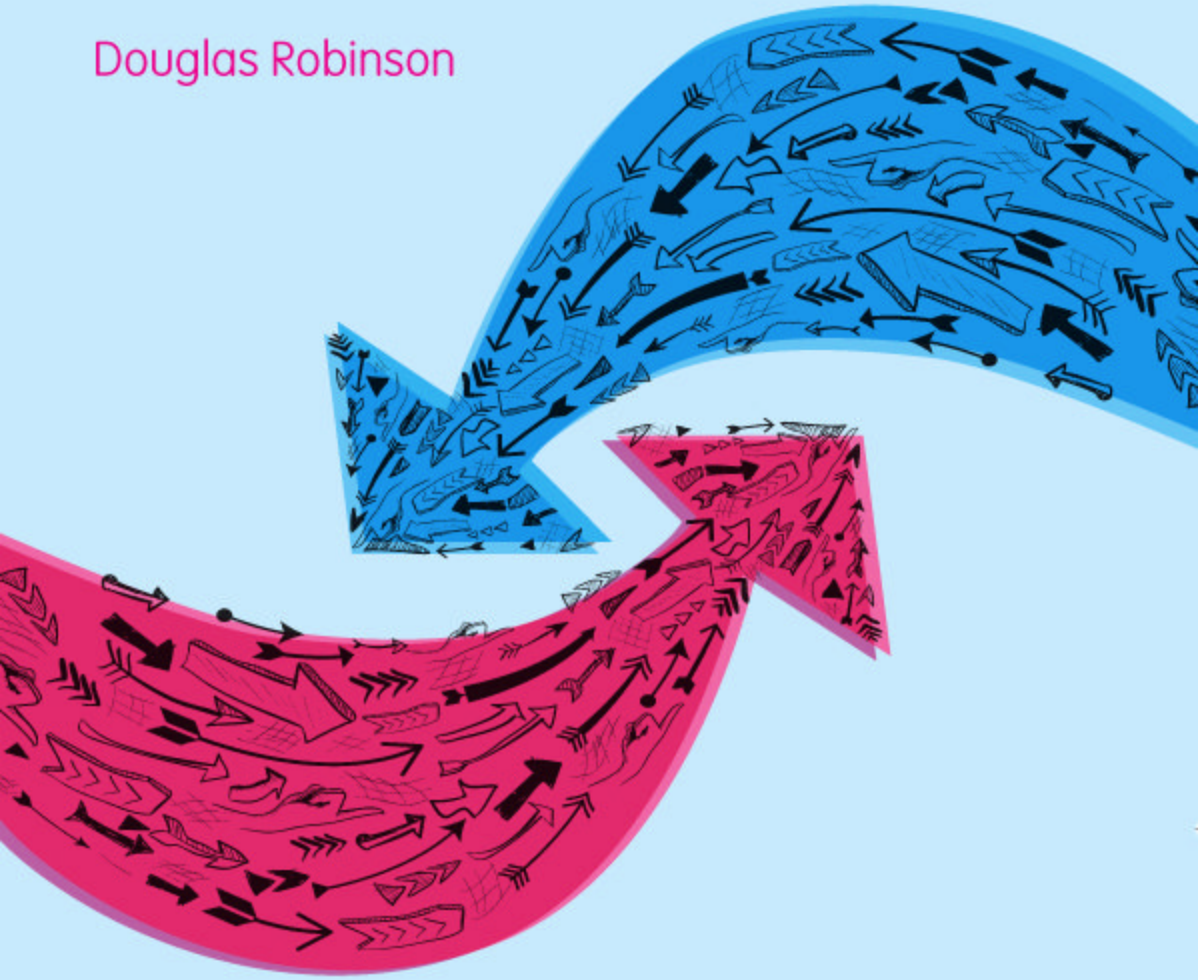
Douglas Robinson



BECOMING A TRANSLATOR

An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Translation

Third edition

ROUTLEDGE

Becoming a Translator

Fusing theory with advice and information about the practicalities of translating, *Becoming a Translator* is the essential resource for novice and practicing translators. The book explains how the market works, helps translators learn how to translate faster and more accurately, as well as providing invaluable advice and tips about how to deal with potential problems, such as stress.

The third edition has been revised and updated throughout, offering:

- extensive up-to-date information about new translation technologies
- discussions of the emerging "sociological" and "activist" turns in translation studies
- new exercises and examples
- updated further reading sections
- a website containing a teacher's guide, the chapter 'The Translator as Learner' and additional resources for translators

Offering suggestions for discussion, activities, and hints for the teaching of translation, the third edition of *Becoming a Translator* is updated throughout, and remains invaluable for students and teachers of Translation Studies, as well as those working in the field of translation.

Becoming a Translator

An Introduction to the Theory and Practice of Translation

Third Edition

Douglas Robinson

With additional technology-related contributions by **Dorothy Kenny**

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

First published 2012
by Routledge
2 Park Square, Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 4RN

Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada
by Routledge
711 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017

Routledge is an imprint of the Taylor & Francis Group, an informa business

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
A catalog record for this book has been requested

ISBN: 978-0-415-61591-4 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-0-415-61590-7 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-0-203-10872-7 (ebk)

Typeset in Perpetua and Futura
by Keystroke, Station Road, Codsall, Wolverhampton

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Acknowledgements

This book has taken shape in interaction with teachers and students of translation in the United States, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Brazil, and England. Eileen Sullivan's invitation to tour central Mexico in the fall of 1994 first got me started on the series of interactive hands-on experiences that eventually turned into these chapters; and while many of the participants in my seminars in Guadalajara, Mexico D.F., Tlaxcala, Xalapa, and Veracruz were enthusiastic, I owe even more to the skeptics, who forced me to recognize such things as the importance of the "slow" or analytical side of the shuttle movement explored here. Thanks especially to Richard Finks Whitaker, Teresa Moreno, Lourdes Arencibo, Adriana Menassé, and Pat Reidy in Mexico; Marshall Morris, Angel Arzán, Yvette Torres, and Sara Irizarry in Puerto Rico; John Milton, Rosemary Arrojo, John Schmidt, Regina Alfarano, Maria Paula Frota, and Peter Lenny in Brazil; Peter Bush, Mona Baker, and Terry Hale in England.

Several people read early drafts of the book in part or in whole, and made helpful comments: Anthony Pym, Beverly Adab, and Marla O'Neill. Bill Kaul's pictorial and other comments were as usual least helpful and most enjoyable.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to my friends and fellow translators on Lantra-L, the translators' online discussion group, who have graciously consented to being quoted repeatedly in these pages. A lonely translator could not ask for more dedicated help, support, advice, and argument!

Special thanks go to all the teachers and other learners who have used this book in various contexts around the world, and then shared their experiences with me.

In updating and revising the book I have not been able to make all the changes they suggested, but every suggestion initiated a thought process that contributed in some significant way to the final form the revision took. Christy Kirkpatrick at Routledge (for the second edition) and Louisa Semlyen (for the third edition) solicited extensive responses from teachers who have used the book; thanks to all for that valuable assistance. Some of my old friends on Lantra-L pitched in for the second edition, offering often lengthy disquisitions on what should be added, subtracted, or updated, especially in the area of translation memory. Thanks in particular (in alphabetical order) to Enrica Ardemagni, Michelle Asselin, Michael Benis, Manon Bergeron, Tony Crawford, Helen Elliott, Maureen Garelick, Sharon

Grevet, and Kirk McElhearn. For the third edition, thanks go to my new friends in Hong Kong and Guangdong Province, especially Martha Cheung and John Wang; also, since my work as a translator since the second edition has moved entirely over into the literary, Dorothy Kenny updated the sections on translation technology.

Introduction

> The present-day rapid development of science and technology, as well as the continuous growth of cultural, economic, and political relations between nations, have confronted humanity with exceptional difficulties in the assimilation of useful and necessary information. No way has yet been found to solve the problems in overcoming language barriers and of accelerated assimilation of scientific and technological achievements by either the traditional or modern methods of teaching. A new approach to the process of teaching and learning is, therefore, required if the world is to meet the needs of today and tomorrow.
>
> Georgi Lozanov, *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy* (1971)

The study of translation and the training of professional translators is without question an integral part of the explosion of both intercultural relations and the transmission of scientific and technological knowledge; the need for a new approach to the process of teaching and learning is certainly felt in translator and interpreter training programs around the world as well. How best to bring student translators up to speed, in the literal sense of helping them to learn and to translate rapidly and effectively? How best to get them both to retain the linguistic and cultural knowledge and to master the learning and translation skills they will need to be effective professionals?

At present the prevailing pedagogical assumptions in translator training programs are (1) that there is no substitute for practical experience – to learn how to translate one must translate, translate, translate – and (2) that there is no way to accelerate that process without damaging students' ability to detect errors in their own work. Faster is generally better in the professional world, where faster translators – provided that they continue to translate accurately – earn more money; but it is generally not considered better in the pedagogical world, where faster learners are thought to be necessarily careless, sloppy, or superficial.

This book is grounded in a simultaneous acceptance of assumption (1) *and* rejection of assumption (2). There is no substitute for practical experience, and translator training programs should continue to provide their students with as much of it as they can. But there are ways of accelerating that process that do not simply foster bad work habits.

The methodological shift involved is from a pedagogy that places primary emphasis on conscious analysis to a pedagogy that balances conscious analysis with subliminal discovery and assimilation. The more consciously, analytically, rationally, logically and systematically a subject is presented to students, and the more consciously and analytically they are expected to process the materials presented, the more slowly those materials are internalized.

And this is often a good thing. Professional translators need to be able to slow down to examine a problematic word or phrase or syntactic structure or cultural assumption painstakingly, with full analytical awareness of the problem and its possible solutions. Slow analysis is also a powerful source of new knowledge. Without the kinds of problems that slow the translation process down to a snail's pace, the translator would quickly fall into a rut.

The premise of this book is, however, that in the professional world slow, painstaking, analytical learning is the exception rather than the rule – and should be in the academic world of translator training as well. All humans learn better, faster, more effectively, more naturally, and more enjoyably through rapid and holistic subliminal channels. Conscious, analytical learning is a useful *check* on more efficient learning channels; it is not, or at least it should not be, the only or even main channel through which material is presented.

This book, therefore, is set up to shuttle between the two extremes of subliminal or unconscious learning, the "natural" way people learn outside of class, and conscious, analytical learning, the "artificial" way people are traditionally taught in class. As teaching methods move away from traditional analytical modes, learning speeds up and becomes more enjoyable and more effective; as it approaches the subliminal extreme, students learn enormous quantities of material at up to ten times the speed of traditional methods while hardly even noticing that they're learning anything. Because learning is unconscious, it seems they haven't learned anything; to their surprise, however, they can perform complicated tasks much more rapidly and confidently and accurately than they ever believed possible.

Effective as these subliminal methods are, however, they are also somewhat mindless, in the sense of involving very little critical reflection, metathinking or testing of material against experience or reason. Translators need to be able to process linguistic materials quickly and efficiently; but they also need to be able to recognize problem areas and to slow down to solve them in complex analytical ways. The main reason for integrating conscious with subliminal teaching methods is that learners need to be able to test and challenge the materials and patterns that they sublimate so quickly and effectively. Translators need to be able to shuttle back and forth between rapid subliminal translating and slow, painstaking critical analysis – which means not only that they should be trained to do both, but that their training should embody the shuttle movement between the two, subliminal-becoming-analytical, analytical-becoming-subliminal. Translators need to be able not only to perform both subliminal speed-translating and conscious analytical problem-solving,

but also to shift from one to the other when the situation requires it (and also to recognize when the situation does require it).

Hence the rather strange look of some of the chapters, and especially the exercises at the end of the chapters. Teachers and students accustomed to traditional analytical pedagogies will probably shy away at first from critical perspectives and hands-on exercises designed to develop subliminal skills. And this critical caution is a good thing: it is part of the shuttle movement from subliminal to conscious processing.

The topics for discussion that precede the exercises at the end of every chapter are in fact designed to foster just this sort of critical skepticism about the claims made in the chapter. Students should be given a chance both to experience the power of subliminal learning and translating and to question the nature and impact of what they are experiencing. Subliminal functioning without critical self-awareness quickly becomes mind-numbing mechanical routine; analytical critiques without rich playful experience quickly become inert scholasticism.

The primary course for which this textbook is intended is the introduction to the theory and practice of translation. Such introductory courses are designed to give undergraduate (and, in some cases, graduate) students an overall view of what translators do and how translation is studied. To these ends the book is full of practical details regarding the professional activities of translators, and in Chapters 5–9 it offers ways of integrating a whole series of theoretical perspectives on translation, from psychological theories in Chapter 5, through terminological theories in Chapter 6, linguistic theories in Chapter 7, and social theories in Chapter 8, to cultural theories in Chapter 9.

In addition, however, the exercises are designed not only to teach *about* translation but to help students translate better as well; and the book might also be used as supplementary material in practical translation seminars. Since the book is not written for a specific language combination, the teacher will have to do some work to adapt the exercises to the specific language combination in which the students are working; while suggestions are given on how this might be done, it would be impossible to anticipate the specific needs of individual students in countries around the world. If this requires more active and creative input from teachers, it also allows teachers more latitude to adapt the book's exercises to their students' needs.

Since most translators traditionally (myself included) were not trained for the job, and many still undergo no formal training even today, I have also set up the book for self-study. Readers not currently enrolled in, or employed to teach in, translator training programs can benefit from the book by reading the chapters and doing the exercises that do not require group work. Many of the exercises designed for group work can easily be adapted for individuals. The main thing is *doing* the exercises and not just thinking about them. Thought experiments work only when they are truly experiments and not just reflection upon what this or that experiment might be like.

Suggestions for further reading

Kiraly (1995, 2000), Kussmaul (1995), Pym (1993)

1 External knowledge: the user's view

In this chapter: Translation can be perceived from the outside, from the client's or other user's point of view, or from the inside, from the translator's point of view; and while this book mainly takes the translator's perspective, it is useful to begin with a sense of what our clients and users need and why. Not only are our clients "non-translators with money" (the source of our income); a highly simplified version of their demands (equivalence) has formed the basis for most prescriptive approaches to translation, and it's good to identify those approaches as grounded in clients' expectations.

Internal and external knowledge

Translation is different things for different groups of people. For people who are not translators, it is primarily a text; for people who are, it is primarily an activity. Or, as Anthony Pym (1993: 131, 149–50) puts it, from the perspective of "external knowledge" (the knowledge of non-translators) translation is a text; from the perspective of "internal knowledge" (translators) translation is an activity that aims at the *production* of a text.

From the translator's internal perspective, the activity is most important: the process of becoming a translator, receiving and handling requests to do specific translations, doing research, networking, translating words, phrases, and registers, editing the translation, delivering the finished text to the employer or client, billing the client for work completed, getting paid. The text is an important part of that process, of course – even, perhaps, the most important part – but it is never the whole thing. From the non-translator's external perspective, the text as product or commodity is most important. And while this book is primarily concerned with (and certainly written from and for) the translator's internal knowledge, and thus with the activity of translating – it is, after all, a textbook for student translators – it will be useful to explore the complexities of an external perspective briefly here in Chapter 1, if only to distinguish it clearly from the more translator-oriented approach of the rest of the book. A great deal of thinking and teaching about translation in the past has been controlled by what is essentially external knowledge, text-oriented approaches that one might have thought of greater interest to non-translators than translators – so much, in fact, that these external perspectives have in many ways come to dominate the field.

Internal	External
A translator thinks and talks about translation from inside the process, knowing how it's done, possessing a practical real-world sense of the problems involved, some solutions to those problems, and the limitations on those solutions (the translator knows, for example, that no translation will ever be a perfectly reliable guide to the original).	A non-translator (especially a monolingual reader in the target language who directly or indirectly pays for the translation – a client, a book-buyer) thinks and talks about translation from outside the process, not knowing how it's done but knowing, as Samuel Johnson once said of the non-carpenter, a well-made cabinet when s/he sees one.

Ironically enough, traditional approaches to translation based on the non-translating user's need for a certain kind of text have tended only to focus on one of the user's needs: reliability (often called "equivalence" or "fidelity"). A fully user-oriented approach to translation would recognize that *timeliness* and *cost* are equally important factors. Let us consider these three aspects of translation as perceived from the outside – translation users' desire to have a text translated *reliably*, *rapidly*, and *cheaply* – in turn.

Reliability

Translation users need to be able to rely on translation. They need to be able to use the translation as a reliable basis for action, in the sense that if they take action in the belief that the translation gives them the kind of information they need about the original, that action will not fail *because* of the translation. And they need to be able to trust the translator to act in reliable ways, delivering reliable translations by deadlines, getting whatever help is needed to meet those deadlines, and being flexible and versatile in serving the user's needs. Let's look at these two aspects of translation reliability separately.

Textual reliability

A text's reliability consists in the trust a user can place in it, or encourage others to place in it, as a representation or reproduction of the original. To put that differently, a text's reliability consists in the user's willingness to base future actions on an assumed relation between the original and the translation.

For example, if the translation is of a tender, the user is most likely the company to which the tender has been made. "Reliability" in this case would mean that the

translation accurately represents the exact nature of the tender; what the company needs from the translation is a reliable basis for action, i.e., a rendition that meticulously details every aspect of the tender that is relevant to deciding whether to accept it. If the translation is done in-house, or if the client gives an agency or freelancer specific instructions, the translator may be in a position to summarize certain paragraphs of lesser importance, while doing painstakingly close readings of certain other paragraphs of key importance.

Or again, if the translation is of a literary classic, the user may be a teacher or student in a class that is reading and discussing the text. If the class is taught in a mother tongue or comparative literature department, "reliability" may mean that the users agree to act as if the translation really were the original text. For this purpose a translation that reads as if it had originally been written in the target language will probably suffice. If the class is an upper-division or graduate course taught in a modern-language or classics department, "reliability" may mean that the translation follows the exact syntactic contours of the original, and thus helps students to read a difficult text in a foreign language. For this purpose, various "cribs" or "interlinears" are best – like those New Testament translations published for the benefit of seminary students of Greek who want to follow the original Greek text word for word, with the translation of each word printed directly under the word it renders.

Or if the translation is of advertising copy, the user may be the marketing department in the mother company or a local dealer, both of whom will presumably expect the translation "reliably" to sell products or services without making impossible or implausible or illegal claims; or it may be prospective customers, who may expect the translation to represent the product or service advertised reliably, in the sense that, if they should purchase one, they would not feel that the translation had misrepresented the actual service or product obtained.

As we saw above, this discussion of a text's reliability is venturing into the territory traditionally called "accuracy" or "equivalence" or "fidelity." These terms are in fact shorthand for a wide variety of reliabilities that govern the user's external perspectives on translation. There are many different types of textual reliability; there is no single touchstone for a reliable translation, certainly no single simple formula for abstract semantic (let alone syntactic) "equivalence" that can be applied easily and unproblematically in every case. All that matters to the non-translating user is that the translation be reliable in more or less the way s/he expects (sometimes unconsciously): accurate or effective or some combination of the two; painfully literal or easily readable in the target language or somewhere in the middle; reliable for her or his specific purposes.

A text that meets those demands will be called a "good" or "successful" translation, period, even if another user, with different expectations, might consider it bad or unsuccessful; a text considered a failure by some users, because it doesn't meet their reliability needs, might well be hailed as brilliant, innovative, sensitive, or highly accurate by others.

It is perhaps unfortunate, but probably inevitable, that the norms and standards appropriate for one group of users or use situations should be generalized to apply to all. Because some users demand literal translations, for example, the idea spreads that a translation that is not literal is no translation at all; and because some users demand semantic (sense-for-sense) equivalence, the idea spreads that a translation that charts its own semantic path is no translation at all.

Thus a free retelling of a children's classic may be classified as an "adaptation" rather than a translation; and an advertising translation that deviates strikingly from the original in order to have the desired impact on target readers or viewers (i.e., selling products or services) may be thought of as a "new text" rather than as an advertising translation.

Each translation user, limited to the perspective of her or his own situational needs, may quite casually fall into the belief that those needs aren't situational at all, indeed aren't her or his needs at all, but simply the nature of translation itself. *All* translation is thus-and-such – because *this* translation needs to be – and how different can different translations be? The fact that they can be very different indeed is often lost on users who believe their own expectations to be the same as everyone else's.

This mistaken belief is almost certainly the source of the quite widespread notion that "fidelity," in the sense of an exact one-to-one correspondence between original and translation, is the only goal of translation. The notion arises when translation is thought of exclusively as a product or commodity (rather than as an activity or process), and when the reliability of that product is thought of narrowly in terms of exact correspondence between texts (rather than situated pragmatic reliability).

Reliably translated texts cover a wide range from the lightly edited to the substantially rewritten, with the "accurate" or "faithful" translation somewhere in the middle; there is no room in the world of professional translation for the theoretical stance that only straight sense-for-sense translation *is* translation, therefore as a translator I should never be expected to edit, summarize, annotate, or re-create a text.

While some effort at user education is probably worthwhile, it is usually easier for translators simply to shift gears, find out (or figure out) what the user wants or needs or expects, and provide that – without attempting to enlighten the user about the variability and volatility of such expectations. Many times clients' demands are unreasonable, unrealistic, even impossible – as when the marketing manager of a company going international demands that an advertising campaign in fourteen different languages be identical to the original, and that the translators in all fourteen languages show that this demand has been met by providing literal back-translations of their work. Then the translators have to decide whether they are willing to undertake the job at all; and if so, whether they can figure out a way to do it that satisfies the client without quite meeting her or his unreasonable demands.

For the hard fact is that translators, with all their internal knowledge, can rarely afford to ignore the external perspectives of non-translators, who are, after all, the source of our income. As Anthony Pym (1993: 149) notes wryly, in conversation

with a client it makes little sense to stress the element of creative interpretation present in all translation; this will only create misunderstandings. From the client's external point of view, "creative interpretation" spells flagrant distortion of the original, and thus an unreliable text; from the translator's internal point of view, "creative interpretation" signals the undeniable fact that all text-processing involves some degree of interpretation and thus some degree of creativity, and beyond that, the translator's sense that every target language is more or less resistant to his or her activities.

Types of text reliability

1 Literalism
The translation follows the original word for word, or as close to that ideal as possible. The syntactic structure of the source text is painfully evident in the translation.

2 Foreignism
The translation reads fairly fluently but has a slightly alien feel. One can tell, reading it, that it is a translation, not an original work.

3 Fluency
The translation is so accessible and readable for the target reader as to seem like an original in the target language. It never makes the reader stop and reflect that this is in fact a translation.

4 Summary
The translation covers the main points or "gist" of the original.

5 Commentary
The translation unpacks or unfolds the hidden complexities of the original, exploring at length implications that remain unstated or half-stated in the original.

6 Summary-commentary
The translation summarizes some passages briefly while commenting closely on others. The passages in the original that most concern the user are unpacked; the less important passages are summarized.

7 Adaptation
The translation recasts the original so as to have the desired impact on an audience that is substantially different from that of the original; as when an adult

text is adapted for children, a written text is adapted for television, or an advertising campaign designed to associate a product with sophistication uses entirely different images of sophistication in the source and target languages.

8 Encryption
The translation recasts the original so as to hide its meaning or message from one group while still making it accessible to another group, which possesses the key.

The translator's reliability

But the text is not the only important element of reliability for the user; the translator too must be reliable. Notice that this list is closely related to the traditional demand that the translator be "accurate," and indeed contains that demand within it, under "Attention to detail," but that it is a much more demanding conception of reliability than merely the expectation that the translator's work be "correct." The best synonym for the translator's reliability would not be "correctness" but "professionalism": the reliable translator in every way comports himself or herself like a professional. A client that asks for a summary and receives a "correct" or "faithful" translation will not call the translator reliable – in fact will probably not call the translator ever again. A sensitive and versatile translator will recognize when a given task requires something besides straight "accuracy" – various forms of summary or commentary or adaptation, various kinds of imaginative re-creation – and, if the client has not made these instructions explicit, will confirm this hunch before beginning work.

When accuracy alone is wide of the mark . . .
(by Michael Benis)

Accuracy is essential to a good translation, but it cannot guarantee that a text will be effective.

Writing practices vary greatly between countries for everything from technical manuals to speeches and ads. Meaning that reader expectations also differ, causing the clarity and effectiveness of the text to suffer if it is not rewritten to suit.

You gain significant benefits, including cost-efficiency, when this is done at the same time as the translation. But most important of all, you can be sure the rewriting will not take the meaning too far away from the original – as in a game of "Chinese whispers."

This naturally costs more than a "straight translation." But when you consider that product differentiation is so often image-based in today's mature markets, it is an investment that far outweighs the potential losses.

Few things impact on your image as much as the effectiveness of your communications. Make sure they are in safe hands.

http://www.michaelbenis.cwc.net/trans.htm

Aspects of translator reliability

Reliability with regard to the text

1 Attention to detail
The translator is meticulous in her attention to the contextual and collocational nuances of each word and phrase she uses.

2 Sensitivity to the user's needs
The translator listens closely to the user's special instructions regarding the type of translation desired, understands those instructions quickly and fully, and strives to carry them out exactly and flexibly.

3 Research
The translator does not simply "work around" words she doesn't know, by using a vague phrase that avoids the problem or leaving a question mark where the word would go, but does careful research, in reference books, Internet databases and other web-based research, and through phone calls and email inquiries.

4 Checking
The translator checks her work closely, and if there is any doubt (as when she translates into a foreign language) has a translation checked by an expert before delivery to the client. (The translator also knows when there is any doubt.)

Reliability with regard to the client

5 Versatility
The translator is versatile enough to translate texts outside her area of specialization, out of languages she doesn't feel entirely competent in (always having such work checked, of course), in manners she has never tried. (The translator also knows when she can handle a novel task and when something is simply beyond her abilities and needs to be politely refused.)

6 Promises
The translator knows her own abilities and schedule and working habits well enough to make realistic promises to clients or agencies regarding delivery dates and times, and then keeps those promises; or, if pressing circumstances make it impossible to meet a deadline, calls the client or agency and renegotiates the time frame or arranges for someone else to finish the job.

7 Friendliness
The translator is friendly and helpful on the phone or in person, is pleasant to speak or be with, has a sense of humor, offers helpful advice (such as who to call for that one page of Estonian or Urdu), doesn't offer unhelpful advice, etc.

8 Confidentiality
The translator will not disclose confidential matters learned through the process of translation (or negotiation) to third parties.

Reliability with regard to technology

9 Hardware and software
The translator owns a late-model computer, a recent version of Microsoft Word, an Internet connection, an e-mail address, and a scanner, and either owns and uses regularly, or is prepared to purchase and learn how to use, translation-memory software specified by the client.

Clearly, however, the translator's reliability greatly exceeds the specific operations performed on texts. Clients and agencies want freelancers who will produce *reliable texts*, texts that they won't have to edit substantially after they arrive; but they also want freelancers who will produce *texts reliably*, on time and otherwise as promised, using the requested word-processing and/or translation-memory software, with proper formatting if so requested, and so on. They want to work with people who are pleasant and professional and helpful on the phone, asking competent, knowledgeable questions, making quick and businesslike decisions, even making reasonable demands that cause extra work for them, such as "please scan and email me the whole thing, including illustrations, and I'll call you within ten minutes to let you know whether I can do it." A freelancer who can't take a job but can suggest someone else for the client or agency to call will probably get another job from the same client or agency later; an abrupt, impatient freelancer who treats the caller as an unwanted interruption and just barely has time to say "No" before hanging up may not. Given a choice between two producers of reliable texts in a given language combination, who would not rather call someone pleasant than someone unpleasant?

Timeliness

But it is not enough for the user of a translation that both it and its creator be reliable; it must also be timely, in the sense of not arriving past the time of its usefulness or value. Timeliness is most flexible in the case of literary or Biblical translations, which are supposedly timeless; in fact, of course, they are not timeless but simply exist in a greatly extended time frame. The King James Version of the Bible is still in use after four centuries; but even it is not timeless. It has been replaced in many churches with newer translations; and even in the most conservative churches it is difficult to imagine it still in use a thousand or two thousand years hence. Sooner or later the time will come when it too will have had its day. Timeliness is least flexible when the translation is tied to a specific dated use situation.

Just to speak from the agency end of things: I have on file plenty of resumes of translators in all kinds of languages. Who do I send the work to?

1 the person who keeps phoning up and nudging me if I have any work for him. He shows he wants to do work for me so that means more to me than someone who just sends a resume who I never hear from again.
2 the person who accepts a reasonable rate and doesn't badger for higher prices.
3 the person who does (a) great work, (b) quickly, and (c) needs little if no editing work on his translation.
4 the person who has the main word-processing programs used by most clients, a fax and preferably a modem.
5 a pleasant, nice to deal with person.

(1) is usually important for me to take notice of a translator. (2,3,4,5) are necessary for me to keep going back to that person. Of course, if you need a certain translation combination in a certain topic and have few translators who can handle it, you'll turn to those translators notwithstanding their faults.

Miriam Samsonowitz

* * * * *

We might work differently, Miriam, but I would hate to be disturbed by someone who calls me continuously. I could tell fairly well how good the person is as a translator, and if I

want to use her/his services, I would often send her/him a sample (and pay for it).

Sincerely Gloria Wong

* * * * *

Maybe it's a cultural question. In some countries, Miriam's position is not only dead on, but essential for the survival of the person doing the nudging. In such cultures, both parties accept that and are used (or resigned) to it. In others, such "nudging" would definitely be seen by both parties as pestering, and you'll get further by using the "humble" approach. I think Canada is somewhere near the middle – you can nudge a bit, but not too much. The U.S. is perhaps a bit more towards the nudging end – you have to really go after what you want, and persistence is considered a virtue and tends to get a positive response. But even there, there is such a word as obnoxious.

Werner Maurer[1]

A provincial governor in Finland is entertaining guests from Kenya, and wants to address them in English; his English is inadequate to the task, so he writes up a one-page speech in Finnish and has it translated into English. Clearly, if the translation is not timely, if it is made after the luncheon engagement, it is useless. As often happens, the governor is too busy to write up the speech in good time before it is to be read; he finishes it on the morning of the luncheon, and his staff immediately start calling around to local translators to find one who can translate the one-page document before noon. An English lecturer at the university promises to do the job; a courier brings him the text and sits in his office while he translates, waiting to carry the finished text back to the governor's office.

A Chinese iron foundry is seeking to modernize its operations, and in response to its queries receives five bids: one from Japan, two from the United States, one from Spain, and one from Egypt. As requested, all five bids are in English, which

1 All of the boxed translator discussions in this book are taken from Lantra-L, an Internet discussion group for translators. To subscribe to it, send a message to listserv@segate.sunet.se saying only SUBSCRIBE LANTRA-L YOUR NAME. The Lantra-L archives are stored on the World Wide Web at http://segate.sunet.se/cgi-bin/wa?A0=LANTRA-L, and all of the passages quoted here with permission from their authors can be found there. For subscription information to other translator listservs, see [URL].

the directors can read adequately. When the bids arrive, however, the directors discover that their English is not sufficient; in particular the bids from Japan, Spain, and Egypt, since they were written by non-native speakers of English, pose insuperable difficulties for the directors. With a ten-day deadline looming before them, they decide to have the five bids translated into standard (Putonghua or Mandarin) Chinese. Since they will need at least four days to read and assess the bids, they need to find enough translators to translate a total of over 20,000 words in six days. A team of English professors and their students from the university undertake the task, with time off their teaching and studying.

One of the most common complaints translators make about this quite reasonable demand of timeliness is that all too often clients are unaware of the time it takes to do a translation. Since they have written proposals or bids themselves, they think nothing of allowing their own people two weeks to write a forty-page document; since they have never translated anything, they expect a translator to translate this document in two days. The frustrating slowness of translation (as of all text-production) is one of several factors that fuel dreams of machine translation: just as computers can do calculations in nanoseconds that it would take humans hours, days, weeks to do, so too would the ideal translation machine translate in minutes a text that took five people two weeks to write. User-oriented thought about translation is product-driven: one begins with the desired end result, in this case meeting a very short deadline, and then orders it done. How it is done, at what human cost, is a secondary issue. If in-house translators regularly complain about ungodly workloads before critical deadlines, if agencies keep trying to educate you regarding the difficulty and slowness of translation, you begin to shop around for machine-translation software, or perhaps commission a university to build one especially for your company. The main thing is that the translations be done reliably and quickly (and cheaply – more of that in a moment). If human translators take too long, explore computer solutions. (See the discussion on Google Translate in Chapter 2.)

It is not often recognized that the demand for timeliness is very similar to the demand for reliability, and thus to the theoretical norm of equivalence or fidelity. Indeed, timeliness is itself a form of reliability: when one's conception of translation is product-driven, all one asks of the process is that it be reliable, in the complex sense of creating a solidly trustworthy product on demand (and not costing too much). We need it *now*. And it has to be *good*. If a human translator can do it rapidly and reliably, fine; if not, make me a machine that can.

This is not to say that a product-driven user-orientation is pernicious or evil. It often seems callous to the translator who is asked to perform like a machine, working long hours at repetitive and uninspiring tasks, and expected not to complain (indeed,

to be grateful for the work). But it is important not to become narcissistic in this. Translators are not the only ones working long hours at uninspiring tasks. Indeed the people who expect translations to be done reliably and rapidly are often putting in long exhausting hours themselves. The reality of any given situation, especially but not exclusively in the business world, is typically that an enormous quantity of work needs to be done immediately, preferably yesterday, and there are never enough hands or eyes or brains to do it. Yes, in an ideal world no one would have to do boring, uninspiring work; until someone builds a world like that, however, we are stuck in this one, where deadlines all too often seem impossible to meet.

What we can do, as translators and translation teachers, is to reframe the question of speed from an internal viewpoint, a translator-orientation. How can we enhance the translator's speed without simply mechanizing it? More on this in the next chapter.

Cost

Reliably, rapidly – and above all *cheaply*. Cost controls virtually all translation. A translation that the client considers too expensive will not be done. A translation that the translator considers too cheap may not get done either, if the translator has a strong enough sense of self-worth, or an accurate enough sense of the market, to refuse to work virtually for free. Private persons with a book they would like translated and no knowledge of the market may call a translator and ask how much it would cost to have the book translated; when they hear the ballpark figure they are typically shocked. "I was thinking maybe a couple hundred! Certainly not five thousand!" Where translators are professionally unorganized – as they are in most of the world – a small group of quasi-professional translators can undercut professional translators' fees and make those fees seem exorbitant, even when by translating at those market rates 40–60 hours per week a translator can just barely stay above the poverty line. When "quality" or reliability suffers as a result (and it almost always does), it is easy to blame the result on all translators, on the profession as a whole.

Conclusion

From a user's "external" point of view, obviously, the ideal translation would be utterly reliable, available immediately, and free. Like most ideals, this one is impossible. Nothing is utterly reliable, everything takes time, and there ain't no such thing as a free lunch.

Even in a less than ideal world, however, one can still hope for the best possible *realistic* outcome: a translation that is reasonably reliable, delivered in good time before the deadline, and relatively inexpensive. Unfortunately, even these lowered expectations are often unreasonable, and trade-offs have to be considered:

- *The closer one attempts to come to perfect reliability, the more the translation will cost and the longer it will take* (two or three translators, each of whom checks the others' work, will improve reliability and speed while adding cost and time).
- *The shorter the time span allowed for the translation, the more it will cost and the harder it will be to guarantee reliability* (one translator who puts aside all other work to do a job quickly will charge a rush fee, and in her rush and mounting exhaustion may make – and fail to catch – stupid mistakes; a group of translators will cost more, and may introduce terminological inconsistencies).
- *The less one is willing to pay for a translation, the harder it will be to ensure reliability and to protect against costly delays* (the only translators willing to work at a cut rate are non-professionals whose language, research, translation, and editing skills may be wholly inadequate to the job; a non-professional working alone may also take ill and not be able to tell another translator how to pick up where s/he left off, or may lack the professional discipline needed to set and maintain a pace that will ensure timely completion).

These real-world limitations on the user's dream of instant reliable translation free of charge are the translator's professional salvation. If users could get exactly what they wanted, they either would not need us or would be able to dictate the nature and cost of our labor without the slightest consideration for our needs. Because we need to get paid for doing work that we enjoy, we must be willing to meet non-translating users' expectations wherever possible; but because those expectations can never be met perfectly, users must be willing to meet us halfway as well. Any user who wants a reliable translation will have to pay market rates for it and allow a reasonable time period for its completion; anyone who wants a reliable translation faster than that will have to pay above market rates. This is simple economics; and users understand economics. We provide an essential service; the products we create are crucial for the smooth functioning of the world economy, politics, the law, medicine, and so on; much as users may dream of bypassing the trade-offs of real-world translating, then, they remain dependent on what we do, and must adjust to the realities of that situation.

> I wonder if anyone on the list has had an experience similar to mine. I work at a large company on a contract basis. I've been with them, off and on, for over 2.5 years now. At present, I work full-time, some part-time, and often – overtime. The work load is steady, and they see that the need in my services is constant. They refuse to hire me permanently, though. Moreover, they often hire people who are engineers, bilingual, but without linguistic skills or translator credentials, or

> abilities. The management doesn't seem to care about the quality of translation, even though they have had a chance to find out the difference between accurate translation and sloppy language, because it has cost them time and money to unravel some of the mistakes of those pseudo-translators.
>
> I know that I will be extraordinarily lucky if they ever decide to hire me on a permanent basis. Ethically, I can't tell them that the work of other people is . . . hm . . . substandard. Most engineers with whom I have been working closely know what care I take to convey the material as accurately as possible, and how much more efficient the communication becomes when they have a good translator. I also know that it is supposed to be a part of translator's job to educate his/her clients. I tried that. . . . <sigh.>
>
> Rina

This is not to say that we are in charge, that we are in a position to dictate terms, or that we can ever afford to ignore users' dreams and expectations. If users want to enhance reliability while increasing speed and decreasing cost, we had better be aware of those longings and plan for them. This book doesn't necessarily offer such a plan; such a plan may not even exist yet. What it offers instead is a translator-oriented approach to the field, one that begins with what translators actually do and how they feel about doing it – without ever forgetting the realities of meeting users' needs. In Chapter 2 I will be redefining from the translator's perspective the territory we have been exploring here in Chapter 1: the importance of reliability, income, and *enjoyment*, that last a subjective translator experience that is completely irrelevant to users but may mean the difference between a productive career and burnout.

Discussion

1. The ethics of translation has often been thought to consist of the translator assuming an entirely external perspective on his or her work, thinking about it purely from the user's point of view: thinking, for example, that accuracy is the only possible goal of translation; that the translator has no right to a personal opinion or interpretation; that the finished product, the translated text, is the only thing that matters. What other ethical considerations are important? Is it possible to allow translators their full humanity – their opinions, interpretations, likes and dislikes, enthusiasms and boredoms – while still insisting on ethical professional behavior that meets users' expectations?

2. Translators are usually, and understandably, hostile toward machine-translation systems, which promise clients enormous increases in speed at a fraction of the cost of human translation. Translators typically point to the low quality or reliability of machine-translated texts, but in some technical fields, where style is not a high priority, the use of constrained source languages (specially written so as to be unambiguous for machine parsing) makes reliability possible along with speed and low cost. How should translators meet this challenge? Translate faster and charge less? Retrain to become pre- and post-editors of machine-translation texts? Learn to translate literature?

Exercises

1. List the stereotyped character traits of your country, your region, your group (gender, class, race, education level, etc.). Next list user-oriented ideals for the translator – the personal characteristics that would make a translator "good" or "reliable" in the eyes of a non-translating employer or client. Now compare the lists, paying special attention to the mismatches – the character traits that would make people like you "unqualified" for the translation field – and discuss the transformations that would be required in either the people who want to be translators or in society's thinking about translation to make you a good translator.
2. Dramatize a scene in the conference room of a large international corporation that needs a text translated into the executives' native language by a certain date. What are the parameters of the discussion? What are the main issues? What are the pressures and the worries? Try to perceive translation as much as possible from this "external" point of view.
3. Work in small groups to list as many different types of translation user (including the same user in different use situations) as you can. Then identify the type of text reliability that each would be likely to favor – what each would want a "good" translation to do, or be like.
4. Break up into groups of three, in each group a source-language user, a target-language user, and a translator. Take a translation use-situation from this chapter and try to negotiate (a) who is going to commission and pay for the translation, the source or target user or both (who stands to benefit most from it? which user has economic power over the other?) and (b) how much money is available to pay the translator (will the translator, who is a professional, do it for that money?).

Suggestions for further reading

Introductions to translating: Anderman *et al*. (2003), Gutt (1992), Hewson and Martin (1991), Pym (1992a, 1993, 1995)

The translation marketplace: Holz-Mänttäri (1984), Nord (1991, 1997)

Translator handbooks: Fuller (1973), Hatim and Munday (2004), Jones (1997), Picken (1989), Samuelsson-Brown (1993/2010), Sofer (1996/2009)

Translation technology: Bowker (2002), Trujillo (1999)

Translation practices explained: Alcaraz and Hughes (2002), Austermühl (2001), Dias Cinta and Remael (2007), Gillies (2005), Kelly (2005), Mayoral Asensio (2003), Mikkelson (2000a), Montalt and Gonzalez Davis (2007), Mossop (2001/2007), Romero-Fresco (2011), Torresi (2010), Wagner *et al*. (2002)

2 Internal knowledge: the translator's view

In this chapter: While translators must meet the needs of translation users in order to make a living, it is also important for them to integrate those needs into a translator-oriented perspective on the work, seeing the reliability that users demand in the larger context of professional pride (including also involvement in the profession and ethics); seeing the timeliness users want in terms of enhanced income, requiring speed (various technological tools) but also connected to project management and raising the status of the profession; and insisting on the importance of actually enjoying the work.

