

---

## Lesson n°5: Translation Strategies and Techniques

### **I. Definition of Translation**

Based on Oxford English Dictionary, “translation is written or spoken expression of the meaning of a word, speech, book, etc in another language”.

- **Newmark (1988:5)** explains that it is rendering the meaning of a text into other language in the way that author intended the text. The temptation is to transfer as many SL (Source Language) words to the TL (Target Language) as possible
- Translation is a phenomenon that has a huge effect on everyday life. This can range from the translation of a key international treaty to the following multilingual poster that welcomes customers to a small restaurant near to the home of one of the authors (**Hatim and Mundai, 2004: 3**).

### **II. Purpose of Translation**

The basic purpose of translation is to reproduce various types of texts, comprising literary, religious, scientific, philosophical texts etc. in another language. Thus, it makes them available to wider readers to a greater number of target audiences and to bring the world closer. From those definitions of translation, it can be concluded that translation is an activity of finding out the equivalent words of Source Language in Target Language so that the Target Language text contains the closest natural and accurate message to the SL text. From the definitions of translation above, it is obvious that every translator should be able to convey the message of source text accurately in the target text.

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences

Department of Human Science

Level: 2<sup>nd</sup> year LMD Human Science (Group1+2)

Instructor: Ms. Saci Meriem

*Module: English***III. Translation Strategies and Techniques****1. Borrowing:**

Borrowing is the taking of words directly from one language into another without translation. Many English words are "borrowed" into other languages; for example: Internet, software, computer, and electronic in the field of technology, telephone, cinema, internet, radio, virus, strategy, carbon etc.

- English also borrows numerous words from other languages; café and résumé from French; hamburger, and kindergarten from German; bandana, musk and sugar from Sanskrit; and Al-gebra, algorithm الخوارزمية, alcohol, cotton and lemon from Arabic
- . Borrowed words are often printed in italics when they are considered to be "foreign".

**2. Calque:**

Calque is defined as a special kind of borrowing where Source Language expression or structure is translated in literal translation” (Vinay&Darbelnet, as cited in Munday 2001). According to (Ivir's, 1987), claque means to translate words literally word-for-word without any addition or modification to be part of the target language dictionary. Politically, “the corridors of power” (السلطة أروقة) (is translated literally as it is without any change. Similarly, recycling (تدوير إعادة) is an example of calque translation. Ivir (1987) draws some examples like: “gone with the wind” (الرياح مع ذهب), “the cold war” (الباردة الحرب), “the black market” (السوق السوداء). Other examples can include “Good luck” (سعيد حظ), and “The straw that broke the camel's back” (البعير ظهر قصمت التي القشة).

**3. Addition**

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences

Department of Human Science

Level: 2<sup>nd</sup> year LMD Human Science (Group1+2)

Instructor: Ms. Saci Meriem

*Module: English*

It is translation strategy in which something is added to the TT which is not present in the ST.

Notice how the following underlined words in the translation of Naguib Mahfouz's Trilogy are enriched in the TT.

اعتزمت أن أكمل نصف ديني -

- I've decided to perfect my religious observance by marrying.

و لو سمعها سامع في الدكان وهي تشكوني في هذه الظروف العسيرة لحسبني ريا أو سكينه -

- Anyone hearing her complain about me in the store under such adverse conditions would have thought I was a cold-blooded killer like those dreadful women in Alexandria: Rayya and Sakina.

#### 4. Omission

This strategy may sound rather drastic, but it does no harm to omit translating a word or expression in some contexts, if the meaning conveyed by a particular item or expression is not vital enough to the development of the text. Omission can occur for many legitimate reasons:

- a. Background information is sometimes not translated: Arabic for example uses different patterns of cohesion. Arabic radio broadcasts usually use of the phrase “... (بالذكرو جدير) or “ هذا و ” as a signal in Arabic that what comes next is background information to the main argument (Cf. Hatim 1997: 67-74). Thus, such phrases are not expected to be translated in an English TT.
- b. “Another occasion for omission is when the information conveyed is not particularly important” (Dickins et al 2002: 23).

