

modelling creativity in translation

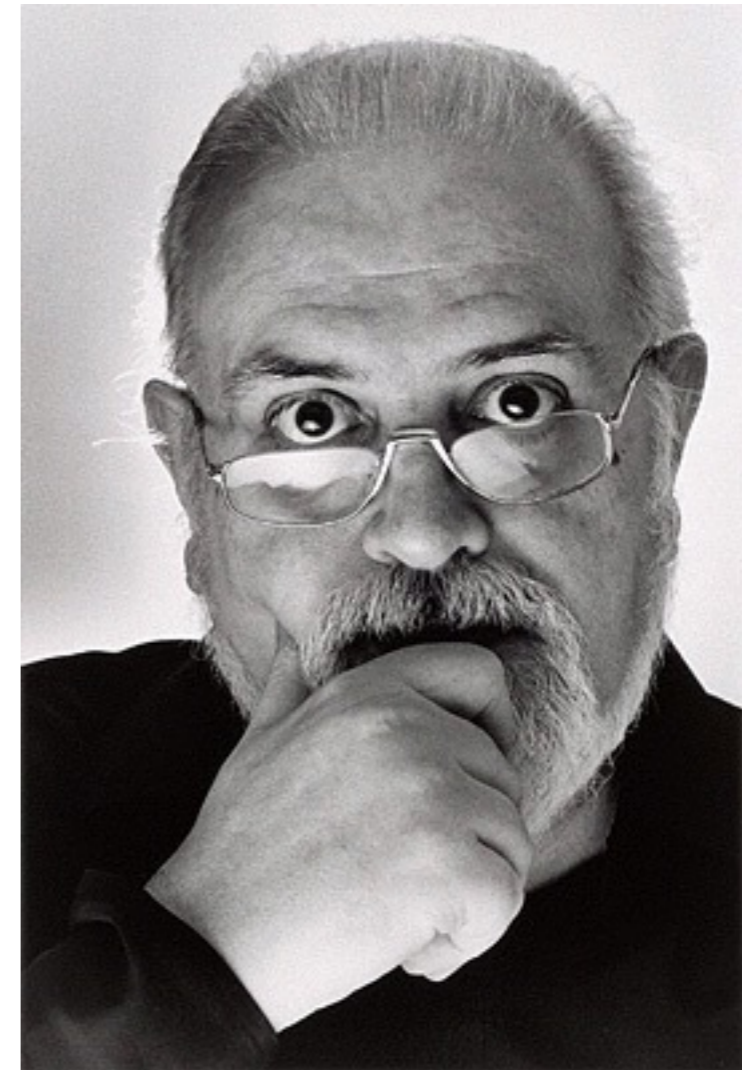
**pedro atã
joão queiroz**

[irg] **iconicity
research
group**

- the 'creative' translation vs. literal translation: why is one more creative than the other?
- a text has different levels of description
- creative translation deals with multi-level system of constraints
- this multi-level system of constraints makes meaning processual and prone to change

creative translation

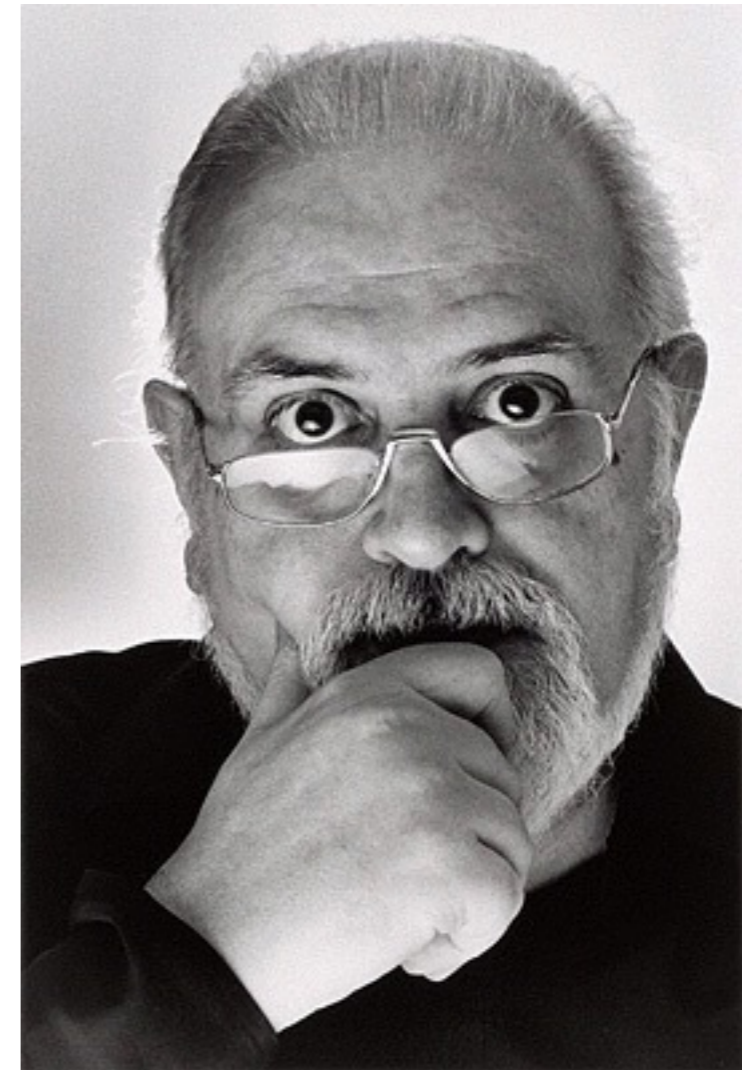
“not only the signified but also the sign itself is translated, (...) its very materiality (sonorous properties, graphical-visual properties all of that which forms, for Charles Morris, the iconicity of the aesthetic sign...)”