Who are translators?

What does it take to be a translator or interpreter? What kind of person would even want to, let alone be able to, sit at a computer or in court day after day turning words and phrases in one language into words and phrases in another? Isn't this an awfully tedious and unrewarding profession?

It can be. For many people it is. Some people who love it initially get tired of it, burn out on it, and move on to other endeavors. Others can only do it on the side, a few hours a day or a week or even a month: they are writers or teachers or editors by day, but for an hour every evening, or for an afternoon one or two Saturdays a month, they translate, sometimes for money, sometimes for fun, mostly (one hopes) for both. If a really big job comes along and the timing and money are right, they will spend a whole week translating, eight to ten hours a day; but at the end of that week they feel completely drained and are ready to go back to their regular work.

Other people, possibly even the majority (though to my knowledge there are no statistics on this), translate full time – and don't burn out. How do they do it? What skills do they possess that makes it possible for them to "become" doctors, lawyers, engineers, poets, business executives, even if only briefly and on the computer screen? Are they talented actors who feel comfortable shifting from role to role?

How do they know so much about specialized vocabularies? Are they walking dictionaries and encyclopedias? Are they whizzes at *Trivial Pursuit*?

These are the questions we'll be exploring throughout the book; but briefly, yes, translators and (especially) interpreters do all have something of the actor in them, the mimic, the impersonator, and they do develop remarkable recall skills that will enable them to remember a word (often in a foreign language) that they have heard

only once. Translators and interpreters are voracious and omnivorous readers, people who are typically in the middle of four books at once, in several languages, fiction and nonfiction, technical and humanistic subjects, anything and everything.

They are hungry for real-world experience as well, through travel, living abroad for extended periods, learning foreign languages and cultures, and above all paying attention to how people use language all around them: the plumber, the kids' teachers, the convenience-store clerk, the doctor, the bartender, friends and colleagues from this or that region or social class, and so on. Translation is often called a profession of second choice: many translators were first professionals in other fields, sometimes several other fields in succession, and only turned to translation when they lost or quit those jobs or moved to a country where they were unable to practice them; as translators they often mediate between former colleagues in two or more different language communities. Any gathering of translators is certain to be a diverse group, not only because well over half of the people there will be from different countries, and almost all will have lived abroad, and all will shift effortlessly in conversation from language to language, but because by necessity translators and interpreters carry a wealth of different "selves" or "personalities" around inside them, ready to be reconstructed on the computer screen whenever a new text arrives, or out into the airwaves whenever a new speaker steps up to the podium. A crowd of translators always seems much bigger than the actual bodies present.

My father worked for the international area of a major Brazilian bank. As a consequence, I lived in 8 countries and 10 cities between the ages of 1 and 19. My parents learned the languages of the places we lived in "on location." My father never wanted us (my 3 brothers and I) to study in American or French schools (which can be found anywhere), but instead forced us to learn and study in the language of the place. My parents encouraged travel and language studies, and since I was 14, I traveled alone throughout Europe. I learned the 3Rs in Spanish, did high school in Italian and Portuguese. In Luxembourg, I studied at the European School in three languages at the same time (French, English, and Italian) and spoke Portuguese at home. Italian used to be choice for girlfriends:-)

The outcome: I speak Portuguese, English, Spanish, Italian, and French and translate from one into the other.

I have always worked with the set of languages I learned in my youth. I have started learning Russian, but I didn't like my teacher's accent. For the future, I plan to study Chinese (I have a brother who lives in Taiwan and a nephew who speaks it fluently).

Renato Beninatto

But then there are non-translators who share many of these same characteristics: diplomats, language teachers, world travelers . . . What special skills make a well-traveled, well-read language lover a translator? Not surprisingly, perhaps, the primary characteristics of a good translator are similar to the expectations translation users have for the ideal translation: a good translator is reliable and fast, and will work for the going rate. From an internal point of view, however, the expectations for translation are rather different than they look from the outside. For the translator, reliability is important mainly as a source of professional pride, which also includes elements that are of little or no significance to translation users; speed is important mainly as a source of increased income, which can be enhanced through other channels as well; and it is extremely important, perhaps even most important of all, that the translator enjoy the work, a factor that is of little significance to outsiders. Let's consider these three "internal" requirements in order: professional pride, income, and enjoyment.

Professional pride

From the user's point of view, it is essential to be able to rely on translation – not only on the text, but on the translator as well, and generally on the entire translation process. Because this is important to the people who pay the bills, it will be important to the translator as well; the pragmatic considerations of keeping your job (for in-house people) or continuing to get offered jobs (for freelancers) will mandate a willingness to satisfy an employer's or client's needs.

But for the translator or interpreter a higher consideration than money or continued employability is professional pride, professional integrity, professional self-esteem. We all want to feel that the job we are doing is important, that we do it well, and that the people we do it for appreciate our work. Most people, in fact, would rather take professional pride in a job that pays less than get rich doing things they don't believe in. Despite the high value placed on making a lot of money (and certainly it would be nice!), a high salary gives little pleasure without pride in the work.

The areas in and through which translators typically take professional pride are reliability, involvement in the profession, and ethics.

Reliability

As we saw in Chapter 1, reliability in translation is largely a matter of meeting the user's needs: translating the texts the user needs translated, in the way the user wants them translated, by the user's deadline. The demands placed on the translator by the attempt to be reliable from the user's point of view are sometimes impossible; sometimes disruptive to the translator's private life; sometimes morally repugnant; often physically and mentally exhausting. If the demands are at all possible, however, in many or even most cases the translator's desire to take professional pride in

reliability will override these other considerations, and s/he will stay up all night doing a rush job, cancel a pleasant evening outing with a friend, or translate a text reliably that s/he finds morally or politically loathsome.

Professional pride in reliability is the main reason we will spend hours hunting down a single term. What is our pay for that time? Virtually nothing. But it feels enormously important to *get it right*: to find exactly the right term, the right spelling, the right phrasing, the right register. Not just because the client expects it; also because if you didn't *do it right*, your professional pride and job satisfaction would be diminished.

Involvement in the profession

It is a matter of little or no concern to translation users, but of great importance to translators, what translator associations or unions we belong to, what translator conferences we go to, what courses we take in the field, how we network with other translators in our region and language pair(s). These "involvements" sometimes help translators translate better, which is important for users and thus for the pride we take in reliability. More crucially, however, they help us feel better about being translators; they enhance our professional self-esteem, which will often sustain us emotionally through boring and repetitive and low-paid jobs. Reading about translation, talking about translation with other translators, discussing problems and solutions related to linguistic transfer, user demands, nonpayment, and the like, taking classes on translation, attending translator conferences, keeping up with technological developments in the field, buying and learning to use new software and hardware – all this gives us the strong sense that we are are not isolated underpaid flunkies but professionals surrounded by other professionals who share our concerns. Involvement in the translation profession may even give us the intellectual tools and professional courage to stand up to unreasonable demands, to educate clients and employers rather than submit meekly and seethe inwardly.

Involvement in the profession helps us realize that translation users need us as much as we need them: they have the money we need; we have the skills they need. And we will sell those skills to them, not abjectly, submissively, wholly on their terms, but from a position of professional confidence and strength.

Ethics

The professional ethics of translation have traditionally been defined very narrowly: it is unethical for the translator to distort the meaning of the source text. As we have seen, this conception of translator ethics is far too narrow even from the user's point of view: there are many cases when the translator is explicitly asked to "distort" the meaning of the source text in specific ways, as when adapting a text for television, a children's book, or an advertising campaign.

From the translator's internal point of view, the ethics of translation are more complicated still. What is the translator to do, for example, when asked to translate a text that s/he finds offensive? Or, to put that differently, how does the translator proceed when professional ethics (loyalty to the person paying for the translation) clash with personal ethics (one's own political and moral beliefs)? What does the feminist translator do when asked to translate a blatantly sexist text? What does the liberal translator do when asked to translate a neo-Nazi text? What does the environmentalist translator do when asked to translate an advertising campaign for an environmentally irresponsible chemical company?

As long as thinking about translation has been entirely dominated by an external (non-translator) point of view, these have been non-questions – questions that have not been asked, indeed that have been unaskable. The translator translates whatever texts s/he is asked to translate, and does so in a way that satisfies the translation user's needs. The translator *has* no personal point of view that has any relevance at all to the act of translation.

From an internal point of view, however, these questions must be asked. Translators are human beings, with opinions, attitudes, beliefs, and feelings. Translators who are regularly required to translate texts that they find abhorrent may be able to suppress their revulsion for a few weeks, or months, possibly even years; but they will not be able to continue suppressing those negative feelings forever. Translators, like all professionals, want to take pride in what they do; if a serious clash between their personal ethics and an externally defined professional ethics makes it difficult or impossible to feel that pride, they will eventually be forced to make dramatic decisions about where and under what conditions they want to work.

And so increasingly translators are beginning to explore new avenues by which to reconcile their ethics as human beings with their work as translators. The Quebecoise feminist translator Susanne Lotbinière-Harwood (1991), for example, tells us that she no longer translates works by men: the pressure is too great to adopt a male voice, and she refuses to be coopted. In her literary translations of works by women she works very hard to help them create a woman-centered language in the target culture as well. In *The Subversive Scribe* Suzanne Jill Levine (1992/2009) tells us that in her translations of flagrantly sexist Latin American male authors, she works – often with the approval and even collaboration of the authors themselves – to subvert their sexism.

This broader "internal" definition of translator ethics is highly controversial. For many translators it is unthinkable to do anything that might harm the interests of the person or group that is paying for the translation (the translation "commissioner" or "initiator"). For other translators, the thought of being rendered utterly powerless to make ethical decisions based on personal commitments or belief structures is equally abhorrent; it feels to some like the Nürnberg "ethics" of the SS, the claim that "we were just obeying orders." When the translator's private ethics clash

substantially with the interests of the commissioner, to what extent can the translator afford to live by those ethics and still go on earning a living? And on the other hand, to what extent can the translator afford to compromise with those ethics and still go on taking professional pride in his or her work?

A British translator living in Brazil who is very active in local and international environmentalist groups is called by an agency with an ongoing job, translating into English everything published in Brazil on smoking. Every week a packet of photocopies arrives, almost all of it based on scientific research in Brazil and elsewhere on the harmful effects of smoking. As a fervent nonsmoker and opponent of the tobacco industry, she is pleased to be translating these texts. The texts are also relatively easy, many of them are slight variations on a single press release, and the money is good.

Gradually, however, ethical doubts begin to gnaw at her. Who in the English-speaking world is so interested in what Brazilians write about smoking, and so rich, as to pay her all this money to have it all in English? And surely this person or group isn't just interested in Brazil; surely she is one of hundreds of translators around the world, one in each country, hired by a local agency to translate everything written on smoking in their countries as well. Who could the ultimate user be but one of the large tobacco companies in the United States or England? She starts paying closer attention, and by reading between the lines is finally able to determine that the commission comes from the biggest tobacco company in the world, one responsible for the destruction of thousands of acres of the Amazon rainforest for the drying of tobacco leaves, a neocolonialist enterprise that has disrupted not only the ecosystem of the rain forest but the economy of the Amazonian Indians. Gradually her ethical doubts turn into distaste for her work: she is essentially helping the largest tobacco company in the world spy on the opposition.

One week, then, a sixty-page booklet comes to her, written by a Brazilian anti-tobacco activist group. It is well researched and wonderfully written; it is a joy to translate. It ends on a plea for support, detailing several ways in which the tobacco industry has undermined its work. Suddenly she realizes what she has to do: she has to give her translation of this booklet, paid for by the tobacco industry, to this group that is fighting this rather lucrative source of her income. Not only would that help them disseminate their research to the English-speaking world; sales of the booklet would provide them with a much-needed source of funding.

So she calls the group, and sets up a meeting; worried about the legality of her action, she also asks their lawyer to determine what if any legal risks she and

they might be taking, and be present at the meeting. When at the meeting she is reassured that it is perfectly legal for her to give them the translation, she hands over the diskette and leaves.

No legal action is ever taken against her, but she never gets another packet in the mail from the agency; that source of income dries up entirely, and instantly. It seems likely that the tobacco company has a spy in the anti-tobacco group, because she is cut off immediately, the same week, perhaps even the same day – not, for instance, months later when the booklet is published in English.

An American translator working in-house at a large translation agency was regularly assigned to translate a single client's advertisements that she felt strongly were demeaning toward women. She worked hard to suppress her resistance to translating these texts as long as she was able, but then could stand it no longer, and went to talk to her boss about being relieved from that assignment. He was sympathetic to her request, in principle, but said that he couldn't spare anyone else in that language pair, and asked her to keep doing those jobs for another six months; then they would reassess the situation.

After another month, the translator found that she simply could not do it any longer. She went on the job market and found another job with a smaller agency, making less money, but doing work that she could believe in, and is much happier now.

Income

Professionals do their work because they enjoy it, because they take pride in it – and also, of course, to earn a living. Professional translators translate for money. And most professional translators (like most professionals of any field) feel that they don't make enough money, and would like to make more. There are at least three ways to do this, two of them short-term strategies, the third long-term: translate faster (especially but not exclusively if you are a freelancer); create your own agency and farm translation jobs out to other freelancers (take a cut for project management); and (the long-term strategy) work to educate clients and the general public about the importance of translation, so that money managers will be more willing to pay premium fees for translation.

Speed

Speed and income are not directly related for all translators. They are for freelancers. The situation is somewhat more complex than this, but basically the faster a freelancer translates, the more money s/he makes. (Obviously, this requires a large volume of incoming jobs; if, having done a job quickly, you have no other work to do, translating faster will not increase your income.)

For in-house translators the links between speed and money are considerably less obvious. Most in-house translators are expected to translate fast, so that employability, and thus income, is complexly related to translation speed. Translation speed is enforced in a variety of unofficial ways, mostly though phone calls and visits from engineers, editors, bosses, and other irate people who want their job done instantly and can't understand why you haven't done it yet. Some in-house translators, however, do translations for other companies in a larger concern, and submit records of billable hours to their company's bookkeeping department; in these cases monthly targets may be set (200 billable hours per month, invoices worth three times your monthly income, etc.) and translators who exceed those targets may be given bonuses. Some translation agencies also set such targets for their in-house people.

A translator's translating speed is controlled by a number of factors:

1. typing speed
2. the level of text difficulty
3. familiarity with this sort of text
4. technological support
5. personal preferences or style
6. job stress, general mental state

(1–3) should be obvious: the faster one types, the faster one will (potentially) be able to translate; the harder and less familiar the text, the slower it will be to translate. I will return to (4) in the next section. (6) is also relatively straightforward: if you work under great pressure, with minimum reward or praise, your general state of mind may begin to erode your motivation, which may in turn slow you down.

(5) is perhaps less obvious. Who would "prefer" to translate slowly? Don't all translators want to translate as rapidly as possible? After all, isn't that what our clients want?

The first thing to remember is that not everyone translates for clients. There is no financial motivation for rapid translation when one translates for fun. The second is that not all clients need a translation next week. The acquisitions editor at a university press who has commissioned a literary or scholarly translation may want it done quickly, for example, but "quickly" may mean in six months rather than a year, or one year rather than two.

And the third thing to remember is that not everyone is willing or able to force personal preferences into conformity with market demands. Some people just do prefer to translate slowly, taking their time, savoring each word and phrase, working on a single paragraph for an hour, perfecting each sentence before moving on to the next. Such people will probably never make a living as freelancers; but not all translators *are* freelancers, and not all translators need to make a living at it. People with day jobs, high-earning spouses, or family money can afford to translate just as slowly as they please. Many literary translators are academics who teach and do research for a salary and translate in their free time, often for little or no money, out of sheer love for the original text; in such situations rapid-fire translation may even feel vaguely sacrilegious.

There can be no doubt, however, that in most areas of professional translation, speed is a major virtue. I once heard a freelancer tell a gathering of student translators, "If you're fast, go freelance; if you're slow, get an in-house job." But translation divisions in large corporations are not havens for slow translators either. The instruction would be more realistic like this: "If you're fast, get an in-house job; if you're really fast, so your fingers are a blur on the keyboard, go freelance. If you're slow, get a day job and translate in the evenings."

Above all, work to increase your speed. How? The simplest step is to improve your typing skills. If you're not using all ten fingers, teach yourself to, or take a typing class at a community college or other adult education institute. If you're using all ten fingers but looking at the keyboard rather than the screen while you type, train yourself to type without looking at the keys. Take time out from translating to practice typing faster.

The other factors governing translating speed are harder to change. The speed with which you process difficult vocabulary and syntactic structures depends partly on practice and experience. The more you translate, the more well-trodden synaptic pathways are laid in your brain from the source to the target language, so that the translating of certain source-language structures begins to work like a macro on the computer: zip, the target-language equivalent practically leaps through your fingers to the screen. Partly also it depends on subliminal reconstruction skills that we will be exploring in the rest of the book.

The hardest thing to change is a personal preference for slow translation. Translating faster than feels comfortable increases stress, decreases enjoyment (for which see below), and speeds up translator burnout. It is therefore more beneficial to let translating speeds increase slowly, and as naturally as possible, growing out of practice and experience rather than a determination to translate as fast as possible right now.

In addition, with translating speed as with other things, variety is the spice of life. Even the fastest translators cannot comfortably translate at top speed all day, all week, all month, year-round. In this sense it is fortunate, in fact, that research, networking, and editing slow the translator down; for most translators a

"broken" or varied rhythm is preferable to the high stress of marathon top-speed translating.

You translate at top speed for an hour or two, and the phone rings; it is an agency offering you a job. You go back to your translation while they email it to you, then stop again to look the new job over and call back to say yes or no. Another hour or two of high-speed translating and a first draft of the morning job is done; but there are eight or ten words that you didn't find in your dictionaries, so you get on the phone, email, or social-networking site (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, etc.), trying to find someone who knows. Phone calls get immediate answers; email messages and social-networking sites take time. While you're waiting, you pick up the new translation job, start glancing through it, and before you know it (some sort of automatism clicks in) you're translating it, top speed. An hour later your email inbox beeps; it's an email from a friend overseas who has found some of your words. You stop translating to look through the email. You're unsure about one of the words, so you get back on email and send out a message over a translator mailing list, asking other subscribers whether this seems right to them; back in your home computer, you jump over to the morning translation and make the other changes. You notice you're hungry, so you upload the new job to your iPad and go into the kitchen to make a quick lunch, which you eat while looking over the file. Then back to the afternoon translation, top speed. You find a good stopping place and check your email; nothing for you, but there's a debate going on about a group of words you know something about, so you type out a message and send it. Then you edit the morning translation for a while, a boring job that has to be done some time; and back to the afternoon translation.

And all this keeps you from burning out on your own translating speed. Interruptions may cut into your earnings; but they may also prolong your professional life (and your sanity).

Translators need dictionaries, obviously – both monolingual and bilingual dictionaries. You will not find a professional translator who doesn't rely heavily on them – even though you will also find that they use dictionaries far less than beginning translators. Professional translators typically use dictionaries when:

1. They've never seen the word in the source language and have no idea what it means.
2. They know the word in the source language well enough to know generally what it means, but without the kind of semantic specificity that they need to translate it accurately.
3. They know the word in the source language but for the moment can't think of its target-language equivalent.
4. They know the word in the source language and can list 5–10 possible target-language equivalents, but can't settle on a single one that captures the most important semantic features of the source word.

As one gains experience and expertise in translation, one tends to move *downward* on that list (1>4): novice translators tend to need dictionaries more for (1–2), professional translators more for (3–4); but professional translators never move entirely away from (1–2). And that is a *good* thing: without lexical surprises, translation would quickly become boring!

Some professional translators love their traditional print dictionaries, and even find that flipping through the pages itself reminds them of the word they've gone looking for, before they reach the relevant page; but increasingly professional translators do dictionary work electronically, either online or on CDs bought and stored on one's own computer. Not only is it faster; since their work is mostly done digitally on the computer screen anyway, using an electronic dictionary allows them to integrate dictionary work with translating and editing work far more seamlessly than they could if they were constantly turning away from the screen and picking up a book.

Electronic dictionaries have many other advantages as well, including vast storage capacities, flexible search options, and the ability to integrate with other software programs. Thus the user can look for instances of a search word as it appears in a headword list, or in definitions of other words. A search can be conducted for words that match the search word exactly, or that merely start with the same characters, etc. It is also a simple matter to copy and paste a word from an electronic dictionary directly into a document currently open in the translator's word-processing program. It is even possible to configure some electronic dictionaries so that if a translator has a source text open on her computer, the text is automatically scanned for words that appear in the dictionary, and the translator's attention is then drawn to the relevant dictionary entries.

This can be taken one step further, and target-language equivalents for source-language words can be automatically pasted into the source text, providing a kind of "pre-translation," usually of highly specialized words or phrases in a source text. Whether or not this is ultimately useful, of course, depends on how appropriate the dictionary is for the text currently being translated. If the subject fields covered by the dictionary and the source text do not match, or if client-specific terminology that is not listed in an off-the-shelf dictionary has to be used in the translation, then automatic dictionary look-up is likely to be more of a hindrance than a help. In general, given the wide range of choices that open up any time a translator has to translate even very technical terms (choices that arise because one-to-one equivalence across languages happens only in the rarest of cases, and polysemy and synonymy are rife even in technical fields) automatic look-up and replacement of source-language words or terms with their target-language equivalents are likely to be useful in only very constrained environments, where bespoke term lists have been prepared for individual translation projects or clients, and/or where translators are required to use particular terms in the target language.

If we move from a position where an off-the-shelf electronic dictionary suffices for our needs to one in which a bespoke term list has to be created and used for a

particular job or client, then we move into the realm of terminology management. Instead of merely retrieving lexical data from an already existing resource, we now need to create the resource, which involves making decisions about what data we will record (just the term and its target-language equivalent? a definition? perhaps some examples of usage?) and how we will record them (in a word-processed document? in a spreadsheet? in a database?). Probably the most sophisticated solution for storing, displaying, and retrieving terminological data is found in the terminology management system (TMS). TMSs allow users to create their own terminological resources – or "termbases" – to specify which data categories they will contain, and how they will appear to the user. They typically integrate with other software used by translators, most notably word-processing programs and translation-memory systems (see below), allowing the kind of automatic dictionary look-up (also known as automatic term recognition) described above. A variety of TMSs are available on the market, and to ensure that termbases created with one TMS can be used with another TMS (in other words, to ensure that the resource is independent of the tool) a standard exchange format has been developed for terminological data. It is known as TBX (Term Base eXchange).[1]

Another tool that can be used in conjunction with a TMS is the term-extraction tool. Term-extraction tools are used to extract potential terms from electronic text. Once the status of such extracted-term candidates has been verified by a user, the confirmed terms can normally be uploaded into an existing termbase in the appropriate format and with very little effort. Term-extraction tools are normally based on either linguistic or statistical methods. A linguistics-based term-extraction tool extracts strings that match a given linguistic pattern. The string "computer screen" would match the pattern <*noun*><*noun*>, for example. This kind of term extraction requires the electronic text to first be marked up with part-of-speech information, and the patterns that one looks for are usually language-specific: terms in French, for example, might commonly follow the pattern <*noun*> <*preposition*> <*noun*>. Statistical term extraction, on the other hand, is language-independent, and does not require the electronic text to be pre-processed. It involves extracting from the corpus of electronic text any strings of (one, two, three . . . *n*) words that occur more frequently than a given threshold. Thus one might search for all strings of two words that co-occur at least ten times in a given text or corpus of texts.

Whichever technique is used, term-extraction tools need to be carefully calibrated by their users, so that they do not return too much "noise" (non-terms like "wide variety") or too much "silence" (caused by a failure to return good terms like "relative humidity"). Users also need to know how to use "stop lists," that is,

1 TBX was developed by the now defunct Localization Industry Standards Association (LISA). It has since been revised and republished by the International Organization for Standardization as ISO standard 30042:2008.

lists of words (usually function words like "the," "and," "of") that they do not wish to consider as forming part of a candidate term. Despite the challenges associated with term-extraction tools, some freelance translators claim that they are useful for producing glossaries either for their own use, or for their clients. In fact, the production of unsolicited glossaries as a goodwill gesture to existing clients, or as an initiative to develop contacts with new clients, is a well-known strategy in the translation business (see, for example, Durban 2010). Such gestures are, of course, likely to be more appreciated by clients who do not already produce their own glossaries. Larger translation clients are more likely to develop their own termbases or term lists and to circulate these to freelancers either directly or else through the intermediary of a language-service provider.

The technology that has been associated most with translators since the mid-1990s is the translation-memory system. A translation memory is basically a repository of previously completed translations stored alongside their corresponding source texts. The source texts and translations in question may be stored as full texts, or they may be broken up into smaller segments. The simple idea behind translation memories is that if a translator encounters a sentence s/he has already translated, then s/he does not need to translate that sentence again, or even recall how she translated the sentence last time; s/he merely needs to access the solution s/he has already stored in her or his translation memory. S/he can then reuse the solution as it is or edit it to suit the new context. (A third option is to ignore the solution already in memory and translate from scratch.) In theory the translation will get done faster and will be more consistent than might otherwise be the case. It might also be cheaper, if the translator passes productivity gains on to the client (and often the translator is obliged to do so).

A translation memory is thus a set of data – a resource – and a translation-memory *tool* is required to manage that resource. Translation-memory tools allow users to create translation memories: maybe one for each subject field a translator works in, or one for each of her clients. The tool also enables the translator to add to those memories "interactively," as s/he goes about the normal business of translating. In interactive mode the system works as follows: the translation-memory tool first segments the source text, which must already be in electronic form, into easily recognizable units such as sentences, headings, cells in tables, items in bulleted lists, etc.[2] The tool then provides an editing environment in which source-text segments are presented one by one to the translator, who types his or her translation for that segment into a dedicated area on his or her screen. When the translator has finished typing in her translation, the source and target segments are saved to memory as a single "translation unit."

2 These units are easy to recognize as they are delimited in many languages by, for example, sentence-ending punctuation and trailing white spaces, line breaks, tabs, etc.

For translators who are just starting out on their careers, the proliferation of translation-memory tools on the market, coupled with the vast number of functions some of them offer and the controversies surrounding their use, can lead to confusion, and it can be difficult to work out whether one should invest time and money in purchasing and learning to use a translation-memory tool, and if so, which one. It is very difficult to provide a generally applicable answer to these questions, as so much depends on the market in which a translator intends to work. Some language pairs have more of a need for "generalist" translators who can tackle a wide variety of text types and work for a wide variety of clients; such translators may not see much repetition in the texts they translate, and if even their regular clients do not have large volumes of text to translate, then they might not be required to use translation-memory tools anyway. These translators may quite happily get by without a translation-memory tool. Likewise, if a translator is working in a market where there has been little penetration of such tools, then her competitors are unlikely to be offering clients translation-memory services, and so there is less pressure on her to do so. She might, however, decide that it is precisely the adoption of translation-memory technology that will give her the edge in her market. In other markets translators might find that by not using a translation-memory tool they restrict the amount of work they can bid for.

But while it is easy to say that translators use translation-memory tools because the market obliges them to do so, some research suggests otherwise. Lagoudaki's (2006) frequently quoted translation-memory survey found, for example, that 71 percent of the more than 700 respondents who used translation-memory technology did so primarily out of personal choice. Most translators using translation-memory tools voluntarily did so to save time, to ensure consistency in their use of terminology, and to improve overall quality. It seems that most of the translators Lagoudaki surveyed accept translation memory as a useful, standard tool of the trade.

Which tool they use is another question: for many years the tool known as Trados Translator's Workbench was the market leader. Trados was acquired by SDL International in 2005 and its name lives on in SDL's most recent TEnT, SDL Trados Studio 2011. Other well-known translation-memory tools include Déjà Vu marketed by ATRIL (the current version is Déjà Vu X2), Wordfast, Kilgray's MemoQ, Star's Transit (current version: Transit ^{NXT}) and MultiCorpora's MultiTrans (current version: MultiTrans Prism). Most tools offer the same basic functionality, although some offer what they call "advanced leveraging translation memory," which means that they can look for matches at sub-segment level, among other things. Tools may differ in price, in the kind of technical support available, and in the file formats they support, and the best way for translators to find out which tool might suit them is to consult with other translators, in person or online. For many translators free open-source translation-memory tools like OmegaT are attractive; other translators may choose to access a translation-memory tool using a SaaS (Software-as-a-Service)

model. In the latter case, exemplified by Lionbridge's Translation Workspace,[3] rather than buy a licence to install and use a TEnT at their own premises, users pay a subscription to store and access their translation memories and other linguistic assets remotely (or "in the cloud"), and to use tools that are also hosted remotely. The SaaS model is marketed as a way of cutting upfront licensing costs and alleviating burdens caused by local translation-memory maintenance and software updates.

Some translation-memory tools use already familiar programs like Microsoft Word as their editing environment. Others use proprietary interfaces that often allow the user to decide how source and target segments are displayed; typically a tabular layout is selected, with the segmented source text displayed in one column, and the emerging target text in another. For texts created using markup languages like XML and HTML (the language used to format and display web pages), the environment can be adapted to either show or hide tags whose contents should not normally be translated (for example tags that indicate what language a web page is written in, or who the publisher is), and, more significantly, tags that should not be changed by the translator can be "protected." Many interfaces also allow numbers and other "placeables" (entities that do not need to be translated; rather they can simply be *placed* in the target text) to be copied automatically into the target text, thus saving time and avoiding errors. And the fact that a translation-memory tool moves systematically through a source text, segment by segment, means that it is difficult for a translator to skip a segment. (Even if the translator did manage to miss a segment the tool would probably alert him or her to the omission.)

One of the greatest advantages of using a translation-memory tool is, however, that these tools typically support multiple-file formats. A translator can receive a file created using a software program (for example, a desktop publishing system) that is not installed on her computer, or that she does not even know how to use: if her translation-memory tool supports that format then it will use one of its in-built "filters" to convert the external file into a format it can process. The translator then translates the file using the normal interface provided by her translation-memory tool. When the translation is complete, the translator exports the translated file to the original format, ideally without losing any formatting or other information.

One of the tools some professional translators are increasingly beginning to use to increase their speed is Google Translate (http://translate.google.com/), an online Statistical Machine Translation (SMT) system whose reliability has improved to the point where some translators, in some language pairs, find it cost-effective to create a *first draft* with Google Translate (GT) and then edit it into professional form.

3 Lionbridge Translation Workspace http://en-us.lionbridge.com/Company.aspx?pageid=2182&LangType=1033.

SMT means specifically that GT does not "parse" texts syntactically, according to phrase-structure rules; rather it outputs what it deems to be the most probable translation of a sentence, based on statistics it has "learned" from existing, human translations, and often looking at strings of just a few words at a time. This means that sometimes (for example, when the system doesn't have enough data to make a complex statistical analysis, or when the word order differs significantly between the two languages in question), GT produces gibberish, or simply transfers words it does not know in the source language unchanged into the target language.

It is usually enough for translators who want to use GT for initial drafting to know *nothing at all* about SMT – for them to assume, for example, that GT is the screen face of a rather poorly trained or a sometimes sloppy human translator. And the discussion that follows will be based on that (factually incorrect, but strategically useful) assumption. It is, however, also helpful for translators to know that the more texts that are fed into GT, the better it becomes at producing useful rough-draft translations – so that they will remember to use the system whenever they can!

Novice translators should also be strongly warned against *trusting* GT to produce a submittable draft; machine translation is not well enough developed for that. Post-editing is nearly *always* required. The issue is whether the rough draft GT creates for you is good enough that editing it is not more time-consuming than creating that rough draft yourself.

For example, running these German instructions for people submitting letters of recommendation to the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation through Google Translate (GT) yields this English rendition:

Fragenkatalog

für Referenzgutachter/innen
für Anträge auf Forschungsstipendien

Bitte geben Sie Ihren vollen Namen, Titel, Position und Ihre Institution (mit Ort und Land) sowie den Namen der Bewerberin/des Bewerbers an, zu dem Sie Ihre Stellungnahme abgeben.

Bitte unterzeichnen Sie Ihre Stellungnahme mit Angabe des Datums. Ihre Stellungnahme wird den unabhängigen Fachgutachterinnen / Fachgutachtern sowie dem zuständigen Auswahlausschuss vorgelegt und fließt damit direkt in die Beurteilung und Entscheidung des Antrags mit ein. Wir bitten Sie daher, Ihre Stellungnahme in deutscher oder englischer Sprache abzufassen. Für Ihre Kooperation bedanken wir uns schon im Voraus.

Fragen, auf die Sie in Ihrer Stellungnahme eingehen sollten:

1. Seit wann kennen Sie die Bewerberin/den Bewerber, in welcher Funktion ist sie/er Ihnen bekannt und wie intensiv haben Sie zusammengearbeitet?
2. Wie beurteilen Sie das wissenschaftliche Potential der Bewerberin/des Bewerbers? Welche Karriereperspektiven sehen Sie für sie/ihn?
3. Haben Sie gemeinsame wissenschaftliche Publikationen verfasst?

    - Falls ja, wie hoch war der Eigenanteil der Bewerberin/des Bewerbers an den Publikationen?
    - Falls nein, wie bewerten Sie die Qualität der Publikationen der Bewerberin/des Bewerbers?

4. Gibt es aus Ihrer Sicht weitere Gesichtspunkte, die für die Entscheidung über den Stipendienantrag der Bewerberin/des Bewerbers von Relevanz sind?

Nur bei Anträgen von erfahrenen Wissenschaftlerinnen/Wissenschaftlern zu beantworten:

5. Ist bereits ein eigenständiges wissenschaftliches Profil der Bewerberin/des Bewerbers erkennbar?

(used with permission)

Questionnaire

For expert / inside
For applications for research grants

Please include your full name, title, position, and your institution (with city and country) and the name of the candidate / the candidate, to give you your opinion.

Please sign your comments by stating the date. Your opinion will be submitted to the independent expert reviewers / evaluators, and the relevant selection committee and thus flows directly into the evaluation and application of a decision. We therefore ask you to draft your comments in English or German. We thank you for your cooperation in advance.

Questions to which you should enter your opinion:

1st Since when have you known the applicant / candidate, in what capacity is she/ he have known you and how hard you worked?

2nd How do you evaluate the scientific potential of candidate / the candidate? What career opportunities do you see for him / her?
3rd Have you written joint scientific publications?

- If yes, what was the share capital of candidate / the candidate to the publications?
- If not, how would you rate the quality of the publications of the candidate / the candidate?

4th Are there other aspects of your view, relevant to the decision to grant the request of the candidate / the candidate's relevant?

Only complete applications from experience scientists / researchers:

5th Already an independent scientific profile of the candidate / the candidate is recognizable?

(Google Translate, 3 August 2011)

Obviously, there are some problems there. GT (imagined as a "weak" human translator) doesn't recognize that the "inclusive" (feminine/masculine) usage *die Bewerberin/der Bewerber* needs only a single English translation ("the candidate," not "the candidate / the candidate"). GT has also made some glaring syntactic errors, for example rendering the participial adjective *bekannt* ("known") as the present perfect "have known," and the unmistakably present perfect *wie intensiv haben Sie zusammengearbeitet* ("how intensively have you worked together") as the simple past "how hard you worked." In (5), even a literal translation of *Ist bereits ein eigenständiges wissenschaftliches Profil der Bewerberin/des Bewerbers erkennbar?* as "Is already an independent scientific profile of the candidate recognizable?" would have been far closer to an idiomatic English sentence like "Is an original scholarly profile already evident in the candidate's work?" than GT's mystifying decision – mystifying for a human translator, that is – to make the sentence declarative and then tack a question mark on the end.

It's less mystifying, of course, if you know that GT works with "windows" of a few words at a time and builds statistical models of how they're translated. It's very likely that strings with "ist x y z" will be translated as declaratives (cf. "heute *ist Oma zu Hause*," today Oma is at home), and if a candidate translation that happens to be a declarative is also a very likely sentence in English ("Grandma is at home today"), then GT will go for it, even if the sentence has a question mark at the end.

But these are very minor problems, very easily fixed. Even the professional translator may well decide that it saves considerable time (and therefore money) to run German source texts through GT and then post-edit the results.

The situation is different with highly inflected (source) languages, like Finnish:

> Työryhmäraportissa on selvitetty määräaikaisen sopimuksen solmimisedellytyksiä sekä kansallisen että Suomea sitovan kansainvälisen sääntelyn näkökulmasta. Määräaikaiselle työsopimukselle asetettuja vaatimuksia on tarkasteltu työsopimuslain säännöksen esitöiden ja säännöksestä syntyneen oikeuskäytännön perusteella.
>
> (http://www.mol.fi/mol/fi/99_pdf/fi/06_ tyoministerio/06_julkaisut/10_muut/maaraaik_tyosuhteet_tyor07.pdf)
>
> The Working Group report has determined a fixed-term contract solmimisedellytyksiä both the national and the Finnish point of view, a binding international regulation. Fixed-term contract requirements, muslain employment contract provision, the legislative history and case law arising from the provision.
>
> (Google Translate, August 3, 2011)

Here the heavily inflected Finnish syntax has proved too much for GT:

Työryhmäraportissa: the inessive suffix *-ssa* means "in," thus "*in* the working group report"; GT doesn't recognize the suffix, and so ignores it.

on selvitetty: this is a present perfect passive ("has been outlined"); GT reads it as a present perfect indicative ("has determined").

määräaikaisen sopimuksen solmimisedellytyksiä: in addition to not being able to unpack *solmimisedellytyksiä* (conditions for signing something) and so leaving it untranslated, GT fails to recognize that *määräaikaisen sopimuksen* is in the genitive case, and so translates it as "a fixed-term contract" (rather than "[conditions for signing]) a fixed-term contract").

sekä kansallisen että Suomea sitovan kansainvälisen sääntelyn näkökulmasta: GT misses both the repeated genitive *-n* on *kansallisen ja Suomea sitovan kansainvälisen sääntelyn* ("*of* national and Finland-binding international regulation") and the elative *-sta* on *näkökulmasta* ("*from* the perspective [of]"), and so renders the clause incoherently as "both the national and the Finnish point of view, a binding international regulation".

Määräaikaiselle työsopimukselle: GT misses the allative *-lle* on both the adjective and the noun here ("*for* fixed-term contracts"), and so renders the noun phrase as if it were in the nominative in Finnish: "Fixed-term contract."

asetettuja vaatimuksia: GT doesn't recognize that *asetettuja* is a passive participial form that takes the allative *-lle* ("set for"), and so simply adds "requirements" to "fixed-term contract."

on tarkasteltu: again, GT misses the present perfect passive ("have been examined") here, and simply leaves it out.

työsopimuslain säännöksen esitöiden ja säännöksestä syntyneen oikeuskäytännön perusteella: GT misses the genitive *-n* on every one of those words (except *ja* "and" and *perusteella* "on the basis of"), and so is unable to parse the syntax, and "solves" the problem by omitting "on the basis of," abandoning the noun phrase "the legislative history and case law arising from the provision" to syntactic limbo.

Here is a professional-quality human translation of that same passage:

> The working group report outlines the conditions for the signing of a fixed-term contract from the perspectives of both Finnish law and international law that is binding upon Finland. The report explores the requirements set for fixed-term employment contracts on the basis of both the legislative history behind the Employment Contract Act and the case law that has emerged out of it.

What is striking about the errors made by GT, however, is that Finnish syntax is highly regular, and the inflected case endings are clearly and consistently marked. Anyone who reads Finnish competently should recognize, say, that:

- *on selvitetty* and *on tarkasteltu* are present perfect passives;
- *asetettuja* is a passive participial adjective that takes (and follows) the allative *-lle*, so that, registering *asetettuja*, this hypothetical human translator would look immediately before that word for a noun phrase in the allative;
- as in English, *näkökulmasta* (from the perspective of) and *perusteella* (on the basis of) take the genitive, but unlike in English, *follow* the genitive noun phrases they modify.

It would be relatively easy to program a syntactically oriented Finnish>English MT program to see *kansainvälisen sääntelyn näkökulmasta* and parse that as X (genitive *-n*) Y (genitive *-n*) Z (elative *-sta*), and so recognize that the basis syntax in English must be "from the Z of XY." Then the lexicon would provide translations for X, Y, and Z: "from the perspective of international regulation." But GT doesn't work that way. It doesn't parse syntax. It makes "educated" guesses based on statistical analyses of the texts in its database. Highly inflected languages like Finnish require far more data before GT will come up with accurate probabilities.

What this almost certainly means for GT in fact is that, as more users throw Finnish>English translation jobs at the system, it will gradually be "trained" statistically to handle these patterns better, and that readers of this third edition of *Becoming a Translator* will in a few years protest that GT *does* recognize these things – which is to say that this section of the book should soon become outdated, and will need to be rewritten substantially for the fourth edition.

Even apart from that likely future, too, it should be noted that the syntactic dropouts in the GT version are only a significant problem for the user who has no

idea what the Finnish says. If the Googler with no Finnish wants to figure out roughly what the passage is *about*, the GT translation is adequate; if s/he wants to figure out roughly what it *says* about fixed-term contract legislation, s/he is bound to be disappointed. For the Finnish>English translator who is using GT as a quick means of generating a rough draft, none of this is a problem. It is quite simple for someone who reads Finnish well to recognize where GT went wrong. Also, many of the lexical solutions GT offers are excellent (especially "legislative history" for *säännöksen esitöiden*, literally "the preworks of the provision," and "case law" for *oikeuskäytännön*, literally "legal practice"), and the inaccurate lexical solutions ("determine" for *selvittää*) are easy enough to fix.

