obliges the authors to introduce a second notion, that of adequacy (*Adäquatheit*), which alludes to the relationship between a target text and a source text when the purpose (the skopos) of the translation is taken into account. Equivalence is then defined as a particular case of adequacy, which takes place when the source and the target text have the same function. This conceptual ambiguity gave rise to a great deal of criticism and misunderstanding in the German-speaking translation community.

Vermeer elaborated and refined his skopos theory in successive publications (for example, Vermeer 1982, 1986, 1989a, 1990 and 1996a). His approach is based on a "relative relativism" (Vermeer 1996a: 24), according to which all textual interpretation depends decisively on the point of view and the situation of the recipient. In line with this idea, Vermeer (1982) defines texts as offers of information that can be accepted or rejected, and perceived in different ways by their addressees; and translations, in turn, as offers of information in one culture and language about another offer of information



[Source] from another culture and language. Consequently, the role of translators and interpreters cannot be reduced to that of neutral linguistic mediators that reproduce "the" meaning of a text in another language: Skopos theory conceives them as professionals responsible for their decisions and experts in cultural mediation. In addition, by taking into account the non-linguistic and cultural aspects of communication and the possibility of assigning to the translations different skopoi to those that had guided the source texts, Vermeer's

approach offers a more complex view of the translators' decision-making processes, which no longer depend exclusively on the linguistic structure of the source text.

The view of translators as experts reaches its ultimate consequences in Holz-Mänttari's (1984) model of translational action, to which Vermeer (1989a) later connected skopos theory. Based on action theory and systems theory, Holz-Mänttari (1984) defines translational action as a cooperative activity that takes place in a social structure characterized by division of labour. Communication is understood in this model as an activity that guides cooperation, and the need for translational action arises when there are cultural barriers that prevent or hinder such cooperation. Holz-Mänttari (1984) described translators as experts who are responsible for creating texts appropriate to the situations of action and cooperation into which they are going to be integrated. In later work (for example, Holz-Mänttari 1993), she introduced the broader concept of text design, which includes, in addition to translation and interpreting, other professional activities such as cultural consulting and technical writing.

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¶ The concept of culture in skopos theory

Skopos theory relies on the concept of action to offer a broader view of translation than traditional approaches based on comparative and structural linguistics. The concept of culture also plays an essential role in this broadening of perspective. Both Reiß & Vermeer (1984: 26) and Holz-Mänttari (1984: 34) developed their concept of culture from the well-known definition of Göhring (1978: 10, *apud* Reiß & Vermeer 2014: 24):

Culture is whatever one has to know, master or feel in order to be able to judge whether a particular form of

behavior shown by members of a community in their various roles conforms to general expectations or not.

Heinz Göhring, who was not only a sociologist and anthropologist but also a professional interpreter, devoted his academic activity at the University of Mainz to expanding the teaching of foreign languages for translators and interpreters with a new discipline, intercultural communication. His definition of culture is based on that proposed by Goodenough (1964: 36) in the field of cognitive anthropology:



[...] a society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members, and do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves.

*Heinz
Göhring.
[Source]*

Both definitions of culture focus on cultural competence, i.e., on the cognitive abilities that a person needs to function in a society, and not on its realization, similar to the Chomskyan notion of linguistic competence as opposed to linguistic performance.

The aim of these approaches to culture was to elaborate inventories of forms and rule systems, i.e., cultural grammars reflecting the mental structures that supposedly, and largely unconsciously, guided the behavior of individuals in a culture. They responded to the point of view of the ethnographer who observes a social group from the outside and tries to integrate into it, and they conceived culture as a system analogous to the linguistic one.

Reiß & Vermeer (2014: 24) summarized Göhring's definition, emphasizing the normative aspects of cultures: "Culture encompasses a society's social norms and their expression." In doing so, they seemed to leave little room for individual initiative and creativity (Prunč 2003: 175). In order to take into account individual differences and the heterogeneity of social groups, Vermeer (1990: 229) established successive subdivisions of the concept of culture that should make it possible to apply this concept to different communicative situations:

Da eine Gesellschaft bei aller Ähnlichkeit ihrer Mitglieder in sich nicht homogen ist, unterscheiden wir neben der Gesellschaft als ganzer (neben ihrer "Parakultur") Teile der Gesellschaft mit ihren jeweiligen "Diakulturen" bis hinab zu den Normen und Konventionen eines einzelnen Mitglieds, die es von allen anderen Mitgliedern derselben Gesellschaft unterscheiden. Letztere Kultur nennen wir "Idiokultur". Es ist nun nicht so, daß die Summe aller zugehörigen Idiokulturen eine Dia- und die Summe aller Diakulturen eine Parakultur ausmacht. Vielmehr sind die Ränder der jeweiligen Kulturen nicht deckungsgleich [...].