Haroldo de Campos

creative translation

...the signified, the semantic parameter, becomes just a kind of boundary marker for the 're-creative' enterprise”



Haroldo de Campos

translation centered on the materiality
of the sign

vs.

translation centered on the signified, the
referential message

...how can we model this difference?

text: levels of description

pragmatic

semantic

syntactic

morphological

phonological / typographic

'literal' translation

- you **can** isolate the semantic levels

pragmatic

semantic

syntactic

morphological

phonological / typographic

'literal' translation

- you **can**
isolate the
semantic
level

why?

'literal' translation

- you **can** isolate the semantic level
 - levels are either *decoupled, loosely coupled*, or their coupling is *irrelevant*
 - semantic meaning is autonomous across different material circumstances and situations

'literal' translation

- you **can** isolate the semantic level
- a text has a fixed identity, its message: an unchangeable, immutable core of meaning, that can be communicated in different ways
- action of a translator doesn't change this core

'literal' translation

source-sign

pragmatic

semantic

syntactic

morphological

phonological / typographic

target-sign

pragmatic

semantic

syntactic

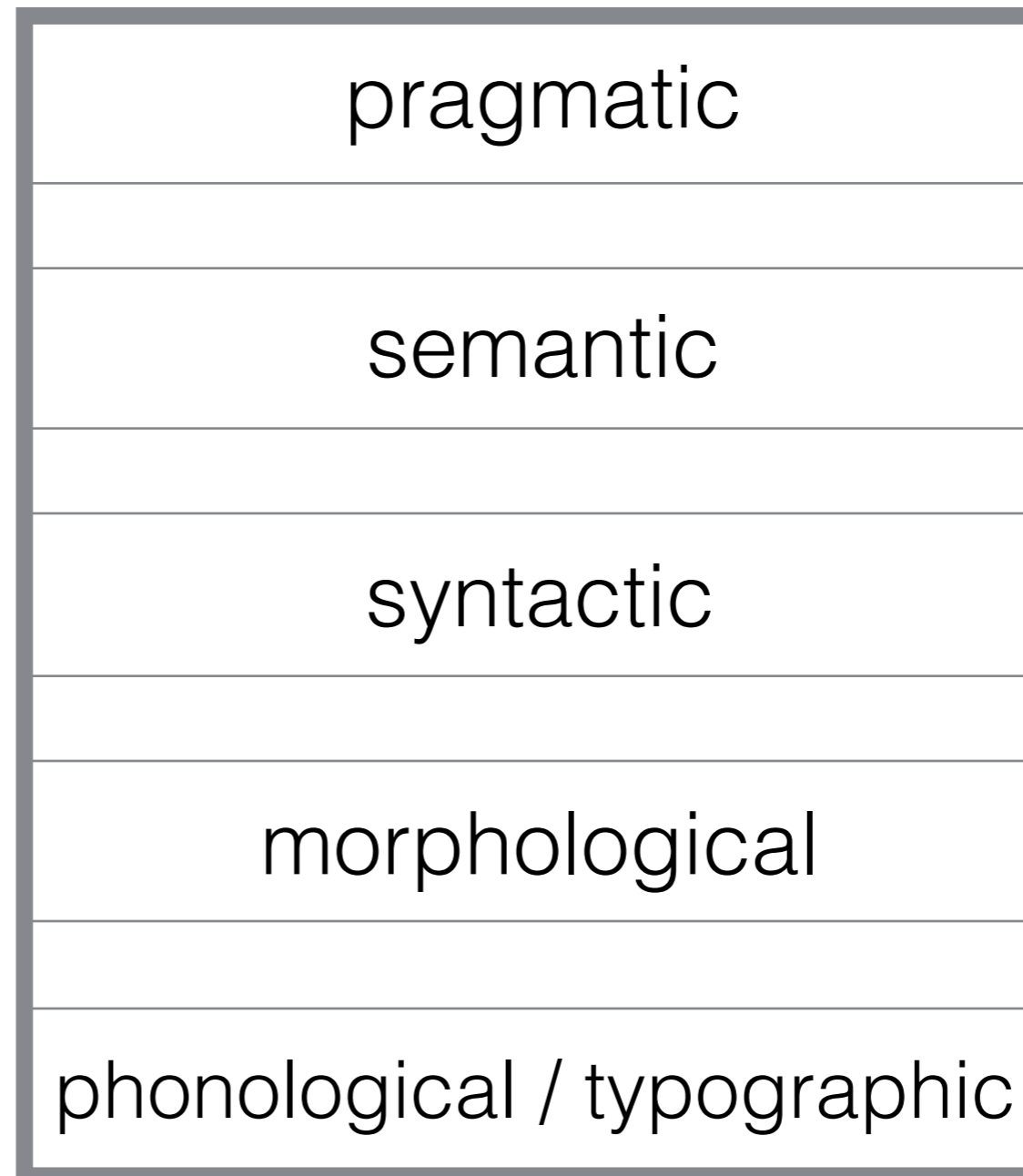
morphological

phonological / typographic



creative translation

- you **cannot** isolate the levels



creative translation

- you
cannot
isolate the
levels

why?

