

#### ***IV. Testing the translation***

Before writing the fair copy of your translation, a good way of evaluating your work is to read it aloud to some listeners in order to observe their reactions. The reactions of the receptors to the hearing of a text are important indicators of validity of the overall impression of translation. The translator himself can note the points at which the reader hesitates (often marking awkward style or word choice) as well as expressions of comprehension or misunderstanding in the hearers. Moreover, the translator can question hearers about matters which may not have been clear and items which could lead to misunderstanding. This may be done by direct questions about content or by asking certain persons to explain the substance of what they have learned.

The above procedure can be used for translation of a single sentence, a paragraph, a passage, or a whole book from the day you start translating till the day you finish it and give it to be published.

#### ***References***

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which one determines equivalence between source and receptor language consists in (1) decomposition of message into the simplest semantic structure with the most explicit statement of relationships, and (2) recomposition of the message into the receptor language in such a way as to employ those correspondences which (a) conform to a "literal" translation, a "free" translation or a "compromise" translation, and (b) provide the most appropriate communication load for the receptors. A competent translator prefers to establish "contextual equivalence" rather than "verbal consistency".

### *Adjustments*

The translator, no matter what he translates, is believed to be the one whose duty is to convey the message in the best way possible. In order to achieve this, he has to make changes or adjustments in his translation. These adjustments may be classified as lexical (to make changes in lexis), grammatical (to make changes in grammar) and both lexical and grammatical adjustments. These changes and adjustments are performed in order to reproduce natural equivalents which in turn help the translation to be read with ease and pleasure.

### *III. Revising the draft copy of translation*

When the process of restructuring has been completed, it is important that the first draft be left "to cool" at least for a day or so, so that the translator can return to the work with a greater objectivity and detachment. During the process of revision one can (a) prune out unnecessary words, (b) rearrange the component parts, (c) correct errors in meaning and style, and (d) give special attention to the connection between units.

In this stage the translator determines:

1. Unit of translation
2. Proper equivalence
3. Necessary adjustments (lexical, or grammatical).

### ***Indicating unit of translation***

Determining unit of translation basically depends on the type of translation you want to produce; for example, if the aim is to produce a very literal translation, then the unit of translation may be: group-to-group, or sentence-to-sentence. On the other hand, if the tendency is towards a free translation, the unit of translation can be a whole paragraph.

Since word-for-word and phrase-by-phrase translation are considered very primitive methods in translating, no translation should proceed word by word or phrase by phrase, but should take as a minimal unit (the smallest unit) the longer sentences or shorter paragraphs. In translating such units the translator should not hesitate to employ boldness and freedom of expression. Moreover, the first draft should aim at fullness of expression rather than bare minimum of equivalence. Remember that whatever unit of translation you choose, you always adhere to the stream of thought which lies behind the words and goes through the whole body of the text.

### ***Determination of equivalence***

When hearing the term "equivalence", the immediate thought that comes to the mind should not necessarily be perceived as "replacement" of words by their straightforward, apparent synonyms. We must think and talk of equivalence in terms of equivalent ideas, parallel grammatical structures and equivalent effects. However, the process by

3. Consult a reliable English-English dictionary and pick up the meanings which best fit the context. The habit of consulting an English dictionary first and then using the bilingual dictionary to find the nearest equivalent in one's own language is indispensable to successful translation.

The bilingual dictionary is therefore the last, not the first instrument to be used by the translator.

4. Long sentences which trouble understanding or transferring can be broken down into "kernel sentences", that is, keeping to the basic patterns: Subject, Verb, Object, Qualifying phrases.
5. Try to judge the writer's purpose in writing the text. You can do this by asking questions such as:
  - a. Is the writer trying to describe or explain something?
  - b. Is he trying to induce the reader to accept his point of view or is he trying to persuade the reader to act on his suggestions or ideas that he puts forward or makes?
  - c. To what extent is the writer successful in his purpose? If he is explaining a process, does he do so with the minimum of words and maximum of clarity?
  - d. Judge the writer's style and particularly his use of figurative language.

## ***II. Preparing the draft copy of translation***

Now that all obscurities have become clear to you, and you have grasped both the message and the style through an analytical approach, (considering translation as a process of analysis, transfer, and restructuring), you can start restructuring the message. In restructuring the message, what has been transferred in the translator's mind through the "transfer-mechanism" should be encoded into the TL symbols.

Obviously, teachers who are teaching mathematics know the shortest and best ways of solving mathematical problems. They know the right path, and they tell their students what and which the right path is. The same is true about translating from one language into another. Teachers who are teaching translation will tell their students about the right path in translating. The following methodology of translating is the outcome of studying several books and articles in the field. It has been used in many translating classes and the would-be translators have found it effective and helpful.

### *Translating procedures*

It is obviously impossible to define adequately all variety of procedures the translators employ for different types of translations. However, some of the principal steps and procedures employed by a competent translator can be outlined as follows:

#### I. Reading over the entire text

Before actual translating can be started, it is essential to read the entire text. As it is assumed that full understanding of the message is the primary goal of the translator, some general points respecting the nature of the text (whether it is of a literary, technical, informative, etc.) and levels of usage (whether it is a formal, informal, colloquial, slang, etc.) should be taken into consideration by the translator. On the other hand, the translator should know how to read a text in order to reach the highest degree of comprehension. Here is a suggested procedure:

1. Read the text through as quickly as possible in an effort to grasp the general meaning.
2. Again read the text, this time paying attention to details, unfamiliar words, expressions, unusual grammatical structures. (One may underline difficult words and expressions).

