

## **What is translation?**

Hatim and Munday (2004:3) point out that translation can be analyzed from two different perspectives: that of a 'process', which refers to the activity of turning a ST into a TT in another language, and that of a 'product', i.e. a translated text. They (1997:1) define translating as "an act of communication which attempts to relay, across cultural and linguistic boundaries, another act of communication (which may have been intended for different purposes and different readers / hearers)".

Shuttleworth and Cowie (1997:181) see that **translation** is a very broad notion which opens the way to be understood in various ways. This broad notion enables one to talk about translation as process and a product. In addition, one can recognize sub-types of translations such as literary translation, technical translation, subtitling and machine translation. According to Ghazala (2006:1), translation refers to "all processes and methods used to transfer the meaning of the source language text into the target language".

The ideal role of the translator as it is argued by Nida (1964:153) is to have a complete knowledge of both source and target language, intimate acquaintance with the subject matter, effective empathy with the original author and the content and stylistic facility in the target language. Unfortunately, these ideal competences do not always found in the translator, therefore, a lot of discrepancies are found among translated texts and the original ones. Consequently, the aim in most of the cases is to be as close as possible to the essence of the message meant to be conveyed.

Bassnet (1980) established five principles for the translator, they are the job of the translator ( How to Translate Well from one Language into Another). (in Bassnett, 1980) .

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

## **Equivalence in translation**

Equivalence is a key concept in the process of translation because it determines which type of translation should be used to render a certain text. Farghal (1994:56) argues that "translation is a mode of communication where choices are further subjected to a principle of equivalence between a source text in one language and a target text in another."

No single topic in this basic domain of knowledge has attracted the attention of workers in linguistics and translation theory more than the issue of equivalence, for it represents the backbone of the whole translation process (Al-Hajjaj, 1995:233).

For Hatim and Mason (1990:6), equivalence in translation is a relative matter. The term means reaching the closest meaning to the ST meaning. They argue that there is no complete equivalence.

According to Bell (1991:6), total equivalence is an illusion because languages differ from each other in form. They have different patterns and rules, which regulate the grammatical structure of languages and these forms give different meanings. Therefore, if we want to transfer one language into another, there will be a change in form, and this entails a change in meaning. There must be a loss or gain in the process of translating.

According to Farghal (1994:56), the term "equivalence" refers to the correspondence of effects: the effect of the ST on the ST receivers versus the effect of the translation on the TT receivers. This equivalence is not complete because of different factors such as informativity,

creativity and expressivity, and because of differences or similarities between the two language cultures (ibid).

**In short, most translation studies emphasize the fact that there is no total equivalence or one-to-one equivalence throughout the whole text because of the differences in the systems, patterns, rules, conventions and cultures of languages. However, they stress that the translator must do his best in order to reach the closest equivalent to the source text and he may follow certain strategies to achieve this aim.**

Ilyas (1989:37) illustrates three types of translation as follows:

1. Word-for-word translation: This type of translation is word-oriented. The translator in this type of translation handles the text word by word. This type transfers SL grammar and word order, as well as the primary meanings of all the SL words, into the TL, and it is normally effective only for brief simple neutral sentences (Newmark, 1988:69). Therefore, such method can be useful in throwing light on the nature of the SL lexis and grammar, since it slavishly follows the SL grammatical structure, e.g.,

He went home. (SL)

هو ذهب بيت (TL)

2. Literal translation: This type is also word-oriented, but it does not follow the SL grammar as is the case with word-for-word translation. the translation in this case adopts TL grammar, e.g.,

Once in a blue moon. (SL)

مرة في قمر أزرق. (TL)

It is worth mentioning that for de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981), literal translation is the “decomposition of the original text into single elements and the replacement of each with a corresponding element in the target language.”

Farghal and Shunnaq (1999:13) point out that literal translation is often unacceptable, especially in the case of multi-word units like cols and idioms.

3. Literary translation (free translation): Unlike the two above-mentioned types, this type is free-rank, in which the translator aims at reproducing a similar effect on the TL receiver as that of the SL one, e.g.,

Once in a blue moon. (SL)

نادراً جداً. (TL)

It is raining cats and dogs. (SL)

انها تمطر بغزارة. (TL)

or انها تمطر كأفواه القرب

In a mood	Literally	في مزاج
In the pink	=	في القرنفلي
In a nut shell	=	في قشرة جوزة
On paper	=	على ورق
Over the moon	=	فوق القمر

But their meanings are respectively في غاية الابتهاج and نظرياً, بايجاز, في تمام الصحة والعافية, متعكر المزاج.

## Examples of literal translation from English

A black market  
Adopt a plan/project  
Anarchy prevailed  
At a stone throw  
Blind confidence  
Blind imitation  
By sheer coincidence  
Devote time  
Draw a policy  
Fire lines  
Exert an effort  
Hard currency  
Honourable defeat  
Kill time  
On equal footing  
Point of view  
Policy of rapprochement  
Political tension  
Raise the level  
Safety valve  
Save a situation  
Starting point  
Show interest

## A case study

The plain **was** rich with crops; there **were** many orchards of fruit trees and beyond the plain the mountains **were** brown and bare. There **was** fighting in the mountains and at night we could see the flashes from the artillery. In the dark it **was** like summer lightning, but the nights **were** cool and there **was** not the feeling of a storm coming. (**A Farewell to Arms**, by Ernest Hemingway)

A static translation determined by formal equivalence:

كان السهل غنياً بالمحاصيل. كان ثمة كثير من جنائن الأشجار المثمرة، ووراء السهل كانت الجبال سمراء عارية، كان القتال دائراً في الجبال، وخلال الليل كان في استطاعتنا ان نرى وميض المدافع، وكان يخيل للمرء، في الظلمة، وكأنه برق الصيف، ولكن الليالي كانت باردة، ولم نكن نستشعر أن عاصفة توشك أن تهب. (البعليكي: 7)

A dynamic translation free from the repetition of *kaana* كان is as follows:

سهل غني بالمحاصيل كثرت فيه جنائن الأشجار المثمرة ومن وراءه اسمرت الجبال وتعرت حيث دار فيها القتال. وخلال الليل استطعنا رؤية وميض المدافع بدا في الظلمة كأنه برق الصيف. لكن الليالي لطفت حرارتها ولم يساورنا احساس بأن عاصفة آتية.