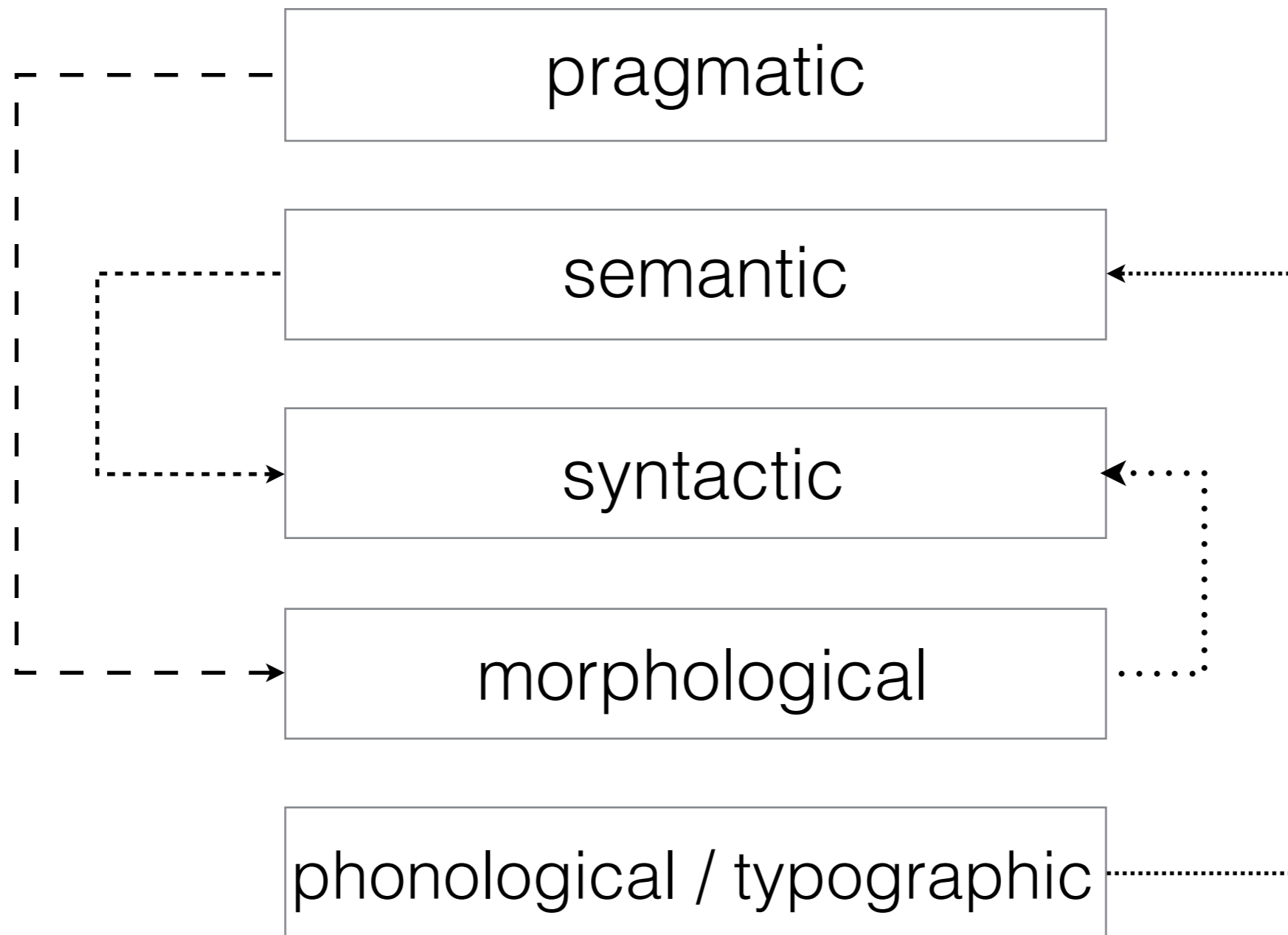
creative translation

- you **cannot** isolate the levels
 - levels are relevantly *coupled*
 - organization of the elements of a level narrows down the possibilities of organization of the elements of another level: *multi-level constraints*