According to Vermeer's model, paraculture encompasses the norms of a society as a whole, which in turn is divided into diacultures and idiocultures. Although the notion of paraculture can be applied at different levels (e.g., it can refer to European culture or Western culture), it has tended to be identified with the culture of a nation. Diacultures are the cultures of different social or professional groups, and idiocultures correspond to the norms and conventions of individuals. This scheme takes as models notions of linguistics such as dialect and idiolect, and responds to Göhring's (1967: 808) project

of developing a generative ethnography that would attend to differences by elaborating a hierarchical structure of cultural groups and subgroups. It is, therefore, a concept of culture based on the linguistic paradigms in vogue in the 1960s.



[Source]

The subsequent development of cognitive anthropology and other related sciences led to question this approach for adopting a monolithic view of culture and overlooking interpersonal variations and the complexity of the relationships between thought and language (D'Andrade 1995). From the field of conference interpreting, Pöchhacker (1991: 50) pointed out that specialists attending an international conference share a cultural background regardless of their belonging to a particular paraculture, and proposed the concept of international diaculture, more oriented to individual participants with their specific sociocultural contexts than to a group of recipients defined by nationality.

The concept of culture, being an abstraction that encompasses diverse and changing phenomena, raises the problem of its locus: Where do we place cultures? In the minds of individuals? In their practices? In the artifacts they produce? This difficulty is manifest in Vermeer's concept of idioculture, which places norms and conventions in the mind of the individual. However, to speak about individual conventions is paradoxical, since conventions depend on the existence of an agreement (tacit or explicit) between people. In this sense, the concept of idioculture is

contradictory, because everything that is cultural is by definition social (Risku 1998: 53). Prunč (2003: 177) criticized this concept because it assigns a passive role to the individual, and proposed adopting a view more consistent with the concept of translational action, which would emphasize the interactive nature of culture.

In more recent approaches, particularly in the application of functionalist theories to didactics of intercultural competence, the concept of culture seems to be more oriented towards interpersonal interaction, empathy, awareness of one's own cultural models and schemas, and change of perspective (Witte 2017, 2020). This evolution is in line with the development of cognitive anthropology, which, since the 1990s, has been adopting a more embodied and dynamic vision that foregrounds the notions of action, emotion and motivation (D'Andrade 1995: 247-248).

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Dissemination, reception and criticism

The foundational texts of skopos theory are written in a dense academic German with pseudo-mathematical formulas interspersed. Although he also wrote a few articles in English, Vermeer largely maintained the German academic style in them, which delayed their dissemination beyond the German-speaking academic world until the mid-1990s (Dudenhöfer [2012](#)). In the decades of 1980, 1990 and 2000, Vermeer disseminated his ideas through small-circulation university publishers or self-publications, mainly through the journal *TexTconText*, which he founded in 1986 with Justa Holz-Mänttari and other colleagues (Holz-Mänttari 2012: 73). This journal, which also published monographic volumes, played a central role in the debate and dissemination of functionalist approaches.

In the German-speaking academic world, skopos theory aroused considerable criticism for relativizing the axiom of constant function and thus distancing itself from the German translatology of previous decades, which was centered on a notion of equivalence that only considered textual reproduction and the preservation of the original function. With skopos theory, the accent shifted from the source text to the target text, a shift that Vermeer (1986: 42) himself described as “dethronement” of the source text. Reiß and Vermeer (1996: 84) had formulated the axiom of the intentionality of translational action in a provocative way with the maxim “the end justifies the means”, which was interpreted as a justification for arbitrariness in translators’ decisions. According to Koller (1992: 212), this arbitrariness could only be avoided by recovering the notions of truth and fidelity: “Der Satz ‘Der Zweck heiligt die Mittel’ beinhaltet nichts anderes als die gefährliche Abspaltung des Begriffs der Zweckmässigkeit (der Übersetzung) vom Begriff der Wahrheit (bzw. in der traditionellen Terminologie: der Treue) der Übersetzung.” These criticisms were mainly of an ethic nature, but also had an ontological root, i.e., they referred to the delimitation of translation as opposed to other concepts such as adaptation or original production. Vermeer, in his attempt to model the professional reality of translators and interpreters in a complex and dynamic cultural environment, had expanded the traditional definition of translation.



TexTconText
Magazine. [Photo
 by CML]

Nevertheless, skopos theory also received positive responses in the German-speaking academic world, where it was well received by the researchers who appreciated the orienting potential of the notion of skopos for translators:

Die unlösbaren Dilemmata, in die Translatoren durch die rigiden, miteinander konkurrierenden Äquivalenzpostulate unweigerlich gedrängt wurden, werden so durch eine sinnvolle und erfüllbare Forderung ersetzt. Durch die angeführte Prioritätsreihung von Adäquatheit und Äquivalenz wird die bisherige Wertehierarchie zwar auf den Kopf, dafür aber der Translator auf die Beine gestellt und gewinnt für seine Entscheidungen festen Boden innerhalb eines überschaubaren Horizonts.