Given the extent of the syntactic dropouts, however, it would have been considerably more time-consuming to edit GT's FI>EN output into coherent (let alone professional-quality) English than it would have been, say, with its GE>EN output on the Humboldt Foundation instructions; and the real issue the professional translator must ask in connection with GT is whether the program actually does save time for his or her language pair.

There are also some ethical issues involved with the use of Google Translate. For example, may a translator bound by confidentiality legally and ethically upload the source text to GT? And, particularly for users of Google Translator Toolkit, there is the question of who *owns* a translation produced by, or recycled through, GT. A translator who reuses translations made available through such services may assume that the translations in question have been shared by their rightful owner, but the translator cannot be sure that this is the case; nor can s/he acknowledge the individuals whose work s/he reuses. These and other ethical issues that arise in the context of sharing translation resources are discussed by Drugan and Babych (2010).

Just as translators have to ensure that their own use of MT is ethical, they may also wish to ensure that they do not collude with unethical uses of the technology by other parties. There is some anecdotal evidence of translators receiving machine-translated output from agencies with a request to "revise" the target text, as if it had actually been written by a human translator. Given the potentially significant differences between human and machine translation, translators should be careful that they do not unwittingly take on what are effectively post-editing jobs disguised as revision jobs. Not only would this mean going along with dishonest (or simply inept) practices on the agency's side, it might also mean that the translator is not sufficiently remunerated for the effort it takes to get machine-translated text to the required level of quality. Online translator forums like ProZ.com can give useful guidance on these matters.

4 Translation memory tools are commonly sold as part of a suite of tools that includes the kind of programs discussed above (terminology management systems, alignment tools, QA checkers, etc), leading many commentators to use the more holistic term 'Translation Environment Tools' (or TEnTs) to designate these commercial products.

Project management

Another effective way to increase your income is to create your own agency: farm out some of your work to other freelancers and take a cut of the fee for project management, including interfacing with the client, editing, desktop publishing, etc.

Most agency-owners do not, in fact, immediately begin earning more money than they did as freelancers; building up a substantial clientele takes time, often years. A successful agency-owner may earn three or four times what a freelancer earns; but that sort of success only comes after many years of just getting by, struggling to make payroll (and sometimes earning *less* than you did before), and dealing with all the added headaches of complicated bookkeeping, difficult clients, unreliable freelancers, insurance, etc.

There is, of course, much more to be said on the subject of creating your own agency; but perhaps a textbook on "becoming a translator" is not the place to say it.

Raising the status of the profession

This long-range goal is equally difficult to deal with in a textbook of this sort, but it should not be forgotten in discussions of enhancing the translator's income. Some business consultants become millionaires by providing corporate services that are not substantially different from the services provided by translators. Other business consultants are paid virtually nothing. The difference lies in the general perception of the relative value of the services offered. The higher the value placed on the service, the more money a company will be willing to budget for it. Many small companies (and even some large ones) value translation so little that they are not willing to pay anything for it, and do it themselves; others grudgingly admit that they need outside help, but are unwilling to pay the going rate, so they hire anyone they can find who is willing to do the work for almost nothing. One of the desired outcomes of the work done by translator associations and unions, translator training programs, and translation scholars to raise the general awareness of translation and its importance to society is, in fact, to raise translator income.

Enjoyment

One would think that burnout rates would be high among translators. The job is not only underpaid and undervalued by society, it involves long hours spent alone with uninspiring texts working under the stress of short deadlines. One would think, in fact, that most translators would burn out on the job after about three weeks.

And maybe some do. That most don't, that one meets freelance translators who are still content in their jobs after thirty years, says something about the operation of the greatest motivator of all: they enjoy their work. They must – for what else would sustain them? Not the fame and fortune; not the immortal brilliance of the

texts they translate. It must be that somehow they find a sustaining pleasure in the work itself.

In what, precisely? And why? Is it a matter of personal style: some people just happen to love translating, others don't? Or are there ways to teach oneself to find enhanced enjoyment in translation?

Not all translators enjoy every aspect of the work; fortunately, the field is diverse enough to allow individuals to minimize their displeasure. Some translators dislike dealing with clients, and so tend to gravitate toward work with agencies, which are staffed by other translators who understand the difficulties translators face. Some translators go stir-crazy all alone at home, and long for adult company: they tend to get in-house jobs, in translation divisions of large corporations or translation agencies or elsewhere, so that they are surrounded by other people, who help relieve the tedium with social interaction. Some translators get tired of translating all day: they take breaks to write poetry, or attend a class at the local college, or go for a swim, or find other sources of income to pursue every third hour of the day, or every other day of the week. Some translators get tired of the repetitiveness of their jobs, translating the same kind of text day in, day out: they develop other areas of specialization, actively seek out different kinds of texts, perhaps try their hand at translating poetry or drama.

Still, no matter how one diversifies one's professional life, translating (like most jobs) involves a good deal of repetitive drudgery that will simply never go away. And the bottom line to that is: if you can't learn to enjoy even the drudgery, you won't last long in the profession. There is both drudgery and pleasure to be found in reliability, in painstaking research into the right word, in brain-wracking attempts to recall a word that you know you've heard, in working on a translation until it feels just right. There is both drudgery and pleasure to be found in speed, in translating as fast as you can go, so that the keyboard hums. There is both drudgery and pleasure to be found in taking it slowly, staring dreamily at (and through) the source text, letting your mind roam, rolling target-language words and phrases around on your tongue. There are ways of making a mind-numbingly boring text come alive in your imagination, of turning technical documentation into epic poems, weather reports into songs.

In fact in some sense it is not too much to say that the translator's most important skill is the ability to learn to enjoy everything about the job. This is not the translator's most important skill from the user's point of view, certainly: the user wants a reliable text rapidly and cheaply, and if a translator provides it while hating every minute of the work, so be it. If as a result of hating the work the translator burns out, so be that too. There are plenty of translators in the world; if one burns out and quits the profession, ten others will be clamoring for the privilege to take his or her place.

But it is the most important skill for the translators themselves. Yes, the ability to produce reliable texts is essential; yes, speed is important. But a fast and reliable

translator who hates the work, or who is bored with it, feels it is a waste of time, will not last long in the profession – and what good are speed and reliability to the ex-translator? "Boy, I used to be *fast*." Pleasure in the work will motivate a mediocre translator to enhance her or his reliability and speed; boredom or distaste in the work will make even a highly competent translator sloppy and unreliable.

Conclusion

In some sense this textbook is an attempt to teach translators to enjoy their work more – to drill not specific translation or vocabulary skills but what we might call "pre-translation" skills, attitudinal skills that (should) precede and undergird every "verbal" or "linguistic" approach to a text: intrinsic motivation, openness, receptivity, a desire to constantly be growing and changing and learning new things, a commitment to the profession, and a delight in words, images, intellectual challenges, and people.

In fact the fundamental assumptions underlying the book's approach to translation might be summed up in the following list of axioms:

1. Translation is more about people than about words.
2. Translation is more about the jobs people do and the way they see their world than it is about registers or sign systems.
3. Translation is more about the creative imagination than it is about rule-governed text analysis.
4. The translator is more like an actor or a musician (a performer) than like a tape recorder.
5. The translator, even of highly technical texts, is more like a poet or a novelist than like a machine-translation system.

Which is not to say that translation is not about words, or phrases, or registers, or sign systems. Clearly those things are important in translation. It is to say rather that it is more productive for the translator to think of such abstractions in larger human contexts, as a part of what people do and say.

Nor is it to say that human translation is utterly unlike the operation of a tape recorder or machine-translation system. Those analogies can be usefully drawn. It is merely to say that machine analogies may be counterproductive for the translator in her or his work, which to be enjoyable must be not mechanical but richly human.

Machine analogies fuel formal, systematic thought; they do not succor the translator, alone in a room with a computer and a text, as do more vibrant and imaginative analogies from the world of artistic performance or other humanistic endeavors.

Is this, then, a book of panaceas, a book of pretty lies for translators to use in the rather pathetic pretense that their work is really more interesting than it seems?

No. It is a book about how translators actually view their work; how translating actually feels to successful professionals in the field.

Besides, it is not that thinking about translation in more human terms, more artistic and imaginative terms, simply makes the work *seem* more interesting. Such is the power of the human imagination that it actually makes it *become* more interesting. Imagine yourself bored and you quickly become bored. Imagine yourself a machine with no feelings, a computer processing inert words, and you quickly begin to feel dead, inert, lifeless. Imagine yourself in a movie or a play (or an actual use situation) with other users of the machine whose technical documentation you're translating, all of you using the machine, walking around it, picking it up, pushing buttons and flipping levers, and you begin to feel more alive.

The structure of flow. The autotelic [self-rewarding] experience is described in very similar terms regardless of its context . . . Artists, athletes, composers, dancers, scientists, and people from all walks of life, when they describe how it feels when they are doing something that is worth doing for its own sake, use terms that are interchangeable in the minutest details. This unanimity suggests that order in consciousness produces a very specific experiential state, so desirable that one wishes to replicate it as often as possible. To this state we have given the name of "flow," using a term that many respondents used in their interviews to explain what the optimal experience felt like.

Challenges and skills. The universal precondition for flow is that a person should perceive that there is something for him or her to do, and that he or she is capable of doing it. In other words, optimal experience requires a balance between the challenges perceived in a given situation and the skills a person brings to it. The "challenge" includes any opportunity for action that humans are able to respond to: the vastness of the sea, the possibility of rhyming words, concluding a business deal, or winning the friendship of another person are all classic challenges that set many flow experiences in motion. But any possibility for action to which a skill corresponds can produce an autotelic experience.

It is this feature that makes flow such a dynamic force in evolution. For every activity might engender it, but at the same time no activity can sustain it for long unless both the challenges and the skills become more complex . . . For example, a tennis player who enjoys the game will want to reproduce the state of enjoyment by playing as much as possible. But the more such individuals play, the more their skills improve. Now if they continue to play against opponents of the same level as before, they will be bored. This always happens when skills surpass challenges. To return in flow and replicate the enjoyment they desire, they will have to find stronger opposition.

To remain in flow, one must increase the complexity of the activity by developing new skills and taking on new challenges. This holds just as true for enjoying business, for playing the piano, or for enjoying one's marriage, as for the game of tennis. Heraclitus's dictum about not being able to step in the same stream twice holds especially true for flow. This inner dynamic of the optimal experience is what drives the self to higher and higher levels of complexity. It is because of this spiraling compexity that people describe flow as a process of "discovering something new," whether they are shepherds telling how they enjoy caring for their flocks, mothers telling how they enjoy playing with their children, or artists, describing the enjoyment of painting. Flow forces people to stretch themselves, to always take on another challenge, to improve on their abilities.

(Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, "The Flow Experience and Its Significance for Human Psychology" (1995: 29–30) (with permission))

Hi Lantrans,

How would you like a story like this?

A translator sent me his resume and a sample translation (I didn't order him anything – just asked him to send me one of the translations he had already done – that's an important point).

I answered him pointing out some mistakes in his sample and the fact that he didn't comply with my request to name his CV file with his last name. I wrote him: do you know how many files named resume.doc I receive every day?

His answer was: Do you know how many sample translations I have to do searching for a job? I simply don't have time to polish them. Surely, I will be more accurate working on a real job as I won't then waste my time searching for an assignment.

Isn't he charming?

Natalie Shahova

* * * * *

I'm sure he can get a job at McDonald's . . .

Kirk McElhearn

* * * * *

Another thing many people sending you unsolicited material don't think about is that you might not have a secretary sitting there who has nothing better to do than to sift through the crap that arrives.

Reminds me of the days not too long ago when I was receiving unsolicited ***handwritten*** applications almost every day in the mail because we happen to be in the *Yellow Pages*. Don't people know that an application gives them the chance to show their word processing capabilities? Who did they think is going to teach them that? Did they think there is someone here to type their translations?

One young woman really took the cake when she called up, complaining that I hadn't responded to her unsolicited application. When I told her I just didn't have the time, she demanded that I mail her stuff back to her. (It was the usual application containing all sorts of certificates and transcripts.) I told her I wasn't going to shell out the equivalent of $1.50 for something I didn't ask for and that if she wanted it she was free to come and pick it up. She never took me up on my offer.

Amy Bryant

* * * * *

Reason is probably that not too long ago, maybe 10–15 years back, handwritten was the form to be used for job applications. Probably employers imagined learning something from the graphology. Mind you, that was at the time when I might have sent out job applications, but my hand was so lousy even back then, so preferred to buy my first "computer" in 1983 or so. (I only sent out a job application once, a decade later, in mint-condition layout of course. Didn't get the job as a multilingual press person for some biotech center here in Vienna, and am *soooo* happy about that now.)

look Ma, no hands!

Werner Richter

* * * * *

As head of Human Resources for Laconner Medical Center (and head of everything else there except providing medical care), I required job applicants to submit typed applications – which had to be flawless; I wouldn't interview a nurse whose

cover letter was ridden with typos/spelling errors. But I also had a form for them to fill out by hand when they arrived for the interview, which included a section that required a few sentences to be strung together. That way I got to see their handwriting – and whether or not they could spell, write, etc.

That said, when my son was home at Christmas it amazed me when he said he was about the only person with a laptop computer in the entire translation program; that exams were to be handwritten (he doesn't have a prayer there – the son and grandson of physicians, his handwriting has never been particularly legible), and that people actually said they "refused" to have anything to do with computers.

The program does offer a course in technology (TRADOS, of course), and some Internet stuff (Erik has a bit of an advantage there), though one teacher told him to use dictionaries because you can't trust anything you find on the net . . . he's on some committee, stirring up trouble, recommending that everyone use computers for everything . . .

Makes you wonder,

Susan Larsson

* * * * *

Werner:

> Reason is probably that not too long ago, maybe 10–15 years back,
> handwritten was the form to be used for job applications.
> Probably employers imagined learning something from the graphology.

I realize that but this was happening as recently as 1–2 years ago. By then the institute for applied linguistics at the local university (Saarland University in Saarbrücken, Germany) was offering word processing (and the rest of the Office family members) and translation memory training.

Granted, these courses were optional but I would have thought students would have gotten the message that these things are an absolute must if they want to make it in the real world.

A year ago I attended an informal TRADOS seminar organized by a colleague. It was conducted in the institute's computer

room. I about dropped my teeth when I saw all the TM software installed on those machines (at least 5–6 programs in all).

Amy Bryant

* * * * *

Well over 10 years ago, a teacher at McGill University was telling translation students he would not accept handwritten assignments and that since they intended to eventually earn money as translators, they should start acting as professionals right then. He also recommended that they do their first draft on the computer, NOT do everything by hand and then transcribe their final text.

Michelle Asselin
(Lantra-L, February 1–3, 2002)

Discussion

1. Should translators be willing to do any kind of text-processing requested, such as editing, summarizing, annotating, desktop publishing? Or should translators be allowed to stick to translating? Explore the borderlines or gray areas between translating and doing something else; discuss the ways in which those gray areas are different for different people.
2. When and how is it ethical or professional to improve a badly written source text in translation? Are there limits to the improvements that the translator can ethically make? (Tightening up sentence structure; combining or splitting up sentences; rearranging sentences; rearranging paragraphs . . .) Is there a limit to the improvements a translator should make without calling the client or agency for approval? A reliable translator is someone who on the one hand doesn't make unauthorized changes – but who on the other hand doesn't pester the client or agency with queries about every minute little detail. Where should the line of "reliability" be drawn?
3. Read the following satire on the freelance translator, originally posted on a ProZ.com site but quickly removed.

Mario Abbicciì (abbicci)

Italy
Getting rich fast applying low rates!

The background
Honours degree in Archaeology at University of Rome, 1999, I passed my Greats with a dissertation on "The Ruins of Intelligence and the Rests of Idiocy in the Modern World, Especially among Professionals". PhD in Gardening, dissertation with Sir Edward Mumford Blase on "The Giardini all'Italiana and The Figure of Labyrinth: Is That an Attitude or What?".

Full time professional freelance translator and reviewer since 2000. Actually, I started translating for money in 1987. Yes I was fifteen but I was full of promise, yet dad's spending money was not enough to buy cigarettes, filthy magazines and holy smoke. Furthermore, my Auntie Gina said I was doing it very well. She was deaf and blind, but loved me very much. I started studying to acquire a position in society, yet my interest in learning and widening my knowledge was very limited and I didn't give a shit about it all, but I wanted an easy income with the least possible effort. My studies were mnemonic and I just can't remember that much of it, but the method seemed to work and I feel like recommending it strongly to the generations to come. Next step: you know, in European countries there's not much chance to work without effort and competence, so I jumped at the Internet and started as a localizer.

The areas of specialisation
In line with my educational background my areas of specialisation are Information Technology, Software, Hardware, Technical/Industry, Medical/Pharmacy, Legal, Scriptures. I have ample experience in these sectors and I can quickly provide strictly unfounded references.

The experience
I have been a native Italian freelance translator/reviewer/editor/proofreader since 2000.

In May 2001 I set up a team with three reliable colleagues, cooperating to provide high quality results wasting little time. Let me introduce you to Mr. Jonathan Babelfish, Mrs. Gloria Altavista, Dr. Gianni Chiudoz and Dr. Juan Do Cojocojo. They are very flexible and fanciful professionals and always really pluck an unexpected solution out of a source text. Please note that they're collaborating with most of the professionals on this site and they represent in many cases the only reference their translations are built upon.

The references

References of company and agency contacts that have assigned the above-mentioned projects to me are available upon request and referees are kept in total ignorance. We can also provide you with our up-to-date resumes, just ask and we make it up instantly.

Please also note that we are available to perform paid translation tests not exceeding 75 words of source text and only if you can assure us total anonymity. In fact, we still do not understand why you customers and agencies persist in forcing translators to perform free tests, whereas you should pay for this from now on, neither do we agree on the test practice itself which is plainly contrary to the entrepreneurial principle that quality doesn't need prove.

The methods

First, I accept a text about an argument I've never heard of. Then I perform an extensive query on-line using Boolean smooth operators and an excellent abuse of the KudoZ system on ProZ site, eventually choosing the least reliable and most fancy solution. If this still doesn't help, I ask the customer to postpone the deadline asserting that the material is very challenging for a satisfying linguistic solution and I am currently involved in a fine-tuning phase.

<BMT>We are always keeping ourselves up to date and are continuously involved in professional research and upgrades. We do not miss a line of the most known and crowded newsgroups and mailing lists. We do prefer Langit to Lantra because of the aseptic environment of the first. While politics are not allowed there, you can enjoy packs of rowdy translators insulting each other about rates, wordcounts, and clients, with a peculiar social attitude that poor Aristotle was wrong to consider "political". As a result one can improve their professionalism learning how to breed suspicion about an agency they have failed a test for, how to set up new translators guilds, how to quote jewels of funny deja-vu social theory in native German while they hardly speak a correct Italian, without any intervention of the local moderators, strictly committed to preserve the Subject syntax correctness.

The policies

Our official rates are fairly rigid, based upon the material complexity, though not low. We need you to understand the reasons of these policies. We are forced to act this way in the presence of our honourable colleagues. But we are willing to grossly knock rates down in private bids or if you contact us directly.

Our rates are based upon gobbledygook accounting methods and we use the Cartella, the Canna and the Pertica as translation unit measures, according to Editto de lo Merchante which dates back to 1312, Patavia. For your convenience,

let us clarify that Cartella is 65 keystrokes for a square of 60 rows per side, 360 white spaces of hypotenuse, and as long as you do not use Strong Papyrus, in which case it takes more time to count because of the peculiar sensitivity of the medium. Bill collection must be performed no later than 30 days from the billing date and VAT code must be specified in the invoice. We reserve the right to collect on the side. Whatever cannot be safely collected on the side, please refer it to "Donations and Charitable Acts" so we can deduct it from our income tax return and save our souls. We are left-wingers but not morons, after all.

Mario Abbiccìì
Freelance native translations
Via Sonzogno, 77 – Milazzo Italy
E-mail address:
marioabbicci@katamail.com (preferred)
marioabc@microsoft.com (deterred)

(a) Who do you think wrote the satire? If it was an agency person, what do you think his or her motivations were in writing it? If it was a freelancer, what could his or her motivations have been? What other possible job experiences can you imagine that would have led someone to write a satire like this?
(b) Based on Mario's education, what would you say the author believes is an appropriate or useful education for the translator? What is wrong with this particular educational background? What is the bit about being fifteen and translating to make money for cigarettes and filthy magazines trying to say? What does it mean to say "my studies were mnemonic and I just can't remember that much of it"?
(c) What does this mean: "Next step: you know, in European countries there's not much chance to work without effort and competence, so I jumped at the Internet and started as a localizer"?
(d) What is the problem with the translator's references in "areas of specialisation," "experience," and "references"? What does it mean for references to be "unfounded"? What *should* they be? What does it mean to say: "Please note that they're collaborating with most of the professionals on this site and they represent in many cases the only reference their translations are built upon"? Why is it a problem if referees are "kept in total ignorance"?
(e) The four professionals with whom Mario teamed up in 2001 (he says there are three) represent online translation help: Babelfish is the automatic translation program on Altavista, a major search engine; Chiudoz probably refers to KudoZ, the points you can accrue on http://www.proz.com by

answering language queries. Why is it a bad thing for this author that Mario relies on these online resources? If the fact that he formed this team in 2001 (and posted this website in 2002) is taken to be satirical, what is wrong with having started so recently?

(f) The second paragraph of the section on "references" is about free tests. What is at issue here? What freelancer attitude is the author trying to satirize? (Note the grammatical error at the end of the last sentence: ". . . need prove." Is this error a significant part of the satire? Rephrase Mario's statement from a freelancer's point of view without the satire, making the reluctance to take free tests a professionally respectable attitude.

(g) The sentence "As a result one can improve their professionalism learning how to breed suspicion about an agency they have failed a test for, how to set up new translators guilds, how to quote jewels of funny deja-vu social theory in native German while they hardly speak a correct Italian, without any intervention of the local moderators, strictly committed to preserve the Subject syntax correctness" is a satire on translator listservs like Langit (langit@list.cineca.it) and Lantra (lantra-l@segate.sunet.se). Comment on the three different assumptions underlying the satire:

(i) All translator listservs are dominated by freelancers who are suspicious of agencies. That suspicion is not based on agency incompetence or failure to pay, but on the freelancers' own failures to pass the agency tests.
(ii) Translator listservs help freelancers organize into translator guilds.
(iii) Translator listservs help freelancers *pretend* to possess worthless knowledge and language skills.

(h) The lines "We are forced to act this way in the presence of our honourable colleagues. But we are willing to grossly knock rates down in private bids or if you contact us directly" deal with hypocrisy about dumping. What are the practices the author is satirizing, and why are they a problem?

(i) Why does the author satirize "gobbledygook accounting methods"? What are the financial realities behind this attack on how freelancers calculate their fees?

(j) Given the line "We are left-wingers but not morons, after all," what political orientation would you say the author has, and why? What significance might political beliefs have for the translation marketplace?

Exercises

1. Set up a translating speed test. Translate first 10 words in five minutes; then 20 words in five minutes; then 30, 40, 50, and so on. Stick with the five-minute period each time, but add 10 more words. Try to pace yourself as you proceed through each text segment: when you do 10 words in five minutes, translate two words the first minute, two more the second, etc. When you are trying to do 100 words in five minutes, try to translate 20 words each minute. Pay attention to your "comfort zone" as the speed increases. How does it feel to translate slowly? Medium-speed? Fast? When the pace gets too fast for your comfort, stop. Discuss or reflect on what this test tells you about your attitudes toward translation speed.
2. Reflect on times in your studies or a previous career when you were close to burnout – when the stress levels seemed intolerable, when nothing in your work gave you pleasure. Feel again all those feelings. Now direct them to a translation task, for this class or another. Sit and stare at the source text, feeling the stress rising: it's due tomorrow and you haven't started working on it yet; it looks so boring that you want to scream; the person you're doing it for (a client, your teacher) is going to hate your translation; you haven't had time for yourself, time to put your feet up and laugh freely at some silly TV show, in months. Pay attention to your bodily responses: what do you feel?
3. Now shake your head and shoulders and relax; put all thought of deadlines and critiques out of your head. Give yourself ten minutes to do nothing; then look through the source text with an eye to doing the silliest translation you can imagine. Start doing the silly translation in your head; imagine a group of friends laughing together over the translation. Work with another person to come up with the funniest bad translation of the text, and laugh together while you work. Now imagine yourself doing the "straight" or serious translation – and compare your feelings about the task now with your feelings under stress.

Suggestions for further reading

Introduction to translating: Anderman *et al*. (2003), Duff (1989), Finlay (1971), Robinson (1991)

Translator handbooks: Fuller (1973), Hatim and Munday (2004), Jones (1997), Picken (1989), Samuelsson-Brown (1993/2010), Sofer (1996/2009)

Translation practices explained: Alcaraz and Hughes (2002), Austermühl (2001), Dias Cinta and Remael (2007), Gillies (2005), Kelly (2005), Mayoral Asensio (2003), Mikkelson

(2000a), Montalt and Gonzalez Davis (2007), Mossop (2001/2007), Romero-Fresco (2011), Torresi (2010), Wagner *et al*. (2002)

Translation technology: Mossop (2006), Biau Gil and Pym (2006)

Note: Jost Zetzsche's *Tool Box Newsletter* is a regularly updated source of news related to translation technology. See http://www.internationalwriters.com/toolkit/current.html.

3 The process of translation

In this chapter: Translation for the professional translator is a constant learning cycle that moves through the stages of *instinct* (unfocused readiness), *experience* (engagement with the real world), and *habit* (a "promptitude of action"), and, within experience, through the stages of *abduction* (guesswork), *induction* (pattern-building), and *deduction* (rules, laws, theories). The translator is at once a *professional* for whom complex mental processes have become second nature (and thus subliminal), and a *learner* who must constantly face and solve new problems in conscious analytical ways.

The shuttle: experience and habit

Translating is a professional activity, governed by rules of the marketplace; and it is an affective activity, governed by the rules of what and how individuals *feel* (whether they enjoy what they're doing). But it is also a cognitive activity, an *intelligent* activity, governed by the rules of how people learn, and how they use what they learn: how translators develop their own idiosyncratic preferences and habits into a general procedure for transforming source texts into successful target texts.

In brief, the model presented here imagines the translator shuttling between two very different mental states and processes: (1) a subliminal "flow" state in which it seems as if the translator isn't even thinking, as if the translator's fingers or interpreter's mouth is doing the work, so that the translator can daydream while the body translates; and (2) a highly conscious analytical state in which the translator mentally reviews lists of synonyms, looks words up in dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other reference works, checks grammar books, analyzes sentence structures, semantic fields, cultural pragmatics, and so on.

The subliminal state is the one that allows translators to earn a living at the work: in the experienced professional it is very fast, and, as we saw in Chapter 2, enhanced speed means enhanced income. It works best when there are no problems in the source text, or when the problems are familiar enough to be solved without conscious analysis. The analytical state is the one that gives the translator a reputation for probity and acumen: it is very slow, and may in some cases diminish a freelancer's income, but without this ability the translator would never be able to finish difficult jobs and would make many mistakes even in easy jobs, so that sooner or later his or her income would dry up anyway.

The shuttle metaphor is taken from weaving: the shuttle is a block of wood thrown back and forth on the loom, carrying the weft or cross-thread between the separated threads of the warp. This metaphor may make the translation process seem mechanical, like throwing a block of wood back and forth – and clearly, it is not. It may also make it seem as if the two states were totally different, perfect opposites, like the left and right side of a loom. The two states are different, but not perfectly or totally so. In fact, they are made up of very much the same experiential and analytical materials, which we will be exploring in detail in Chapters 4–10: experiences of languages, cultures, people, translations; textual, psychological, social, and cultural analyses. The difference between them is largely in the way that experiential/analytical material is stored and retrieved for use: in the subliminal state, it has been transformed into habit, "second nature," procedural memory; in the analytical state, it is brought back out of habit into representational memory and painstakingly conscious analysis.

Experience, especially fresh, novel, even shocking experience, also tough-minded analytical experience, the experience of taking something familiar apart and seeing how it was put together, is in most ways the opposite of habit – even though in another form, processed, repeated, and sublimated, it is the very stuff of habit, the material that habit is made from. Fresh experiences that startle us out of our habitual routines are the goad to learning; without such shocks to the system we would stagnate, become dull and stupefied. Fresh experiences make us feel alive; they roughen the smooth surfaces of our existence, so that we really *feel* things instead of gliding through or past them like ghosts.

Translators need habit in order to speed up the translation process and make it more enjoyable; but they also need new experiences to enrich it and complicate it, slow it down, and, again, to make it more enjoyable. For there is enjoyment to be had in translating on autopilot, in what Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990) calls the "flow" experience, and there is enjoyment to be had in being stopped dead by some enormously difficult problem. There is pleasure in speed and pleasure in slowness; there is pleasure in what is easy and familiar and pleasure in what is new and difficult and challenging. There is pleasure, above all, in variety, in a shuttling back and forth between the new and the old, the familiar and the strange, the conscious and the unconscious, the intuitive and the analytical, the subliminal and the startling.

This back-and-forth movement between habit and fresh experience is one of the most important keys to successful, effective, and enjoyable translation – or to any activity requiring both calm expertise and the ability to grow and learn and deal with unforeseen events. Without habit, life proceeds at a snail's pace; everything takes forever; all the ordinary events in life seem mired in drudgery. Without fresh experience, life sinks into ritualized repetitive sameness, the daily grind, the old rat-race. Life is boring without habit, because habit "handles" all the tedious little routines of day-to-day living while the conscious mind is doing something more

interesting; and life is boring without fresh experience, because experience brings novelty and forces us to learn.

Charles Sanders Peirce on instinct, experience, and habit

One useful way of mapping the connections between experience and habit onto the process of translation is through the work of Charles Sanders Peirce (1857–1913), the American philosopher and founder of semiotics.

Peirce addressed the connections between experience and habit in the framework of a three-step process that he called a "triad":

instinct > experience > habit

He understood everything in the world in terms of these three-step movements, and we'll see another in the next section. In this case:

- *Instinct* is what he calls a First, the first thing that presents itself to us. For Peirce it is a general unfocused readiness to act.
- *Experience* is what he calls a Second, a larger interactive process that "hits" us next, slams into the instinctual readiness with which we First approach the world. It is grounded in real-world activities and events that work on the individual from the outside.
- *Habit*, finally, is what he calls a Third. For Peirce the Third in any triad was a blending or synthesizing of the First and Second; thus habit "transcends" (incorporates but goes beyond) the opposition between instinctual readiness and external experience by incorporating both into a "promptitude of action" (1931–66: 5.477), "a person's tendencies toward action" (5.476), a "readiness to act" (5.480) – to act, specifically, in a certain way under certain circumstances as shaped by experience (see Figure 1).

One may be instinctively ready to act, but that instinctive readiness is not yet directed by experience of the world, and so remains vague and undirected; experience of the world is powerfully there, it hits one full in the face, it must be dealt with, but because of its multiplicity it too remains formless and undirected. It is only when an inclination to act is enriched and complicated by experience, and experience is directed and organized by an instinctive inclination to act, that both are sublimated together as habit, a readiness to do specific things under specific conditions – translate certain kinds of texts in certain ways, for example.

The process of translation in Peirce's three terms might be summarized simply like this:

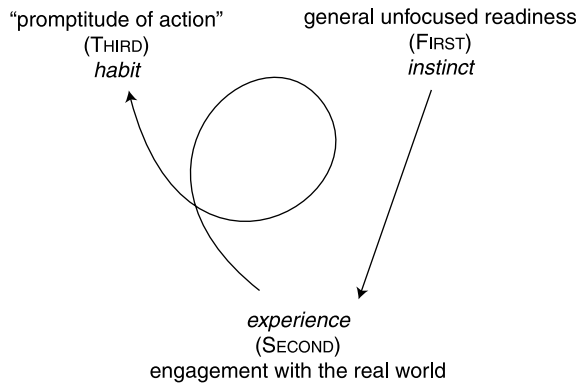

Figure 1 Peirce's instinct/experience/habit triad in translation

- the translator begins with a blind, intuitive, instinctive sense of what a word or phrase means, how a syntactic structure works (*instinct*);
- when s/he finds those words and phrases in a source text, s/he proceeds by translating those words and phrases, moving back and forth between the two languages, feeling the similarities and dissimilarities between words and phrases and structures (*experience*); and
- gradually, over time, sublimates specific solutions to specific experiential problems into more or less unconscious behavior patterns (*habit*), which help her or him to translate more rapidly and effectively, decreasing the need to stop and solve troubling problems.

Because the problems and their solutions are built into habit, and especially because every problem that intrudes upon the habitualized process is itself soon habitualized, the translator notices the problem-solving process less and less, feels more competent and at ease with a greater variety of source texts, and eventually comes to think of herself or himself as a professional. Still, part of that professional competence remains the ability to slip out of habitual processes whenever necessary and experience the text, and the world, as fully and consciously and analytically as needed to solve difficult problems.

Abduction, induction, deduction

The translator's experience is, of course, infinitely more complicated than simply what s/he experiences in the act of translating. To expand our sense of everything involved in the translator's experience, it will be useful to borrow another triad from Peirce, that of abduction, induction, and deduction. You will recognize the latter two as names for types of logical reasoning, *induction* beginning with specifics

and moving toward generalities, *deduction* beginning with general principles and deducing individual details from them. *Abduction* is Peirce's coinage, born out of his sense that induction and deduction are not enough. They are limited by the fact that on its own neither induction nor deduction is capable of generating new ideas. Both, therefore, remain sterile. Both must be fed raw material for them to have anything to operate on – individual facts for induction, general principles for deduction – and a dualistic logic that recognizes only these two ways of proceeding can never explain where that material comes from.

Hence Peirce posits a third logical process which he calls abduction: the act of making an intuitive leap from unexplained data to a hypothesis. With little or nothing to go on, without even a very clear sense of the data about which s/he is hypothesizing, the thinker entertains a hypothesis that intuitively or instinctively (a First) *seems* right; it then remains to test that hypothesis inductively (a Second) and finally to generalize from it deductively (a Third).

Using these three approaches to processing experience, then, we can begin to expand the middle section of the translator's move from untrained instinct through experience to habit.

The translator's experience begins "abductively" at two places: in (1) a first approach to the foreign language, leaping from incomprehensible sounds (in speech) or marks on the page (in writing) to meaning, or at least to a wild guess at what the words mean; and (2) a first approach to the source text, leaping from an expression that makes sense but seems to resist translation (seems untranslatable) to a target-language equivalent. The abductive experience is one of not knowing how to proceed, being confused, feeling intimidated by the magnitude of the task – but somehow making the leap, making the blind stab at understanding or reformulating an utterance.

As s/he proceeds with the translation, or indeed with successive translation jobs, the translator tests the "abductive" solution "inductively" in a variety of contexts: the language-learner and the novice translator face a wealth of details that must be dealt with one at a time, and the more such details they face as they proceed, the easier it gets. Abduction is hard, because it's the first time; induction is easier because, though it still involves sifting through massive quantities of seemingly unrelated items, patterns begin to emerge through all the specifics.

Deduction begins when the translator has discovered enough "patterns" or "regularities" in the material to feel confident about making generalizations: syntactic structure X in the source language (almost) always becomes syntactic structure Y in the target language; people's names shouldn't be translated; ring the alarm bells whenever the word "even" comes along. Deduction is the source of translation methods, principles, and rules – the leading edge of translation theory (see Figure 2).

And as this diagram shows, the three types of experience, abductive guesses, inductive pattern-building, and deductive laws, bring the translator-as-learner ever

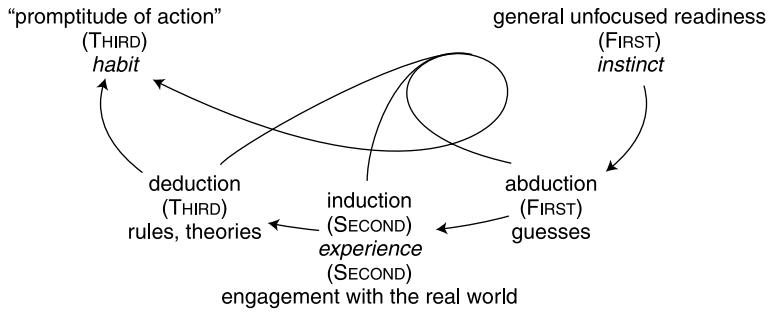

Figure 2 Peirce's instinct/experience/habit and abduction/induction/deduction triads in translation

closer to the formation of "habit," the creation of an effective procedural memory that will enable the translator to process complex textual, psychosocial, and cultural material rapidly, reliably, and enjoyably – and thus make it possible both to earn a living and to have some fun while doing it.

Karl Weick on enactment, selection, and retention

Another formulation of much this same process is Karl Weick's in *The Social Psychology of Organizing*. Weick begins with Darwin's model of natural selection, which moves through stages of variation, selection, retention: a variation or mutation in an individual organism is "selected" to be passed on to the next generation, and thus genetically encoded or "retained" for the species as a whole. In social life, he says, this process might better be described in the three stages of (1) enactment, (2) selection, and (3) retention.

1. As Em Griffin (1994: 280) summarizes Weick's ideas in *A First Look at Communication Theory*, in Stage 1, **enactment**, you simply *do* something; you "wade into the swarm of equivocal events and 'unrandomize' them." This is similar to what Charles Sanders Peirce calls *abduction*, the leap to a hypothesis (or "unrandomization") from the "swarm of equivocal events" that surround you.

2. The move from enactment in Stage 1 to **selection** in Stage 2 is governed by a principle of "respond now, plan later": "we can only interpret actions that we've already taken. That's why Weick thinks chaotic action is better than orderly inaction. Common ends and shared means are the result of effective organizing, not a prerequisite. Planning comes after enactment" (Griffin 1994: 280).

In Stage 2, Weick says, there are two approaches to selection: (2a) **rules** and (2b) **cycles**.

2a. **Rules** (or what Peirce would call *deductions*) are often taken to be the key to principled action, but Weick is skeptical. Because rules are formalized for general

and usually highly idealized cases, they most often fail to account for the complexity of real cases. Sometimes, in fact, two conflicting rules seem to apply simultaneously to a single situation, which only complicates the "selection" process. One rule will solve one segment of the problem; if we try to force the remainder of the problem into compliance with that rule, we bring into play another rule that challenges the first. Therefore, Weick says, in most cases "cycles" are more useful in selecting the optimum course of action.

2b. There are many different **cycles**, but all of them deal in trial and error – or what Peirce calls *induction*. The value of Weick's formulation is that he draws our attention to the cyclical nature of induction: you cycle out away from the problem in search of a solution, picking up possible courses of action as you go, then cycle back in to the problem to try out what you have learned. You try something and it doesn't work, which seems to bring you right back to where you started, except that now you know *one* solution that won't work; you try something and it does work, so you build it into the loop, to try again in future cycles.

Perhaps the most important cycle for the translator is what Weick calls the **act–response–adjustment** cycle, involving (2bi) trial-and-error action, (2bii) feedback ("response") from the people on whom your trial-and-error actions have an impact, and (2biii) a resulting shift ("adjustment") in your actions. This cycle is often called collaborative decision-making; it involves talking to people individually and in small groups, calling them on the phone, sending them emails and text messages, doing quick Facebook or gmail chats, taking them to lunch, trying out ideas, having them check your work, etc. Each interactive "cycle" not only generates new solutions, one brainstorm igniting another, it also eliminates old and unworkable ones, moving the complicated situation gradually toward clarity and a definite decision. As Em Griffin says, "Like a full turn of the crank on an old-fashioned clothes wringer, each communication cycle squeezes equivocality out of the situation" (Griffin 1994: 281).

3. Stage 3 is **retention**, which corresponds to Peirce's notion of *habit*. As with Peirce, Weick sees retention not as the stable goal of the whole process but as the condition out of which new actions spring. In order for the individual or the group to respond flexibly to new situations, the **enactment–selection–retention** process must itself constantly work in a cycle, each "retention" repeatedly being broken up by a new "enactment." Memory, Weick says, should be treated like a pest; while old solutions retained in memory provide stability and some degree of predictability in an uncertain world, that stability – often called "tradition" or "the way things have always been" – can also stifle flexibility. The world remains uncertain no matter what we do to protect ourselves from it; we must always be prepared to leap outside of "retained" solutions to new enactments. In linguistic terms, the meanings and usages of individual words and phrases change, and the translator who refuses to change with them will not last long in the business. "Chaotic action" is the only escape from "orderly inaction."

(This is not to say that all action must be chaotic; only that not all action can ever be orderly, and that the need to maintain order at all costs can frequently lead to inaction.) In Griffin's words again, "Weick urges leaders to continually discredit much of what they think they know – to doubt, argue, contradict, disbelieve, counter, challenge, question, vacillate, and even act hypocritically" (Griffin 1994: 283).