creative translation

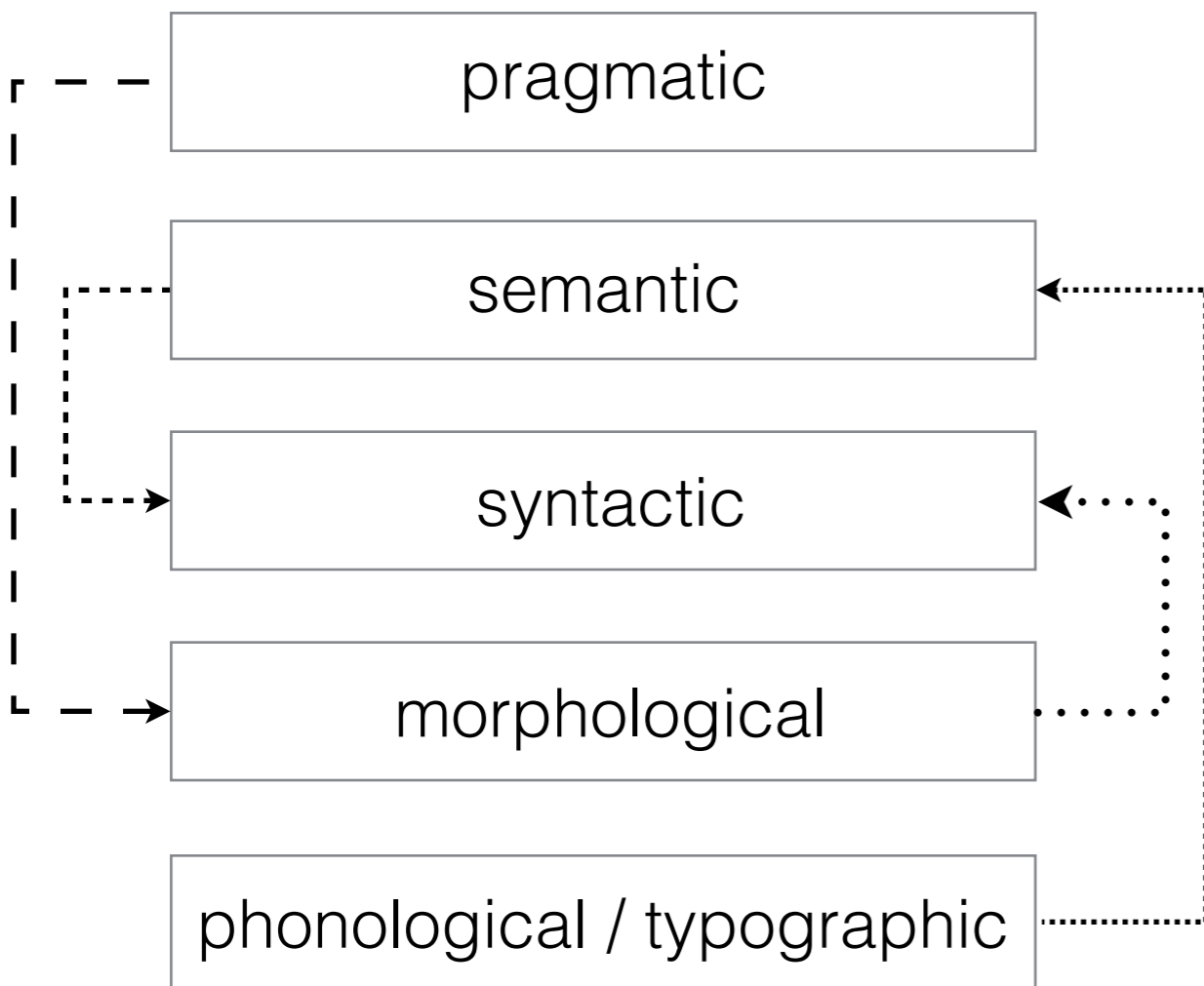
- you **cannot** isolate the levels
 - a sign has no fixed identity, it is always in *process*
 - action of a translator participates in this process and can radically transform meaning

