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TRANSLATION PROCEDURES, STRATEGIES AND METHODS

Translation typically has been used to transfer written or spoken source language texts to equivalent written or spoken target language texts. In general, the purpose of translation is to reproduce various kinds of texts – including religious, literary, scientific and philosophical texts – in another language and thus making them available to wider readers.

If languages were just a classification for a set of general or universal concepts, it would be easy to translate from a source language to a target language. In this regard languages are not nomenclatures and the concepts of one language may differ radically from those of another since each language articulates or organizes the world differently, and languages do not simply name categories; they articulate their own.

The difference between a source language and a target language and the variation in their cultures makes the process of translating a real challenge. Among the problematic factors involved in translation such as form, meaning, style, proverbs, idioms, etc., the present paper is going to concentrate mainly on the procedures of translating culture-specific concepts (CSC) in general and on the strategies of rendering allusions in particular.

The translating procedures

Technical procedures:

analysis of the source and target languages; a thorough study of the source language text before making attempts translate it; making judgments of the semantic and syntactic approximations.

Organizational procedures: constant reevaluation of the attempt made; contrasting it with the existing available translations of the same text done by other translators, and checking the text's communicative effectiveness by asking the target language readers to evaluate its accuracy and effectiveness and studying their reactions.

It must be mentioned that there is the difference between translation methods and translation procedures. While translation methods relate to whole texts, translation procedures are used for sentences and smaller units of language. Some linguists mark out the following methods of translation:

Word-for-word translation in which the source language word order is preserved and the words are translated singly by their most common meanings out of context.

Literal translation in which the source language grammatical constructions are converted to their nearest target language equivalents but the lexical words are again translated singly out of context.

Faithful translation: it attempts to produce the precise contextual meaning of the original within the constraints of the target language grammatical structures.

Semantic translation which differs from «faithful translation» only in as far as it must take more account of the aesthetic value of the source language text.

Adaptation which is the freest form of translation, and is used mainly for plays (comedies) and poetry; the themes, characters, plots are usually preserved, the source language culture is converted to the target language culture and the text is rewritten.

Free translation: it produces the target language text without the style, form, or content of the original.

Idiomatic translation: it reproduces the «message» of the original but tends to distort nuances of meaning by preferring colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.

Communicative translation: it attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readership.

In order to clarify the distinction between procedure and strategy, the forthcoming section is allotted to discussing the procedures of translating culture-specific terms in detail.

Procedures of translating culture-specific concepts (CSCs)

Some procedures of translating CSCs are put forth:

1. Making up a new word.
2. Explaining the meaning of the source language expression in lieu of translating it.
3. Preserving the source language term intact.
4. Opting for a word in the target language which seems similar to or has the same «relevance» as the source language term.

Defining culture-bound terms (CBTs) as the terms which «refer to concepts, institutions and personnel which are specific to the source language culture», the following four major techniques for translating CBTs are put forward:

1. *Functional Equivalence:* It means using a referent in the target language culture whose function is similar to that of the source language (source language) referent.

2. *Formal Equivalence* or «*linguistic equivalence*»: It means a «word-for-word» translation.

3. *Transcription* or «*borrowing*» (i. e. reproducing or, where necessary, transliterating the original term): It stands at the far end of source language-oriented strategies. If the term is formally transparent or is explained in the context, it may be used alone. In other cases, particularly where no

knowledge of the source language by the reader is presumed, transcription is accompanied by an explanation or a translator's note.

4. *Descriptive or self-explanatory translation*: It uses generic terms (not CBTs) to convey the meaning. It is appropriate in a wide variety of contexts where formal equivalence is considered insufficiently clear. In a text aimed at a specialized reader, it can be helpful to add the original source language term to avoid ambiguity.

The following are the different translation procedures:

Transference: it is the process of transferring a source language word to a target language text. It includes transliteration.

Naturalization: it adapts the source language word first to the normal pronunciation, then to the normal morphology of the target language.

Cultural equivalent: it means replacing a cultural word in the source language with a target language one.

Functional equivalent: it requires the use of a culture-neutral word.

Descriptive equivalent: in this procedure the meaning of the CBT is explained in several words.

Componential analysis: it means comparing a source language word with a target language word which has a similar meaning but is not an obvious one-to-one equivalent, by demonstrating first their common and then their differing sense components.

Synonymy: it is a near target language equivalent.

Through-translation: it is the literal translation of common collocations, names of organizations and components of compounds. It can also be called calque or loan translation.

Shifts or transpositions: it involves a change in the grammar from source language to target language; for instance, change from singular to plural, etc.

Modulation: it occurs when the translator reproduces the message of the original text in the target language text in conformity with the current norms of the target language, since the source language and the target language may appear dissimilar in terms of perspective.

Recognized translation: it occurs when the translator normally uses the official or the generally accepted translation of any institutional term.

Compensation: it occurs when loss of meaning in one part of a sentence is compensated in another part.

Paraphrase: in this procedure the meaning of the CBT is explained. Here the explanation is much more detailed than that of *descriptive equivalent*.

Couplets: it occurs when the translator combines two different procedures.

Notes: notes are additional information in a translation.

The conclusion likely to be drawn from what is described above is that one of the troublesome problems of translation is the disparity among languages. The bigger the gap between the source language and the target language, the more difficult the transfer of a message from the former to the latter will be.