The process of translation

What this process model of translation suggests in Peirce's terms, then, is that novice translators begin by approaching a text with an instinctive sense that they know how to do this, that they will be good at it, that it might be fun; with their first actual experience of a text they realize that they don't know how to proceed, but take an abductive guess anyway; and soon are translating away, learning inductively as they go, by trial and error, making mistakes and learning from those mistakes; they gradually deduce patterns and regularities that help them to translate faster and more effectively; and eventually these patterns and regularities become habit or second nature, are incorporated into a subliminal activity of which they are only occasionally aware; they are constantly forced to revise what they have learned through contact with new texts. In Weick's terms, the **enact–select–retain** cycle might be reformulated as ***translate, edit, sublimate***:

1. *Translate*: act; jump into the text feet first; translate intuitively.
2. *Edit*: think about what you've done; test your intuitive responses against everything you know; but edit intuitively too, allowing an intuitive first translation to challenge (even successfully) a well-reasoned principle that you believe in deeply; let yourself feel the tension between intuitive certainty and cognitive doubt, and don't automatically choose one over the other; use the act–response–adjustment cycle rather than rigid rules.
3. *Sublimate*: internalize what you've learned through this give-and-take process for later use; make it second nature; make it part of your intuitive repertoire; but sublimate it flexibly, as a directionality that can be redirected in conflictual circumstances; never, however, let subliminal patterns bind your flexibility; always be ready if needed "to doubt, argue, contradict, disbelieve, counter, challenge, question, vacillate, *and even act hypocritically* (*be willing to break your own rules*)."

The model traces a movement from bafflement before a specific problem through a tentative solution to the gradual expansion of such solutions into a habitual pattern of response. The model assumes that the translator is at once:

(a) a *professional*, for whom many highly advanced problem-solving processes and techniques have become second nature, occurring rapidly enough to enhance

especially the freelancer's income and subliminally enough that s/he isn't necessarily able to articulate those processes and techniques to others, or even, perhaps, to herself or himself; and

(b) a *learner*, who not only confronts and must solve new problems on a daily basis but actually thrives on such problems, since novelties ensure variety, growth, interest, and enjoyment.

Throughout the book, this model of the process of translation will suggest specific recommendations for the translator's "education," in a broad sense that includes both training (and training either in the classroom or on the job) and learning through personal discovery and insight. What *are* the kinds of experiences ("abductive" intuitive leaps, "inductive" sifting and testing, "deductive" generalizing) that will help the translator continue to grow and improve as a working professional? How can they best be habitualized, sublimated, transformed from "novel" experiences or lessons that must be thought about carefully into techniques that seem to come naturally? (See Figure 3.)

This diagram can be imagined as the wheel of a car, the line across at the top marking the direction of the car's movement, forward to the right, backward to the left. As long as the wheel is moving in a clockwise direction, the car moves forward, the translation process proceeds smoothly, and the translator/driver is only occasionally aware of the turning of the wheel(s). The line across the top is labeled "habit" *and* "intuition" because, once the experiential processes of abduction, induction, and deduction have been sublimated, they operate sub- or semiconsciously:

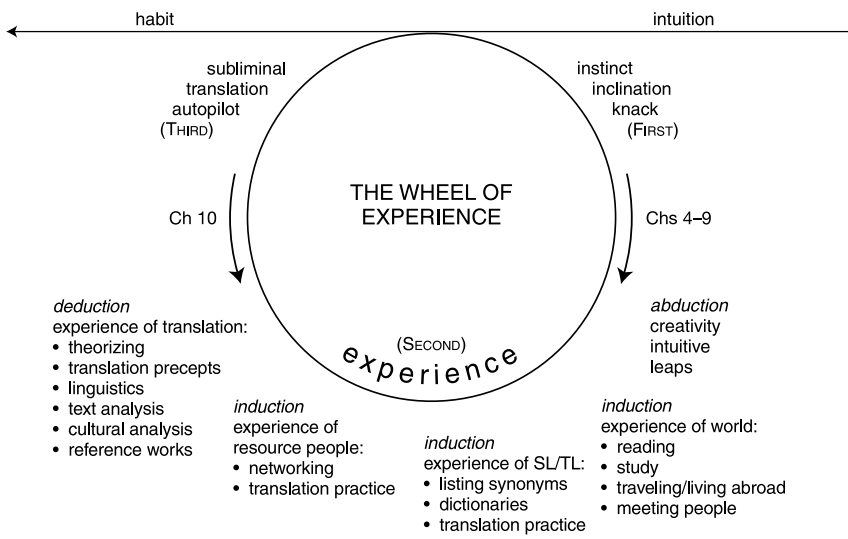

Figure 3 The wheel of experience

the smooth movement of the top line from left to right may be taken to indicate the smooth clockwise spinning of the triadic circle beneath it. This movement might be charted as follows:

The translator approaches new texts, new jobs, new situations with an intuitive or *instinctive* readiness, a sense of her or his own knack for languages and translation that is increasingly, with experience, steeped in the automatisms of habit. Instinct and habit for Peirce were both, you will remember, a readiness to act; the only difference between them is that habit is directed by experience.

Experience begins with general knowledge of the world (Chapter 4), experience of how various people talk and act (Chapter 5), experience of professions (Chapter 6), experience of the vast complexity of languages (Chapter 7), experience of social networks (Chapter 8), and experience of the differences among cultures, norms, values, assumptions (Chapter 9). This knowledge or experience will often need to be actively sought, constructed, consolidated, especially but not exclusively at the beginning of the translator's career; with the passing of years the translator's subliminal repertoire of world experience will expand and operate without her or his conscious knowledge.

On the cutting edge of contact with an actual text or job or situation, the translator has an intuition or image of her or his ability to solve whatever problems come up, to leap *abductively* over obstacles to new solutions. Gradually the "problems" or "difficulties" will begin to recur, and to fall into patterns. This is *induction*. As the translator begins to notice and articulate, or read about, or take classes on, these patterns and regularities, *deduction* begins, and with it the theorizing of translation.

At the simplest level, deduction involves a repertoire of blanket solutions to a certain class of problems – one of the most primitive and yet, for many translators, desirable forms of translation theory. Each translator's deductive principles are typically built up through numerous trips around the circle (abductions and inductions gradually building to deductions, deductions becoming progressively habitualized); each translator will eventually develop a more or less coherent theory of translation, even if s/he isn't quite able to articulate it. (It will probably be mostly subliminal; in fact, whatever inconsistencies in the theory are likely to be conflicts between the subliminal parts, which were developed through practical experience, and the articulate parts, which were most likely learned as precepts.) Because this sort of effective theory arises out of one's own practice, another person's deductive solutions to specific problems, as offered in a theory course or book, for example, will typically be harder to remember, integrate, and implement in practice. At higher levels this deductive work will produce regularities concerning whole registers, text-types, and cultures; thus various linguistic forms of text analysis (Chapter 7), social processes (Chapter 8), and systematic analyses of culture (Chapter 9).

This is the "perfected" model of the translation process, the process as we would all like it to operate all the time. Unfortunately, it doesn't. There are numerous

hitches in the process, from bad memory and inadequate dictionaries all the way up through untranslatable words and phrases (*realia*, puns, etc.) to the virtually unsolvable problems of translating across enormous power differentials, between, say, English and various Third World languages. The diagram allows us to imagine these "hitches" kinesthetically: you stop the car, throw it into reverse, back up to avoid an obstacle or to take another road. This might be traced as a counterclockwise movement back around the circle.

The subliminal autopilot fails; something comes up that you cannot solve with existing habitualized repertoires (Chapter 10). In many cases the subliminal process will be stopped automatically by bafflement, an inability to proceed; in other cases you will grow gradually more and more uneasy about the direction the translation is taking, until finally you are no longer able to stand the tension between apparent subliminal "success" and the gnawing vague sense of failure, and throw on the brakes and back up. As we have seen, you can also build an alarm system, perhaps an automatic emergency brake system, into the "habit" or subliminal functioning, so that certain words, phrases, registers, cultural norms, or the like stop the process and force you to deal consciously, alertly, analytically with a problem. This sort of alarm or brake system is particularly important when translating in a politically difficult or sensitive context, as when you feel that your own experience is so alien from the source author's that unconscious error is extremely likely (as when translating across the power differentials generated by gender, race, or colonial experience); or when you find yourself in opposition to the source author's views.

And so, forced out of subliminal translating, you begin to move consciously, analytically, with full intellectual awareness, back around the circle, through deduction and the various aspects of induction to abduction – the intuitive leap to some novel solution that may even fly in the face of everything you know and believe but nevertheless *feels* right. Every time one process fails, you move to another: listing synonyms doesn't help, so you open the dictionary; the word or phrase isn't in the dictionary, or the options offered all look or feel wrong, so you call or text or email a friend or acquaintance who might be able to help, or send out a query over an Internet mailing list; they are no help, so you plow through encyclopedias and other reference materials; if you have no luck there, you call the agency or client; and finally, if nobody knows, you go with your intuitive sense, generate a translation abductively, perhaps marking the spot with a question mark for the agency or client to follow up on later. Translating a poem, you may want to jump to abduction almost immediately.

And note that the next step after abduction (intuitive leaps), moving back around the circle counterclockwise, is once again the subliminal translation autopilot: the solution to this particular problem, whether generated deductively, inductively, or abductively (or through some combination of the three), is incorporated into your habitual repertoire, where it may be used again in future translations, perhaps tested inductively, generalized into a deductive principle, even made the basis of a new theoretical approach to translation.

The rest of this book is structured to follow the circle: first clockwise, in Chapters 4–9, beginning with subliminal translation and moving through the various forms of experience to an enriched subliminality; then (rather more rapidly) counterclockwise, in Chapter 10, exploring the conscious analytical procedures the translator uses when subliminal translation fails. In each case we will be concerned with the tension between experience and habit, the startling and the subliminal – specifically, with how one slides from one to the other, sublimating fresh experiential discoveries into an effective translating "habit," bouncing back out of subliminal translation into various deductive, inductive, and abductive problem-solving procedures.

Discussion

Most theories of translation assume that the translator works consciously, analytically, alertly; the model presented in this chapter assumes that the translator only rarely works consciously, for the most part letting subliminal or habitual processes do the work. Speculate on the nature and origin of this difference of opinion. Are the traditional theories idealizations of the theorist's own conscious processes? Is this chapter an idealization of some real-world translators' bad habits?

Exercises

1. What habits do you rely on in day-to-day living? In what ways do they help you get through the day? When do they become a liability, a straitjacket to be dropped or escaped? Estimate how many minutes a day you are actively conscious of what is happening around you, what you are doing. Scientists of human behavior say it is not a large number: habit runs most of our lives. What about you?
2. What fresh discoveries have you made in your life that have since become "second nature," part of your habitual repertoire? Remember the process by which a new and challenging idea or procedure became old and easy and familiar. For example, remember how complex driving a car seemed when you were first learning to do it, how automatic and easy it seems now. Relive the process in your imagination; jot down the main stages or moments in the change.
3. What are some typical problem areas in your language combination(s)? What are the words or phrases that ought to set off alarm bells when you stumble upon them in a text?

Suggestions for further reading

Translation theory and practice: Chesterman and Wagner (2001), Kraszewski (1998), Lörscher (1991), Robinson (2001), Schäffner and Adab (2000), Seguinot (1989), Tirkkonen-Condit and Jääskeläinen (2000)

Peirce: Gorlée (1994, 2004), Peirce (1931–66), Robinson (2011: 23–39, 92–5)

4 Drawing on experience: How being a translator is more than just being good at languages

In this chapter: While it is true that "experience" is the best teacher, experience comes in many shapes and sizes, including wild or educated guesses when faced with an apparently insoluble problem, exposure to a variety of cases over a long period of time, which is what we generally call "practical experience," and theoretical teaching or training based on laws or general principles.

Intuitive leaps: most translation decisions are in the end based on intuitive leaps (a given word or phrase *feels* right); it is important to remember, though, that these intuitive leaps are only trustworthy when they are heavily grounded in experience, especially in the attentive sort of experiential exposure to thousands of cases that we're calling "pattern-building."

Pattern-building: a professional translator *pays attention* to experience. S/he doesn't just live; s/he is constantly studying what happens around him or her, other people (Chapter 5), people doing jobs (Chapter 6), what people say and write (Chapter 7), social networks (Chapter 8), and cultural habits (Chapter 9).

Rules and theories: ideally, rules and theories arise out of pattern-building experience, and are constantly being tested in and by that experience. When a rule or a theory is not grounded in practical experience, it is practically useless (and is often identified as a "bad theory"). While teaching rules and theories seems like a time-saver in class, therefore, it's best to remember that students will learn best by being guided from intuitive leaps through pattern-building experience to rules and theories.

What experience?

Experience of the world is of course essential for all humans. Without experience of other people speaking we would never learn language. Without experience of other people interacting we would never learn our society's behavioral norms.

Without experience of written texts and visual media we would never learn about the world beyond our immediate environment. Without experience of the world – if in fact such a thing is even imaginable – we would never learn anything. Experience of the world is an integral and ongoing part of our being in the world. Without it, we could hardly be said to exist at all.

The real question is, then, not *whether* experience of the world is indispensable for the translator's work, but *what kind* of experience of the world is indispensable for the translator's work.

Is it enough to have profound and extensive experiences of one or more foreign languages? If so, is it enough to have been exposed to that language or those languages in books and classrooms, or is experience of the culture or cultures in which it is natively spoken essential? How important is rich experience of one's mother tongue(s)? And how rich? Is it essential to be exposed to people who speak it in different regions, social classes, and professions? Or is it enough to have read in it widely and attentively?

Alternatively, is extensive experience of a certain subject matter enough, if the translator has a rudimentary working knowledge of at least one foreign language?

If so, does that experience need to be hands-on practical experience of the field, experience of the objects and the people who handle them and the way those people speak about the objects? Or is it enough to have experience of books, articles, and coursework on that subject matter?

At a radical extreme that will make professional translators uncomfortable, could it even be sufficient, in certain cases, for the translator to have fleeting and superficial experience of the foreign language and the subject matter but a rich and complex experience with dictionaries? Or, in a slightly less extreme example, would it be enough for a competent professional translator from Spanish and Portuguese to have heard a little Italian and own a good Italian dictionary in order to translate a fairly easy and routine text from the Italian?

One answer to *all* of these questions is: "Yes, in certain cases." A solid experiential grounding in a language can get you through even a difficult specialized text when you have little or no experience of the subject matter; and a good solid experiential grounding in a subject matter can sometimes get you through a difficult text in that field written in a foreign language with which you have little experience. Sometimes knowledge of similar languages and a dictionary can get you through a fairly simple text that you can hardly read at all.

While the ability to compensate for failings in some areas with strengths in others is an important professional skill, however, asking the questions this way is ultimately misleading. While in specific cases a certain level or type of experience (and competence) may be "enough" or "essential," few translators have the luxury of knowing in advance just what will be required to do the job at hand. Thus the translator's key to accumulating experience of the world is not so much what may be "enough" or "essential" for specific translation jobs as it is simply experiencing as much of

everything as possible. The more experience of the world, the better; also, the more *of* the world one experiences, the better.

The more experience of the world you have accumulated in advance, the easier it will be to *draw* on that experience in doing whatever translation job appears in your inbox.

Of course, it must immediately be added that one never has enough experience. A good translator is someone who has never quite experienced enough to do her or his job well: just one more language, s/he thinks, one more degree, one more year abroad, fifty or sixty more books, and s/he'll be ready to start doing the job properly. But that day never comes – not because the translator is incompetent or inexperienced, not because the translator's work is substandard, but because a good translator *always wants to know more*, always wants to have experienced more, never feels quite satisfied with the job s/he just completed. Expectations stay forever a step or three in front of reality, and keep the translator forever restlessly in search of more experience.

Experience of the world sometimes confirms the translator's habits. There are regularities to social life that make some aspects of our existence predictable. A visit to a city we've visited many times before will confirm many of our memories about that city: a favorite hotel, a favorite restaurant or café, a favorite park, areas to avoid, etc. Every attempt to communicate in a foreign language that we know well will similarly confirm many of our memories of that language: familiar words mean more or less the same things that we remember them meaning before, syntactic structures work the same, common phrases are used in situations similar to the ones in which we've encountered them before.

But experience holds constant surprises for us as well. We turn the corner and find that a favorite hotel or restaurant has been torn down, or has changed owners and taken on an entirely new look. Familiar words and phrases are used in unfamiliar ways, so that we wonder how we ever believed ourselves fluent in the language.

If nothing ever stayed the same, obviously, we would find it impossible to function. No one would ever be in a position to give anyone else directions, since nothing would stay the same long enough for anyone to "know" where it was or what it was like. Communication would be impossible.

But if nothing ever changed, our habits would become straitjackets. We would lock into a certain rigid set of worldly experiences and our expectations and predictions based on those experiences, and stop learning. Most of us try to just do that in as many areas of our lives as possible, to become "creatures of habit" (a phrase that is not usually taken as an insult), and so to control our environments in some small way.

But only the extremely insecure crave this "habitual" control over their whole lives; and only the extremely wealthy can afford to achieve anything even approximating that control in reality. The rest of us, fortunately, are forced past our habits in a thousand little ways every day, and so forced to rethink, regroup, shift our

understandings and expectations to accord with the new experiences and slowly, sometimes painfully, begin to rebuild broken habits around the changed situation.

As we've seen, the translator's habits make it possible to translate faster, more reliably, and more enjoyably; but when those habits are not broken, twisted, massaged, and reshaped by fresh experience, the enjoyment begins to seep out, and speed and reliability stagnate into mechanical tedium. (Player pianos can play fast pieces rapidly and reliably, and for a while it can be enjoyable to listen to their playing; but how long would you enjoy *being* one?)

In Chapters 5–9 we will be considering a sequence of worldly experiences – people, professions, languages, social networks, cultures – and their significance for translators. In each case we will be exploring the relevant experience in terms of Charles Sanders Peirce's triad of abduction, induction, and deduction: intuitive leaps, pattern-building, and the application of general rules or laws or theories. In the rest of this chapter, then, let us examine each of those in turn, asking what role each plays in a translator's engagement with the world.

Intuitive leaps

What role should intuition play in translation?

None at all, some say – or as little as possible. Nothing should be left to chance; and since intuition is often equated with guessing, and guessing with randomness or chance, this means that nothing in translation should be left to intuition. But even in its broadest application, this is an extreme position that has little to do with the everyday realities of translation.

From China:

Outside a lift in Hong Kong:

屋苑範圍嚴禁飼養狗隻

IN THIS ESTATE: BRING ON TO OR KEEP ON ANY DOGS ARE PROHIBITED
(recently changed to "NO DOGS ALLOWED")

One of the most famous "Chinglish" signs:

小心滑倒

SLIP AND FALL DOWN CAREFULLY
(literally: "[be] careful [or you will] slip [and] fall")

Outside a toilet for the handicapped:

殘疾人專用

DEFORMED PERSON
(Literally: "special toilet for disabled person")

At a bus stop:

旅客由此進入乘車

Traveler from to get into by bus
(Literally "tourists enter from here to take the vehicle")

In a Chinese park:

花草也有生命，請足下留情

HELLO! I AM HERE TOO, PLEASE
(Literally: "The plants and flowers are alive too, please be kind to them")

On a steep hill:

坡道路滑 注意安全

TO TAKE NOTICE OF SAFE
THE SLIPPERY ARE VERY CRAFTY
(Literally: "Slippery slope: watch out for your safety"; note: *huá* 滑 is "slippery" in both the literal sense [meant here] and the metaphorical sense of "crafty" [but not here])

On a Polish train:

HAMULEC RĘCZNY
W razie potrzeby kręcić w prawo aż do odczucia oporu
Nieuzasadnione użycie będzie karane

HAND BRAKE

Should the need arise to wiggle to the right till feelings the resistance
Unnecessarily usage will be sanctioned

A better English translation offered by a professional Polish translator:

In case of emergency, turn the hand brake to the right until resistance is felt
A penalty applies for any unjustified use

(http://www.hotforwords.com/forum/topic/engrish-please-dont-correct-is-funny)

It is true that a competent reader would swiftly reject a scientific or technical or legal translation based largely or solely on an ill-informed translator's "intuitions" about the right words and phrases. This kind of "intuition" is the source of the infamous "terrible translations" that one finds in shops and hotels and restaurants and owners' manuals the world around.

But that does not mean that intuition is a bad thing, to be avoided. Intuitive leaps are an essential part of the translation process: essential, but only a part; only a part, but essential.

In the first place, it is often difficult to distinguish intuitive leaps from calm certainty. You are translating along, and stumble briefly on a word. "What *was* that in the target language?" All of a sudden it comes to you, out of nowhere, it seems, and your fingers type it. How do you know it's right? Well, you just know. It *feels* right. It feels intuitively right. Your procedural memory has taken over. In your experience it has always been used in situations or contexts roughly like the one in which the problem word appeared, with roughly the same tone and semantic extension; you turn it around in your head three or four times, sampling it on your tongue, and no matter how you probe it, it still feels right. So you trust your intuition (or your experience) and proceed. You don't check the word in four dictionaries, or email three friends who might be able to tell you for sure, or send a query out over the Internet. The fact is, if you did that with every word, you would never finish anything. You would certainly never make a living by translating.

Sometimes, of course, your "intuition" or "experience" (and which is it?) tells you that there are serious problems with the word or phrase you've come up with; so you check your dictionaries, and they all confirm your choice, but still you go on doubting. It feels almost right, but not quite. You call or text your friends, and they give you conflicting answers, which is no help; it's still up to you. You get up and pace around, worrying the word, tugging and pulling at it. Finally the word you've been looking for jumps into your head, and you rejoice, and rush to write it down – *that's* the word!

But how do you know?

You just *do*.

Or you rush to write it down, only to discover that the word you finally remembered has some other connotation or association that makes it potentially inappropriate for this context. What do you do now? You now have two words that feel partly right and partly wrong; which do you choose? Or do you keep agonizing until you find some third word that leaves you feeling equally torn?

Welcome to the world of translation – a compromised world of half-rights and half-wrongs. (But then, what aspect of our world is that *not* true of?)

The process of remembering and vetting words and phrases, then – the semantic core of the job – is steeped in intuitive leaps. Some of those leaps are solidly grounded in long experience, others in dim memories of overheard snatches of conversation; and it is not always possible to tell the two apart. If a word jumps into your head without dragging along behind it the full history of your experience with it, an educated guess may feel very much like a calm certainty, and vice versa.

A good translator will develop a rough sense of when s/he can trust these intuitive leaps and when they need to be subjected to close scrutiny and/or independent testing; but that sense is never more than a rough one, always just a little fuzzy at the crucial boundaries.

Intuitive leaps may be unavoidable, even essential, at the leading edge of the translation process; but once a rough draft has been completed, the translator steps back from her or his work, and edits it with a careful and suspicious eye. At least, that is the idea; and it is not only a good idea, it is often a successful one. Many times the translator will catch on the second or third read-through a silly mistake that s/he made in the white heat of invention. "What could I have been thinking!?"

But even editing is heavily grounded in intuitive leaps. After all, what is the source of the cool rational judgment that decides some word or phrase is wrong?

The source is the exact same set of experiences that produced it in the first place – simply channeled a little differently. There are cases in which one word is right and seventeen others are wrong; but the translator, working alone, and the interpreter, working in public and without the liberty of looking things up in reference books or asking questions, doesn't always *know* which the right word is, and must rely on an intuitive sense. You make mistakes that way; the mistakes get corrected, and you learn from them, or they don't get corrected, and you make them again. And you wish that you could avoid making such mistakes, but you can't, not entirely; all you can do is try not to make the same mistakes over and over again.

Furthermore, while it is usually considered desirable for a translator to solve all the problems in a text before submitting a finished translation, this isn't always possible. Sometimes the translator will have to call the project manager or client and say, "I just can't find a good equivalent for X." If X is easy and the translator should know it, s/he will lose face, and will probably lose future jobs as well; obviously, the translator should usually admit ignorance only after doing everything in her or his own power to solve a problem first.

On the other hand, a translator who admits ignorance in the face of a really difficult (perhaps even insoluble) problem actually gains face, wins the confidence of the agency or client, because it is important to recognize one's own limits.

Admitting ignorance of this or that difficult word indirectly casts a glow of reliability over the rest of the text, which can now be presumed to be full of things that the translator does know.

Some large translation projects are done by teams: translator A translates the first half and sends the original and translation to translator B for editing; translator B translates the second half and sends the original and translation to translator A for editing; each translator makes changes based on the other's suggestions; the "finished product" of their collaboration is further checked by an in-house person at the agency before it is shipped off to the client. Another in-house person searches databases in the World Wide Web and other Internet sources for useful terminology; both translators compile and constantly revise tentative glossaries of their terminological solutions. In this sort of collaboration, intuitive leaps are not only acceptable, they are strongly encouraged. One translator doesn't know a word, and so guesses at it; the other translator sees instantly that the guess is wrong, but the guess helps her or him to remember the correct word, or to make a better guess, or to suggest a source that may solve the problem for them. Comparing each other's tentative glossaries so as to maintain terminological consistency, they brainstorm individually and together on various problem areas, and gradually hone and polish the words chosen.

In sum, then, intuitive leaps are a necessary part of invention, subject to later editing; and they are a necessary part of editing as well, subject to discussion or negotiation among two or more translators, editors, or managers of a project.

Because intuitive leaps are generally considered guesswork, they are usually kept "in-house," whether inside the translator's house and not revealed to an agency, or inside the agency and not revealed to a client. But agencies (and even some corporate clients) realize that translation is not an exact science, and are often all too willing to work together with the translator(s) to untangle knotty problems.

Finally, of course, it should be said that not all translation is scientific or technical; not every translation revolves around the one and only "correct" or "accurate" translation for a given word or phrase. In "free imitations" or "rough adaptations," such as television or film versions of novels or plays, "retellings" of literary classics for children, and international advertising campaigns, intuitive leaps are important not in order to recall the "correct" word but to come up with an interesting or striking or effective word or image or turn of phrase that may well deviate sharply from the original. Where creativity and effectiveness are prized above accuracy, the critical blockages to a good translation are typically not in the translator's memory but in the free flow of her or his imagination; intuitive leaps help to keep (or to start) things flowing.

In some cases, also, the "correct" word or phrase is desired, but proves highly problematic, as when translating from the ancient Babylonian or Sumerian – who

knows what this or that word might have meant three thousand years ago? (see Roberts 1997) – or when the translator suspects that the original writer didn't quite have a hold on the word s/he wanted yet. When the Armenian-American poet Diana derHovanessian was working with an Armenian scholar to translate a collection of contemporary Armenian poetry into English, there was a word for mountain-climbing that she felt strongly was *right*, poetically "accurate" or appropriate, despite her Armenian collaborator's insistence that it had the wrong connotations for the Armenian word used by the original poet. In this situation she was translating (or trying to translate) abductively, intuitively, by the seat of her pants. Her intuitive leap was later confirmed by the original Armenian poet himself, who said that he wished he had thought to use the Armenian equivalent of the word she used; and would have done so, had he thought of it, because *it*, not the word actually printed in the poem, was the "right" one.

But these hunches are rarely so satisfactorily confirmed; they come, they insist on being heard, considered, and acted upon; the translator makes a decision, and typically the situation is gone, past, over and done with. No one even notices; no one says, "No, you're wrong," or "You were right and I was wrong." The word or words chosen become water under the bridge; new jobs await their translator.

Pattern-building

Less perhaps needs to be said in defense, let alone explanation, of the inductive process of building patterns through exposure to numerous individual cases, than about the more controversial process of making intuitive leaps; it is generally recognized that inductive pattern-building is how translators most typically proceed with any given translation task or series of translation tasks, and thus also how translators are most effectively "trained" (or train themselves). Practice may not make perfect, but it certainly helps; the more words, phrases, and whole texts a person has translated, the better a translator that person is likely to be.

But a few comments are in order. One is that "experience" or "practice" conceived as *pattern-building* is more than sheer mindless exposure to masses of material. It is a process of sifting mindfully through that material, constantly looking for regularities that can bring some degree of order and thus predictability and even control to the swirl of experience. To some extent this "mindfulness" can be subconscious, subliminal – but only if one has sublimated an analytical spirit, a searching contrast-and-compare mentality that never quite takes things exactly as they come but must always be asking "why?" and "why not?" and "haven't I seen something like this before?"

To put that differently, the "mindfulness" that raises experience to a process of intelligent pattern-building is an attentiveness, a readiness to notice and reflect upon words and phrases and register shifts and all the other linguistic and nonlinguistic material to which a translator is constantly being exposed – striking or unusual

words and phrases, certainly, but also ordinary ones that might have escaped earlier attention, familiar ones that might have shifted in usage or meaning, etc.

You hear a word that sounds as if it might work as an equivalent for some source-language word that has bothered you in the past, and you immediately stop and ask questions: you hear someone in Spain using the word "empoderamiento" casually in conversation, for example, and you begin pestering the speaker with questions designed to establish whether that word really works as a Spanish equivalent of the English "empowerment," or whether its parallel Latin derivation is a mere misleading coincidence (making it a "false friend"). Working inductively, translators are always "collecting" words and phrases that might some day be useful, some on note cards or in computer files, others only in their heads; and that sort of collection process requires that the translator have her or his "feelers" out most or all of the time, sorting out the really interesting and potentially useful and important words and phrases from the flood of language that we hear around us every day.

It is also significant that, while the inductive process of finding patterns in large quantities of experience has the power to transform our subliminal habits, it is ultimately only effective once it is incorporated *into* those subliminal habits. In fact, the process of sublimating inductive discoveries can help explain why the slow process of discovering and building patterns through one's own practical experience is so much more useful for the practicing translator than the learning and application of general rules and theories. There is a natural movement from ongoing discoveries and insights to habit that is enhanced by pattern-building – especially when pattern-building is conceived as becoming conscious of something just long enough to recognize its interesting characteristics and then storing it. That movement can actually be hindered or blocked by an excessive focus on rules and theories. But more of that in the next section.

Rules and theories

Ideally, deductive principles – rules, models, laws, theories – of translation should arise out of the translator's own experience, the testing of hypotheses (best guesses) through a series of individual cases. In the "intuitive leap" stage (what Peirce calls abduction) the translator tries something that feels right, perhaps feels potentially right, without any clear sense of how well it will work; in the pattern-building stage (induction) the translator allows broad regularities to emerge from the materials s/he has been exposed to; and in the "rules and theories" stage (deduction) the translator begins to impose those regularities on new materials by way of predicting or controlling what they will entail. Lest these general principles become too rigid, however, and so block the translator's receptivity to novel experiences (and thus ability to learn and grow), the application of rules and theories to new material must constantly be fed "from below," remaining flexible in response to pressures from new intuitive leaps and newly discovered patterns to rethink what s/he thought was understood.

This ideal model is not always practicable, however. Above all it is often inefficient. Learning general principles through one's own experience is enormously time-consuming and labor-intensive, and frequently narrow – precisely as narrow as the translator's own experience. As a result, many translators with homegrown rules and theories about translation have simply reinvented the wheel, pronouncing with experience-based fervor such things as: "I believe it is important to translate the meaning of the original text, not individual words." Translators who post such deductive principles on Internet discussion groups like Lantra-L have learned the hard way, through laborious effort and much concentrated reflection, what translation theorists have been telling their readers for a very long time: about sixteen centuries, if you date this theory back to Jerome's letter to Pammachius in 395:

> Now I not only admit but freely announce that in translating from the Greek – except of course in the case of Holy Scripture, where even the syntax contains a mystery – I render, not word for word, but sense for sense. (Robinson 1997c/2002: 25)

Or two millennia if you date it back to Cicero in 55 before the common era:

> And I did not translate them as an interpreter, but as an orator, keeping the same ideas and the forms, or as one might say, the "figures" of thought, but in language which conforms to our usage. (Robinson 1997c/2002: 9)

It is also what translation instructors have been telling their students for decades.

Is it really necessary for individual translators to relearn this principle with so much effort? Wouldn't it make more sense for them to be told, early on in their careers, that this is the fundamental axiom of all mainstream translation in the West, and so to be spared the effort of working it out for themselves?

Yes and no. The effort is never really wasted, since we always learn things more fully, integrate them more coherently into our working habits, when we learn them in rich experiential contexts, through our own efforts. In some sense no one ever learns anything without first testing it in practice – even if that "practice" is only the experience of taking a test on material taught in class, or comparing it to one's own past experiences and seeing whether they match up. The beginning student translator who "naturally" translates one word at a time will not quite believe the teacher who says "translate the meanings of whole sentences, not individual words," until s/he has tested that principle in actual translation work and felt its experiential validity. So experience remains important even when being taught someone else's deductive principles.

But at the same time, "being told" can mean immense savings in time and effort over "figuring it out on your own." The beginning student translator told to translate the meanings of whole sentences will still have to test the principle in practice, but

this experiential testing process will now be focused or channeled by the "rule" or "model," and so will move much more quickly and effectively toward its goal than it would if left to develop on its own.

This is, of course, the rationale behind translator training: given a few general principles and plenty of chances to test those principles in practice (and intelligent feedback on the success or failure of those tests), novice translators will progress much more rapidly toward professional competence than they would out in the working world on their own.

In addition, exposure to other people's deductions about translation can help broaden a translator's sense of the field. We all tend to assume that translation is pretty much the same everywhere, and everywhere pretty much the same as what we've experienced in our own narrow little niche – and this assumption can be terribly limiting. A translator who has concluded from years of experience in technical or business translation that all translators must render the meaning of the original text as accurately as possible will feel paralyzed when asked to adapt advertising copy to the requirements of a different culture, or a complex novel for children.

"That's not translation!" this sort of person typically cries – because that is not the kind of translation s/he has long been engaged in doing. Whatever lies outside each individual translator's fairly narrow experience of the field is "not translation." Exposure to other people's rules and theories about the field can coax translators with these ingrained assumptions past the limitations of their own experiential worlds.

And this is one rationale for translation theory: it pushes translators past narrow conceptions of the field to expanding insights into *what translation has been historically* (in the Middle Ages translators often wrote their own glosses or commentaries and built them *into* their translations), *what it is today* (radical adaptations, interpretive imitations, propagandistic refocusing), and *what it might be in some imaginable future*. These theoretical explorations may not be immediately applicable to the translator's practical needs; the in-house translator who only translates a certain type of technical documentation, for example, may not have a strong professional need to know how people translated in the Middle Ages, or how advertising translations often proceed in the present.

But no one ever knows what kinds of knowledge or experience will prove useful in the future. The in-house technical translator may one day be offered an advertising translation: "So-and-so's out sick today, do you think you could have a look at this full-page ad?" Does s/he really want to have to say, "I don't know anything about advertising translation, I've never thought about it, and to be quite frank I don't *want* to think about it"? A friend with an advertising agency may be looking for a translator to join the firm; does the technical translator really want not to be in a position to choose between the two jobs, simply because advertising translation (indeed anything outside her or his current narrow experience) is unthinkable?

Conclusion

The best way to sum up the ideas in this chapter is to say that the translator should be a *lifelong learner*, always eager to push into new territories, and at least occasionally, in accordance with his or her own personal preferences, willing to let other people chart the way into those territories. No one can experience everything first hand; in fact, no one can experience more than a few dozen things even through books and courses and other first-hand descriptions. We have to rely on other people's experiences in order to continue broadening our world – even if, once we have heard those other experiences, we want to go out and have our own, to test their descriptions in practice.

It is important to remember, in these next five chapters, that intuitive leaps, pattern-building, and rules and theories are all important channels of experience and learning. Each has its special and invaluable contribution to make to the learning process. Intuitive guesswork without the ongoing practical trial-and-error of pattern-building or the rules, laws, and theories introduced by teachers would leave the translator a novice: pattern-building and rules and theories are essential to professional competence. But pattern-building without fresh perspectives and creative intuitive leaps would become a rote, mechanical straitjacket. Rules and theories too should have an expansive effect on the learner, opening up wider horizons of translation. Rules and theories without surprises from the world of intuitive leaps, or a solid grounding in professional practice, would be sterile and empty.

Discussion

1. Is it enough for the translator to have profound and extensive experiences of one or more foreign languages? If so, is it enough to have been exposed to that language or those languages in books and classrooms? Or is experience of the culture or cultures in which it is natively spoken essential?
2. How important is rich experience of your mother tongue(s)? And how rich? Is it essential to be exposed to people who speak it in different regions, social classes, and professions? Or is it enough to have read in it widely and attentively?
3. Is extensive experience of a certain subject matter enough for the translator, if s/he has a rudimentary working knowledge of the foreign language a source text in that field is written in? If so, does that experience need to be hands-on practical experience of the field, experience of the objects and the people who handle them and the way those people speak about the objects? Or is it enough to have experience of books, articles, and coursework on that subject matter?
4. Could it be enough in certain cases for the translator to have fleeting and superficial experience of the foreign language and the subject matter but a rich and complex experience with dictionaries? Would it be enough for a competent

professional translator from Spanish and Portuguese to have heard a little Italian and own a good Italian dictionary in order to translate a fairly easy and routine text from the Italian?

5. What role should intuition play in translation?
6. Can translation be taught? If so, can it be taught through precepts, rules, principles? Or can it only be "taught" through doing it and getting feedback?

Exercises

1. Think of the foreign culture you know best. Cast your mind back to all the times when you noticed that something, especially the way a thing was said or done, had changed in that culture. Relive the feelings you had when you noticed the change: bafflement, irritation, interest and curiosity, a desire to analyze and trace the sources of the change, etc. What did you do? How did you handle the situation?
2. Read through a source text that is new to you and mark it as follows: (a) *underline* words and phrases that are completely familiar to you, so that you don't even have to think twice about them; (b) *circle* words and phrases that are somewhat familiar to you, but that you aren't absolutely sure about, that you might want to verify in a dictionary or other source; (c) put a *box* around words and phrases that are completely unfamiliar to you. Now look back over your markings and predict the role that intuition will play in your translation of the words and phrases in the three different categories. Finally, look up one or more circled or boxed words or phrases in a dictionary or other reference book and monitor the role that intuition actually plays in your selection, from the various alternatives listed there, of the "correct" or "accurate" or "best" equivalent for each.
3. Work in pairs with a fairly short (one-paragraph) translation task, each person translating the whole source text and then "editing" the other's translation. As you work on the other person's translation, be aware of your decision-making process: how you "decide" (or feel) that a certain word or phrasing is wrong, or off; how you settle upon a better alternative. Do you have a grammatical rule or dictionary definition to justify each "correction"? If so, is the rule or definition the first thing you think of, or do you first have a vague sense of there being a problem and then refine that sense analytically? Do you never consciously analyze, work purely from inarticulate "raw feels"? Then discuss the "problem areas" with your partner, exploring the differences in your intuitive (and

experiential) processing of the text, trying to work out in each case why something seemed right or wrong to you; why it continues to seem right or wrong despite the other person's disagreement; or what it is in the other person's explanations that convinces you that you were wrong and s/he was right.

4. Work alone or in small groups to develop rules or principles out of a translation you've done – a certain word or syntactic structure should always, or usually, or in certain specified cases be translated as X. As you work on the deduction of general principles, be aware of how you do it: what processes you go through, what problems you have to solve, what obstacles you must remove, where the problems and obstacles come from, etc. To what extent do the members of your group disagree on the proper rule or law to be derived from a given passage? What does the disagreement stem from? Divergent senses of the commonality or extension of a certain pattern? Try to pinpoint the nature of each difficulty or disagreement.

Suggestions for further reading

Experience of the translation marketplace: Campbell (1998), Kussmaul (1995), Robinson (2001: 186–92)

Anthologies of translation theory: Cheung (2006), Robinson (1997c/2002), Venuti (2000), Weissbort and Eysteinsson (2006)

5 Starting with people: Social interaction as the first key focus of translators' experience of the world

In this chapter: A person-centered approach to any text, language, or culture will always be more productive and effective than a focus on abstract linguistic structures or cultural conventions.

Intuitive leaps: our first impressions of people are by necessity imperfect, and are often complicated and even overturned by later acquaintance; but it is still valuable for translators to pay attention to those first impressions, and even to intensify them by imitating people's body language and speech.

Pattern-building: getting to know people, everybody you have any kinds of dealings with in life, is extremely useful for translation work; one of the important professional "skills" it develops is emotional intelligence.

Rules and theories: psychology is the field of study that provides you with "rules and theories" about people; and while there aren't many courses (or books) available on the psychology of translation, many psycholinguistics and psychology of business courses may be very helpful as well.

"The meaning of a word is its use in the language"

Translation is often thought to be primarily about words and their meanings: what the words in the source text mean, and what words in the target language will best capture or convey that meaning.

While words and meanings are unquestionably important, however, they are really only important for the translator (as for most people) in the context of someone actually using them, speaking or writing them to someone else. When the Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein quipped, famously, in his *Philosophical Investigations* (1958: para. 43), that "the meaning of a word is its use in the language," he meant that *people* using language always take precedence – or at least should take precedence – over meanings in the dictionary, semantic fields in the abstract.

Jim and Maria live together. Jim is a native speaker of North American English, Maria a native speaker of Argentinian Spanish. Maria's English is better than Jim's Spanish, so they mostly speak English together. Maria gets offended when Jim calls her "silly" – which he does frequently. Finally he says the offensive word once too often and she decides to talk about it with him. He says he means the word affectionately: in his childhood everyone in his family used "silly" as a term of endearment. It was a good thing for someone to be silly; it meant funny, humorous, genial, pleasantly childlike, a good person. Maria explains that she learned the word in school, where she was taught that it means "stupid, foolish, ridiculous." As a result of this conversation, Jim is careful to use the word "silly" in contexts where he hopes his light, playful mood and affectionate tone will make it clear to Maria that he doesn't mean to hurt her feelings with it; Maria begins to notice that the word as Jim uses it means something different from what she learned in school. But occasionally she hears him using it in a less loving way, as when they are having an argument and he shakes his head in disgust and snorts, in response to something she has just said, "Don't be silly!" She guesses, rightly, that for him in that particular context "silly" does mean more or less what she was taught: "stupid, foolish, ridiculous." But she also accepts his insistence that for him it mostly means "funny, humorous, playful."