a multi-level system of constraints

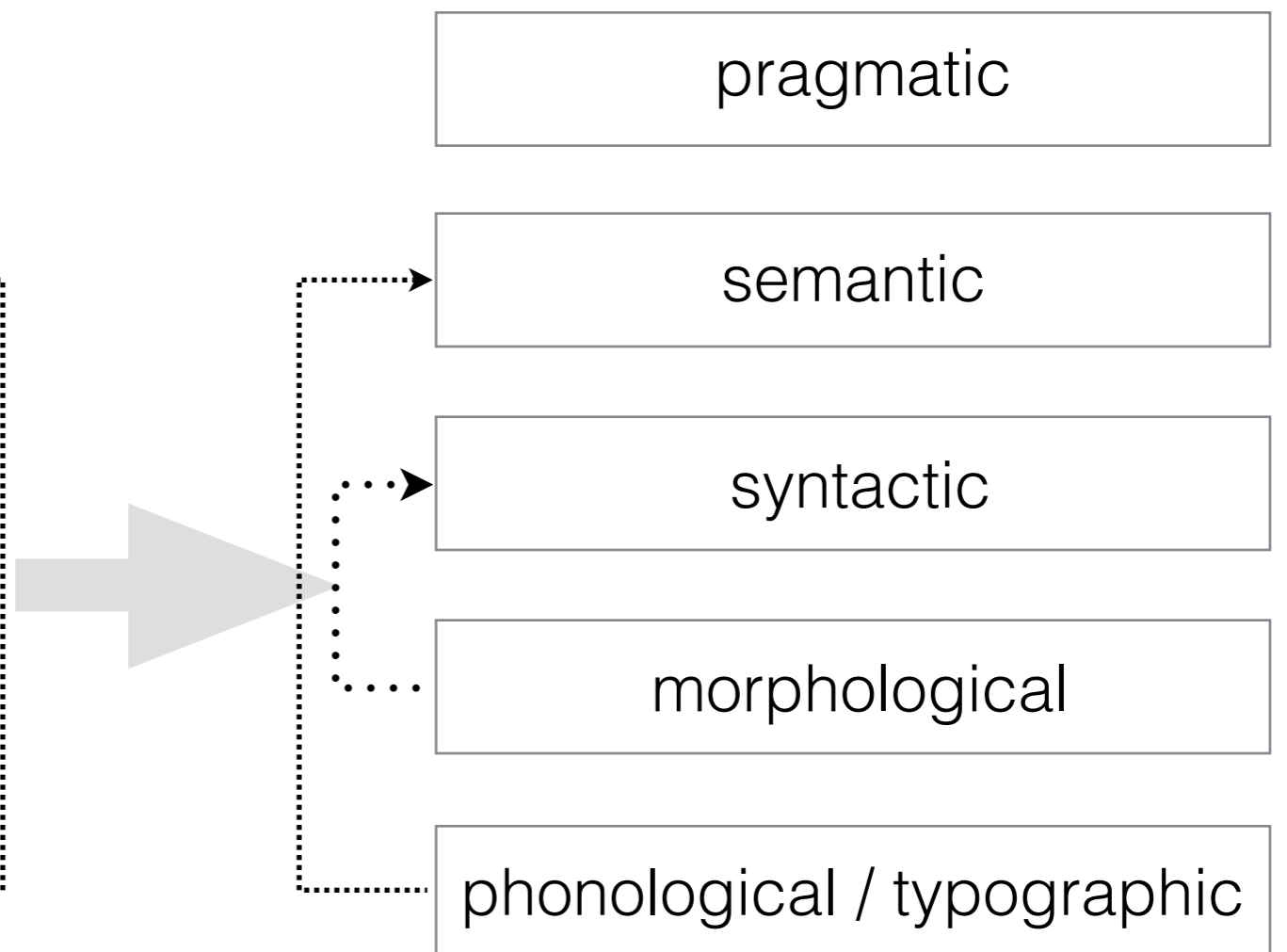


translation of multi-level constraints

source-sign



target-sign



If we are correct...