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences

Department of Human Science

Level: 2<sup>nd</sup> year LMD Human Science (Group1+2)

Instructor: Ms. Saci Meriem

*Module: English*

وكان الرئيس الأمريكي بيل كلينتون قد اكد مساء اول من امس

“Two days ago, the American President, Bill Clinton confirmed....”

-Unlike Arabic, English does not afford the concept ‘two days ago in the evening’.

C. Cultural differences provide another area in which simple omission may be a reasonable strategy. The ST word ‘الفاتيكان’ in the following example is better omitted because Western readers would be unaware of any Popes other than the Catholic one

•Pope John-Paul II بابا الفاتيكان يوحنا بولس الثاني

Professor’ or ‘Dr. Ali’ الستاذ الدكتور علي المحترم

Arab students are used to saying ‘Professor’ or ‘Dr.’ before the name of their tutors as a mark of respect for their higher status. Therefore, it is quite usual to address a tutor by saying ( ‘الدكتور الاستاذ المحترم’) (The respected Professor Dr. Ali” which sounds awkward in English. Thus, all these additional adjectives must be omitted from the English target text. Again, “detached house” is usually translated simply as ‘house’ as this kind of house is not found in Arab culture.

### 5. Adaptation

Adaptation occurs when something specific to one language culture is expressed in a totally different way that is familiar or appropriate to another language culture. It is a shift in cultural environment. Similarly, Pokasamrit (2013) states that “the translation of some known or unknown concepts in the source language by using the substitution from the culture of the receptor language rather than by other available means of meaning equivalence”. For example, the English use ‘pound’ رطل as a weight unit. Arabs, however, use kilos (كيلو). So, when we say ‘four pounds of meat’ in English, we substitute this in Arabic with ‘about two kilos of meat’.

## 6. Transposition (shift)

For Vinay and Darbelnet (1995: 36), transposition involves replacing one word class with another without changing the meaning of the message. They add that besides being a special translational procedure, transposition can also be applied within a language. They note that in translation there are two types of transposition: (a) obligatory transposition and (b) optional transposition. They also indicate that this method requires the translator to change the grammar of the source language (SL) text; and the translator needs to shift the grammatical make-up of the SL to fit that of the target language (TL) to achieve an equivalent effect or to produce the same effect on the readership of the translation as was obtained on the readership of the original. From a stylistic point of view, the base and the transposed expression do not necessarily have the same value. Translators carry out a transposition if the translation obtained fits better into the text or allows a particular nuance of style to be retained. The transposed forms are generally more literary in character than the original (Vinay and Darbelnet 1995: 36).

Examples:

- He is feeling relaxed and happy. (واطمأن ارتاح)

**Adj + Adj                      V + V**

(- (N + N) - وقد عرف بالجتهاد والنشاط)

- He had been known for his energetic diligence. (**Adj + N**)

## 7. Equivalence (approximate equivalence)

In a rather unusual sense, Vinay and Darbelnet use equivalence to refer to different ways of rendering the idioms, proverbs, advertising slogans and clichés (sentences or phrases that

Faculty of Human and Social Sciences

Department of Human Science

Level: 2<sup>nd</sup> year LMD Human Science (Group1+2)

Instructor: Ms. Saci Meriem

*Module: English*

---

usually express popular or common thoughts or ideas but that have been lost. The idea behind (approxiate) equivalence is that sometimes the same context is referred to in different ways depending on the language in use.

The translator resorts to equivalence as a translation technique whenever literal translation fails and whenever transposition and modulation are of no use in conveying the meaning in the target language. In Arabic it is possible to respond to a thank you as "عفوا" or "واجب على" لا شكر لا

### 8. Modulation

Modulation consists of using a phrase that is different in the source and target languages to convey the same idea: Te lo dejo means literally I leave it to you but translates better as you can have it. It changes the semantics and shifts the point of view of the source language. Through modulation, the translator generates a change in the point of view of the message without altering or affecting the meaning and without generating a sense of awkwardness in the reader of the target text. It is often used within the same language. The expressions "it is easy to understand" (أفهم أن السهل من) (are examples of modulation. It does not suit the Arabic language, and stylistically inappropriate to translate it as ( أفهم أن الصعب من )