(Prunč [2003](#): 168)

As far as the reception of skopos theory beyond the German-speaking academic milieu is concerned, the work of [Christiane Nord](#) should be highlighted. Nord (e.g. 1997, 2013) has contributed with numerous publications to the dissemination of functionalist approaches in international scholarship (see also Chesterman 2001, Schäffner 2009 and Martín de León 2020). Skopos theory has also received some criticism from the English-speaking academic community, particularly with regard to its [epistemological](#) approach, i.e., the way it approaches knowledge. For example, Toury (1995), while sharing the finalistic orientation of Vermeer's approach, did not consider skopos theory to be a descriptive general theory, but rather an applied theory, aimed at improving practice. Also Chesterman (2010) considered it a prescriptive theory with deductive structure, based on a few axioms, and criticized its lack of empirical support and its assumption that human behavior is always rational (for a discussion of these criticisms, see Dudenhöfer [2012](#)).

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¶ Ethics and responsibility in skopos theory

Since conventions determine what readers expect of a translation, the translator has the responsibility not to deceive the users of his translation by acting contrary to the conventions without telling them what he is doing, and why. This responsibility is what I refer to as loyalty.

(Nord 1991: 91)



Nord (1991) tried to reconcile the decidedly finalistic character of skopos theory with traditional approaches based on the notion of equivalence by introducing an ethic principle of loyalty (Loyalität) into her functional theory.

Unlike the old notion of fidelity, which alluded to a relationship between texts, the concept of loyalty alludes

Christiane Nord.

[Source]

to a relationship between persons, in particular the translators' relationship with the source authors and the target addressees. The principle of loyalty assumes the translation rules and conventions of the European

tradition, which do not sanction, in particular for literary translation, the assignment of objectives incompatible with the intentions of the original author. In doing so, Nord was also responding to some criticisms made in the English-speaking academic world, such as that of Pym (1996: 338), who accused functionalist approaches of producing "mercenary experts, able to fight under the flag of any purpose able to pay them".

Vermeer (1996a), however, argued that skopos theory is a general theory and, as such, is free of any specific cultural determination (in as much as this is possible), and pointed out that a translator is free to deviate from the intentions of the source text author "[...] as long as he informs the target recipients about his procedure and its reasons" (Vermeer 1996a: 22). Furthermore, the rule according to which the

skopos of a translation cannot contradict the intentions of the source text raises the problem of identifying such intentions. If, as skopos theory argues, texts are structures open to interpretation by the recipient, how can we determine which interpretation corresponds to the author's intentions? (Prunč 2003: 193). In addition, and in accordance with skopos theory, each target text has its own skopos, which may or may not coincide with that of the source text. If it does not coincide, it is obvious that it will not share the intentionality of that text either.

Skopos theory offers criteria for evaluating the efficacy (the adequacy to the ends) of a translational action, but does not address the debate on the ends themselves, which it considers to be specific of each culture. However, there is a contradiction in this approach, since the pretension of universality and the primacy of efficacy are features of Western cultural tradition, i.e., skopos theory is not free from cultural determinations (Martín de León 2005). In fact, the concept of the translator's professional responsibility implies an ethical dimension, as Vermeer (1989a, [1989b](#)/2004) himself stated. Witte ([2005](#): 7) considers in this sense that the notion of loyalty is redundant, since skopos theory, in its application, by taking into account the conditioning factors of the corresponding cultural situation, does limit the possibilities of assigning goals to a translation; in other words, the communicative situation itself would require the principle of loyalty to be followed, according to the rule that the skopos depends on the addressees.

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Application to didactics

As Kiraly ([2012](#)) points out, skopos theory has served as a pedagogical model for more than a quarter of century and has

inspired didactic practices that are still highly valid today, such as the use of translation assignments (real or imaginary, but plausible), and the development of the autonomy and professional responsibility of future translators.

Functionalist approaches developed from skopos theory quickly made their way into the classroom. As early as 1982, Hönig and Kußmaul, who taught at the University of Mainz, published a translation handbook entitled *Strategie der Übersetzung* [Translation Strategy], in which they proposed a functional framework to guide students in developing strategies suited to the intended purposes of their translations. Their subsequent work addressed cognitive aspects of the translation process based on functionalism and psycholinguistics, and was largely aimed at improving classroom practice.



[Source] *Paul Kußmaul y Hans
G. Hönig.*

Nord has published several works of didactic orientation focusing on different aspects of translation (for example, translation of titles, literary translation and translation of proper names). With no doubt, the most widely used in the classroom is her well-known manual on textual analysis for translation (Nord 1988, translated into English by the author in 1991). Her work has contributed to disseminating functionalist concepts such as translation assignment and skopos in the pedagogical practice of universities around the world.