In this example, and in ordinary day-to-day life in general, "words" and "meanings" take on their importance in intimate connection with *people*. They take on meaning through those people, arise out of those people's experiences and needs and expectations; and they tell us more about the people around us than we knew before, help us to understand them better. A dictionary could represent the two different meanings "silly" had for Jim and Maria by identifying two separate semantic fields: (1) stupid, foolish, ridiculous; (2) funny, humorous, playful. But this would only be a pale imitation of the living complexity of Jim's and Maria's shifting sense of the word in their relationship.

We almost always learn words and their meanings from people, and as a function of our complex relationships with people. The only really reliable way to learn a new word, in fact, is in context, as used by someone else in a real situation, whether spoken or written. Only then does the new word carry with it some of the human emotional charge given it by the person who used it; only then does it feel alive, real, fully human. A word learned in a dictionary or a thesaurus will most often feel stiff, stilted, awkward, even if its dictionary "meaning" is "correct"; other people who know the word will feel somewhat uncomfortable with its user.

A prime example of this is the student paper studded with words taken straight out of a dictionary or thesaurus, words that the student has never seen or heard used in a real conversation or written sentence. For the teacher who knows the words

thus used, the whole paper comes to seem like gibberish, because the words are used mechanically and without attention to the nuances of actual human speech or writing.

Another example, as we saw in Chapter 4, is the "bad" translation done by someone who doesn't speak the target language fluently, and has painstakingly found all the words in a dictionary.

Experiencing people

One implication of this for the training or professional growth of a translator is that, beginning ideally in childhood and continuing throughout life, a translator should be interested in people, all kinds of people – and should take every opportunity to learn about how different people act.

Friends, colleagues, relatives – that goes without saying. But also shopkeepers, salespersons, electricians and plumbers, the mail carrier, servers in restaurants, bank tellers – all the people with whom we come in contact in our everyday lives.

Perfect strangers with whom we have encounters: accidental collisions, gurgling at a baby, scratching a dog's ears, between floors in an elevator. Perfect strangers whom we never actually encounter, whom we overhear on a bus or watch walk across a street. We watch them; we observe them closely. We turn their words over in our ears and our mouths. We wonder what it feels like to be that person.

And what do we notice? What do we pay attention to? Mannerisms, nervous habits, posture and gestures, facial expressions, a style of walking and talking. Word choice: certain words and phrases will always provoke a vivid memory of a certain person using them in a certain situation. We will remember minute details about the situation: how hot it was that day, what so-and-so was wearing, how someone laughed, a vague feeling of unease . . . With other words and phrases we will work very hard to overcome their association with a certain person or a certain situation – as when a word provoked titters in you as a child but needs to be used seriously when you are an adult; or when a word had one set of associations for you back home, in your regional dialect, but is used very differently in the metropolis where you now live.

The more situational and personal associations you have with a word or a phrase, the more complexly and flexibly you will be able to use it yourself – and the less it will seem to you the sole "property" of a single person or group. This complexity and flexibility of use is a goal to strive for; the more complexly and flexibly you use language, the better a translator you will be. But striving for that goal does not mean *ignoring* the situational and personal associations of words and phrases. It means internalizing so many of them that they fade into your subconscious or subliminal knowing. The goal is to "store" as many vivid memories of people saying and writing things as you can, but to store them in linguistic habits where you do not need to be conscious of every memory – where those memories are "present," and work for

you powerfully and effectively, but do so subliminally, beneath your conscious awareness.

How is this done? We might think of this "storage" process in terms of Peirce's three types of reasoning: abduction, induction, and deduction. Abduction would cover the impact of first impressions; induction our ongoing process of building up patterns in the wealth of experience we face every day; and deduction the study of human psychology.

> Yeah, aren't we a horrid lot? Friends and family think we want to chat about something, like modern warehouse logistics or actuators for gaseous media, they strike up a lively conversation about the subject, and all this only to find out that we were just after the _word_ for it:)
>
> Sometimes I happen to listen in on conversations, like in the subway, and when someone uses a word I've been searching for ages, I almost want to shake their hands.
>
> But of course, I don't.
>
> pro verbially
>
> Werner Richter

First impressions (intuitive leaps)

To experience a person "intuitively" is to make a first rough attempt to understand that person based on early conflicting evidence – what we normally call "first impressions." People are hard to figure out; we can live with a person for decades and still be surprised by his or her actions several times a day. People are riddled with contradictions; even first impressions are almost always mixed, vague, uncertain. It is so rare to get a coherent or unified first impression of a person, in fact, that we tend to remember the occasions when that happened:

> "It was love at first sight."
>
> "I don't know, there was just something about him, something evil, he gave me the creeps."
>
> "We hit it off instantly, as if we'd known each other all our lives."
>
> "I don't know why, but I don't trust her."

(The complexities, the contradictions, the conflicts will arise later, inevitably; but for the moment it feels as if the other person's heart is laid bare before you, and it all fits together as perfectly as in a jigsaw puzzle.)

Even so, despite the complex welter of different impressions that we get of a

person in our first encounter, we do make judgments – perhaps by jumping to conclusions. There are at least three ways of doing this:

1. *Typecasting, stereotyping*. "I know her type: she promises you the world but never follows through." "He's shy, unsure of himself, but seems very sweet." "She's the kind of person who can get the job done." "S/he's not my type." "It's a romance? Forget it, I hate romances." "Oh, it's one of *those* agencies, I know the type you mean." We make sense of complexity by reducing it to fairly simple patterns that we've built up from encounters with other people (or texts).
2. *Postponing judgment along simplified (often dualistic) lines*. "I think he could become a good friend" or "I don't think I could ever be friends with someone like that." "She might prove useful to us somewhere down the line" or "We'll never get anything out of her." "Maybe I'll ask her/him out" or "S/he'd never go out with me." "There's something interesting in here that I want to explore, so I'll read on" or "This is so badly written it can't possibly be any good, so I'll quit now." We sense a direction our connection with this person or text might potentially take and explain that "hunch" to ourselves with simple yes/no grids: friend/not-friend, lover/not-lover, interesting/uninteresting, etc.
3. *Imitating, mimicking*. This is often misunderstood as ridicule. Some mimicking is intended to poke fun, certainly – but not all. Pretending to be a person, acting like her or him, imitating her or his voice, facial expressions, gestures, other bodily movements can be a powerful channel for coming to understand that person more fully – from the "inside," as it were. Hence the saying, "Never criticize a man till you've walked a mile in his shoes." Walking a mile in someone's shoes is usually taken to mean actually being in that person's situation, being forced to deal with some problem that s/he faces; but it applies equally well to merely imagining yourself in that person's place, or to "staging" in your own body that person's physical and verbal reactions to situations. It is astonishing how much real understanding of another person can emerge out of this kind of staging or acting – though this type of understanding can frequently not be articulated, only felt.

This "acting out" is essential training for actors, comedians, clowns, mimes – and translators and interpreters, who are also in the business of pretending to be someone they're not. What else is a legal translator doing, after all, but pretending to be a lawyer, writing as if s/he were a lawyer? What is a medical translator doing but pretending to be a doctor or a nurse? Technical translators pretend to be (and in some sense thereby become) technical writers. Verse translators pretend to be (and sometimes do actually become) poets.

Deeper acquaintance (pattern-building)

The more experience you have of people – both individual people and people in general – the more predictable they become. Never perfectly predictable; people are too complicated for that. But increased experience with an individual person will help you understand that person's actions; increased experience with a certain type or group of people (including people from a certain culture, people who speak a certain language) will help you understand strangers from that group; increased experience of humanity in general will take some of the surprise out of odd behavior.

Surprises will fall into patterns; the patterns will begin to make sense; new surprises that don't fit the patterns will force you to adjust your thinking, build more complexity into your patterns, and so on. This is the process traditionally called inductive reasoning: moving from a wealth of minute details or specific experiences to larger patterns.

The process of getting to know people and coming to understand them (at least a little) is essential for all human beings, of course; but especially for those of us who work with people, and with the expressive products of people's thinking.

A technician may be able to get along without much understanding of people; a technical writer is going to need to know at least enough about people to be able to imagine a reader's needs; and a technical translator is going to need to know most of all, because the list of people whom s/he will need to "understand" (or second-guess) is the longest: the agency representative who offered her or him the job, the company marketing or technical support person who wants the text translated, the technical writer who wrote the text, friends who might know this or that key word, and the eventual target-language user/reader.

And the amount of people-oriented knowledge or understanding that a successful translation of this sort requires is nothing less than staggering:

1. What do the agency hope to get out of this? What stake do they have in this particular translation? How much more than money is it? Is this a big client that they're wooing? Is there a personal connection, something other than pure business? Such things are almost never made explicit; you have to read them between the lines, hear them in the voice of the person who calls from the agency with the job.
2. Just how invested in the text is this or that in-house person at the client? Who wrote it, and why? Freelancers who work through agencies don't normally find out much about the client, but again a good deal can be read between the lines. Does it read as if it was written by a technical writer or editor, a manager, a secretary, a marketing or publicity person? Was the writer writing for print, word-processed newsletter, corporate website, business correspondence (letter or memo or email, typed or scribbled)? Does the writer seem to have a good sense of her or his audience? Is it a supplier, a dealer, a customer? Is it one person

whom the writer knows, or a small group of people, or a large undefined public? Does the writer feel comfortable writing? Are there other people directly influencing the writing of the text – for example, in the form of marginal notes jotted in in several hands?

3. Who can you call or text or email to ask about unfamiliar words? How will they react to being asked to help out? Do you already owe them favors? If so, how should you phrase the request? Should you promise the friend something in return (money, dinner, help of some sort) or ask for another favor? If the friend is extremely helpful and provides words or phrases (or diagrams or drawings or other material) that almost solve your problem but not quite, how many follow-up questions will s/he put up with? This is never something that can be predicted in advance; it has to be taken as it comes, with full sensitivity to the friend's verbal and nonverbal signals.
4. Who is the target reader? Who are the target readers? Is any information available on them at all, or is it some undefined group that happens to read the translation? What do you know about people who speak the target language natively, people who grew up in the target culture, that differs in significant ways from their counterparts in the source culture? What aspects of climate, geography, geopolitical stature, cultural politics, and religious background make a target reader likely to respond to a text differently from a source reader? What proverbs, metaphors, fairy tales, Bible translations, and literary classics have shaped target readers along different lines from source readers?

Hi there,

Some of you may remember a query I sent to this list on how to behave towards a client who had lied to me repeatedly, then 'fessed up and told me she didn't have the money but would send a post-dated check . . . Although many people advised me not to, I decided to give her one last chance. The check was sent and handed in to the bank in Dec. Around the same time, I received a Christmas card thanking me for being so patient etc., etc. *plus* a music cd. Hm. Good omen. Or so I thought. Fact is, I just received the check stamped "account closed" from my bank. Needless to say, I do NOT find this even remotely funny any more. Actually, I'm fuming, but meditation seems to have helped. Anyway. What do I do now? Client is in the US. I'm in Germany. I don't have friends nearby to sit on her porch and demand the money (although hubby will be there in march . . . but that's a bit late). The ATA only seems to offer Dun&Bradstreet. and: should I phone her one last time asking

what on earth she thinks she's doing (and see if she's still there at all?). Any input welcome . . .

Eva

P.S. And no, it's not a sum I'm prepared to forfeit – we are talking approx. 900 USD . . .

* * * * *

Tell her that if you don't get a cashier's check via express courier within three days, you will file a police report and have her charged with writing bad checks, fraud, and possibly international mail fraud. What she did is a punishable criminal offense. Check out the law in her state and find out what the penalty is for committing fraud/writing bad checks and inform her of just how much jail time she is facing. That should do it, I would think. Oh, you may also be entitled by law to compensation from her for writing the bad check. Again, this depends on the state in which she lives. Which is it?

Good luck,
Rosemary

* * * * *

Yikes. Can I really do that? Tennessee, BTW . . .

* * * * *

I am not familiar with the laws of the state of Tennessee, so I am not sure, but it wouldn't hurt to perhaps call a (county?) prosecutor and ask. Otherwise, you can at the very least turn the account over to a collection agency (which will damage her credit rating) and get them to go after the money for you. They will charge a fee, but at least you will have some chance of recovering at least part of the debt. We had a similar situation a few years ago, which we resolved by telling the customer that we intended to inform the end customer of the situation and tell them that they had no right to use the translation since it had not been paid for (copyright of "work for hire" passes to the purchaser when the work is paid for).

She paid up within 24 hours.

Best,
Rosemary

* * * * *

Tennessee Law Summary

Notice of Dishonored Check

Note: This summary is not intended to be an all inclusive summary of the law of bad checks, but does contain basic and other provisions.

Civil Provisions

TITLE 47 COMMERCIAL INSTRUMENTS AND TRANSACTIONS

CHAPTER 29 COLLECTION OF BAD CHECKS

47-29-101. Liability for dishonored check – Damages.

(quotes entire law)

Torkel

* * * * *

Torkel just sent those – thanks! I'll have to find a quiet moment to read them, I'm rather beside myself with fury at the moment . . . how does one get hold of a county prosecutor? Perhaps I could get our friends that live in Nashville (this person doesn't, I should add) to find out for me . . .

Unfortunately, I can't do much about the end client – this was an interpreting assignment and the list of end clients was extremely complex (company – consulting firm – translation agency – this person (who was apparently supposed to do the job herself, if I'm not mistaken) – me) . . .

Eva

* * * * *

Hi Eva:

Check this URL: http://www.co.eaton.mi.us/ecpa/proslist.htm

(Prosecuting Attorneys, District Attorneys, Attorneys General & US Attorneys)

Good luck, Michael Ring

It is important to stress that, while "pattern-building" experience of the people who have a direct impact on a translator's work is always the most useful in that work, it is not always possible to predict who those people will be in advance.

Representatives of new agencies and clients call out of the blue; the people an interpreter is asked to interpret for are always changing; not all technical writers are the same, nor are medical writers, legal writers, etc. Personal differences mean stylistic differences; the better able a translator or interpreter is to recognize and understand an unexpected personality type, the better able s/he will also be to render an idiosyncratic style effectively into the target language.

And this means that it is never enough for translators to get to know certain people, or certain types of people. You never know what personalities or personality types will prove useful in a translation or interpretation job – so you need to be open to everyone, interested in everyone, ready to register or record any personal idiosyncrasy you notice in any person who comes along.

This in turn requires a certain observant frame of mind, a people-watching mentality that is always on the lookout for character quirks, unusual (not to mention usual) turns of phrase, intonations, timbres, gestures, and so on. Translators who "collect" little tidbits of information about every person they meet, every text they read, and turn them over and over in their mind long after collecting them, will be much more likely to be ready for the peculiar text than those who are completely focused on linguistic structures in the abstract.

One of the most important new developments coming out of the study of multiple intelligences and learning styles is the study of "personal intelligence," or what is now being called "emotional intelligence." Daniel Goleman (1995: 43–4) outlines five elements of emotional intelligence:

1. *Emotional self-awareness – knowing how you feel about something, and above all how you are currently feeling*. Many professional decisions are made on the basis of our reactions to people; this makes recognizing *how* we are reacting essential to successful decision-making. As Goleman (1995: 43) writes, "An inability to monitor our true feelings leaves us at their mercy." For example, if you hate your work, the sooner you recognize that and move on to something you enjoy more, the better off you will be. If you love certain parts of it and hate others, being aware of those mixed feelings will help you gravitate more toward the parts you enjoy and avoid or minimize or learn to reframe the parts you dislike. And the more astute your emotional self-awareness, the better you will also get at:
2. *Emotional self-control* – transforming and channeling your emotions in positive and productive ways. Many translators work alone, or in large impersonal corporations, and battle loneliness, boredom, and depression. The better able you are to change your mood, to spice up a dull day with phone calls or email chats or Twitter tweets or Facebook status updates or a coffee break, or to "think" (visualize, breathe, soothe) yourself out of the doldrums, the more positive and successful you will be as a translator. Clients and agencies will do things that irritate you; the better able you are to conceal or transform your

irritation when speaking to them on the phone or in a meeting, or even get over the irritation before speaking to them, the more professional you will appear to them, and the more willing they will be to give you work. And the more effectively you are able to channel and transform your emotions, the better you will also get at:

3. *Emotional self-motivation* – finding the drive within yourself to accomplish professional goals. In almost every case, translators have to be self-starters. They have to take the initiative to find work and to get the work done once it has been given to them to do. They have to push themselves to take that extra hour or two to track down the really difficult terminology, rather than taking the easy way out and putting down the first entry they find in their dictionaries. The better able they are to channel their emotional life toward the achievement of goals, the more they will enjoy their work, the more efficiently they will do it, and the more professional recognition they will receive. At the very highest levels of self-motivation, translators experience the "flow" state described by Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1990), where the rest of the world seems to fade away and work becomes sheer delight. And knowing and channeling your own emotions also helps you develop powers of:
4. *Empathy* – recognizing, understanding, and responding to other peoples' emotions. This is a crucial skill for professionals who rely on social contacts for their livelihood. While many translators work alone, they also have clients whose needs they have to second-guess and attempt to satisfy, agencies that may only hint at the institutional complexity of a job they are trying to get done, friends and acquaintances who know some field professionally and may be able to help with terminology problems. Sensing how they feel about your requests, or your responses to their requests, will help you interact with them in a personally and professionally satisfying manner, leading both to more work and to enhanced enjoyment in your work. And of course the better able you are to empathize with others, the better you will be at:
5. *Handling relationships* – maintaining good professional and personal relationships with the people on whom your livelihood depends. Translation is a business; and while business is about money, and in this case words, phrases, and texts, it is also, as this chapter shows, about people – interpersonal relations. Successful business people are almost invariably successful socially as well as financially, because the two go hand in hand. This is perhaps clearest when money is not involved: how do you "pay" a friend for invaluable terminological help? The pay is almost always emotional, social, relational: the coin of friendship and connection. But even when a client or agency is paying you to do a job, the better able you are to handle your relationship – even, in many cases, professional friendship – with them, the happier they are going to be to pay you to do this job and future ones.

Psychology (rules and theories)

If psychology is the application of general principles to the problem of how people act, it might be argued that the next step beyond paying close attention to people for the student translator would be to take classes in psychology.

But this may be unsatisfactory for a number of reasons.

The first and most obvious is that the psychology of translation is still undeveloped as a scholarly discipline, so that you are unlikely to find courses in it at your university, and the psychology courses you do find offered may be utterly irrelevant for a translator's needs.

Then again, what *are* a translator's needs? We just saw in discussing pattern-building approaches to people that it is impossible to predict exactly what kind of people-oriented knowledge will be useful in any given translation job; the same goes for deductive approaches as well. It is quite possible that extensive (or even cursory) study of psychology might provide insights into people that will help the translator translate better.

For example, the second reason why classes in psychology might be unsatisfactory to the student of translation is that psychology as a discipline is typically concerned with pathology, i.e., problems, sicknesses, neuroses and psychoses, personality disorders – and the people translators deal with in a professional capacity tend to be fairly ordinary, normal folks. But this can then be turned around into a positive suggestion: if there are courses offered at your university in the psychology of normal people, they might very well prove useful, especially if they deal with work-related topics.

In addition, it should be remembered that psychology, psychoanalysis, psychotherapy, and psychiatry are professional fields that generate texts for translation. Translators are asked to translate psychiatric evaluations and medical records, social workers' reports, and various scholarly writings in the field (conference papers, journal articles, scholarly books); court interpreters are asked to interpret testimony from expert witnesses in psychiatry and psychology; conference interpreters at scholarly meetings in the field must obviously be well versed in how psychologists and psychiatrists think, how they see their world.

In studying psychology, in other words, one should not forget that the relevant "people" in the field are not merely the subjects of psychologists' theories and experiments. They are also the psychologists themselves. If a translator is ever asked to translate a psychological text, a class in psychology at university will provide an excellent background – not only because the translator will have some familiarity with the terms and concepts, but because s/he will have grown familiar with one real-life psychologist, the professor in the course.

Finally, there is no reason why translators should not gradually become amateur psychologists in their own right. In fact, a few weeks of reading postings on an email discussion group like Lantra-L, for example, will convince the would-be translator

that most of the translators writing in *are* amateur psychologists – people who have developed theories of human behavior which they will elaborate for you at great length. These theories grew out of inductive experience, which is the very best source for theories; but they have since become formulated in broad, general terms, as deductive principles, ready to explain any personal quirk or trait that comes along. The only real danger in these theories is the same danger that inheres in all deductive or theoretical thinking: that the general principles become so rigid that they no longer change in response to experience; that they become straitjackets for experience. Hence the importance of continued abductive and inductive openness to novelty, to experiences that the "theories" can't explain. Without such wrenches in the deductive works, the translator stops growing.

Psychology courses of potential benefit to translators

- Industrial psychology
- The psychology of advertising
- The psychology of learning
- The psychology of problem-solving
- Human memory and cognition
- The psychology of language
- Group dynamics
- Intergroup behavior
- Decision-making and perceived control
- The social psychology of organizations
- Social identity, social conflict, and information processing
- Networking and social coordination
- Team development
- Psychology applied to business
- Psychology and law
- Interpersonal influence and communication
- Cross-cultural training
- Social-psychological approaches to international conflict

Conclusion

It is not too much to say that *people*, ourselves as people who interact with other people, are at the core of this book's approach to translation. The book's basic assumption is that people – human translators and the people we interact with professionally and socially – are the true focus of the *work* of translation, and so must be the focus of the *study* of translation as well. People know the things we need to

know, use the words and phrases we need to use in order to translate, and generally perform the actions in which we need to participate in order to make a living.

And while structure-oriented translators and translation scholars would agree with those statements, there is a significant difference between an approach that starts with structure and ultimately, late in the process, tries to make some allowance for people, and an approach that starts with people and tries to account for structure:

Start with people, try to explain structure (PS)	*Start with structure, try to explain people (SP)*
PS1 Translation is people doing things to other people with words	SP1 Translation is a text with certain linguistic properties ("structure")
PS2 One of the things people do in (PS1) is to develop strategies for assessing the value and success of certain key activities	SP2 When the structures in (SP1) are compared with the counterpart structures in the source text, it becomes possible to assess the translation's "equivalence"
PS3 One of the evaluative strategies in (PS2) is the norm	SP3 This comparison in (SP2) is enhanced manifold when one studies the quantitative patterns in corpora (searchable collections of written transcripts of language use)
PS4 When people apply the norms in (PS3) to the products of human verbal activities, they produce normative textual structures like "equivalence"	SP4 It is possible to imagine that the texts in (SP1–3) were spoken or written by actual human beings, but we don't need to know anything about what they were thinking or feeling as they used language in those ways, or in what situations; they are "speaker types" or "writer types"
PS5 Sometimes it seems more effective ("streamlined, economical") to forget all about (PS1-4) and act as if the structures in (PS4) were objective and completely depersonalized	SP5 The comparisons in (SP2–3) and the imagining in (SP4) are presumably performed by actual human beings as well, but it's best to think about them as *generic* human beings, not significantly different from anyone else

What that right-hand column (SP) does with people is often called "idealization": instead of taking *real* people into account, you deal with "ideal" people, which is to

say, abstractions like "types." That idealizing operation is usually taken to be the essential foundation of a "scientific" approach to the study of translation: the so-called "human element" introduces too much variation into the equation for science. People want different things in different situations, and sometimes just in different moods. This book is grounded in the assumption that too much of value is lost in that move to idealization and the "science of translation," namely human social interaction as the foundation of all translation, all language, all communication.

Discussion

1. If, as Ludwig Wittgenstein says, "the meaning of a word is its use in the language," and that use varies from person to person and from situation to situation, how is it ever possible to know what someone else means?
2. In the table on p. 103, PS5 seems to create the conditions for SP1: once one has forgotten (PS1-4), it becomes possible to (seem to) *start* with the assumption that translations are texts with certain linguistic properties, and ignore the work people have done to get you there entirely. By the same token, SP5 seems to be begging the reader to take the next step, something like SP6, and admit that people are different, want different things, find themselves in different situations, react differently to different events, and so on. This would make the two opposed approaches (starting with people and starting with structure) into a kind of circle: PS1 > PS2 > PS3 > PS4 > PS5 > SP1 > SP2 > SP3 > SP4 > SP5 > PS1 > etc. Where would you place yourself on that circle? What do you think is lost and what is gained by taking one side or the other in this conflict?

Exercises

1. Give dictionary definitions of "dog" and "cat" in your mother tongue. Think of the equivalent words in your main foreign tongue; get the equivalence fixed firmly in your imagination. Now get comfortable in your chair; close your eyes if that helps you "daydream" better. Think of the house pets of your childhood; visualize them, tactilize them, imagine yourself holding them in your lap or rolling around on the floor with them (whatever you did in close contact with them); remember whether you loved them (or one particular one), hated them, were afraid of them, were indifferent to them; if you had negative feelings for them, recall in detail specific times when you felt those feelings most strongly, as when a dog snarled at you, bit you, when a cat hissed at you, scratched you.

Next reflect on the many positive and negative connotations and usages of "dog" and "cat" in English and many other languages. (In English some people call a homely woman a "dog" and a nasty woman a "cat"; "a dog's life" is an unpleasant one; but "a dog is a man's best friend" and a sweet person is a "pussy-cat.") Which of these usages feel right to you, which feel wrong?

Discuss with the group: what connection is there between personal physical experience and our figurative use of common words like "dog" and "cat"? What similarities and differences are there between our experiences of people and our experiences of animals (especially domestic pets), and how do those similarities and differences affect the way we use language?

2. Think to yourself the strongest taboo word you can think of in your native language. Pay attention to your body as you say that word to yourself – how you feel, whether you feel good or bad, relaxed or tense, warm or cold, excited or anxious.

   Now say it very quietly out loud, and glance at your neighbors to see how they're reacting to it, all the while monitoring your body reactions. Now imagine saying it to your mother. Say the word 100 times – does it lose some or all of its force, its power to shock?

   Finally, imagine a situation, or a person, or a group of people, with whom you would feel comfortable using the word. Recall the situations where you were taught not to use such language, who the person (or group) was in each case, how you felt when you were shamed or spanked for using it. Recall the situations where you used it with friends or siblings and felt rebellious. (If you never did, imagine such situations – imagine yourself bold enough and brave enough to break through your inhibitions and the social norms that control them and *do* it.)

   Discuss with the group: how do other people's attitudes, expectations, and reactions govern the "meaning" of swear words? When we compare swear words in various languages, how can we tell which is "stronger" and which is "weaker"?

3. Think of a word or a phrase in your mother tongue that your schoolteachers taught you to consider "low," "substandard," "bad grammar," etc., and say it out loud to the person next to you, monitoring your body response. Does it feel good, bad, warm, uneasy, what?

   Next try to put yourself in a frame of mind where you can be proud of that word or phrase, where using it includes you in a warm, welcoming community.

Finally, feel the conflict built into your body between the community that wants you to use words and phrases like that and the community that disapproves.

Discuss with the group: how are the boundaries between standard and nonstandard (regional, ethnic, class, gender, age) dialects policed by individuals and groups of people? How do individuals and groups resist that policing? How effective is their resistance?

4. Have a short conversation with your neighbor in some broken form of your native tongue – baby talk, foreigner talk, etc. – and try to put yourself in the speaker's body, try to feel the difficulty of expressing yourself without the calm, easy fluency that you now have in the language; also feel the conflict between your desire to speak your language "right" and this exercise's encouragement to speak it "wrong."

   Discuss with the group: what other skills besides linguistic ones must you have mastered in order to speak your language fluently? Are there times when you lose those skills, at least partially – when you're wakened in the middle of the night by the phone ringing, when you have a high fever, when you've had too much to drink?

5. Playact with your neighbor a hierarchical shaming situation, without ever making it clear what the other person did wrong. Get really indignant, angry, shocked; say whatever your parents or teachers or whoever said to you when you were small: "No, that's *bad*, very *bad*, you're a *bad boy/girl*, don't *ever* do that again; what's wrong with you? whatever could you have been thinking of? how dare you? just wait till your father gets home!"

   Now switch roles, and monitor your body's reaction to being both the shamer and the shamed.

   Discuss with the group: what lasting effects does this sort of shaming speech heard in childhood have on later language use? In what ways are foreign languages "liberating" precisely because they don't have this early childhood power over you?

Suggestions for further reading

People and cross-cultural communication: Bochner (1981), Fitzgerald (1993), Kim (1988), Miller (1973), Oittinen (2000), Robinson (1991, 2001, 2003, 2006)

The psychology of translation: Krings (1986), Lörscher (1991)

6 Working with people: The workplace as the interactive setting for specialized terminologies

In this chapter: It is far easier to learn and remember specialized terminology, one of the professional translator's main concerns, if one thinks of it as simply the way working people talk and write, rather than trying to memorize long lists of words taken out of context.

Intuitive leaps: pretending to be someone you're not – a doctor when you're translating a medical report, for example – based on fairly flimsy evidence, such as television shows about doctors that you've watched, may be unreliable, but is better than nothing (helps you make *coherent* guesses).

Pattern-building: essential to successful professional translation is repeated attentive exposure to people at work, and the process of constructing patterns out of their behavior – whether you actually do the job you then later "pretend" to do when you translate, or only read about it and ask people about it.

Rules and theories: memorizing vocabulary lists and other domain-specific features (registers, common phrases, etc.) is not the most effective way to learn specialized terminology, but even that sort of exercise constitutes "experience" of a sort, and some of it may stick.

A new look at terminology

One of the most important aspects of the translator's job is the management of terminology: being exposed to it, evaluating its correctness or appropriateness in specific contexts, storing and retrieving it. The focal nature of terminology for translation has made terminology studies one of the key subdisciplines within the broader field of translation studies; learning specialized terminology is one of the main emphases in any course on legal, medical, commercial, or other technical translation; and "How do you say X, Y, and Z in language B?" is the most commonly asked question in online translator discussion groups like Lantra-L.

But terminology studies as they are traditionally conceived are typically grounded methodologically in the neglect of one essential point: that terminology is most easily learned (i.e., stored in memory so as to facilitate later recall) in context – in

actual use-situations, in which the people who use such terms in their daily lives are talking or writing to each other. Not that terminologists ignore or discount this fact; its importance is, on the contrary, widely recognized in terminology studies.

But the subdiscipline's very focus on *terms* as opposed to, say, people, or highly contextualized conversations, or workplaces, reflects its fundamental assumption that terminology is a stable objective reality that exists in some systematic way "in language" and is only secondarily "used" by people – often used in confusing and contradictory ways, in fact, which is what makes the imagination of a pure or stable "primary" state so attractive.

Faking it (intuitive leaps)

Translators are fakers. Pretenders. Impostors.

Translators and interpreters make a living pretending to be (or at least to speak or write as if they were) licensed practitioners of professions that they have typically never practiced. In this sense they are like actors, "getting into character" in order to convince third parties ("audiences," the users of translations) that they are, well, not exactly real doctors and lawyers and technicians, but enough like them to warrant the willing suspension of disbelief. "Expert behaviour," as Paul Kussmaul (1995: 33) puts it, "is acquired role playing."

And how do they do it? Some translators and interpreters actually have the professional experience that they are called upon to "fake." This makes the "pretense" much easier to achieve, of course; and the more experience of this sort you have, the better. As I have mentioned before, translation has been called the profession of second choice; if your first choice was something radically different, you are in an excellent position to specialize in the translation of texts written by practitioners of your previous profession. Other people choose translation simultaneously with another profession, and may even feel guilty about their inability to choose between them; they too have an enormous advantage over other translators working in the same field, because of their "insider" command of terminology.

Most translators and interpreters, however, are not so lucky. Most of us have to pretend with little or no on-the-job experience on which to base the pretense. Some solve this problem by specializing in a given field – medical translations, legal translations, etc., some even in such narrow fields as patents, or insurance claims – and either taking coursework in that field or reading in it widely, in both languages.

Interpreters hired for a weekend or a week or a month in a given field will study up on that field in advance. Gradually, over the years, these translators and interpreters become so expert at pretending to be practitioners of a profession they've never practiced that third parties ask them for medical or legal (or whatever) advice. (More on this under "Working (pattern-building)", below.)

But most of us just fake it, working on no job experience and perhaps a little reading in the field, but never quite enough. An agency calls you with a medical

report translation; you've done technical translations for them before, they like and trust you, you like and trust them, they have been an excellent source of income to you in the past, and you want to help them in whatever way you can; they are desperate to have this translated as quickly as possible. You know little or nothing about medical terminology. What do you do? You accept the job, do your best to fake it, and then have the translation checked by a doctor, or by a friend who is better at faking it than you are.

Just what is involved, then, in "faking it" – in translating intuitively by pretending to be a professional with very little actual experience or knowledge on which to base your pretense? The first step is imagination: what would it be like to be a doctor? What would it be like to be the doctor who wrote this? How would you see the world? How would you think and feel about yourself? What kind of person would you be? Professional habits are tied up in what the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986) calls a "habitus," a whole pattern of life-structuring activities, attitudes, and feelings. What would your "habitus" be if you were not a translator but a doctor?

And more narrowly: would you have actually written the report, or dictated it? Does the report feel dictated? What difference would it make whether it was written or dictated? If the report is concise and precise, and you imagine the doctor leaning back in a chair with a dictaphone, tired from being up all night, rubbing her or his eyes with one hand – how then does the report come out sounding so balanced, so calmly competent, even so terse? Is it because the doctor has dictated so many medical reports that they come out automatically, almost unconsciously, the doctor's professional "habit" giving the specific findings of an examination a highly formulaic form that requires little or no thought? What would that feel like? How does the translator's professional "habit" resemble the doctor's? Are there enough experiential parallels or convergences between them that the translator can imagine himself or herself in that chair, dictating the medical report in the target language?

Once again, it should go without saying that the translator who is not sure how a real doctor would sound in the target language is obligated to have the product of this imaginative process checked by someone who *is* sure. This sort of intuitive approach to a translation job inevitably involves making mistakes. Without first-hand knowledge of the professions or workplaces from which the text has been taken, it is impossible for the translator to avoid bad choices among the various terminological alternatives in a dictionary entry.

But note two things.

First, by projecting herself or himself "abductively" into a profession or a workplace, the translator gains an intuitive guide to individual word choices.

This guide is, of course, never wholly reliable – it is, after all, based on guesswork, imaginative projections, not (much) actual experience – but it is better than nothing. Some translators would dispute this, saying that no guess is better than a bad one, and if all you can do is make bad guesses you shouldn't have accepted the job at all – perhaps shouldn't even be a translator at all. But everyone has to start

somewhere; no one, not even the best translator, is ever perfectly proficient on every job s/he does; all translation contains an element of guesswork. The translator who never guessed, who refused even in a first rough draft to write down anything about which s/he was not absolutely certain, would rarely finish a job. There are some texts that are so easy that no guesswork is involved; perhaps in some areas of specialization such texts even eventually become the norm. But most translators have to guess at (and later check and/or have checked) some words in almost every text they translate.

Second, it is always better to guess in a pattern, guided by a principle (even if only an imagined one), than to guess at random. The style or tone produced by a series of intuitive guesses based on an imaginative projection may be wrong, but at least it will most likely be recognizable, and thus easier for a checker to fix. The translator who, like an actor or a novelist, pretends to be a practitioner in the field of the source text will probably impart to the finished translation a tonal or rhetorical coherence that will make it read more naturally – even if it is "off."

The rule of thumb for the abductive translation of specialized texts, therefore, might go like this: projecting yourself imaginatively into the professional activities or habitus of the source author will guide your individual choice of words, phrases, and ultimately register in a more coherent fashion than a focus on "terminology" or "register."

Working (pattern-building)

Obviously, important as the ability to make imaginative or creative leaps and project yourself into the professional habitus of the source author is, it is even more important to gain actual work experience in a variety of jobs, or to be exposed to the textual results of that experience through books and articles, conversations with people who work in the field, etc. The more first-, second-, or third-hand experience a translator has of a given profession or workplace or job-related jargon, the better able s/he will be to translate texts in that field.

Let us imagine four separate scenarios in which such job-related experience can help the translator translate.

1. You have actually worked in the field, but it's been years, and the terminology has dimmed in your memory. (Future translators should always have the foresight to write five or ten pages of terminological notes to help jog their memories years later, when they need to remember these specialized terms for a translation. Unfortunately, few of us have such foresight.) You open your favorite dead-tree or Internet dictionary, and there, from among four or five possibilities, the right word jumps off the page and into the translation. Your term-management software offers you a word that you instantly recognize as the right one, and you use it.

Or you aren't so lucky (and here is where it gets interesting): no dictionary or online or client or personal term database gives you even one alternative, which means that you are forced to rely on hazy memories or to jump down to scenario 2, 3, or 4.

How do you jog your memory? Not necessarily by bearing down on the "missing" word (squinting your eyes hard, tightening your head muscles – as you may have noticed, this doesn't work) and hoping to *force* it out. A better way: you daydream about your experiences in the job where you knew that word, letting your mind roam freely over the people you worked with, the places you worked, some memorable events from that time; remember driving to and from work, etc. Forget all about needing to know a particular word; chances are, it will come to you suddenly (if not immediately, then an hour or two later).

2. You've never actually done the job before, but you have lived and worked on the peripheries of the job for years: as a legal secretary around lawyers, as a transcriptionist in a hospital, etc. Or you have good friends who work in the field, and hear them talking about it daily. Or you habitually have lunch at a restaurant where people from that field all go for lunch, and overhear them talking shop every day. Or you are an acute observer and a good listener and draw people out whenever you talk to them, no matter who they are or what they do, so that, after a chance encounter with a pharmacist or a plumber or a postal worker you have a reasonably good sense of how they talk and how they see their world.

   Or you've read about the field extensively, watched (and taped and rewatched) shows about it on television, and frequently imagined yourself as a practitioner in it. Some of the books you've read about it are biographies and autobiographies of people in the field, so that, even though you have no first-hand experience of it, your stock of second-hand information is rich and varied. Pretending to be a practitioner in the field, therefore, is relatively easy for you, even though there are large gaps in your terminological knowledge.

   Creating a plausible register is no problem; when you focus on actual scenes from books and television shows, it often seems as if you know more terminology than you "actually" do – because you have been exposed to more words than you can consciously recall, and your unconscious mind produces them for you when you slip into a productive daydream state. So you stare at the dictionary, and recognize none of the words; but one unmistakably *feels* right. You know you're going to have to check it later, but for now that intuitive "rightness" is enough.

3. You have neither job experience nor an abiding interest in the field, but you know somebody who does, and so you get them on the phone, or text or email them; as you describe the words you're looking for, you listen for the note of confidence in their voices when they *know* the correct word with absolute calm

and easy certainty. It's like when a foreigner is saying to you, "What's the machine called, you know, it's in the kitchen, you put bread in it and push down, and wires get hot, and –" "Oh yeah," you say easily, "a toaster." When you hear that tone of voice, you know you can trust your friend's terminological instinct.

When it is obvious that your friend isn't sure, that s/he is guessing, you listen to everything s/he has to say on the subject, say thanks, and call somebody else.

Or you get on to Lantra-L or some other translator listserv that you subscribe to (see www.routledge.com/9780415615907) and ask your question there. A translator list is an excellent place to go for terminological help, since the subscribers are themselves translators who know the kind of detail a translator needs to have in order to decide whether a given word is right or wrong. There are only two drawbacks of going to an email discussion group. One is that the discussion of *who uses what words how* can become more interesting than the actual translation that pays the bills (see box).

4. You can't find anybody who knows the word or phrase you're looking for, and the dictionaries and other resources give you conflicting answers. You know that dictionaries and term databases are inherently unreliable anyway, and their results must be checked.

   How do you check them? You do what most professional translators do in this situation: you Google the various options, and examine the hits. How many hits do you get for each one? 200,000 or 2? If you only get a tiny number of hits, are they at least in websites built and written by native speakers of your target language? Do contexts in which the different words or phrases appear seem roughly the same as in your source text? If you get hundreds of thousands of hits, pick a few that seem similar to your text and study them closely. And now, once again, you have to make a decision: which one is right? Which one *works* the best? Given all the textual evidence, on the basis of which you have now constructed a fairly complex sense of the register you're working in, which one *feels* best in your specific context? Or, to put that in terms of working people, again: which one feels like it would have been used by the people who did this job (legal or medical or whatever professional) for a living?

   The other problem with going to a translator discussion group with a terminology question is that getting an answer may take anywhere from several hours to several days. At the end of the process you will know more than you ever wanted to know about the problematic terms (especially if you work in "major" European languages) – but the process may take longer than you can afford to delay.

Some of you may know that my French is abominable, so please excuse my ignorance here. My Italian text says that 'mise en place' will be provided for everyone. Since this is a conference/buffet lunch, I assume this means a place setting at the table? Just wanted to check.

Amy

* * * * *

Wild guessing that it could mean that there will be seating for everyone (i.e., guests are not expected to stand and eat – a horrible practice) OR that there will be a seating arrangement (guests get a place card with a table number, tables have name cards at each place setting).