- Haroldo's 'creative translation' really accounts for creativity in translation
- texts can be modelled as multi-level systems of constraints
- creativity in translation is related to operation on multi-level constraints

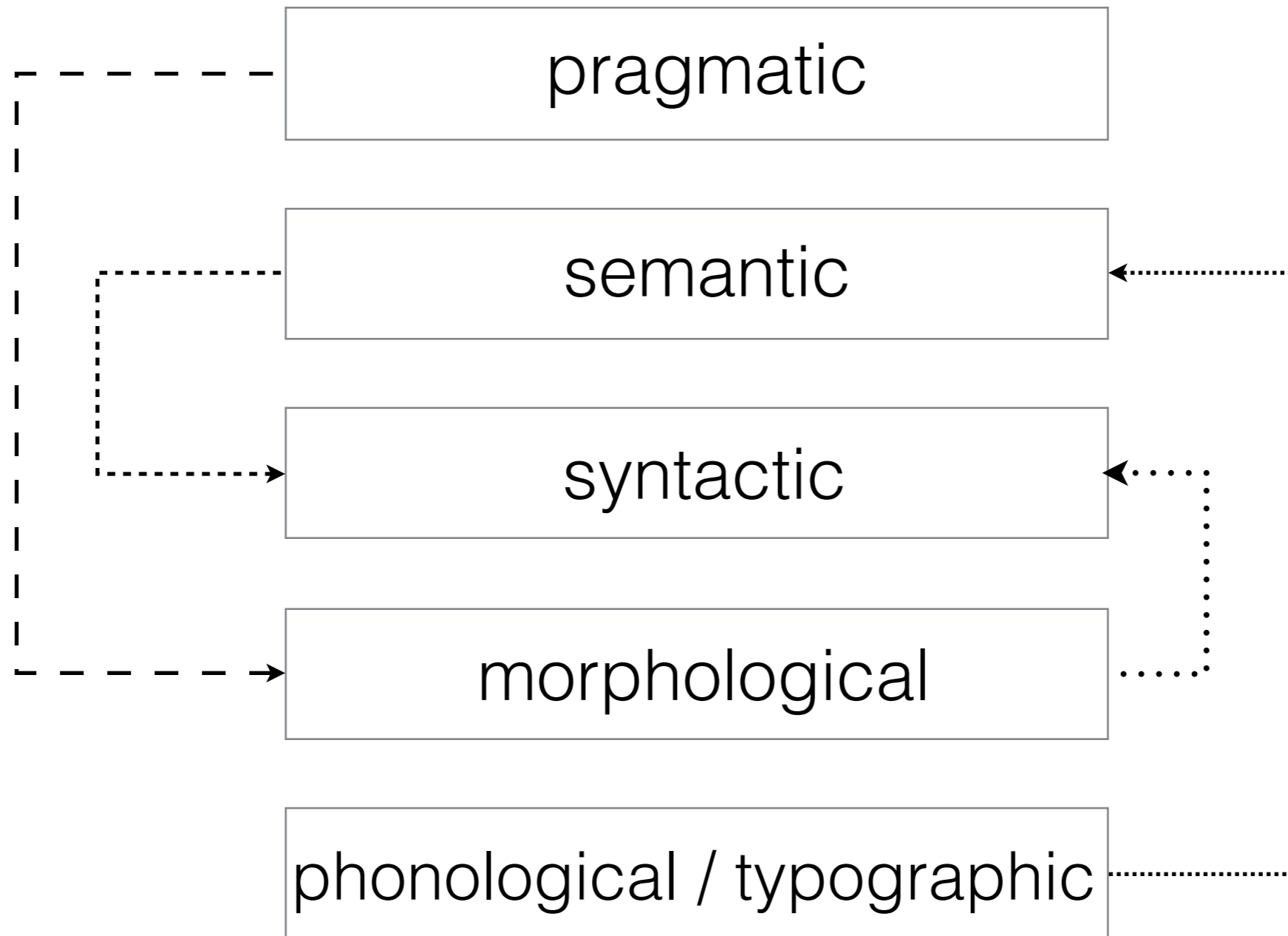
If we are correct...

**...then how do we interpret our
results?**

2 possible keys for interpretation: 1

- **situated cognition:** creativity is somehow dependent on the manipulation of available semiotic resources in a situation....

a multi-level system of constraints with uncountable opportunities of creative influence...