Based on Vermeer's and Holz-Mänttari's functionalism, Witte's work (2000, 2017, 2020) aims to develop the cultural competence of future translators by promoting their awareness of their own cultural conditioning and their ability to adopt different perspectives, as well as their knowledge of cultural differences that may jeopardize communication, particularly those related to the perception of the other, including prejudices and stereotypes.

Finally, user-centered approaches to translation (Suojanen, Koskinen & Tuominen 2015) develop and apply to didactics a central idea of Vermeer's theory: that the purpose or skopos of a translation depends on its addressees, particularly, on their knowledge and expectations.

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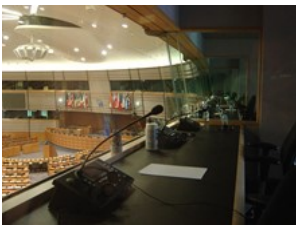
¶ Skopos theory in interpreting

More often than not, persons attending international meetings have a certain familiarity with other languages or cultures or, at any rate, are ready and willing to engage in some sort of cross-cultural contact. Conference participants therefore may not even expect or wish to have all "foreignness" of the original speech filtered out, as it were, by the interpreter; after all s/he is deliberately interacting with someone from abroad [...].

(Pöchhacker 1995: 47-48)

Although skopos theory was presented from the beginning as a general theory of translation, applicable to any type of translation or interpreting, the truth is that it has been developed mainly in the field of translation. Franz Pöchhacker (1991, 1994, 1995) addressed some theoretical and methodological issues that arise when applying

Vermeer's theory to conference interpreting, and emphasized that the peculiarities of this interpreting modality might require a revision of some functionalist concepts. While in translation the production of the source text and the reception of the target text are usually separated in space and time, in the case of interpreting the opposite is true: the delivery of the source speech and its reception usually coincide spatially and temporally (this was even more common in the 1990s, when other forms of remote interpreting had not yet developed much).



[Source]

Pöchhacker (1995) holistically conceives the conference in which interpreters participate as a hypertext that encompasses actions, speeches and texts, and within which the interpreter's activity constitutes a complex system of actions that includes the reception of the assignment and the preparation prior to interpreting. From this perspective, the skopos of simultaneous interpreting would correspond to the overall assignment of the conference, as specified in the contract, and not to each of the individual texts, i.e., it would be the skopos of the hypertext that would guide the general activity of interpreters throughout the conference.

Moreover, in the particular case of conference interpreting, the audience has access to the auditory and visual information (gestures, slides) provided by the speaker, which is why Pöchhacker (1994) defines interpreting as a kind of voice over dependent on the source speech. Furthermore, participants in an international conference, even if they have different cultural backgrounds, share a series of knowledge specific to their discipline and the use of English as a lingua franca, so that they can be considered to form an international diaculture, which makes it necessary to reconsider and rework the concepts of paraculture and diaculture proposed by Vermeer (1990).

The situation is different if we look at other modes of interpreting, such as liaison [interpreting in public services](#) or interpreting for deaf people. In these cases, the cultural differences of the target audience, as well as their needs and expectations, can be more clearly defined, which would allow for a more direct application of the functionalist concepts of skopos and culture (Kalina [2012](#)).

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Research potential

Skopos theory continues to offer potential for research in various fields. First, as Chesterman (2010) points out, [empirical studies](#) are needed to investigate to what extent and in which ways the basic assumptions of skopos theory are fulfilled in the professional field of translation and interpreting, but yet only few studies have been carried out in this direction. Flynn (2004), for example, conducts an ethnographic study to explore how concepts such as skopos, assignment and translatum interrelate in the field of professional literary translation, in order to provide an empirical basis for skopos theory. Empirical research in professional settings could address the different modalities of translation and interpreting, testing the basic concepts of the theory and helping to develop and restructure them when necessary.

Secondly, Vermeer's functionalism maintains its pedagogical potential, and there is much ground to be explored also in this direction. The theoretical framework and the conceptual tools provided by skopos theory have proven their applicability and usefulness in the classroom, and need to be further developed and refined to adjust them to the different fields of specialization and to the new requirements of the professional world. [Action research](#) can offer a promising methodological avenue in this respect, by involving students in the

projects and thus fostering their autonomy and their awareness of the learning process.

Finally, the core ideas of skopos theory have left their mark in other approaches with pedagogical applications that may be further explored and developed. This is the case of intercultural communication approaches (Witte 2000, 2017, 2020) and user-centered translation studies, which assign target audiences an essential role in the translation process (Suojanen, Koskinen & Tominen 2015).

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