Diane

* * * * *

In restaurant parlance, "mise en place" is usually the preparation by the chef and cooks of things that will be used in the meals, i.e., peeling, paring, chopping the veggies, etc. It would seem odd in your context though. Or do you have some sentences you could give us as context?

Michelle

* * * * *

It's basically a bulletted list of issues for a conference. The previous bullet says that Italian and Japanese food will be provided. The bullet in question says that there will 'mise en place' for everyone, approximately 150. That's all I've got – sorry!

Amy

* * * * *

Sounds strange over here also, but I did find this in the Grand Robert:

Dans un restaurant. Faire la mise en place: mettre le couvert.

Dennis

* * * * *

Well, in that case, the other suggestion that it is used here to mean "seating" for everyone would seem to be the right one.

Don't you just hate those bulleted lists (says she, after delivering a document of over 10,000 bulleted words earlier this week)?

Michelle

* * * * *

Mise en place, at least in France (and I know since I worked in restaurants to pay for my studies and my brother has been a restaurateur for over 25 years), means the setting-up of the dining room (not only the tableware, but making sure that the salt and pepper shakers, mustard jars, etc. are cleaned and filled-up, and that everything is ready for service). It is performed by the waiters.

Yes, the kitchen personnel comes in, at the time of mise en place or earlier, to prepare the food, etc. they do not have anything to do with the mise en place itself.

It seems to me that, this being an Italian document, the French expression "mise en place" could have been very loosely or literally used. The probability, given the context, is that they are talking about table/seating assignment.

Jean

* * * * *

It's a consensus then. Thanks to Jean, Michelle, Diane, Kirk and Dennis (did I miss anyone?). I agree with Jean that the Italian author of the document must have used it rather loosely. Much appreciated!!

Amy

(From the archives of Lantra-L, February 1, 2002)

One last point under "pattern-building." Translators and interpreters are professionals too, and for credibility in the field need to *sound* like professionals in the field.

In translator discussion groups like Lantra-L (http://www.geocities.com/Athens/7110/lantra.htm) one occasionally reads postings from would-be translators who ask things like "I'd like to be a translator, but I really want to work at home. How can I do that?" The wry smiles that questions like this elicit on professional translators' faces are complexly motivated, of course, but they have a good deal to do with the fact that the answer seems so obvious as to be practically common knowledge: many, perhaps most, translators work at home.

Shouldn't a would-be translator already know this? The person asking the question, in other words, doesn't yet *sound* like a translator; and will probably not project enough credibility over the phone to convince an agency person to send them a job. Without that credibility, it will be virtually impossible to make a living translating at home. All this means, of course, is that the hopeful novice needs to learn to talk like a translator – a skill that may even be as important as the actual ability to translate, in terms of getting jobs. Translator discussion groups are one good place to learn this, though only in the written medium – active participation on Lantra-L may only help you write like a translator, not talk like one. Translator conferences and translator training programs are other excellent places for learning this crucial skill – but only if you keep your ears open and model your speech and behavior on the professionals around you.

Terminology studies (rules and theories)

If experience is the best teacher, does that mean "deductive" resources like classes in specialized terminology, dictionaries and other reference materials, and theoretical work on terminology management are useless? Not necessarily.

The important points to remember are: (1) everything is experience (we are never not experiencing things, even in our sleep); and (2) some experiences are richer and more memorable than others. Working in a specialized field is an experience; so is reading a highly abstract theoretical study of the terminology used in that field. The former is more likely to be memorable than the latter, because interacting with people in actual use-situations and seeing the practical applicability of the terminology to real objects and people and contexts provides more "channels" or "modes" or "handles" for the brain to process the information through; in neurological terms, abstract theorizing is relatively stimulus-poor.

But this does not mean, again, that the more abstract channels for presenting information are worthless; only that we must all work harder, teachers and students, writers and readers, to infuse abstract discourse with the rich experiential complexity of human life.

This may mean teachers offering students, or writers offering readers, hands-on exercises that facilitate the learner's exploration of an abstract model through several experiential channels – visual, tactile, kinesthetic, auditory. This is sometimes thought of as "pandering to the worst element," mainly because abstract thought is considered "higher" than holistic experience; in fact it is simply "pandering" to the way the brain actually learns best.

Or it may mean students and readers employing their own holistic techniques to work out in their own practical hands-on experience how the abstract model works. This is how the "best" (i.e., most linguistically, logically, and mathematically intelligent) students have always processed abstract thought: unconsciously they flesh it out with sights and sounds and other visceral experiences from their own

lives. This is in fact the *only* way that anyone can make sense of an abstract model or system: all deduction must make a detour through induction; all theory must have some mode of access to practice; all abstraction must derive from, and be referable back to, the concrete. Abstract theoretical thought, deduction as the highest form of logical reasoning, provides an economy of expression that the rich repetitions and circumlocutions of experiential and practice-oriented induction can never match. But for that very reason this sort of thought is difficult to apprehend without practical applications. Abstraction is a shorthand that saves enormous amounts of time – but only when one knows the language that it shortens and can refer each squiggle back to a natural word or phrase that has meaning in real-life situations.

Some suggestions:

Take classes in engineering, biology and chemistry, law, medicine, etc. – and pay attention to the professor, how s/he acts, how s/he speaks of the field. Pay attention to the best students in class, especially the ones who seem most professionally interested in the subject. What habitus are they struggling to emulate and internalize? Who or what are they trying to become? Ask questions that get the professor and various students to comment in greater detail on the real-world horizons of the field. Draw connections with your own experience. If the professor or one or more students grow impatient with questions like this, study their response: Why are they irritated? What bothers them? Speculate about the habitus of a specialist in the field that makes your questions seem irrelevant or impertinent.

When a teacher offers you an abstract model in class, explore it in other media: paint it; sketch it; draw a flowchart for it showing how one might move through it, or a "web" or "mind-map," showing what connects with what (as in Figure 4).

Other suggestions:

Invent a kinesthetic image for the model: is it an elevator? a forklift? a weaving loom, with shuttle? a tiger slinking through the jungle? Abstract models are usually constructed to be static, which will make it very difficult in most cases to think of a kinesthetic image; but that very difficulty, the challenge of putting a static image into motion, is precisely what makes this exercise so fruitful.

Do a Freudian psychoanalysis of the model. Whether you believe in psychoanalysis or not is really irrelevant; this is primarily a heuristic, a way of getting your ideas flowing. What is the model *not* saying? What is it repressing, and why? What are its connections with sex, violence, and death; Oedipus and Electra; narcissism and melancholy; latent homosexuality?

There are more exercises along these lines below (especially exercise 3); it is not difficult to invent others. The key is to develop techniques for dynamizing the static, enlivening the inert, humanizing the inanimate, personalizing the mechanical.

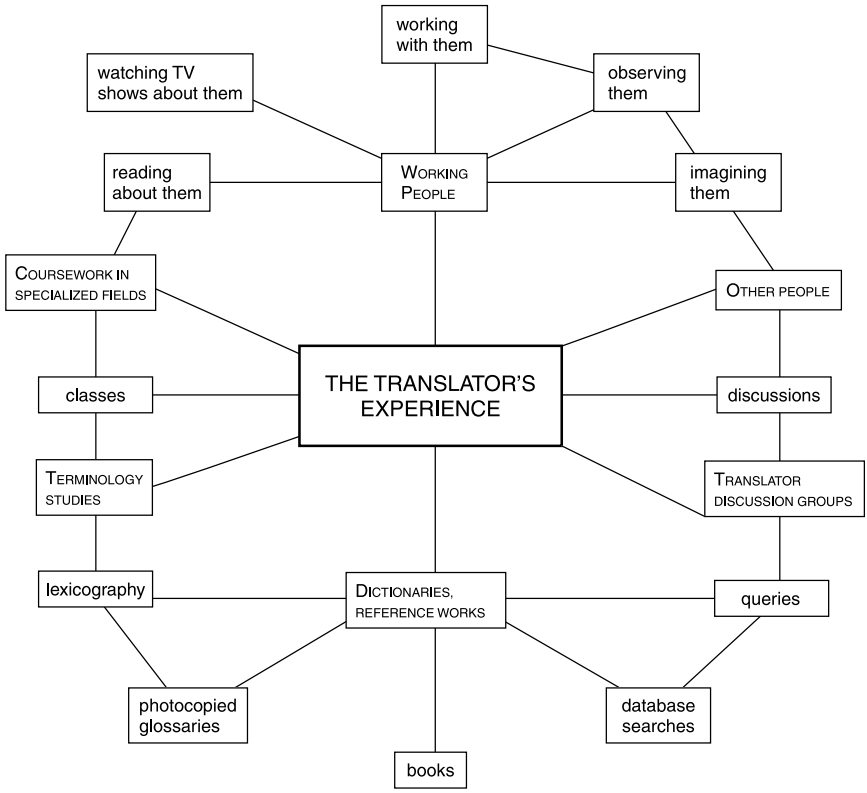

Figure 4 The translator's experience of terminology

Conclusion

The awkward fact is that it is *very* difficult to learn specialized terminology in the classroom – precisely because the best way to learn it is through repeated exposure to it (and intelligent attention to the patterns that emerge through that exposure) in real working situations, and there just isn't time for that in a single semester, or even a series of semesters. What this chapter suggests for the classroom is a kind of simulation of actual exposure to people using specialized terminology in real workplaces, on the dual assumption that (a) situated learning is always more effective than abstract learning and (b) a simulation of working life is the closest one can come to situated learning in the classroom. Ultimately, when it comes to specialized terminology, there is no substitute for real-world experience!

Discussion

1. Is it true that it is easier to learn things when they are grounded in complex real-world situations and experiences? Why or why not?
2. Are translators really fakers or pretenders? How else might their work be regarded?
3. Just how acceptable is it for a translator to pretend to know how to write in a given register, when in fact s/he has almost no idea? Does the answer to this question depend on how successful the translation is, or is there an ethical question involved that transcends success or failure? Who decides when a translation is successful?

Activities

1. Teacher-directed exercise. (See online teacher's guide at www.routledge.com/9780415615907.)
2. Perform the following actions on any source text:

   (a) Discuss it in small groups, brainstorming on useful vocabulary, etc.
   (b) Draw pictures of the activities described.
   (c) Mime the activities described, acting them out, making appropriate sound effects.

   Then translate passages in one or more of the following ways:

   (d) Make an advertising jingle for it in the target language. Use any musical style you like, including local folk songs, rock, rap, etc. Sing it to the class and explain why you chose that particular approach; describe the effect the music had on your translation process.
   (e) Make a commercial voice-over for it in the target language. Read it out loud to the class in an appropriate voice-over voice, and describe what effect thinking of the text in terms of that voice had on your translation process.

Exercises

1. Bring a specialized technical dictionary (or, if one isn't available, any dictionary) to class and perform the following operations on it:

   (a) Open it at random, find a word that catches your interest, and start following the path down which it points you: looking up similar

words listed along with it; looking up interesting words listed under these new entries, etc. Jot down everything of interest that you find: words, definitions, synonyms, antonyms, sample sentences. Make a mark in your notes every time you jump to a new dictionary entry.

Do this for ten, fifteen, or twenty minutes, then stop at any reasonable stopping place and move on to:

(b) Now draw a picture of the information you've gathered. The picture can be a schematic diagram of the complex interrelations between words and dictionary entries; or it can be a complex representation of the words' referents, all fitted into a scene that seems to bring them all together (a city, a factory, a home, a forest, etc.).

2. Search the web for a complex scientific, technical or medical/pharmaceutical text in your usual source language. Pick a single paragraph that contains several words you've never seen, and cut and paste it to a word-processing document. Put the url and title of the site at the top of the document, followed by a short (one-/two-line) description of the site and the type of text it contains (what field, what probable audience, level of difficulty).

   Now pick from the paragraph the word you have the least idea about in your target language, and research its possible target-language equivalents on the web:

   (a) Look it up in an online dictionary. Cut and paste what you find to your word-processing document. Mark it clearly with the name of the dictionary.
   (b) Look it up in at least two other online term databases or glossaries. Cut and paste everything you find to the same word-processing document, marking the results for each database clearly with its name.
   (c) Make a tentative choice, based on what you have so far, of the best translation of the difficult word. Highlight it in the text.
   (d) Now check your choice by Googling it, or, for a medical topic, using Medline (http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi).

   Write the number of hits you got after the highlighted word in your file, in parentheses. Scan through the results for sites that look like they are on topics closely related to your text, and pick five of them to open. Find

(ctrl-F) your word in each site, and copy the paragraph(s) it appears into your word-processing document, marking each with the url and title of the site in which you found it. Make a judgment: based on the evidence from these five sites, is this the right word for your translation?

(e) Now double-check your decision by running web searches on two other possible translations, and performing the same operations on them as in (d). With this new evidence in view, does your initial choice still seem like the best one? Why or why not?
(f) If you live in the country where your target language is natively spoken, get on the phone with an expert in that field, introduce yourself as a translator, and beg him or her for two minutes of his or her time. Explain that you have a source text in X language that mentions a word meaning abcd (describe the thing or idea described in the source text), and you are leaning toward translating it as Y – give your first choice. Ask whether that sounds right. Thank the person for his or her time.
(g) If you are subscribed to a translation listserv, send a term query to it, giving the type of text you're working on, the source-text paragraph you selected (or, if the context is clear enough, just the sentence your word is in), and the target-language equivalent you've selected. Ask whether anybody sees anything wrong with this translation.
(h) Now, drawing on all the evidence from (a–g), make a final choice, and write up a brief explanation justifying it.

3. Research a specific workplace or type of work by visiting it and talking to the people who work there. Compile a list of the fifty most common words and phrases that they use; then make a video of you (or your group) using all fifty words and phrases in natural-sounding conversation.

   Try to sound as much as possible like the working people you studied; if possible, make the video in the natural setting of the work. (If you don't have access to video equipment, present your "natural-sounding conversation" in front of the class.)

Suggestions for further reading

The profession: Collin (2002), Esselink (2000), Sprung (2000), Steiner and Yallop (2001), Tommola (1992), Wagner *et al*. (2002)

Terminology: Bowker (2006), Byrne (2006), Rey (1995), Sager (1990), Snell (1983), Sonneveld and Loening (1993), ten Hacken (2006), Thelen and Steurs (2010)

7 Translation as an operation performed in and on languages

In this chapter: A useful way of thinking about translation and language is that translators don't translate *words*; they translate *what people do with words*.

Intuitive leaps: obviously, *guessing* at what a word means, or at the best target-language equivalent, is not going to be a reliable strategy for producing final copy; but it's an excellent way to get started (so long as you remember to check your guesses later).

Pattern-building: translating, like all verbal activities, is *doing things to people with words*; and like all activities, requires attentive practice.

Rules and theories: linguistic pragmatics, including speech-act theory, is a useful guide not only to what the source author was trying to do to the source reader with words, but also to what the translator is trying to do to the target reader with words.

Translation and linguistics

It may seem strange to hold off discussing language until this late in a book on translation. Translation is, after all, an operation performed both on and in language. In Latin translation used to be referred to as *translatio linguarum*, the translation of languages, to distinguish it from other kinds of translation, like *translatio studii*, the translation of knowledge, and *translatio imperii*, the translation of empire.

And until very recently, virtually all discussions of translation both in class and in print dealt primarily or exclusively with language. The ability to translate was thought of largely as an advanced form of the ability to understand or read a foreign language. Translation studies was thought of as a specialized branch of philology, applied linguistics, or comparative literature. Translator training revolved around the semantic transfer of words, phrases, and whole texts from one language to another. The chief issue in the history of translation theory since Cicero in the first century before our era has been linguistic segmentation: should the primary segment of translation be the individual word (producing word-for-word translation) or the phrase, clause, or sentence (producing sense-for-sense translation)? Even in our day, most of the best-known twentieth-century theorists of translation – J. C. Catford, Kornei Chukovskii, Valentín García Yebra, Eugene A. Nida, Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, Peter Newmark, Juliane House, Basil Hatim and Ian Mason – have

been linguists who think of translation as primarily or exclusively an operation performed on language.

And it should be clear that this book is not an attempt to dismiss or diminish the importance of language for translation either. Language is an integral part of every aspect of translation that we have considered thus far. The purpose of discussing "people" or "working people," rather than, say, equivalence or terminology studies, has not been to downplay the importance of language but rather to place it in a larger social context – the context in which language takes on meaning, and in which linguistic matters are learned and unlearned.

What my approach in this book does downplay, however, is a specific *rule-based* approach to the verbal aspect of translation: one usually known as "linguistics." Traditional linguistic approaches to the study of translation have been given a relatively peripheral status in the argument of this book because they are relatively peripheral to what translators *do*, and thus to how one *becomes* a translator.

To be precise, traditional linguistic approaches to the study of translation begin with an extremely narrow and restrictive conception of what Anthony Pym calls "the external view" – the demands placed on translation by clients. The problem, in other words, is not simply that traditional linguists find it very difficult to account for translators' own internal view of their professional work; it is also that they cannot account for very many of the client's real-world demands either. All their precepts are based on the requirement that the translator should strive for linguistic equivalence with the original text. And, as we saw in Chapter 1, equivalence is only one demand clients often place on translators, and indeed only one *kind* of demand: traditional linguistic approaches cannot, for example, tell us anything about clients' demands for low cost or timeliness, or even translator reliability, and have historically been notoriously unforthcoming about types of textual reliability other than equivalence.

Linguistically oriented translation scholars have, however, recently begun to venture outside the equivalence bubble – the narrow place where the scholar's only conceivable task is to define linguistic equivalence rigorously enough to help translators achieve it – and to explore the amazing variety of linguistic phenomena faced by the translator. We will be examining some of these new approaches under "The translator and speech-act theory (rules and theories)," below.

What could that be? (intuitive leaps)

Understanding someone else's utterance or written message is far more complicated than we tend to think. Common sense says that if we hear or read a text in a language we know well, and the text is syntactically and semantically well formed, we will understand it. Indeed, offhand it is difficult to imagine a case in which that understanding might not immediately and automatically follow.

But there are plenty of such cases. The most common is when you expect to be addressed in one language, say, a foreign or B language, and are addressed in another,

say, your native or A language: until you adjust your expectations and really "hear" the utterance as an A-language text, it may sound like B-language gibberish. This is especially true when you are in a foreign country where you do not expect anyone to speak your language; if someone does address you in your native tongue, even with perfect pronunciation and grammar, your expectations may well block understanding. Even after three or four repetitions, you may finally have to ask, "I'm sorry, what language are you speaking?" When you are told that it is your native tongue, all of a sudden the random phonemes leap into coherent order and the utterance makes sense.

This is what Charles Sanders Peirce calls abduction: the intuitive leap from confusing data to a reasonable hypothesis. And it happens even with utterances in our native language that should have been easy to understand. Something blocks our ability to make sense of a language, misleading expectations, distractions (as when you hear a friend or a parent or a spouse talking, you hear and register and understand all the words, but nothing makes sense because your mind is elsewhere), and all of a sudden what should have been easy becomes hard; what should have been automatic requires a logical leap, an abduction.

When the utterance or written text is not perfectly formed, this experience is even more common.

1. Your ten-month-old infant points at something on the table and says "Gah!" When you don't understand, she points again and repeats, "Gah!" more insistently. The child clearly knows what she is trying to say; she just doesn't speak your language. How do you reach a working interpretation? How do you become a competent interpreter of your infant's language? Through trial and error: you pick up every item on the table, look at the child quizzically, and say "This?" (or "Gah?"). Based on your knowledge of other languages, of course, you make certain assumptions that guide your guesswork: you assume, for instance, that "Gah" is probably a noun, referring to a specific object on the table, or a verb ("Give!"), or an imperative sentence ("Give me that thing that I want!"). Parents usually become skilled interpreters of their infants' languages quite quickly. The infant experiments constantly with new words and phrases, requiring new abductions, but repeated exposure to the old ones rapidly builds up B-language competence in the parents, and they calmly interpret for visitors who hear nothing but random sounds.
2. Fully competent native speakers of a language do not always use that language in a way that certain observers are pleased to call "rational": they do not say what they mean, they omit crucial information, they conceal their true intentions, they lie, they exaggerate, they use irony or sarcasm, they speak metaphorically. The English philosopher Paul Grice (1989: 22–40), best known as the founder of linguistic pragmatics, tried famously in a lecture entitled "Logic and Conversation" to explain precisely how we make sense of speakers

who "flout" the rational rules of conversation; it wasn't enough for him that listeners make inspired guesses, or abductions: there had to be some "regimen" to follow, a series of steps that would lead interpreters to the correct interpretation of a problematic utterance. Clearly, there is something to this; we are rarely utterly in the dark when guessing at another person's meaning. Clearly also, however, Grice overstated his case. The bare fact that we so often guess wrong suggests that understanding (or "intuiting") problematic utterances has as much to do with creative imagination, intuition, and sheer luck as it does with rational regimens (see Robinson 1986, 2003).

3. Learning a foreign language obviously requires thousands of guesses.

It is my second or third week in Finland. I have learned that "no" is *ei* and "yes" is *joo* (pronounced /yo:/). To my great puzzlement, I frequently hear people saying what sounds like **ei joo*, which I translate as "no yes." This doesn't make sense, but whenever I ask anybody about it, they always insist that there is no such phrase in Finnish, no one would ever say that, it doesn't make sense, etc.

And yet I hear it repeatedly. Whenever I hear my friends say it, I stop them: "You said it again!" "What?" "*Ei joo*." "No I didn't. You can't say that in Finnish."

Finally, after about two weeks of this frustration, someone realizes what I'm talking about: *ei oo*, pronounced exactly like **ei joo*, is a colloquial form of *ei ole*, meaning "it isn't." Having explained this, he adds: "But you shouldn't say that, because it's bad Finnish." Finnish teachers, I later discover, actively discourage this colloquialism: hence "bad Finnish." As a result, even though everyone still uses it constantly, my friends repress their knowledge of it when I ask about it, and find it extremely difficult to realize what I'm referring to. It requires almost as big an intuitive leap for them to understand my question as it does for me to ask it.

4. And, of course, translators are forever stumbling upon words they have never seen before, words that appear in no dictionary they own, words for which they must find exact target-language equivalents by tomorrow.

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Hello Lantrans,
  Can anyone tell me the Dutch translation of "flat fee" and/or
define what it means? My dictionary does not contain this
entry.
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```
  Context:
  Your call can either be charged to your phone bill at a
per minute rate or to your credit card (Visa, Mastercard or
American Express) at a flat fee.
  Thanks, best regards,

Gabor Menkes
ULTIMTEXT
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Translation at this level is painfully slow. A translator may spend hours tracking down a difficult word: poring through dictionaries on the shelf and online, calling, texting, and emailing friends and acquaintances who might know it, calling the agency or client and asking for help. A translator may hate or love this part of this job; but a translator who is unwilling to do it will not last long in the profession. Since translators are rarely paid by the hour, and the pay per word is the same for a word that requires hours to find as it is for "the" or "and," their financial motivation to track down the right word may be almost nil; the only reasons to continue the search despite its diminishing monetary returns are:

a. translator ethics, the professional's determination to submit an accurate and correct translation
b. professional pride, the translator's need to feel good about the work s/he does
c. a pragmatic concern for repeat business: the agency or client who is pleased with the translator's work will call her or him again; and
d. a love of language, producing a deep satisfaction in the word-hunt or the "rightness" of the right word, or both.

Doing things with words (pattern-building)

If the hunt for the right word or the right phrase is painfully slow and therefore lamentably underpaid, it can also be one of the translator's greatest professional joys. Reading in books and articles one would never ordinarily read, learning things one would never ordinarily learn, talking to people on the phone about their area of expertise: this can all be drudgery, of course, but it can also be exciting and emotionally and intellectually rewarding. The translator who takes pleasure in this underpaid hunt, it should go without saying, is less likely to burn out in the job than one who hates it and only does it out of a sense of professional ethics or duty. Unpleasant duties quickly become straitjackets.

The other side of this process is that the hunt for the right word or phrase is usually so intense that the right word is later easy to remember: the "solution"

to the translator's problem sticks easily in her/his memory and can be retrieved quickly for later use. Translation-memory software performs this same function for many translators, "remembering" not only the words the translator has used in the past but the contexts in which s/he used them; but since this software too requires a few keystrokes or mouse-clicks, most translators who use it do so mainly for backup, relying primarily on their own neural memories for most words and phrases.

In other words, the "new words" that take so long to find and seem, therefore, to "steal" or "waste" the translator's time and money are internalized and habitualized for later use – and when used in a later translation, the relative speed with which they are remembered begins to earn back the time and money that seemed so extravagantly spent before.

Indeed, the factor that contributes most to the professional translator's speed and accuracy is the internalization and habitualization not only of words but of certain linguistic "transfer patterns" – well-worn pathways from one language to another that the translator has traveled so many times that s/he could do it while talking to a friend on the phone, or planning a menu for dinner, or worrying about a financial crisis. One glance at the source-text syntax and the translator's fingers fly across the keyboard, as if driven by a macro.

And in some sense they are. The brain doesn't work like a computer in all respects – it is far more complicated, far more elastic and flexible, far more creative, and in some things far slower – but in this it does: oft-repeated activities are softwired into a neural network that works very much like a computer macro, dictating keystrokes or other steps in a more or less fixed sequence and at great speed. Thus, the novice translator can take two or three hours to translate a 300-word text that would take a professional translator twenty or thirty minutes; and the discriminating reader will find twenty major errors in the novice translator's rendition and a single slightly questionable word or phrase in the professional translator's version. Practice doesn't exactly make perfect; but it brings exponential increases in speed and reliability.

But what is happening in the process of internalizing these transfer patterns? What is the translator experiencing, and how can that experience be enhanced?

Linguistically speaking, the translator is experiencing a transformation of *what people do with words*. This phrase, taken from J. L. Austin's (1962/1975) famous book, *How to Do Things with Words*, covers all language: language *is* what people do with words. In Chapter 5 we explored the importance of *what people do*, and in Chapter 6 of what *working* people do, precisely because all language users are human beings, social animals, doing things with words. The French lawyer in her office in Paris does certain things with words; the Japanese lawyer in his office in Tokyo does certain other things with words; the French-Japanese legal translator uses what both lawyers do with words to do *new* things with words. The translator *transforms* what people do with words.

But then, that is nothing new; all language users transform what people do with words. All language use is repetition, but never of exactly the same thing. Even the most repetitive language use transforms the "old thing" in some new way.

More specifically, source-culture people do certain things with words in the source text, and it is the translator's job to do new (but more or less recognizable) things with them in the target language. In the process those "things" done with words undergo a sea change. At first this change feels like a metamorphosis of infinite variety, a change so infinite that it cannot be reduced to patterns. Every word and every sequence of words must be taken on its own, thought about, reflected upon, weighed and tested, poked and prodded. The more often one makes the trip, however, the more familiar the transformations become; gradually they begin to fall into patterns; gradually translation comes to seem easier and easier.

The process of wading through tens of thousands of such transfers until the patterns begin to emerge is, as Karl Weick would say, a process of "unrandomizing" what at first seems to be chaos. At first it is difficult to hold ten or fifteen foreign words in your head; then it is easy to hold those ten or fifteen words as discrete lexical items, each one having a specific meaning in your native tongue, but difficult to use them in a sentence, or even to decipher them in an existing sentence. Gradually those ten or fifteen words become easy to use in a certain kind of sentence, but then they appear in another kind of sentence and once again make no sense at all. But we hate disorder. We long for structure, for pattern. We keep doing things with words until they start making sense. We impose false order on them (we overgeneralize) if need be, and get corrected, and try again. Eventually the things we do with source-language words begin to seem coherent – to ourselves, and eventually to others as well.

How does the translator do this? How does the translator impose the kind of order on the "things s/he does with words" that clients and project managers recognize as a successful translation? By imitating, mostly. We get a feel for how others do things, and try to do them in a similar way ourselves. But because we are separate beings, because we inhabit separate bodies, we can never imitate anything exactly.

We always transform what we imitate. When we *do* things, including when we do things with words, we may try very hard to do what other people do, but we will always end up doing something at least slightly new.

The trick, then, is to convince other people that this "slightly new" thing you've done with words in fact is a reliable reproduction of the old thing done by the source author or speaker. That too involves imitation: we watch others, watch what they do when they do things with words and people with money take those things to be "translations" – reliable, accurate, professional translations.

What we do *not* do is sit down with a comprehensive set of rules for linguistic equivalence and create a text that conforms to them. That is the image projected by traditional linguists when they have studied translation; the image does not correspond to reality.

The year 2001 was designated "The European Year of Languages" by the Council of Europe and European Commission; celebrated in forty-five countries, its aim was to promote multilingualism and generally the enhancement of language proficiency across Europe.

One offshoot of the Year was the European Day of Languages, September 26 – just four days before International Translation Day, September 30 (St. Jerome's birthday). Now every year the countries that celebrate the day come up with various events designed to get people excited about languages: competitions, plays, dances, sing-alongs and singing contests, parties, fashion shows, food markets, and so on. The UK National Centre for Languages (CILT) offers some suggested activities on their website (http://www.cilt.org.uk/home/valuing_languages/european_day_of_languages/suggested_activities.aspx):

Higher education:

- Perform a play in Italian
- Offer taster sessions
- Invite ex-students to share positive stories about languages
- Hold an exhibition with Chinese commentary
- Host a Languages Work careers fair
- Organize an international sports tournament
- Promote work and study placements in foreign countries
- Display EDL materials in foyers, common rooms and corridors
- Welcome international students and find them a local "buddy"
- Invite students and staff to a language and culture quiz night
- Enjoy a multilingual pub crawl

Workplace:

- Plan an Italian coffee morning or German breakfast
- Enjoy lunchtime salsa in Spanish
- Invite an expert to run a language and culture workshop
- Plan a French film festival
- Organize a European quiz with tapas
- Answer the phone in different languages
- Have a staff meal in Greek
- Send an email greeting to your customers in their own language
- Investigate opportunities for international work placements
- Organize an away day focusing on multicultural issues
- Learn key words and phrases in British Sign Language

Home/community:

- Making your shopping list in Russian
- Inviting friends round for a Bollywood night
- Playing scrabble in German
- Listening to a foreign-language radio programme
- Organizing an international film night
- Reading a book or magazine in another language
- Teaching a friend a language
- Learning to say hello to your neighbour in their language
- Learning some fun holiday phrases

The translator and speech-act theory (rules and theories)

If, then, our inductive reasoning leads us to the principle that translators *do* things with words, and we decide this is a discovery worth passing on to others, we end up with a deductive conception of translation grounded in speech-act theory. This becomes our new linguistic precept, by which we order our perceptions of the field: translators do things with words.

One of the things translators do with words, obviously, is to strive for equivalence. Clients almost always demand it, and translators almost always have to strive to do what clients demand. Note, however, that there is a significant difference between imagining translators *striving* for equivalence, as I suggest we do, and imagining translation as an abstract pattern or "structure" of equivalence, as those older approaches did. If translation is an abstract structure, there are no people involved. Translation then is simply a text. This is, again, something like the client's view of the matter: the client wants a reliable *text* (and wants it fast and cheap – see Chapter 1). What the translator has to do to achieve that is irrelevant. Like the client, traditional linguistically oriented translation scholars tended to treat the translator and his or her verbal *actions* (let alone how the translator experienced those actions) as unworthy of study.

If we shift our focus to the translator *doing* things with words, then it becomes clear that the striving for linguistic equivalence is an important verbal action performed by the translator. There are many others as well: striving to improve a badly written text; striving to teach a moral or political lesson (especially in propagandistic translation); striving for expressive effect (especially in an advertising or literary translation); and so on. Striving for equivalence is one of the verbal actions performed by the translator, and a very important one – but just one. Not the whole job. Certainly not the basis for all rules and theories of translation. In this newer

approach, *equivalence* isn't the basis for deduction; the *striving* for equivalence (and other desirable effects) is.

One of the consequences of this shift is that it enables us to integrate linguistic studies of translation into the bigger picture of the translator's professional activities, and of the economic and political and cultural contexts in which those activities are carried out. Striving for equivalence is something a translator will do to satisfy a client, in order to establish his or her professional reliability; or something a translator will do to satisfy his or her own sense of cultural or ideological "rightness," the way the text "has" to be in the target language according to large-scale cultural norms. Conceived as "doing things with words," translation taken linguistically remains part and parcel of all the many real-life things translators do in specific real-world contexts.

More important, seeing equivalence as something the translator *strives* for helps the linguistically oriented scholar focus on the complex process by which an individual translator determines what equivalence in this specific case *might be* – how the translator "constructs" equivalence as an ideal to strive for. This moves the linguistic study of translation past narrow static comparisons of two texts ("source" and "target") and out into the complex world of professional norms (see the end of Chapter 8, "The sociological turn," for discussion). This shift in linguistic approaches to the study of translation from abstract *structures* of equivalence to the psychological, sociological, and cognitive processes by which individual translators come to *strive* for equivalence is bringing about a welcome integration of linguistic approaches with more socioculturally oriented approaches. Rather than simply imposing an abstract rule or other ideal structure on translation from "somewhere" (actually, from idealized conceptions of what clients want), the linguistically oriented translation scholar increasingly moves toward rule-formation and theorization the hard way, slogging through masses of experiential detail to build up a sense of what is "really" going on that can be taught to others. As a result, his or her linguistic rules and theories of translation are more useful for the translation student as well.

And as the linguist pays ever closer and more complex attention to the practical world of professional translation, even the purely verbal aspect of that field becomes increasingly interesting and exciting. For example, Pym (1993) notes that the traditional linguistic conception of translation makes it impossible for a translator ever, as a translator, in the act of translating, to utter a performative utterance.

A performative, you may recall, is an utterance that performs an action: "I now pronounce you man and wife," "I bet you five dollars," "I call the meeting to order," etc. (Austin 1962/1975). The chairperson of the meeting says "I call the meeting to order," and performs the action of opening the meeting; the simultaneous interpreter hired by the organizers renders that utterance into a specific foreign language, and in so doing – according to traditional linguistic conceptions of translation – does *not* perform the action of opening the meeting. The interpreter's

rendition simply repeats or reports on the actual performative utterance for those who didn't understand it in the original.

However, as Pym notes, even repeating or reporting on a performative utterance performs an action: it performs the action of reporting. Even if we see the interpreter as by definition incapable of opening the meeting with his or her words, we must nevertheless recognize that s/he is doing *something*.

Furthermore, "reporting on" the opening of the meeting is not what the interpreter does explicitly. Explicitly, the interpreter is opening the meeting! S/he says, in whatever target language s/he is interpreting into, "I call the meeting to order." Therefore, if we want to deny the interpreter the power to perform the action of opening the meeting, we have to assume that s/he is "really" (on a deep or implicit level) performing the act of reporting on the opening of the meeting and merely *pretending* to perform the act of opening the meeting on a superficial or explicit level – a considerably more complex action than static structural equivalence theories would admit! Can translators really perform two (or more) actions with the same words, on different levels? Other human beings can; why not translators?

It is also open to question whether the interpreter truly is incapable of opening the meeting. That would be the case, it seems to me, only if the act of "opening the meeting" were taken in the abstract, as a one-time event that can only be performed by a single person, the chairperson. But if we take the opening of the meeting to be a complex human drama, perceived in many different ways by the many different participants in it, then it is at least conceivable that some members of the audience – monolinguals in the interpreter's language, for example, who understand not a word of the chairperson's language – might in fact take the interpreter to be opening the meeting. Harris (1981: 198) notes that foreign monolinguals sworn in as witnesses in a court case sometimes mistake the origin of the questions being asked by counsel and only interpreted by the court interpreter: "Why are you asking me these pointless questions?" For such witnesses, the interpreter *is* performing the action of "asking pointless questions."

We might want to say, from our position of superior knowledge, that those witnesses are *wrong*. It may *seem* to them as if the interpreter is asking the questions, but that is because they don't fully understand. They don't have the big picture. They don't understand the source language, and so don't hear the target text *as* "merely" a translation.

But then isn't the "naive" response to what is going on (the interpreter is asking the questions) primary, and the "sophisticated" explanation that we may be inclined to offer (the original speaker is asking the questions, and the interpreter is merely *repeating* them in the target language) a secondary *correction*? And who is to say that the "big picture" tells the whole truth? Could it be that the "naive" response, from its position in the pragmatic interchange, captures some interactive human truth that the more idealized and generalized correction misses?

Once we begin to question the assumption that *translation equals equivalence* full stop, in fact it quickly becomes obvious that translators are human beings, social animals, caught up in the human drama like anyone else – and that it is impossible for them to stop performing actions when they translate, impossible for them to stop "doing things with words." Doing often very complex things, in fact: pretending to be doing one thing while at the same time doing another, or doing two significantly different things at once. Venuti (1995, 1998), for example, argues that translators should become political dissidents, using their translations to oppose global capitalism – that they should at once strive (a) to render the original text as closely as possible, (b) to seek to radicalize readers and so increase their resistance to capitalism as well, and (c) to signal to readers that the "roughness" in the translation is not "bad translation" or "translationese" but part of the project of (b). That would be three different "actions" performed by the same translator in the act of translating – and one of those actions, but *only* one, is something like the traditional requirement that the translator strive for equivalence.

And as I say, people do this all the time: we are all perfectly capable of performing several simultaneous actions with the same words. Why, therefore, not translators as well?

The linguistic study of translators as performers of speech acts is, however, very much in its infancy. Most linguistically oriented scholars of translation, still held fast by the requirement of equivalence, have not been interested in exploring the translator's full range of social action. For even the most progressive linguistically oriented scholars, such as Hatim and Mason (1990, 1997) or Neubert and Shreve (1992), the translator is still a more or less faithful reproducer of other people's speech acts, not a performer of speech acts in his or her own right. As a result, the recent movement in translation studies toward exploring translation as *action* – with which we shall be concerned in the next two chapters – has almost completely left the linguists and the specifically *verbal* aspect of translation behind.

Conclusion

Two things are true:

- language is not the only important concern for the professional translator
- language is an extremely important concern for the professional translator

Focusing attention on the other concerns, like technology, professionalism in interactions with clients and project managers, enjoyment, and so on, should never detract from the overriding importance of language. Translators are many things in their professional lives, including business people and social animals and ethical agents; but one of their central roles is as *language mediators*. Translators are people who not only know two or more languages, but people who love to mediate between

and among those languages. (Bilinguals who are fluent in two languages but have no interest in how to say this or that L1 word or phrase in the L2 do not make good translators.)

It is essential to remember, however, that language is not a *thing*. It's not a stable object that can be described scientifically. Language is a channel of human communication, and as such it is saturated in the group dynamics of all human social interaction:

- Pressures to conform to group norms
- The need for stability, predictability
- A desire for some degree of novelty, innovation, surprise (but not at the expense of stability)
- Timing (there is a rhythm to social interaction, and too early is almost as bad as too late)
- Risk-management (you don't want to irritate people, or sound stupid, etc.) and reward structures

These are some of the topics we'll be discussing in the next chapter, "Working and understanding through social networks."

Discussion

1. How realistic is it to discuss language in the abstract, structurally, systematically – linguistically? Does language ever exist in a stable form that can be reduced to unchanging structures? If not, what value do linguistic analyses and descriptions have for the study of translation?
2. "Overgeneralization" is a term that linguists use to describe the mental processes involved in learning one's first language as a child; it is not generally applied to the work linguists do in their attempts to reduce the complexity of natural language to the simplicity of formal systems. Some linguists, in fact, might be offended to hear their work described as involving overgeneralization. Just how "insulting" is the insistence that linguists too overgeneralize? What is at stake in this terminological debate?

Exercises

1. Read the following extract from Eugene Nida and Charles Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (1969: 12–13):

   The best translation does not sound like a translation. Quite naturally one cannot and should not make the Bible sound as if it happened in the next town ten years ago, for the historical context of the Scriptures is important, and one cannot remake the Pharisees and Sadducees into present-day religious parties, nor does one want to, for one respects too much the historical setting of the incarnation. In other words, a good translation of the Bible must not be a "cultural translation." Rather, it is a "linguistic translation."

   Nevertheless, this does not mean that it should exhibit in its grammatical and stylistic forms any trace of awkwardness or strangeness. That is to say, it should studiously avoid "translationese" – formal fidelity, with resulting unfaithfulness to the content and the impact of the message.

   (a) Work in groups to describe the "one" in this passage who "cannot and should not make the Bible sound as if it happened in the next town ten years ago," and who "respects too much the historical setting of the incarnation" to want to attempt such a thing. How old is this person? Male or female? Race, social class? What level of education? Just how devout a Christian (and what kind of Christian) does s/he have to be? Or could s/he be an atheist?

   Now imagine another kind of "one," who does want to modernize the Bible in radical ways and knows that it can be done. What kind of person is this? (Age, sex, race, class, education level, religious affiliation, etc.) Does s/he know and believe that "one" "should not" do this? If so, does s/he feel guilty about trying it? If so, why is s/he doing it anyway? If not, or if s/he doesn't even know that this is "bad translation," what motivates her or him to undertake such a project?

   Finally, describe the "Nida" and/or "Taber" who wrote this paragraph, exploring motivations for portraying the translator as "one" who has these specific features. Imagine "Nida" or "Taber" imagining this "one," and consider the *felt* differences and overlaps between saying that one *cannot* translate this way (is it really impossible? should it be?), one *shouldn't* translate this way (what are they guarding against? what is the worst-case scenario here? what would happen if translators began doing what they *shouldn't* do?),

and one *doesn't want to* translate this way (is this like telling a child "you don't want more ice cream"? or what?).