...a huge bias and no resources left for creativity



semantic

2 possible keys for interpretation: 1

- **situated cognition:** creativity is somehow dependent on the manipulation of available semiotic resources in a situation

...and is negatively influenced when situational resources are considered irrelevant

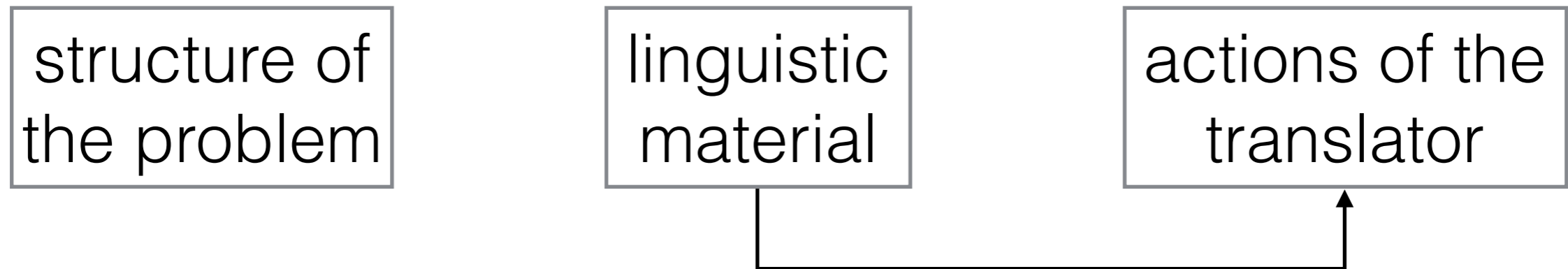
translation

structure of
the problem

linguistic
material

actions of the
translator

translation

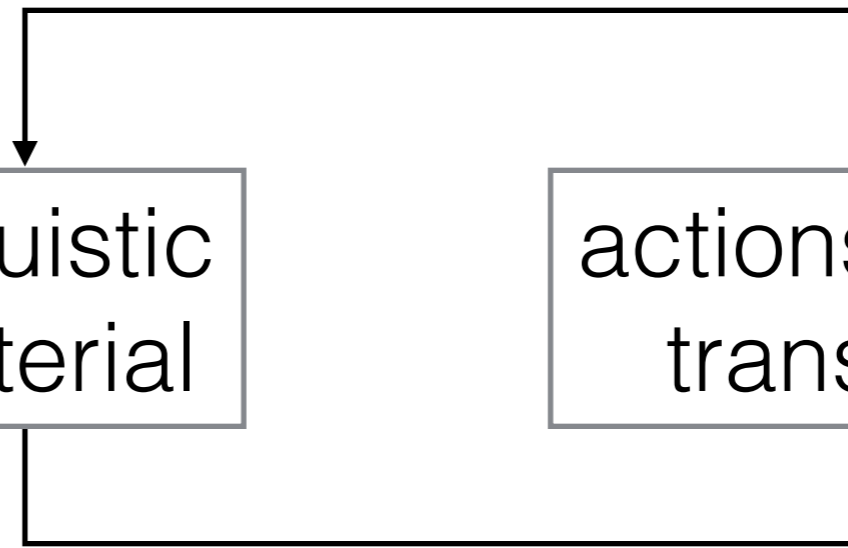


translation

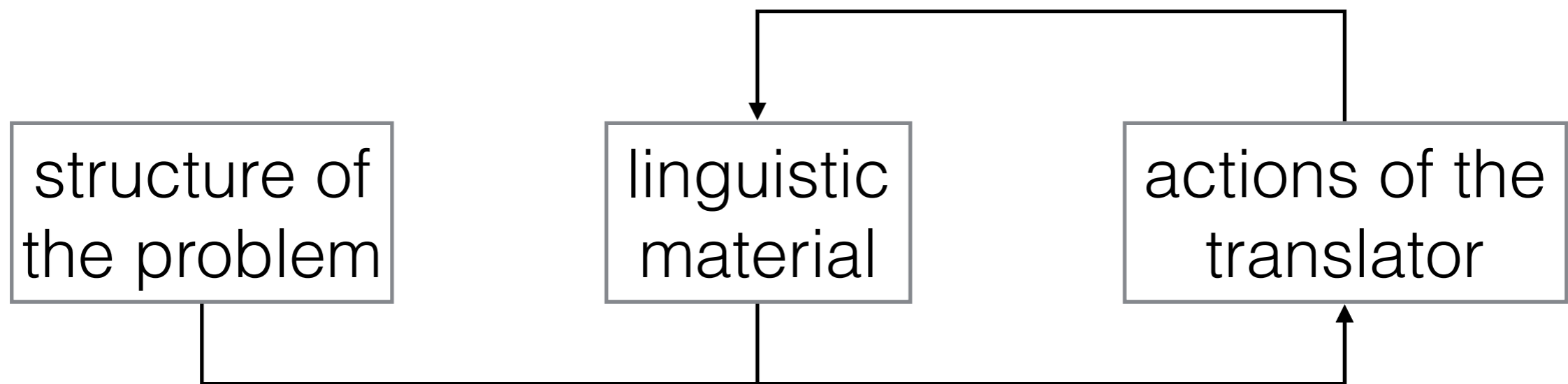
structure of
the problem

linguistic
material

actions of the
translator



'literal' translation

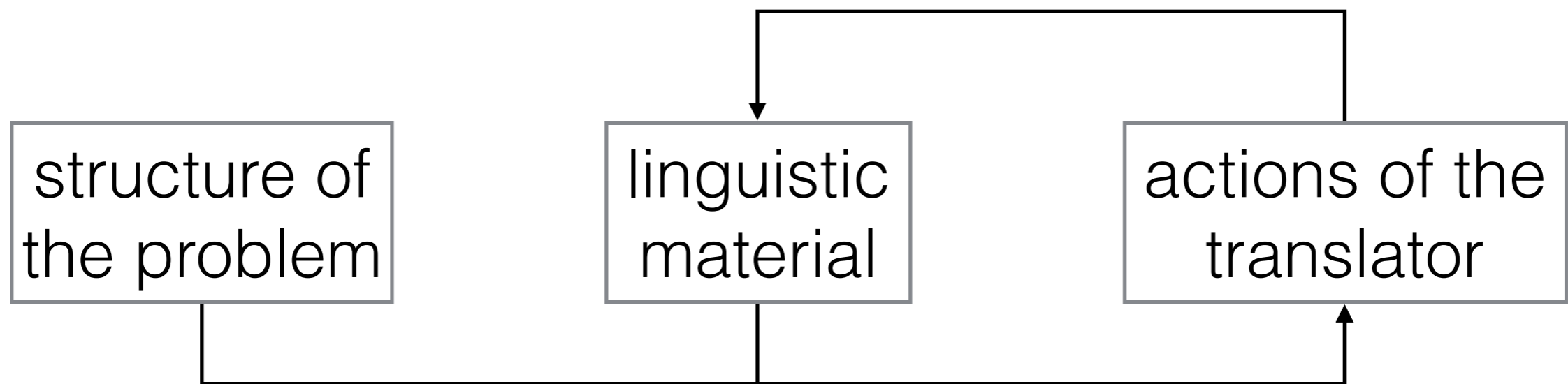


2 possible keys for interpretation: 2

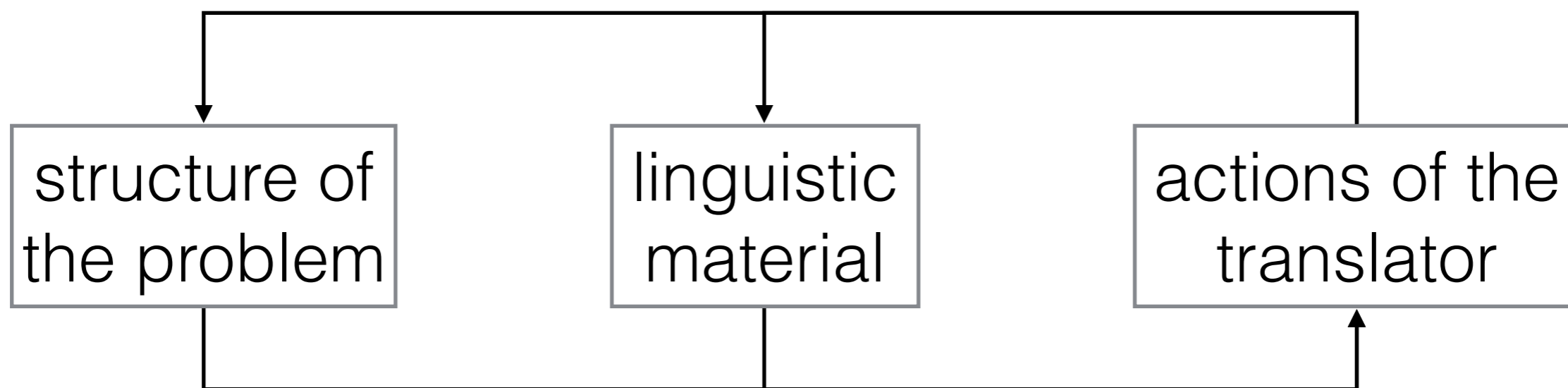
- **problem solving**: translation involves the action of a translator on the linguistic material as structured by the problem...

....if the meaning of the source-sign is seen as immutable,
one can only arrive at very efficient *solutions* for
reconstructing it.

'literal' translation



creative translation



2 possible keys for interpretation: 2

- **problem solving**: translation involves the action of a translator on the linguistic material as structured by the problem...

... if the meaning of the source-sign is seen as a process prone to change, the activity of translation itself can modify the meaning the translator is trying to translate. trying to solve the problem feeds back on the problem itself: one can arrive not only at new *solutions*, but at new *problems*.

thank you!

pedro atã
ata.pedro.1@gmail.com