(1680), tackled the problems of translations by formulating three basic types:

1. Metaphrase, or turning an author word by word, and line by line, from one language into another.
2. Paraphrase, or translation with latitude, the Ciceronian "sense-for-sense" view of translation.
3. Imitation, where the translator can abandon the text of the original as he sees fit.

Of these types, Dryden chooses the second as the more balanced path, provided the translator fulfils certain criteria: To translate poetry, he argues the translator must be a poet, must be a master of both languages, and must understand both characteristics and "spirit" of the original author, besides conforming to the aesthetic canons of his own age. He uses the metaphor of the translator/portrait painter that was to reappear so frequently in the eighteenth century, maintaining that the painter has the duty of making his portrait resemble the original.

The ideas and theories mentioned above are not mere theories; in fact, they cover both points of principles and points of technique. They lead us to think about what translating entails in its practical aspect as well.

Going back to the comparison of a translator to a mathematician, and believing that both are considered as problem solvers, we may ask the question: what is the right path to translating? There are different ways to find an answer to a problem. To solve the same algebra equation, different students may choose different ways, one longer, the other shorter. One examines many formulas and goes through a lot of computations, the other has his own tricks, sharpness, and creativity to make the task easier and gets the right answer in less time.

3. The translator should avoid word-for-word translating.
4. The translator should use forms of speech in common use.
5. The translator should choose and order his work appropriately to produce the correct tone.

Dolet's principles, ranked as they are in a precise order, stress the importance of understanding the SL text as a primary requisite. Understanding of a text starts with reading; and reading may also be considered a kind of problem-solving activity as Thorndike (1917) states:

"Understanding a paragraph is like solving a problem in mathematics. It consists in selecting the right elements of the situation, putting also with the right amount of weight or influence or force for each—the mind is assailed as it were, by every word in the paragraph. It must select, repress, soften, emphasize, correlate and organize, all under the influence of the right mental set of purpose or demand".

Dolet's views were reiterated by George Chapman (1559-1639), the great translator of Homer. In his dedication of *Seven Books* (1598) Chapman declares that the work of a skillful and worthy translator is to observe the sentences, figures and forms of speech proposed in his author, his true sense and height and to adorn them with figures and forms of oration fitted to the original in the same tongue to which they are translated. Chapman's suggested principles are:

1. Avoid word-for-word renderings.
  2. Attempt to reach the "spirit" of the original.
  3. Avoid overloose translations by basing the translation on a sound scholarly investigation of other versions and glosses.
- John Dryden (1631-1700), in his important preface to *Ovid's Epistles*

judge them as good, average or bad artists or translators. This comparison sounds good and logical as far as both the artist and the translator are doing their duties and responsibilities based on the principles of faithfulness (to be faithful to the original source).

But what I have in mind to say here, is to compare the work of a translator with the work of a mathematician. To solve a mathematical problem, no matter of what level of difficulty, (elementary, intermediate, or advanced) one must know the related formulas, must use her/his mental ability, and reasoning power to get the right answer. He/she must find the correct answer by using a series of rules and principles. To get the right answer is the goal in problem solving, and to get the correct meaning and transferring it into another language correctly is the goal of translating. In doing this, the translator is provided with essential rules and principles, rules of grammar and meaning analysis, rules of translating which have been suggested by great writers and translators. The translator is also provided with tools such as dictionaries and encyclopedias and other references. He/she must make use of the rules and tools to make the correct meaning out of the text. To comprehend a text correctly, is like solving a mathematical problem correctly.

Many great translators and theorists in the field of translation have emphasized "the principle of perfect understanding" of the source language. Etienne Dolet (1509-46), one of the first writers to formulate a theory of translation, established five principles for translation:

1. The translator must fully understand the sense and meaning of the original author, although he is at liberty to clarify obscurities.
2. The translator should have a perfect knowledge of both SL and TL.

before translating? what is a proper unit in translating? How much of a text should be submitted to translation in intervals? How about the use of the dictionary in translating? Should we use a bilingual dictionary first, or an English-English one? Is there a step-by-step procedure for translating that the majority of translation teachers can agree on that? These are some of the questions which come to the minds of the would-be translators.

The objective of the present article is twofold: on the one hand, it reviews some theoretical aspects of translation which can shed light on its practical aspect, and on the other hand, to introduce a comprehensive procedure for actual performing of translation to translation classes.

The work of a translator is usually compared with the work of an artist. Both should have a source of inspiration; the source of inspiration for the artist is the nature, for example, she/he is influenced by a beautiful landscape, or an innocent face of a child, then she/he tries to portray it, to make it permanent. In doing this, she/he tries to produce a work which exactly resembles the nature. The same is true for the translator. She/he is impressed by a book, a story, or poetry, etc, and feels an urge to translate it and share others in her/his pleasure. So the source of inspiration for the translator is the book or the information he likes to translate. In producing a work of translation he does his best to be faithful to the original text and produce a translation which resembles the original. Both of them, that is, the artist and the translator are faced with critics, that is, the people who watch the artist's painting in galleries and the people who read the translator's translation. They

## ***THE RIGHT PATH TO TRANSLATING***

***By A. Sedighi***

Having taught translation for some time and having worked alongside other experienced translation teachers, I have found it essential to introduce some standardized step-by-step procedures for actual performance of translating into our translation classes. The reason behind the desirability and essentiality of this attempt is that most of the students in translating courses confess that they do not know how to begin the actual performing of translation. They keep saying: "we are familiar with theories of translation; we can define technical terms in the field, we know the characteristics of a good translator and a good translation and so on and so forth; but we do not know how to put these theories and definitions into practice". They ask questions like: is it correct to read the first sentence and translate it? Shall we read the first paragraph and then translate it? Is it necessary to read the whole text