(b) Based on the above description, discuss the difference between a "cultural translation" and a "linguistic translation" and their relationship to "sounding like a translation." Does "cultural" here mean "loose" or "free" or "adaptative" and "linguistic" mean "strict" or "faithful"? Or are there "free" and "strict" cultural translations and "free" and "strict" linguistic translations? And do "free" translations always sound less (or more?) like translations than "strict" ones?

Draw a diagram of Nida and Taber's argument in this paragraph: a tree diagram, a flowchart, a three-dimensional image, or however you like.

2. Study the following composite passage from Mona Baker, *In Other Words* (1992: 144–5, 149, 151):

The distinction between theme and rheme is speaker-oriented. It is based on what the speaker wants to announce as his/her starting point and what s/he goes on to say about it. A further distinction can be drawn between what is given and what is new in a message. This is a hearer-oriented distinction, based on what part of the message is known to the hearer and what part is new. Here again, a message is divided into two segments: one segment conveys information which the speaker regards as already known to the hearer. The other segment conveys the new information that the speaker wishes to convey to the hearer. Given information represents the common ground between speaker and hearer and gives the latter a reference point to which s/he can relate new information.

Like thematic structure, information structure is a feature of the context rather than of the language system as such. One can only decide what part of a message is new and what part is given within a linguistic or situational context. For example, the same message may be segmented differently in response to different questions:

What's happening tomorrow?	We're climbing Ben Nevis	
	New	
What are we doing tomorrow?	We're	climbing Ben Nevis.
	Given	New
What are we climbing tomorrow?	We're climbing	Ben Nevis.
	Given	New

The organization of the message into information units of given and new reflects the speaker's sensitivity to the hearer's state of knowledge in the process of communication. At any point of the communication process, there will have already been established a certain linguistic and non-linguistic environment. This the speaker can draw on in order to relate new information that s/he wants to convey to elements that are already established in the context. The normal, unmarked order is for the speaker to place the given element before the new one. This order has been found to contribute to ease of comprehension and recall and some composition specialists therefore explicitly recommend it to writers. . . .

Failure to appreciate the functions of specific syntactic structures in signalling given and new information can result in unnecessary shifts in translation. . . .

The above discussion suggests that, when needed, clear signals of information status can be employed in written language. Different languages use different devices for signalling information structure and translators must develop a sensitivity to the various signalling systems available in the languages they work with. This is, of course, easier said than done because, unfortunately, not much has been achieved so far in the way of identifying signals of information status in various languages.

(a) Work alone or in small groups to analyze and discuss the "actors" or "agents" in this passage.

(i) Who does what to whom? Theme/rheme is a "speaker-oriented" distinction, suggesting that the speaker herself or himself makes it; given/new information is a "hearer-oriented distinction, based on what part of the message is known to the hearer and what part is new," suggesting that the hearer makes it. But a few lines down Baker calls new information the segment that "the speaker wishes to convey to the hearer." When she says that "a message is divided into two segments," who does the dividing? The speaker? The hearer? The translator? The scholar? All four? How do their perspectives differ? Should the translator *be* a scholar, or strive to inhabit the scholar's perspective from "above" the dialogue between speaker and hearer? Who is the "one" in "One can only decide what part of a message is new and what part is given within a linguistic or situational context"? Who is the "segmenter" in the passive construction "For example, the same message may be segmented differently in response to different questions"?

(ii) These early paragraphs make it sound as if every decision about information status must be made by real people, speakers and hearers (and possibly translators and scholars), in real-life contexts, based on speakers' knowledge of what hearers know, or on hearers' surmises as to what they think speakers think hearers know, or on translators' or scholars' surmises about speaker-knowledge in relation to hearer-knowledge. Put this way, the task of judging the information status of any given sentence, and thus of building an effective target-language word order, seems hopelessly complicated.

In later paragraphs, however, Baker seems to suggest that the "dividing" and "segmenting" is done less by speakers and/or hearers as autonomous subjects than by the "signalling system" of the language itself; and that translators (and presumably linguists also) must simply develop an appreciation for or "sensitivity to the various signalling systems available in the languages they work with." This assumption allows the translator or linguist to analyze words rather than having to guess at real people's unspoken intentions or surmises. But how does this work? What does the signalling system include? Does it actually control real speakers' and hearers' decisions? Or does it control them only insofar as they too "appreciate" or are "sensitive to" the signalling system their language provides for information status?

(iii) In the sentence, "The above discussion suggests that, when needed, clear signals of information status can be employed in written language," what are some cases in which these clear signals are needed? When aren't such signals needed? Does the speaker/writer decide when such signals are needed, and then employ them? If such signals are not present, does that mean that the speaker/writer has decided that they aren't needed, and has not employed them? Or does it mean that the speaker/writer is simply unaware that they are needed? In other words, is Baker encouraging us to imagine ourselves as the speaker/writer and to make cogent decisions about when to employ clear signals regarding information status? If so, does the same encouragement apply to the translator as well? Should the translator, faced for example with a text in which clear information status signals have not been employed, employ such signals herself or himself in the target text? Or is Baker really talking about something other than the contextual "need" for such signals? Could the sentence be construed to mean something like "The above discussion suggests

that, when faced with the infinite variability of actual real-life contextualized language use, the linguist can detect clear signals of information status in written language"? Is this sentence Baker's way of constructing an argumentative transition from real-life contextual variability, which tends to make linguistic analysis difficult or impossible, to the kind of controlled linguistic environment where rational analytical decisions can and must be made?

(iv) When Baker writes, "This is, of course, easier said than done because, unfortunately, not much has been achieved so far in the way of identifying signals of information status in various languages," who are the "actors" or "agents" behind the passive verbs "said," "done," and "achieved"? Are they the same person? Are they the same type of person? Does she expect the translator, for example, to inhabit all three positions, "saying" that translators should read information-status signalling systems competently, "doing" it, and "achieving" success in the identification of those systems in different languages? Or is the "sayer" the translation theorist, the "doer" the translator, and the "achiever" the linguist? If so, does this imply that the translator is complexly dependent on the translation theorist (who "says" what must be "done") and on the linguist, whose analytical "achievements" make it possible for translators to understand linguistic structures? Or is it possible for translators to develop a sensitivity to these signalling systems without having them analyzed first by a linguist, without even being aware of them? If so, could the reading of information-status signalling systems even be easier "done" than "said" (let alone "achieved") in practice?

(b) Take the last quoted paragraph of Baker's text as your source text (the one beginning "The above discussion"), and, alone or in small groups, translate it into your target language, three times:

(i) Without paying attention to the information status of the various sentences (how much you presume Baker knows about how much your prospective readers know about information status and translation) or the signalling systems of English and your target language.

(ii) Assuming target readers who are totally ignorant of linguistics and need to have everything spelled out clearly.

(iii) Assuming target readers who not only know all of this already but can be expected to be somewhat impatient with it ("yes, yes, we

know all this"). Let this assumption transform your translation in radical ways; move things around, rearrange sentences and even the whole paragraph if need be, omit and add, etc. For example, Baker's paragraph repeats the conceptual cluster "information status signals" four times; do you really want to reproduce that repetition for your impatient knowledgeable reader? If you read the first sentence as actually an argumentative transition from extralinguistic variability to linguistic control rather than as a statement about when signals are needed in written language, how are you going to translate that for your impatient readers? (The ability to read a textual segment as only apparently about what it seems to be about is part of that "sensitivity to signalling systems" that Baker calls for; how does that ability transform your translation when aimed at a knowledgeable reader?) If you assume that your reader is a professional translator who is already highly sensitive to the signalling systems in his or her languages, who gained that sensitivity not by reading linguistic analyses of those systems but through long immersion in the two languages and twenty years of professional translating, and who is easily irritated at the suggestion that translators must rely on linguists for such sensitivity, how would that assumption guide your translation of the last sentence (the "easier said than done" one implying that greater linguistic achievements would make it easier to do)?

Suggestions for further reading

Speech-act theory and pragmatics: Austin (1962/1975), Felman (1980/2003), Grice (1989), Robinson (2003, 2006)

Linguistics: Baker (1992), Baker and Malmkjær (1998), Catford (1965), Chomsky (1965), Chukovskii (1984), Dimitrova (2005), García Yebra (1989a, 1989b, 1994), Hatim (2001), Hatim and Mason (1990, 1997), Hatim and Munday (2004), Hickey (1998), Hymes (1972), Malmkjær (2005), Munday (2001), Nida and Taber (1969), Riccardi (2002), Schäffner (1999, 2002), Vinay and Darbelnet (1958/1977), Williams and Chesterman (2002)

Pattern-building as memes: Chesterman (1997)

8 Working and understanding through social networks

In this chapter: Translation involves far more than finding target-language equivalents for source-language words and phrases; it also involves dealing with clients, agencies, employers; networking, research, use of technology; and generally an awareness of the roles translation plays in society and society plays in translation.

Intuitive leaps: the translator is in many ways a pretender: s/he pretends first of all, early in her or his career, to be a translator, and then, all through his or her career, to be the kind of source reader the source author was writing for and the kind of author that the target reader will trust, and to belong to the appropriate language-use communities.

Pattern-building: learning to be an effective and successful professional translator involves above all participating in the community of translators.

Rules and theories: there have been two separate "sociological turns" (or two surges in the same sociological turn) in translation studies, one in the mid-1980s in Germany (the *skopos* or action-oriented or functionalist school) and the turn to sociological theory (especially Bourdieu) and ethnographic research in the 2000s.

The translator as social being

It should go without saying: not only are translators social beings just by virtue of being human; their social existence is crucial to their professional lives. Without a social network they would never have learned even a single language, let alone two or three or more. Without a social network they would never have kept up with the changes in the languages they speak. Without a social network they would never get jobs, would find it difficult to research those jobs, would have no idea of what readers might be looking for in a translation, would have no place to send the finished translation, and could not get paid for it.

All this is so obvious as to seem to require no elaboration. Everyone knows that translators are social beings, and depend for their livelihood on their social connections with other human beings.

What is strange, however, is that the significance of this fact for the theory and practice of translation was recognized so very recently by translation scholars. Until

the late 1970s, with the rise of polysystems theory, the mid-1980s, with the rise of *skopos/Handlung* theory, the late 1980s and early 1990s, with the rise of postcolonial theory, and the late 1990s and early 2000s, with the so-called "sociological turn" in translation studies (especially ethnographic studies of interpreters in specific institutional contexts), virtually no one thought of translation as essentially a social activity.

Translation was a linguistic activity performed on texts. The significant factors controlling translation were abstract structures of equivalence, defined syntactically and semantically – not the social network of people, authors, translation commissioners, terminology experts, readers, and others on whose real or presumed input or influence the translator relied to get the job done. The only real issue was accuracy, and accuracy was defined both narrowly, in terms of linguistic equivalence, and universally, with no attention to the differing needs and demands and expectations of real people in real-world situations. If a client wanted a summary or an expansion, so that it was difficult to establish neat linguistic equivalence between a source text and a shorter or longer target text, that simply wasn't translation. Medieval or more recent translations that blurred the distinction between translation and commentary, so that target texts contained material not found in the source texts, were not translations. If it could not be discussed in the abstract structural terms of linguistic equivalence, it was not translation, and generally wasn't discussed at all. A translation either *was* accurate, in the sense of truly conveying the informational content (and, for some theorists, as much of the style and syntax as possible) of the source text – and accurate in the abstract, purely in terms of linguistic analysis, without any attention at all to who commissioned it and for what purpose, in what historical circumstances – or it was not a translation and thus of no interest to translators or translation scholars.

These attitudes have changed drastically since the late 1970s; this book is one reflection of those changes. However, old habits die hard. The intellectual tradition on which the abstract linguistic conception of translation was based is very old; it runs back to the beginnings of Western civilization in the origins of the medieval church and indeed of Greek rationalism (see Robinson 1991, 1996, 2001). The inclination to ignore the social construction, maintenance, and distribution of knowledge is an ancient Western tradition, and its legacy is still very much a part of our thought today, despite massive philosophical assaults on it all through the twentieth century. As a result, it still seems "intuitively right" today, despite a growing awareness of the impact society has on translation, to judge the success of a translation in terms of pure linguistic equivalence. We know better; but at some deep level of our intellectual being, we can't help ourselves.

As a result of these inner conflicts, you may find much of the material in this book simultaneously (1) perfectly obvious, so obvious as not to need saying at all, and (2) irrelevant to the study of translation, so irrelevant as to seem almost absurd. It does "go without saying" that translators are social beings, that social networks control

or channel or influence the activity of translation in significant ways, that there are many more factors determining the "success" or "goodness" of a translation than pure linguistic equivalence – but at the same time those factors seem somehow secondary, peripheral, less important than the bare fact of whether the translator conveyed the whole meaning of the source text.

Pretending (intuitive leaps)

Pretending to be a translator

What is a translator? Who is a translator? Many of us who have been calling ourselves translators for years originally had no plans to enter that particular profession, and may even have done numerous translations for pay before beginning to describe ourselves as translators. Is there a significant difference between "translating" and "being a translator"? How does one *become* a translator?

This is a question often asked in online translator discussion groups such as Lantra-L: how do I become a translator? Usually the asker possesses significant foreign-language skills, has lived (or is living) abroad, and has heard that translating might be a potential job opportunity. Sometimes the asker has even done a translation or two, enjoyed the work, and is now thinking that s/he might like to make a living doing it. But it is amply clear both to the asker and to the other mail-list subscribers that this person is *not* yet a translator. What is the difference?

The easiest answer is: experience. A translator has professional experience; a novice doesn't. As a result, a translator talks like a translator; a novice doesn't. A translator has certain professional assumptions about how the work is done that infuse everything s/he says; because a novice doesn't yet have those assumptions, s/he often says things that sound silly to translators, like "I can't afford to buy my own computer, but I have a friend who'll let me work on hers any time I want." (In the middle of the night? When she's throwing a party? Does she have a high-speed wireless modem and a scanner?)

Translators do sound like translators because they have experience in the job. The problem with that answer, however, is that it doesn't allow for the novice-to-translator transition: to get translation experience, you have to sound credible enough (professional enough) on the phone for an agency or client to entrust a job to you. How do you do that without translation experience?

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Hi there!!
  My name is Volker, I am 30 years old, German, living in the
Netherlands and a starting free-lance translator. As I have
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never worked as free-lance-translator before, I have some questions about this way of working. Do you know any organization in the Netherlands or in Germany, which I could turn to?
  Amongst other questions, I have no idea, how a freelance-translator calculates the tariffs/fees/payments.
  Are there any rules or standards?
  Can you help me?
  Thanks anyway for your time!!

Volker

One solution: enter a translator training program. One of the greatest offerings that such programs provide students is a sense of what it means to be a professional. Unfortunately, this is not always taught in class, and has to be picked up by osmosis – by paying attention to how the teachers talk about the profession, how they present themselves as professionals. Some programs offer internships that smooth the transition into the profession.

Even then, however, the individual translator-novice has to make the transition in his or her own head, own speech, own life. Even with guidance from teachers and/or working professionals in the field, at some point the student/intern must begin to present himself or herself as a professional – and that *always* involves a certain amount of pretense:

> "Can you email it to us in .pdf by Friday?"
> "Yes, sure, no problem. Maybe even by Thursday."

You've never created a .pdf before, have no idea how one goes about doing that, but you've got until Friday to find out. Today, Tuesday, you don't say "Do I need special software to create a .pdf?" You promise to email it to them in .pdf, and immediately rush out to find someone to teach you how to do it.

> "What's your rate?"
> "It depends on the difficulty of the text. Could you email it to me first, so I can look it over? I'll call you right back."

It's your first real job and you suddenly realize you have no idea how much people charge for this work. You've got a half hour or so before the agency or client begins growing impatient, waiting for your phone call; you wait for the email to arrive and then get on the phone and call a translator you know to ask about rates. When you call back, you sound professional.

Of course, this scenario requires that you know that it is standard practice to email source texts to translators, and for translators to have a chance to look them over before agreeing to do the job. If you don't know that, you have no way of stalling for time, and have to say, "Uh, well, I don't know. What do you usually pay?" This isn't necessarily a disastrous thing to say; agencies depend on freelancers for their livelihood, and part of that job involves helping new translators get started. Especially if you can translate in a relatively exotic language combination in which it is difficult to find top-notch professionals, the agency may be quite patient with your inexperience. And most agencies – even direct clients – are ethical enough not to quote you some absurdly low rate and thus take advantage of your ignorance. But if your language combination is one of the most common, and they've only called you because their six regular freelancers in that combination are all busy, this is your chance to break in; and sounding like a rank beginner is not an effective way to do that.

So you pretend to be an experienced translator. To put it somewhat simplistically, you become a translator by pretending to be one already. As we saw Paul Kussmaul (1995: 33) noting in Chapter 6, "Expert behaviour is acquired role playing." It should be obvious that the more knowledge you have about how the profession works, the easier it will be to pretend successfully; hence the importance of studying the profession, researching it, whether in classrooms or by reading books and articles or by asking working professionals what they do. And every time you pretend successfully, that very success will give you increased knowledge that will make the "pretense" or intuitive leap easier the next time.

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Hallo, all Lantrans!
  I have just got my first contract as a freelance translator,
and I would like to hear from more experienced people: how do
you go about taxes when you work for a client in a country
different from your own? Do you pay taxes in the other
country, in yours, or in both? Is it any different when you
are working full-time with a normal contract and do the trans-
lation work at evenings?
  Thank you in advance for your help.

Ana Cuesta
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Note, however, that the need to "pretend" to be a translator in some sense never really goes away. Even the most experienced translators frequently have to make snap decisions based on inadequate knowledge; no one *ever* knows enough to act with full professional competence in every situation. The main difference between

an experienced translator and a novice may ultimately be, in fact, that the experienced translator has a better sense of when it is all right to admit ignorance – when saying "I don't know, let me check into that," or even "I don't know, what do you think?", is not only acceptable without loss of face, but a sign of professionalism.

Pretending to be a source reader and target author

Another important aspect of "pretense" as an intuitive leap in the translator's work is the process of pretending to be first a source reader, understanding the source text as a reader for whom it was intended, and then a target author, addressing a target readership in some effective way that accords with the expectations of the translation commissioner.

How do you know what the source text means, or how it is supposed to work? You rely on your skill in the language; you check dictionaries and other reference books; you ask experts; you contact the agency and/or client; if the author is available, you ask her or him what s/he meant by this or that word or phrase. But the results of this research are often inconclusive or unsatisfactory; and at some point you have to decide to proceed as if you already had all the information you need to do a professional job. In other words, you pretend to be a competent source reader. It is only a partial pretense; it is not exactly an "imposture." You are in fact a pretty good source reader. But you know that there are problems with your understanding of this particular text; you know that you don't know quite enough; so you do your best, making educated guesses (intuitive leaps) regarding words or phrases that no one has been able to help you with, and present your translation as a finished, competent, successful translation.

How do you know who your target readers will be, what they expect, or how to satisfy their expectations? In some (relatively rare) cases, translators do know exactly who their target readers will be; more common, but still by no means the rule, are situations in which translators are told to translate for a certain class or group or type of readers, such as "EU officials," or "the German end-user," or "an international conference for immunologists." Conference, court, community, medical, and other interpreters typically see their audience and may even interact with them, so that the recipients' assumptions and expectations become increasingly clear throughout the course of an interpretation. But no writer ever has fully adequate information about his or her readers, no speaker about his or her listeners; this is as true of translators and interpreters as it is of people who write and speak without a "source text" in another language. At some point translators or interpreters too will have to make certain assumptions about the people they are addressing – certain intuitive leaps regarding the most appropriate style or register to use, whether in any given case to use this or that word or phrase. Once again, translators or interpreters will be forced to pretend to know more than they could ever humanly know – simply in order to go on, to proceed, to do their job as professionally as possible.

Pretending to belong to a language-use community

Anthony Pym (1992a: 121–5) makes a persuasive argument against the widespread assumption that "specialist" texts are typically more difficult than "general" texts, and that students in translation programs should therefore first be given "general" texts to practice on, in order to work up the more difficult "specialist" texts later in their training. As Pym sets up his argument, it revolves around what he calls the sociocultural "embeddedness" or "belonging" of a text, meaning the social networks in which its various words, phrases, styles, registers, and so on are typically used.

He shows that the more "embedded" a text is in broad social networks of the source culture, the harder it will be to translate, because (1) it will be harder for the translator to have or gain reliable information about how the various people in those networks understand the words or phrases or styles (etc.), (2) the chances are greater that no similar social networks exist in the target culture, and (3) it will be harder for the translator to judge how target readers will respond to whatever equivalent s/he invents. He writes:

> Jean Delisle, for example, openly recommends the use of such ["general"] texts in the teaching of translators, since "initial training in the use of language is made unnecessarily complicated by specialised terminology" . . . This sounds quite reasonable. But in saying this, Delisle falsely assumes that "general texts" are automatically free of terminology problems, as if magazine articles, publicity material and public speeches were not the genres most susceptible to embeddedness, textually bringing together numerous socially continuous and overlapping contexts in their creation of complex belonging. A specialised text may well present terminological problems – the translator might have to use dictionaries or talk with specialists before confidently transcoding the English "tomography" as French "tomographie" or Spanish "tomografía" –, but this is surely far less difficult than going through the context analysis by which Delisle himself takes seven pages or so to explain why, in a newspaper report on breast removal, the expression "sense of loss" – superbly embedded in English – cannot be translated (for whom? why?) as "sentiment de perte" . . . No truly technical terms are as complex as this most vaguely "general" of examples! The extreme difficulty of such texts involves negotiation of the nuances collected from the numerous situations in which an expression like "sense of loss" can be used and which, for reasons which escape purely linguistic logic, have never assumed the same contiguity with respect to "sentiment de perte". (Pym 1992a: 123)

Pym argues that highly specialized technical texts are typically embedded in an international community of scientists, engineers, physicians, lawyers, and the like, who attend international conferences and read books in other languages and so have usually eliminated from their discourse the kind of contextual vagueness that is

hardest to translate. As Pym's "tomography" example shows, too, international precision tends to be maintained in specialist groups through the use of Greek, Latin, French, and English terms that change only slightly as they move from one phonetic system to another. "General" texts, on the other hand, are grounded in less closely regulated everyday usage, the way people talk in a wide variety of ordinary contexts, which requires far more *social* knowledge than specialized texts – far more knowledge of how people talk to each other in their different social groupings, at home, at work, at the store, etc. Even slang and jargon, Pym would say, are easier to translate than this "general" discourse – all you have to do to translate slang or jargon is find an expert in it and ask your questions. (What makes that type of translation difficult is that experts are sometimes hard to find.) With a "general" text, everybody's an expert – but all the experts disagree, because they've used the words or phrases in different situations, different contexts, and can never quite sort out in their own minds just what it means with this or that group.

But Pym's take on "specialized" texts, and specialist groups, is in some cases a bit simplistic. The key to successful "specialized" translation is not just knowing that "tomography" is *tomographie* in French and *tomografía* in Spanish – i.e., not just finding equivalents for the words – but first reading and then writing like a member of the social groups that write and talk that way. To understand a medical text in one language one must read like a doctor or a nurse or a hospital administrator (or whatever) in that language; to translate it effectively into another language one must *write* like a doctor (or whatever) in that other language. And however "international" these specialists typically are, they are also real people who interact with their peers in intensely local and socially embedded ways as well. The meanings of words and phrases may be more carefully defined in specialist discourse; but the specific way in which those words and phrases are strung together to make a specialized text will vary significantly with the group using them; and the effective professional translator will have to "pretend" to be a member of that group in order to render them plausibly into the target language.

Two examples. First, a few years ago I was asked to translate a list of eighty chemical terms from English into Finnish – no context, no sentences, just eighty words. All of them were Latinate, precisely the sort of term that Pym quite rightly says is quite easy to translate, since it usually requires little more than adjusting spellings to the other language's phonetic system: tomography, *tomographie*, *tomografía*. And it was, as Pym predicts, a very easy job; but because I was translating into Finnish, which is not my native language, I sent my translation to a friend in Finland who has a Ph.D. in chemistry. She made a few corrections and sent it back. Reading through her response, I noticed that she had introduced some inconsistencies into the translation of -ethylene. In some compounds, it was translated *-etyleeni*; in others, *-eteeni*.

Concerned about this, I called her and asked; she said that usage in that area is currently in transition in the Finnish chemist community, and the inconsistencies

reflect that transition. My guess is, in fact, that another member of that community might have construed the transition differently, and given me a slightly different version of the inconsistencies, using both *-etyleeni* and *-eteeni* but in different compounds. No matter how international the social network, usage will always be shaped by the local community.

And second: I was asked to translate some instructions for a pharmaceutical product from English into Finnish, and couldn't find or think of a Finnish translation for "flip-off seal," so I got online and asked three or four translators I know in Finland who do a lot of medical texts. They gave me three substantially different answers, all three duly checked with doctor friends. The most interesting variation was in the terms they offered for "seal": *suoja* "protection, cover," *hattu* "hat," and *sinetti* "seal." I would not have thought that *sinetti*, which does mean most kinds of seal (but not the animal), would have been used for a medicine vial's tamper protection; but a doctor friend assured my translator friend that it was. *Hattu* "hat" is clearly colloquial; Finns use the word in casual conversation to describe anything that vaguely resembles a hat when they don't know the correct term, or when the correct term would sound too technical. This is a good reminder that even specialists belong to more than one community; and even within the specialist community they often maintain two or more registers, one technical and "official," one or more slangy and informal. *Suoja* "protection, cover" is the most neutral of the three; it is in fact the one I ended up using, partly because my own (foreign) intuition was opposed to *sinetti* – but mainly because the *suoja* reply was the only one that came in before my deadline.

Lesson 1: the more social networks or communities or groups you're grounded in, and the more grounded in each you are, the better able you will be to "pretend" to be a reader-member of the source-text community and a writer-member of the target-text community.

Lesson 2: the less grounded you are in the communities themselves, the more important it is to be grounded in the translator community, or to have other friends who either know what you need to know or can connect you with people who do.

Even so, to "pretend" to be a doctor or an engineer when you have never been either you must be able to sort out conflicting "expert" advice and pick the rendition that seems to fit your context best – which in turn requires *some* grounding in the social networks where the terms are "natively" used.

Lesson 3: in the professional world of deadlines, the translator's goal can never be the perfect translation, or even the best possible translation; it can only be the best possible translation *at this point in time*. If a translator friend talks to a doctor friend and provides you with a plausible-sounding term or phrase before your deadline, you don't wait around hoping that a better alternative might arrive some time in the next few days. You deliver your translation on time and feel pleased that it's done. Of course, if another friend sends you an alternative after the deadline and you suddenly realize that *this* is the right way to say it and you and your other friend

were totally wrong before, you phone the agency or client and, if it is still possible, have them make the change.

Learning to be a translator (pattern-building)

In this light, learning to be a translator entails more than just learning lots of words and phrases in two or more languages and transfer patterns between them; more than just what hardware and software to own and what to charge. It entails also, and perhaps most importantly, grounding yourself in several key communities or social networks, in fact in as many as you can manage – and as thoroughly as you can manage in each.

Above all, perhaps, in the translator community. Translators know how languages and cultures interact. Translators know how the marketplace for intercultural communication works (hardware and software, rates, contracts, etc.). Translators will get you jobs: if they can't take a job and want to suggest someone else for an agency or client to call, and they know you from a conference or a local or regional translator organization, they'll dig out your card and suggest you; or if they've enjoyed your postings in an online discussion group, they'll give the agency or client your email address. Translators have to be grounded in many social networks, and will almost always know someone to call or text or email to get an answer to a difficult terminological problem – so that being grounded in the translator community gives you invaluable links to many other communities as well. Hence the importance of belonging to and getting involved in translator organizations, attending translator conferences, and subscribing to translator discussion groups on the Internet.

But you should also, of course, be grounded in as many other communities as you can: people who use specific specialized discourses and people who don't; specialists at work, at professional conferences, and at the bar; people who read and/or write for professional journals, or for "general" periodicals for news, science, and culture, and/or for various popular magazines and tabloids; people who tell stories, things they saw on or read in the news, things that happened to them or their friends, jokes they've heard recently, things they've made up. Translating is, in fact, very much akin to other forms of reading and writing, telling and listening; it is a form of communication, a channel for the circulation of ideas and opinions, information and influence. And translators have a great deal in common with people who use other channels for circulating those things both within and between cultures.

It is essential for translators to ground themselves in the communities that use these channels in at least two language communities, of course – this is the major difference between translators and most other communicators – but it helps translators to think *and* act globally to imagine their job as one of building communicative connections with dozens, perhaps hundreds, of different social networks all over the world. The professional translator should be like a neuron, with

dendrites reaching out to vast communicative networks, and always able to shunt information or requests (as well as various regulatory impulses – in neurological terms "inhibitory" or "excitatory" impulses – such as "here's what you ought to do" or "I think that would be unethical") to this or that network at will.

Eugene Nida (1985) has written an article entitled "Translating Means Translating Meaning." The implication is that the translator burrows into the source text in quest of meaning, extracts it, and renders it into the target language – the traditional view of the profession. A more interculturally and socially aware perspective on translation would paraphrase that to read: "Translating Means Channeling Meaning – and Influence, and Connectedness – Through Vast Global Communicative Networks." Or, more aphoristically:

> translation is transmission
> translators are links in the communicative chain
> translation is synaptic action in the global brain

Teaching and theorizing translation as a social activity (rules and theories)

In a later chapter of *Translation and Text Transfer* (1992a: 152–3), Anthony Pym comments on the historical invisibility of translators as monolingual rulers' servants – "controlled nobodies" – and raises the very political question of loyalty or fidelity, especially the knotty problem of *proving* one's loyalty to a ruler who cannot do what the translator does:

> It is not particularly scandalous that few translators have been kings, princes or priests. There is even a certain pride to be taken in the fact that political and moral authorities have had to trust the knowledge conveyed by their translating servants. But how might the prince know that a particular translator is worthy of trust? It would be foolish to suggest that all translators are equally competent, that their fidelity corresponds automatically to what they are paid, or that their loyalty is beyond doubt. Some kind of extra-textual support is ultimately necessary. Perhaps the prince's confidence is based on a diploma from a specialised translation institute, references from previous employers, comparisons with other translators, or even on what the individual translator is able to say about the practice of translating, since theorisation is itself a mode of professional self-defence.

This conception of translation theory as a necessary part of the translator's defensive armor against attacks from the uncomprehending is at once age-old – it was, after all, Jerome's fundamental motivation for theorizing translation in his letter to Pammachius in 395, and Martin Luther's likewise in his circular letter on

translation in 1530 – and also relatively new. The official and dominant reason for theorizing translation for over two thousand years, after all, has almost invariably been to control the translators' actions, not (as for Jerome, Luther, and Pym) to help them justify those actions after the fact: to make translators absolutely subject to the ruler's command (be faithful, not free!), not to give them defenses against the ruler's incomprehension.

This is once again the distinction between internal and external knowledge, raised in Chapter 1: from the "ruler's" or user's external point of view, the only possible reason for translation theory to exist is to develop and enforce normative standards for accurate and faithful translation – to make sure that translators are translating in conformity with collectively imposed standards and not, say, becoming the "traitors" they are always halfway suspected of becoming (*traduttore traditore*). From the translator's internal point of view, however, translation theory exists largely in order to help them to solve problems that arise and to defend their solutions when criticized, and thus to grow professionally in skills, knowledge, disposition, demeanor, and credibility.

Note, however, that both of these conceptions of the reasons for theorizing translation are explicitly social: they derive justifications for translation theory not from "pure knowledge" or "value-free science," but from the necessity of living and working in the social world, of getting along with other people (in this case the people who pay us to do the work). And while it is by no means new to theorize translation for these social reasons, it is only since the late 1970s – beginning with the functional/action-oriented/translation-oriented/*skopos*/*Handlung* school in Germany (Katharina Reiß, Hans J. Vermeer, Justa Holz-Mänttäri, Christiane Nord, others) and the polysystems/translation studies/manipulation school in the Benelux countries and Israel (Itamar Even-Zohar, Gideon Toury, André Lefevere, James S. Holmes, Theo Hermans, others) – that translation theorists have been explicitly theorizing the *theorizing* of translation in these social terms. Translation, all of these theorists have been insisting, is controlled by social networks, social interactions, people saying to one another "do this," "I'll give you X amount of money if you do this," "could you help me with this," etc. – and translation theory is an inescapable part of that. In fact, if theory isn't a part of such social interactions, these theorists believe, it is useless – a mere academic game, a way to get published, to build a reputation, to be promoted, and so forth.

Since what is variously known as the polysystems or "descriptive translation studies" (DTS) or "manipulation" school is typically more interested in large cultural systems than in local social networks, we will be returning to the work of that group of theorists in Chapter 9; here our concern will be with (a) the German school variously called functional translation theory, action/*Handlung*-oriented translation theory, translation-oriented text analysis, or *skopos* theory and (b) the sociological turn in recent translation studies.

Skopos *theory*

The *skopos* group has worked since the early 1980s, primarily in Germany, to stress the importance of the social functions and interactions of translation for primarily *realistic* purposes. It is more realistic, they believe, to study translation in terms of what really happens when people translate, what social forces really control translation, than in the traditional abstract universal terms of text-based equivalence (translate sense for sense, not word for word). Since their claim is that translation has always *been* social but is just now being *perceived* in terms of its true social nature, this approach is fundamentally corrective: it seeks to undermine traditional approaches that lay down general laws without regard for the vast situational variety that is translation practice.

In this sense the functional/action-oriented/*skopos* theorists develop their correctives to traditional text-oriented theories by exploring their own practical experiences of translating in the social/professional world; they observe what they and their colleagues actually do, what actually happens in and around the act of translating, and build new theories from those observations. This dedication to the "practical" experiences of real translators in real professional contexts has made this approach extremely attractive to many practitioners and students of translation. Like all theorists, functional translation theorists do simplify the social field of translation in order to theorize it; they move from the mind-numbing complexity of the real world to the relative stability of reductive idealizations and abstractions, of diagrams that pretend to be all-inclusive, and sometimes (very rarely) of nearly impenetrable jargon. But because they are themselves professional translators whose theories arise out of their own practical/inductive experiences, they also retain a loyalty to the complexity of practice, so that even while formulating grand schemas that will explain just how the social networks surrounding translators function, they keep reminding their readers that things are never quite this simple – that this or that theoretical component is sometimes different.

A good illustration of the theoretical method behind this approach might be gleaned from Christiane Nord's book *Text Analysis in Translation* (1991), her own English translation of her earlier German book *Textanalyse und Übersetzen* (1988). Nord usefully and accessibly summarizes the main points of the functional or action-oriented approach in her first chapter, in analyses and diagrams and examples as well as in pithy summary statements printed in a larger bold font and enclosed in boxes; let us use those statements to introduce a functional approach here:

> Being culture-bound linguistic signs, both the source text and the target text are determined by the communicative situation in which they serve to convey a message. (1991: 7)

Implication: all texts, not just translations, are determined by the communicative *situation*, not abstract universal rules governing writing or speaking. It is impossible, therefore, to say that text-based "equivalence" is or should be the defining criterion of a good translation, or that a single type of equivalence is the only acceptable one for all translation. These things are determined by and in the communicative situation – by people, acting and interacting in a social context.

> The initiator starts the process of intercultural communication because he wants a particular communicative instrument: the target text. (1991: 8)

This group of theorists was the first to begin speaking and writing of "initiators" or "commissioners" who need a target text and ask someone to create one. That such people exist, and that their impact on the process and nature of translation is enormous, should have been obvious. But no one paid it significant theoretical attention. The only significant "persons" in traditional theories were the source author, the translator, and the target reader; the source author and target reader were imagined to exert some sort of magical influence over the translator without the mediation of the actual real-world people who in fact channel that influence through phone calls, faxes, email messages, and payments.

> The function of the target text is not arrived at automatically from an analysis of the source text, but is pragmatically defined by the purpose of the intercultural communication. (1991: 9)

Implications: (1) that translations are intended to serve some social function or functions; (2) that these functions are not textual abstractions like "the rhetorical function" or "the informative function," but extratextual actions designed to shape how people behave in a social context; (3) that these functions cannot be determined in stable or permanent ways but must be renegotiated "pragmatically" in every new communicative context; and (4) that the guiding factor in these negotiations is the purpose (*skopos*) of the intercultural communication, what the various people hope to achieve in and through it.

> The translator's reception (i.e. the way he receives the text) is determined by the communicative needs of the initiator or the TT [target-text] recipient. (1991: 10)

Implication: the translator reads the text, the interpreter hears the text, neither in absolute submission to some transcendental "spirit" of the text nor in pure anarchistic idiosyncrasy, but as guided by the wishes of the people who need the translation and ask for it.

> The translator is not the sender of the ST [source-text] message but a text producer in the target culture who adopts somebody else's intention in order to produce a communicative instrument for the target culture, or a target-culture document of a source-culture communication. (1991: 11)

Implications: (1) that the translator is the instrument not of the original author, as is often assumed in older theories, but of the target culture; (2) that there are social forces – namely, people working together – in the target culture who organize that culture's communicative needs and present the translator with a specific task in the satisfaction of those needs; and thus (3) that the source-text message always comes to the translator mediated and shaped, to some extent "pre-interpreted," by complex target-cultural arrangements.

> A text is a communicative action which can be realized by a combination of verbal and non-verbal means. (1991: 15)

A text is not, that is, a static object that can be studied in "laboratory conditions" and described in reliable objective ways. It is a social action, and partakes of the situational variety of all such actions. It takes on its actional force not only through its words but through tone of voice (as spoken or read aloud), gestures and expressions, "illustrations, layout, a company logo, etc." (1991: 14). By the same token, a source text found by the translator in a book or a dentist's office will be significantly different from one emailed to the translator by a client or agency – even if the words are identical. The nonverbal action of sending a text to be translated by electronic means actually changes the communicative action.

> The reception of a text depends on the individual expectations of the recipient, which are determined by the situation in which he receives the text as well as by his social background, his world knowledge, and/or his communicative needs. (1991: 16)

Or as Nord (1991: 16) glosses this, "The sender's intention and the recipient's expectation may be identical, but they need not necessarily coincide nor even be compatible." More: not all translation users (initiators, commissioners, recipients) even *expect* them to coincide or be compatible. Some do; but this is far from the absolute ideal requirement for all translation that more traditional theories have made it out to be.

> By means of a comprehensive model of text analysis which takes into account intratextual as well as extratextual factors the translator can establish the "function-in-culture" of a source text. He then compares this with the (prospective) function-in-culture of the target text required by the initiator, identifying and isolating those ST elements which have to be preserved or adapted in translation. (1991: 21)

The translator mediates, in other words, between two textual actions, the source text as an action functioning in the source culture and the (desired) target text which the initiator wants to function in a certain way in the target culture. In the end, the initiator's requirements will determine the nature of the target text, but those requirements must be filtered through what the translator has determined as the "function-in-culture" of the source text. Ethical considerations come into play when the translator (or some other person) feels that there is too great a discrepancy between the two textual actions.

> Functional equivalence between source and target text is not the "normal" skopos [purpose] of a translation, but an exceptional case in which the factor "change of functions" is assigned zero. (1991: 23)

Since the target text will serve different cultural and social functions in the target culture from those served by the source text in the source culture, it is exceedingly rare for a translation to be "functionally equivalent" to its original. Functional *change* is the normal *skopos*; the usual question is "How will the *skopos* or purpose of this textual action change in the target culture?" Hence Nord's functional definition of translation:

> Translation is the production of a functional target text maintaining a relationship with a given source text that is specified according to the intended or demanded function of the target text (translation skopos). Translation allows a communicative act to take place which because of existing linguistic and cultural barriers would not have been possible without it. (1991: 28)

A relationship: not a single stable relationship, to be determined in advance for all times and all places; just a relationship, which will vary with the social interactions that determine it.

This conception of translation as governed by social function in real social interactions has obvious implications for the theorizing and teaching of translation as well.

First, it is clear that translation theorists and teachers, far from standing above or beyond or outside these social networks, are very much caught up in them as well. Theorists attempt to make sense of the social networks controlling translation not for "pure science" reasons but to teach others (especially translators) to understand the social processes better, so as to play a responsible and ethical role in them. Being "responsible" means responding, making active and informed and ethical decisions about how to react to the pressures placed on one to act in a certain way in a certain situation; the function of translation theory and translation instruction must be to enhance translators' ability to make such decisions.

And second, just as translators generate theory in their attempts to understand their work better – for example, to respond more complexly to criticism, to distinguish true problem areas from areas where the critic is simply misinformed, to improve the former and defend the latter, and to renegotiate borderline cases – so too must translation theorists and teachers build their theoretical and pedagogical models at the cusp where deductive principles begin to arise out of inductive experience, and always remember the practical complexity out of which those principles arose. That complexity is not only an explosively fertile source of new ideas, new insights, new understanding; it is the only place in which theories, rules, and precepts can be grasped and applied in action. Students learning, teachers teaching, and theorists theorizing, like translators translating, are social animals engaged in a highly social activity controlled by the interactive communicative needs of real people in real social contexts.

The sociological turn in twenty-first-century translation studies

Following the "cultural turn" of the 1980s and 1990s (Lefevere and Bassnett 1990: 1), translation studies has begun taking what is being called a "sociological turn" (Merkle 2008: 175) or, as Wolf (2006: 9) calls it, a "social turn." This new work begins to emerge out of the descriptive translation studies (DTS) developed out of James S. Holmes (1972/2000, 1975) by Gideon Toury (1980, 1995) through the critique launched of Toury by the French sociologist of translation Daniel Simeoni (1998). We will be looking at DTS in Chapter 9; but let us look quickly at how the sociological turn emerges out of Toury's work on norms.

Toury pioneered the study of translation norms, professional constraints on translation practice that are formulated by the "marketplace" (the community of professional translators) and internalized by novice translators as guides to

professionalism. The problem Simeoni (1998) identifies in Toury's understanding of norms is that Toury seems to have very little sense of *how* novice translators internalize them. Simeoni calls Toury's conception of that internalization process "behaviorist," noting that Toury's sociological theory rests on the work of the behaviorist sociologist Jay Jackson (see also Simeoni 2008: 334); this would imply that for Toury translators are more or less mechanically "conditioned" to accept the guidance of translation norms, like Pavlov's dogs being conditioned to salivate at the ringing of a bell. But who rings the bell to make translators internalize marketplace norms? How does it work, exactly? Is it really as mechanical as the behaviorist model would suggest?

Simeoni (1998: 13–14) begins to crank the wheel of the sociological turn, then, by focusing theoretical attention on just how translators internalize and apply norms:

> Could the elusive faculty of translating today primarily be one of *adjusting* to different types of norms, making the most of them under widely varying circumstances (the image of Dryden serving different masters, and advising translators to steer a middle course, would then be truly emblematic)? . . . In a different order of concerns, could the increasing variety of tasks they are being asked to perform (different clients and contracts, integrating diverse computer skills, working increasingly in their second or even third languages, sometimes stretching their expertise to the fuzzier domain of "information and consulting services") have alerted translators to the relativity of the demands placed on them, thereby causing some degree of cognitive dissonance in their historically imposed submissiveness, making them perhaps also more receptive to Translation Studies? Could it be, circumstances permitting, that the mythical belief in pure, untainted service will eventually prove more and more difficult to sustain?

Sent a translation job by a client or an agency, the translator has to *decide* what kind of text it is, what it will most likely be used for, and thus what norms will most likely govern the client's sense of how successful it is. Does it require localization – adjusting measurements from English to metric, date formats from month-date to date-month, and so on? Is it a back-translation, where the translator should stick as closely as possible to the original syntax to show the client whether the original translation was properly done? Is it aimed at the general public, possibly for purposes of persuasion, so that a general expressive equivalence is more important than getting every item in the source text into the target text? Could more than one norm apply? If so, do those norms conflict in ways that might make successful completion of the translation task difficult?

This sort of focus on "the human agent, the translator, as a member of a sociocultural community called upon to interact with and within the community's structuring and structural dimensions, or Bourdieusian habitus, and as an agent of

(inter-)cultural negotiation" (Merkle 2008: 175), obviously shares some basic assumptions with the *skopos* or action-oriented approach to translation. Above all, both approaches are primarily interested in *what translators do professionally*. The sociological turn, so called, differs from the *skopos* approach largely in its heavy grounding in the sociological theory of Pierre Bourdieu (1986, 1991), grounded as it is in the "triangle" formed by *field*, *capital*, and *habitus*:

- *Field*: a structured system of social positions (occupied by individuals and institutions) and the forces linking them
- *Capital*: can include *economic* capital (money), *cultural* capital (education or professional status), *human* capital (knowledge or useful personality traits), *social* capital (connections), *physical* capital (tools and workspaces), *symbolic* capital (prestige, honor), etc.; used by the individuals and institutions that occupy the various social positions to maintain and enhance their power, status, and self-image
- *Habitus*: the "dispositions" or habitualized inclinations that structure the behavior and preferences of the individuals and institutions that occupy social positions; collectively shaped, but shaped in ways that allow for constant change and some degree of creativity and freedom of choice

Simeoni (1998) and other early proponents of the sociological turn in translation studies, such as Jean-Marc Gouanvic (1999) and Theo Hermans (1999), were all heavily influenced by Bourdieu; Simeoni (2008: 335) suggests that Toury began to be influenced by Bourdieu as well, in the early 1990s, while writing *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995). (See also Wolf 2006, Wolf and Fukari 2007, and especially Wolf 2011: 6–10 for a new look at Holz-Mänttäri's [1984] action-oriented model in light of Bourdieu.)

One of the most exciting applications of the sociological turn in the first decade of the twenty-first century has been adopted in interpreting studies. Strongly anticipated by work in the 1990s like Wadensjö (1992, 1995, 1998) and Roy (1993, 2000), new ethnographic research into *what interpreters do professionally* has brought the sociological turn out of the study and the library and into the hospitals and the courtrooms and the communities. One of the most productive researchers in this area has been the Argentinian scholar Claudia V. Angelelli, who is professor of Spanish at San Diego State University (and also influenced by the thinking of Pierre Bourdieu; see e.g. Angelelli 2004a: 26–8; 2004b: 36–41). Her book *Medical Interpreting and Cross-cultural Communication* (Angelelli 2004a) was the first ethnographic study of the professional work of medical interpreters in hospitals; her *Re-visiting the Role of the Interpreter: A Study of Conference, Court, and Medical Interpreters in Canada, Mexico, and the United States* (Angelelli 2004b) studies interpreters' situated perceptions of their work quantitatively. The book she coedited with Holly E. Jacobson, *Testing and Assessment in Translation and Interpreting Studies:*

A Call for Dialogue Between Research and Practice (Angelelli and Jacobson 2009), applies the sociological turn to a field that until very recently was dominated by a linguistic paradigm based on stable objective standards of equivalence, namely Translation Quality Assessment. Rather than invoking such a stable paradigm, the scholars whose work is collected in the book study the attempts made by a variety of institutions to impose rigorous assessment procedures on the translators and interpreters working for them.

In a sense, too, the Australian translation scholar Anthony Pym, chair of sociolinguistics at the Universitat Rovira i Virgili in Tarragona, Spain, has always been engaged in the sociological turn in translation studies. With a Sorbonne Ph.D. in sociology followed by a Harvard postdoc in economic theory, Pym made the "turn" to translation studies in the late 1980s, with studies of "Paraphrase and Distance in Translation" (Pym 1987), "An Economic Model of Translational Equivalence" (Pym 1990), and "Translational Ethics and the Recognition of Stateless Nations" (Pym 1991). His socioeconomic orientation to translation studies, evident in those titles, seemed odd in those days, and in some sense continued to do so throughout the 1990s; now increasingly they are mainstream.

Especially fruitful in that early work was Pym's notion that translators don't just *mediate* between cultures but actually belong to "intercultures" – his coinage, which has become an important organizing concept for the field. His sociological study of the way texts (and translators) move geographically in Pym (1992a) resurfaces in *The Moving Text: Localization, Translation, and Distribution* (Pym 2004), and figures strongly in his histories (especially Pym 2000) and metahistories (Pym 1998) of translation as well. His two more recent coedited volumes, *Sociocultural Aspects of Translating and Interpreting*, coedited with Miriam Shlesinger and Zuzana Jettmarová (2006), and *Beyond Descriptive Translation Studies: Investigations in Homage to Gideon Toury*, coedited with Miriam Shlesinger and Daniel Simeoni (2008), are also excellent collections of papers on the sociological turn in translation studies, including Merkle (2008), cited above.

Pym's (2008) own paper from that latter collection, in fact, offers an excellent illustration of how he works. There he addresses the apparent overlap between Toury's (1995) two "laws" of translation and Baker's (1996) four "universals" of translation: all four of Baker's universals (explicitation, simplification, normalization, leveling), he suggests, fall into the realm of Toury's first law, the "law of growing standardization," the tendency to assimilate source-text differences to the norms and standards and repertoires of the target language. Because Baker presumably wrote her article before Toury's book was published, she does not mention his laws, and is unable to recognize, as Pym does twelve years later, that none of her four universals allows for Toury's second law, the "law of interference," the tendency for "phenomena pertaining to the make-up of the source text to be transferred to the target text" (Toury 1995: 275). What is significant about Pym's approach to this issue is that he begins with the apparent contradiction between Toury's two laws –

one assimilates translational effects to the target language, the other to the source language – as well as the manifest tensions and conflicts among Baker's universals, and, asking how "laws" and "universals" could allow for such variation, comes up with a sociological answer based on how human translators respond, complexly, interactively, to whatever they perceive their situation to be:

> If there are large-scale explanatory laws or universals, we should not expect to find them on the language level alone (e.g. translations tend to have more or less X than non-translations). Nor are we wholly content with a simple correlation between linguistic variables and sociocultural variables like "prestige" or "position" (e.g. translations tend to have more X in the presence of social condition Y). We see the analysis of risk dynamics and of risk-management as a crucial link, leading to the formulation of relations that have a stronger human causation (e.g. translators will tend to take risk X in the presence of reward structure Y). (Pym 2008: 326)

Pym thus distances himself from both Baker's tendency as a linguist to identify decontextualized "universals" and Toury's tendency as a translation scholar interested in large-scale systems to identify systemic "laws," based on a correlation between linguistic features and certain specific social conditions, like the relative prestige accorded translations in the target culture. Instead, Pym begins with the (psychosocial) observation that human beings seek to minimize risk and maximize rewards, and suggests that the tendencies that Baker calls universals and Toury calls laws are actually produced by *translators* (human agents) responding to a very specific institutional "reward structure": the sociological tendency to give greater rewards to translators who make a text easier to understand (yielding Toury's law of growing standardization and Baker's four universals), and to dole out smaller penalties to translators who produce a text that is difficult to understand if it is clear that the translator is simply giving the reader what is *there* in the source text (yielding Toury's law of interference).

Conclusion

The various sociological turns in translation studies over the past few decades have begun to suggest to us that "translation as a profession" and "translation as the creation of target-language equivalents for source texts" are not radically different operations, as we once thought. It is no longer fruitful to think of translation as *basically* the creation of an equivalent target text (and therefore a matter for linguists and literary critics to study academically) and only *peripherally* the business of earning a living in the professional marketplace (and therefore a matter for business people to write practical guides for). Not only are translators language professionals whose work is situated in a business context; they are also social beings beyond the business

context, and their social affiliations and loyalties in their non-working lives have a significant impact on how they work, what they work on, how they structure their professional lives, and indeed how they use and understand language.

It is, in other words, increasingly pressing that we learn to *integrate* these two sides of the translator's work, the linguistic and the social, the textual and the professional.

But the integration does not stop there. In Chapter 9 we will be concerned with the impact of culture on the translator as a social animal who mediates between and among languages.

Discussion

1. What certainties, stabilities, sureties are lost in a shift from text-based theories of translation to social action-based theories? How important are those certainties? Can we afford to do without them?
2. The idea of pretending to be a professional translator causes some students anxiety; in others it generates a pleasant sense of anticipation. How do you feel about it? And how can talking about how you feel about it help you do it?
3. In what ways are you currently grounded in a translator community? What kinds of professional help do you get from other members of that community? What aspects of your groundedness in that community remain undeveloped? How could you develop those aspects in professionally useful ways?
4. Try to list all the social communities to which you belong. Discuss how you can tell where one community ends and another one begins. Explore some ways in which your personality, behavior, speech patterns, and so on change when you move from one community to another (students, language professionals, family, neighbors, the garage where your car is fixed, etc.). What communities are a peripheral part of your life? Why?
5. In what ways do the translation theories you know serve the translator? How effective are those forms of "service"? How could translation theory be made to serve translators better?

Exercises

1. Read this passage from Katharina Reiß and Hans J. Vermeer, *Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie* ("Foundations for a General Theory of Translation," 1984: 98–9), in the German original and/or English translation (by DR) (with permission):

Normen schreiben vor, daß und wie gehandelt wird. Sie lassen aber einen gewissen Spielraum für die Art der Handlung zu. Die Hauptsache ist, daß auf eine Situation so reagiert wird, daß die Reaktion als sinnvoll erklärt werden kann. (Wir lassen noch offen, daß die Erklärung vom Handelnden und vom Interaktionspartner je getrennt gefordert wird . . .) Es ist weniger wichtig, wie eine Norm erfüllt wird, als daß versucht wird, sie zu erfüllen. Relevant ist die Funktion der Handlung.

Eykman . . . zeigt auf, daß Bilder durch andere Bilder, Formulierungen durch andere Formulierungen ersetzt warden können, ohne daß sich die Textfunktion ändert. Eykman spricht von "Abwandlung" (gegenüber Variation). – Für Translation heißt das:

(1) Abwandlung ist unter gegebenen Bedingungen legitim. (2) Die Bedingungen liegen im Kulturspezifischen, z. B. im gleichen Grad des Üblichen als Adäquatheitsbedingung.

Was man tut, ist sekundär im Hinblick auf den Zweck des Tuns und seine Erreichung.

Eine Handlung ist dann "geglückt", wenn sie als situationsadäquat (sinnvoll) erklärt werden kann. Die Erklärung wird, wie angedeutet, zunächst vom Handelnden (Produzenten) selbst verlangt: Er muß angeben, welches seine "Intention" war. Wie wurde bereits darauf hingewiesen, daß eine Handlung nicht unbedingt einer Intention (optimal) entspricht. (Man schlägt sich auf den Finger, ehe man den Nagel dann doch trifft.) – Andererseits versucht auch der Interaktionspartner des Handelnden (der Rezipient) eine Erklärung ("Interpretation") für das Verhalten des Produzenten. Die "Erklärung" des Rezipienten kann von der des Produzenten abweichen.

Beide versuchen, die gegenseitigen Erklärungen vorwegnehmend einzuschätzen und in ihrem Handeln zu berücksichtigen ("reflexive Ko-Orientierung"). (Zur Überindividualität von Interpretationen vgl. Schnelle . . .) – "Glücken" ist also eine Feststellung, die von Produzent und Rezipient getrennt getroffen wird und für beide (und evtl. dritte) getrennt gilt.

Norms determine that and how someone acts. They do however leave a certain room for play in the *type* of action undertaken. The main thing is that one respond situationally in such a way that one's response can be construed as meaningful. (Let us leave it open for now whether such construals can ever be demanded separately of both participants in an

interaction, the "producer" and the "recipient" . . .) It is less important *how* a norm is satisfied than that an attempt is made to satisfy it. What is relevant is the action's function.

As Eykman . . . has shown, images can be replaced with other images, formulations with other formulations, without altering the function of a text. Eykman speaks not of "variation" but of "adaptation" (*Abwandlung*). For translation this means (1) that adaptation under specific conditions is legitimate, and (2) that these conditions are culture-specific; for example, a condition of adequacy may require that the same degree of "usualness" or ordinariness be maintained.

What one does is secondary to the purpose of that doing and its attainment.

An action "succeeds," then, when it can be construed as situationally adequate (meaningful). As has been suggested, a construal of this adequacy is first demanded of the actant (producer) himself: he must tell us what he intended. We just saw how an action does not always correspond optimally to its intention. (You hammer your finger before connecting with the nail.) On the other hand, the actant's interaction partner (the recipient) also seeks to construe ("interpret") the producer's behavior, and the recipient's construal may well diverge from that of the producer. Both attempt to anticipate these mutual construals and take them into consideration in their actions ("reflexive coorientation"). (For the supraindividuality of interpretations, cf. Schnelle . . .) The "success" of an action is thus an assessment made separately by its producer and recipient, and it retains a separate validity for each – eventually also for a third.

(a) Take a common metaphorical phrase in English or some other source language and come up with a series of possible translations for it, including literal renditions, paraphrases, etc. For example, "It ain't over till the fat lady sings" might be translated into Spanish as *No se acaba hasta que cante la gorda* ("It isn't over till the fat lady sings"), *No se acaba hasta que se acaba* ("It isn't over till it's over"), *Siempre hay esperanza* ("There's always hope"), etc. Collect as many substantially different translations as you can – at least three or four. (Another Spanish–English example: the title of Laura Esquivel's novel, *Como agua para chocolate*, translated into English as *Like Water for Chocolate*. But these examples are easy to multiply: once in a blue moon, have egg all over your face, at sixes and sevens, shape up or ship out, read

someone the riot act, etc. The main thing is, once you have chosen a phrase, to come up with realistic scenarios in which the various possibilities might seriously be considered.)

Now pair off and create social interactions such as Reiß and Vermeer discuss, with one person as "producer" and the other person as "recipient," with the idea of discussing, defending and/or attacking, the "success" of a specific translation of the phrase in a specific context. Flesh out that context in detail first: an advertising agency coordinating a fourteen-country advertising campaign for mp3 discs, working with a freelancer; the acquisitions editor for a major trade press that is publishing the memoirs of an opera diva in translation, working with a translator who is also a professor of musicology; an in-house translator and her boss discussing how to translate this phrase used humorously in a technical document; a reader of the diva's memoirs writing a letter to the editor or op-ed piece protesting the translation of the title, in imaginary dialogue with the translator or a potential "third" person (such as the acquisitions editor or original author).

Argue over what would constitute a "successful" translation from your "character's" particular point of view. If you are able to reach an agreement, spend a few minutes afterwards exploring how comfortable or uncomfortable you are with that compromise.

(b) Now try to imagine a "general" framework for evaluating "successful" or "good" translations. Is it even possible? If so, do you have to compromise with the radical social relativism of Reiß and Vermeer's model? How? What is gained and/or lost by doing this? Try to diagram the framework, or to represent it in some other visual way.

2. Study the diagram of the *Basissituation für translatorisches Handeln* "basic situation for translatorial activity" (Figure 5) from Justa Holz-Mänttäri's book *Translatorisches Handeln*, along with its English translation and expanded commentary (by DR):

Bedarfsträger (**[target-text] "need-bearer"**: the person who needs a translation and so initates the process of obtaining one; also called the "translation initiator")

Besteller (**commissioner**: the person who asks a translator to produce a functionally appropriate target text for a specific use situation)

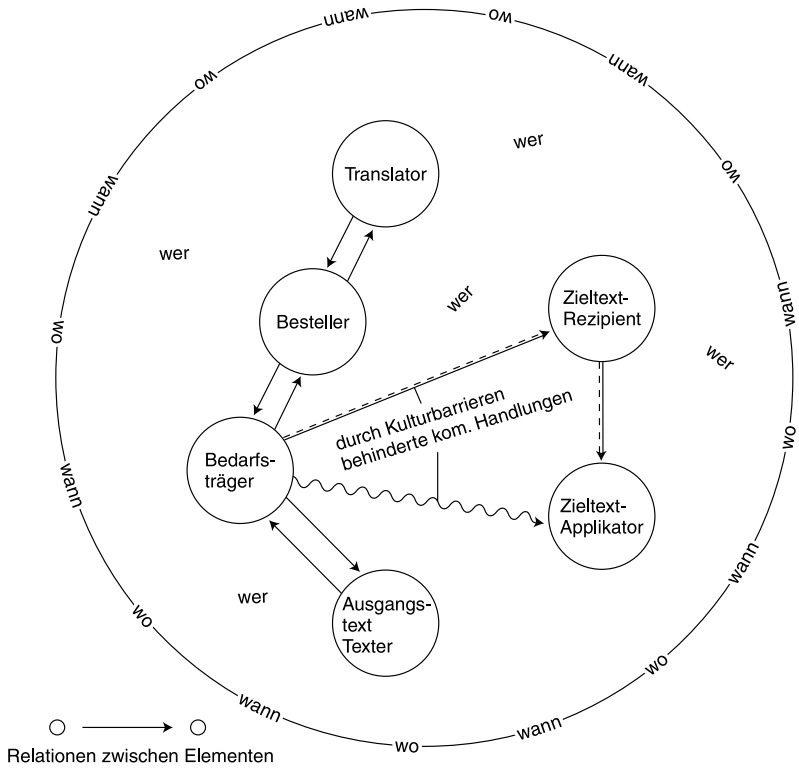

Figure 5 The "basic situation for translatorial activity"
Source: Holz-Mäntärri 1984: 106 (with permission)

Ausgangstext-Texter (**source-text texter**: original writer or speaker)

Translator (**translator/interpreter**: German scholars use the Latin word *translator* to mean the producer of either written or spoken texts, who are normally called *der Übersetzer* and *der Dolmetscher*, respectively)

Zieltext-Applikator (**target-text applier**: person who gives the target text its practical applications, works with it in the social world, for example publishes it, uses it as advertising copy, sends it as a business letter, assigns it to students, etc.)

Zieltext-Rezipient (**target-text recipient**: the person for whom a message is "texted" or produced in textual form)

durch Kulturbarrieren behinderte kom. Handlungen: **communicative activities hindered by cultural barriers**

wann: **when**

wo: **where**
wer: **who**
Relationen zwischen Elementen: **relations between elements**

(a) Work in groups to develop a plausible story for the diagram as Holz-Mänttäri presents it. Identify the "translation initiator" or "needbearer," the "commissioner," the "source-text texter," the translator/interpreter, the "target-text applier," and the "target-text recipient," by name and profession. Set the stage in terms of "who," "where," and "when." Start with the "need-bearer" or translation-initiator on the left side of the diagram and move either to the source-text texter or the commissioner next (or possibly both at once); then to the translator/interpreter; and finally to the target-text applier/recipient loop. What kind of translation "need" is this? Does the source text exist at the beginning of the process, or does the "need-bearer" go to the source-text texter to have one produced? Who is the commissioner and what part does s/he play in this process? How does the commissioner find the translator/interpreter? How is the target text to be "applied" in practice? Who is the intended recipient (or recipient-group), and how does the target-text applier get it to that recipient or recipient-group? Be as detailed as you can; tell the story like a newspaper article, or a short story, but with an omniscient third-person narrator who knows everything.

(b) Now redraw and rethink the diagram to fit the following scenarios:

- The translation-initiator is also the translator and the target recipient; she is reading a novel and finds a sentence in a foreign language that she can just barely make out, so she translates it for herself in order to follow the plot properly (is there a commissioner? a target-text applier?).
- Samuel Beckett writes *En attendant Godot* in French, then translates it himself into English as *Waiting for Godot* (why? for whom? is the translation commissioned? does Beckett's editor or agent or producer or director or some other person serve as target-text applier?).
- A German tourist is picking up a package at the post office in Salvador, Brazil, and is told by the postal clerk that he owes duties on it; he speaks no Portuguese, and the clerk speaks no

German; the next person in line offers to interpret between them, and the transaction is satisfactorily completed.

- The source-text texter is a Bulgarian physics professor who has been invited to speak at an international conference in English; she writes the paper in Bulgarian and gets a grant from her dean to pay a native English-speaker in Sofia (whom she finds by calling the English department of her university) to translate it into English; she sends it to the conference organizers, who send her some suggestions for changes before it is included in the published conference proceedings; she has her translator check the changes and sends it back; she also pays the translator to help her with some pronunciations so that the conference participants will understand her as she reads.

(c) Now rethink and redraw the diagram to account for a role not indicated on Holz-Mänttäri's original diagram: the research consultant.

- The translator asks the client for previous translations of similar texts to help with terminology; he calls the client and asks to talk with technical writers, engineers, technicians, marketing people, etc. (would these research consultants be counted as part of the commissioner? part of the source-text texter?).
- The translator sends out an email query over Lantra-L, asking for help with specific words or phrases; she texts or emails friends in the source-text and/or target-text culture who might be able to help; and has her husband, who is a native speaker of the target language, edit the target text for fluency.
- A community interpreter is interpreting a conversation between a poor Texan Chicana accused of child abuse and the Anglo social worker sent by the county to investigate the charges; she stops the conversation many times to ask one of the speakers for clarification on this or that vague word or phrase, so that both speakers serve at various times as source-text texter, target-text recipient, and research consultant.

(d) Finally, retell any one of the stories in (a)–(c) from a first-person point of view, adopting at least two different roles in succession. Rethink and redraw the diagram to accommodate this new point of view.

Suggestions for further reading

Skopos theory: Holz-Mänttäri (1984), Nord (1991), Reiß (1976), Reiß and Vermeer (1984), Vermeer (1989)

DTS: Even-Zohar (1981/1990), Hermans (1999), Holmes (1972/2000, 1975), Munday (2001), Schäffner (1999), Toury (1980, 1995)

The sociological turn: Bourdieu (1986, 1991), Gouanvic (1999), Merkle (2008), Pym (1987, 1990, 1991, 1992a, 1992b, 1993, 1998, 2000, 2004), Pym *et al*. (2003, 2006, 2008), Simeoni (1998), Wolf (2006, 2011), Wolf and Fukari (2007)

Ethnographic studies: Angelelli (2004a, 2004b), Angelelli and Jacobson (2009), Roy (1993, 2000), Wadensjö (1992, 1995, 1998)

9 The impact on translation of culture(s)

In this chapter: Cultures, and the intercultural competence and awareness that arise out of experience of cultures, are far more complex phenomena than it may seem to the translator who needs to know how to say "wrap-around text" in German, and the more aware the translator can become of these complexities, including power differentials between cultures and genders, the better a translator s/he will be.

Intuitive leaps: becoming aware of the blindness to cultural difference that is almost always built into "intuition" by our cultural habits.

Pattern-building: rather than simply throwing up our hands in frustration at the difficulty of unlearning our ethnocentric habits that feel so intuitively right, we keep learning about other cultures and how to communicate more equitably with them.

Rules and theories: the cultural turn, in two surges (descriptive translation studies in the late 1970s and 1980s, feminism and postcolonialism in the late 1980s and 1990s), possibly also a third surge (activist conceptions of the translator as "intervenient being" [Maier 2007] and narrativity in the late 1990s and 2000s).

Cultural knowledge

It is probably safe to say that there has never been a time when the community of translators was unaware of cultural differences and their significance for translation. Translation theorists have been cognizant of the problems attendant upon cultural knowledge and cultural difference at least since ancient Rome, and translators almost certainly knew all about those problems long before theorists articulated them.

Some Renaissance proponents of sense-for-sense translation were inclined to accuse medieval literal translators of being ignorant of cultural differences; but an impressive body of historical research on medieval translation (see Copeland 1991, Ellis 1989, 1991, 1996, Ellis and Evans 1994) is beginning to show conclusively that such was not the case. Medieval literalists were not ignorant of cultural or linguistic difference; due to the hermeneutical traditions in which they worked and the audiences for whom they translated, they were simply determined to bracket that difference, set it aside, and proceed as if it did not exist.

Unlike the social networks that we explored in Chapter 8, therefore, cultural knowledge and cultural difference have been a major focus of translator training and translation theory for as long as either has been in existence. The main concern has traditionally been with so-called *realia*, words and phrases that are so heavily and exclusively grounded in one culture that they are almost impossible to translate into the terms – verbal or otherwise – of another. Long debates have been held over when to paraphrase (Japanese *wabi* as "the flawed detail that creates an elegant whole"), when to use the nearest local equivalent (German *gemütlich* becomes "cozy, comfortable, homey," Italian *attaccabottoni* becomes "bore"), when to coin a new word by translating literally (German *Gedankenexperiment* becomes "thought experiment," *Weltanschauung* becomes "worldview," Russian *ostranenie* becomes "estrangement"), and when to transcribe (French *épater le bourgeois*, *savoir-faire*, German *Zeitgeist*, *Angst*, Sanskrit *maya*, *mantra*, Yiddish *schlemiel*, *tsuris*, Greek *kudos*, Russian *intelligentsia*, *samizdat*, Finnish *sauna*, Arabic *alcohol*, Chinese *dao*). And these "untranslatable" culture-bound words and phrases continue to fascinate translators and translation theorists (for a compendium of such words, see Rheingold 1988; for a history of early theoretical thought on the subject, see Rener 1989). What has changed in recent translation scholarship on culture is an increasing emphasis on the collective control or shaping of cultural knowledge: the role played by ideology, or what Antonio Gramsci (1971) called "hegemony," in constructing and maintaining cultural knowledge and policing transfers across cultural barriers.

Beginning in the mid-1970s, several groups of scholars in the Benelux countries and Israel began to explore the impact of cultural systems on translation – notably the impact of the target-culture system on what gets translated, and why, and how, and how the translation is used. And beginning in the late 1980s, other groups of scholars around the world began to explore the ongoing impact of colonization on translation – especially the surviving power differentials between "first-world" and "third-world" countries and how they control the economics and ideology and thus also the practice of translation. We will be looking at these theories below, under the heading "Intercultural awareness."

Clairol introduced the "Mist Stick," a curling iron, into Germany only to find out that the German word "mist" is slang for manure.

Electrolux tried to sell vacuum cleaners in the U.S. with the slogan "Nothing sucks like an Electrolux."

Colgate introduced a toothpaste in France called Cue, the name of a notorious porno magazine.

An American t-shirt maker in Miami printed up shirts for the Hispanic market

promoting the Pope's visit. The Spanish translator made a tiny little gender error with the definite article, so that, instead of "I saw the Pope" (el Papa), the shirts read "I saw the Potato" (la Papa).

Frank Perdue's chicken slogan, "it takes a strong man to make a tender chicken" was translated into Spanish as "it takes an aroused man to make a chicken affectionate."

When Parker Pen marketed a ball-point pen in Mexico, its ads were supposed to have read, "it won't leak in your pocket and embarrass you." Instead, the company thought that the word "embarazar" (to impregnate) meant to embarrass, so the ad read: "It won't leak in your pocket and make you pregnant."

3M introduced its scotch tape in Japan with the slogan "It sticks like crazy." The Japanese translator rendered the slogan as "it sticks foolishly."

Olympia office products attempted to sell its ROTO photocopiers in Chile, but did not realize until too late that in Spanish *roto* means "broken" and can designate the Chilean lower class.

Ford had a series of problems marketing its cars internationally. Its low-cost truck the Fiera meant "ugly old woman" in Spanish. Its Caliente in Mexico was found to be slang for "streetwalker."

Kellogg had to rename its Bran Buds cereal in Sweden when it discovered that the name roughly translated to "burned farmer."

Pet Milk had trouble promoting its products in French-speaking countries. Among the many meanings, pet can mean "to break wind."

Esso S.A.F. discovered that its name translates as "stalled car" in Japanese.

The soft drink Fresca was being promoted by a saleswoman in Mexico. She was surprised that her sales pitch was greeted with laughter, and later embarrassed when she learned that fresca is slang for "lesbian."

A new facial cream with the name "Joni" was proposed to be marketed in India. They changed the name since the word is Hindi for "female genitals."

When Kentucky Fried Chicken entered China, their slogan "finger-lickin good" was mistranslated as "eat your fingers off."

Nike made a television ad promoting its shoes, with people from different countries saying "Just do it" in their native language. Too late they found out that a

Samburu African tribesman was really saying, "I don't want these, give me big shoes."

A major soapmaker test-marketed a soap name in 50 countries, and what it found was enough to make them change the name. The proposed name meant "dainty" in most European languages, "song" in Gaelic, "aloof" in Flemish, "horse" in one African language, "dim-witted" in Persian, "crazy" in Korean, and was obscene in Slavic languages.

Another important question is, as Anthony Pym (1992a: 25) puts it, "what then is a culture?" Noting that "Those who travel on foot or have read the diachronic part of Saussure know that there are no natural frontiers between languages", he goes on:

> How might one define the points where one culture stops and another begins? The borders are no easier to draw than those between languages or communities. One could perhaps turn to a geometry of fuzzy sets or maybe even deny the possibility of real contact altogether, but neither mathematics nor ideological relativism are able to elucidate the specific importance of translation as an active relation between cultures.
>
> Although questions like the definition of a culture are commonly thought to be beyond the scope of translation theory, their solution could become one of translation studies' main contributions to the social sciences. Instead of looking for differentiated or distilled cultural essences, it could be fruitful to look at translations themselves in order to see what they have to say about cultural frontiers. It is enough to define the limits of a culture as *the points where transferred texts have had to be (intralingually or interlingually) translated*. That is, if a text can adequately be transferred [moved in space and/or time] without translation, there is cultural continuity. And if a text has been translated, it represents distance between at least two cultures. (Pym 1992a: 25–6)

Texts move in space (are carried, mailed, emailed, downloaded off the web) or in time (are physically preserved for later generations, who may use the language in which they were written in significantly different ways). Cultural difference is largely a function of the distance they move, the distance from the place or time in which they are written to the place or time in which they are read; and it can be marked by the act or fact of translation: native speakers of English today read Charles Dickens without substantial changes (though American readers may read "jail" for "gaol"), but they read William Shakespeare in "modernized English," Geoffrey Chaucer in "modern translation," and *Beowulf* in "translation." Watching *The Benny*

Hill Show on Finnish television in the late 1970s I often had no idea what was being said in rapid-fire culture-bound British English slang and had to read the Finnish subtitles to understand even the gist of a sketch. As we approach cultural boundaries, transferred texts become increasingly difficult to understand, until we give up and demand a translation – and it is at that point, Pym suggests, that we *know* we have moved from one culture to another.

Self-projection into the foreign (intuitive leaps)

One of the problems with this formulation, however, as postcolonial theorists of translation have shown, is that we often *think* we understand a text from a quite different culture, simply because it is written in a language we understand. Do modern English-speakers really share a culture with Shakespeare? Or do the various modernizations of his works conceal radical cultural differences, and so constitute translations? If a native speaker of American English is often puzzled by colloquial British English, how much more by Scottish English, Irish English, and then, another quantum leap, by Indian English, South African English? Do native speakers of British, American, Australian, and Indian English all share a culture? We might surmise that such was the design of the British colonizers: impose a common language on the colonies, and through language a common culture. But did it work? What cultural allusions, historical references, puns, inside jokes, and the like do we miss in thousands of texts that do not seem to require translation?

Do men and women of the "same" culture understand each other? Deborah Tannen (1990) says no, and has coined the term "genderlect" to describe the differences. Do adults and children of the "same" culture (even the same family) understand each other? Do members of different social classes, or majority and minority groups, understand each other? Yes and no. Sometimes we think we understand more than we actually do, because we gloss over the differences, the areas of significant misunderstanding; sometimes we think we understand less than we actually do, because ancient cultural hostilities and suspicions (between men and women, adults and children, upper and lower classes, straights and gays, majority and minority members, first-world and third-world speakers of the "same" language) make us exaggerate the differences between us.

One of the lessons feminist and postcolonial theorists of translation have taught us since the mid-1980s is that we should be very careful about trusting our intuitions about cultural knowledge and cultural difference. Cultural boundaries exist in the midst of what used to seem like unified and harmonious cultures. As silenced and peripheralized populations all over the world find a voice, and begin to tell their stories so that the hegemonic cultures that had silenced and peripheralized them can hear, it becomes increasingly clear that misunderstanding is far more common than many people in relatively privileged positions have wanted to believe. The happy universalism of liberal humanist thought, according to which people are basically

the same everywhere, everybody wants and knows basically the same things and uses language in roughly similar ways, so that anything that can be said in one language can be said in another, has come under heavy attack. That universalism is increasingly seen as an illusion – an "intuition" generated not by nature but by cultural habit – projected outward by hegemonic cultures (patriarchy, colonialism, capitalism) in an attempt to force subjected cultures to conform to centralized norms: be like us and you will be civilized, modern, cultured, rational, intelligent; be like us and you will be seen as "truly human," part of the great "brotherhood of man."

The effect of this consciousness-raising has been to build suspicion into our cultural habits (assumptions) and the intuitive leaps they encourage us to make about what this or that word or phrase or text means. "A first-world translator should *never* assume his or her intuitions are right about the meaning of a third-world text": a dictum for our times, overheard at a translators' conference. By the same token, a male translator should never assume his intuitions are right about the meaning of a text written by a woman; a white translator about a text written by a person of color, and so on.

Recent battles over "political correctness" on Lantra-L and other listservs make it clear that many translators, especially in Europe, are angered and baffled by this new suspicion of old assumptions and intuitions, and are inclined to associate it narrowly with North American academics, who are portrayed as trendy left-wingers on a rampage of righteousness. US and Canadian academic and professional translators, for their part, astonished at the gross insensitivity of many of their European colleagues, wonder whether it might not be just some New World fad after all – except for their strong sense that this new suspicion of first-world intuitions *came* from the third world, especially perhaps from India and Africa, in the form of a series of increasingly vocal and persuasive challenges to first-world control of "universal" or "human" linguistic intuitions.

The intensity with which this debate rages is a good indication of just how attached we all grow to our linguistic and cultural habits, and to the pathways down which those habits channel our intuitions and experiences. It is not only time-consuming labor to retrain our intuitions; it is emotionally unsettling, especially when the state to which we are called to retrain them is one of uncertainty and self-doubt. What language professional who relies on her intuitions to earn a living wants to retrain herself to think, systematically, "If you think you understand this, you're probably wrong"? No one.

And yet this state of uncertainty and self-doubt is really little different from the state in which professional translators entered the profession. In fact, it is little different from the state in which we encounter difficult texts every day. The text is problematic; the sense it seems at first glance to make can't possibly be right, but we can't think of any other sense it might make; we sit there staring at the problem passage, feeling frustrated, on edge, a little disgusted with the writer for making

our job so difficult, a little disgusted with ourselves for not knowing more, not being more creative, etc. This feeling is an all-too-common one for translators.

In this light, then, anger at "political correctness" may just be more of the same irritation: why do I have to make my job even harder than it already is?

There are at least two answers to this question. One is that, if the professional community expects you to make your job even harder than it already is, then to do your job well you had better go ahead and make it harder. The other is that, if you are sensitive to the feelings of other people and other groups, you will not deliberately use language that offends them, or blithely impose your assumptions of what they *must* mean on their words; again, therefore, to do your job well you will go ahead and make it harder.

The big "if" in this question, of course, is whether "the professional community" does in fact expect translators to be sensitive to issues of discriminatory usage, hate speech, and so on – or rather, *which* professional community expects that, or what part of the professional community expects it. Is it just North America? How much sensitivity is required? How much change? How much self-doubt and uncertainty?

There are no easy answers. In this matter as in so many others, professional translators must be willing to proceed without clear signposts, working as ethically and as responsibly as they know how but never quite knowing where the boundaries of ethical and responsible action lie.

Immersion in cultures (pattern-building)

The important thing to remember is, we do go on. Trained to become ever more suspicious of our "immediate" or "intuitive" understanding of a text to be translated, we doggedly go on believing in our ability eventually to work through to a correct interpretation. Thwarted over and over in our attempts to find a target-language equivalent for a culture-bound and therefore apparently untranslatable word or phrase, we keep sending mental probes out through our own and the Internet's neural pathways, hoping to turn a corner and stumble upon the perfect translation. It almost never happens. We almost always settle for far less than the best. But we go on questing. It is perhaps our least reasonable, but also most professional, feature.

And no matter what else we do, we continue to immerse ourselves in cultures. Local cultures, regional cultures, national cultures, international cultures. Foreign cultures. Border cultures. School cultures, work cultures, leisure cultures; family cultures, neighborhood cultures. We read voraciously. We learn new foreign languages and spend weeks, months, years in the countries where those languages are natively spoken. We nose out difference: wherever things are done a little differently, a word or phrase is pronounced differently or given a slightly unexpected twist, people walk differently, dress differently, gesture differently, we pay attention. Perhaps here is a cultural boundary that needs to be crossed. Why do we want to cross it? Because it's there. Because that is what we do, cross boundaries.

The first Greek translators of the Hebrew Bible (the Seventy or "Septuagint"), in 281 BCE Alexandria, translated the Hebrew *alma* "young woman" as *parthenos* "virgin." Thus, Isaiah 7:14 *hiney ha'alma hara veyoledet ben vekarat shemo imanu'el*, "behold the young woman is with child and about to bear a son, she shall call him Immanuel" (Harry Orlinsky's translation), came to say that a *virgin* is with child and about to bear a son. When the Evangelist Matthew (1:23) quoted this passage (loosely) from the Septuagint translation, he made Isaiah the Hebrew prophet of Jesus' virgin birth: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child and she shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel" (King James translation). Bible scholars argue over whether *alma* could *also* mean "virgin," and whether *parthenos* could also mean "young woman." There is also another word in Hebrew, *bet(h)ula*, meaning exclusively "virgin."

Considering how much in Christianity rides on this possible "mistranslation," it is not surprising that the translation debate rages hot and furious even today. Some American fundamentalists burned the Revised Standard Version of the Bible when it appeared in 1952, because in Isaiah it rendered *alma* as "young woman" rather than "virgin." The Catholic translators of the New American Bible (1970) favored "young woman" as well, until their hands were tied by a decision of the American bishops, who required them to translate it as "virgin." Back in 1553, the Spanish translator Abraham Usque brought out two editions of the Ferrara Bible, one aimed at Jewish readers and rendering *alma* "young woman," the other aimed at Christian readers and rendering it "virgin."

And maybe in some ultimate sense it's an illusion. Maybe cultural boundaries cannot be crossed. Maybe we are all locked into our groups, our enclaves, even our own skins. Maybe you have to be a man to understand men, and a woman to understand women; maybe you have to have light skin to understand people with light skin, and dark skin to understand people with dark skin. Maybe no one from the first world can ever understand someone from the third, and vice versa. Maybe all first-world "understanding" of the third world, male "understanding" of women, majority "understanding" of minorities is the mere projection of hegemonic power, a late form of colonialism. Maybe no one ever understands anyone else; maybe understanding is an illusion projected and policed by superior force.

Still, we go on trying to understand, to bridge the communicative gaps between individuals and groups. It's what we do.

And we do it specifically by immersing ourselves in cultural otherness, in the way other people talk and act. We do it in the belief that paying close attention to how people use language and move their bodies in space and time will yield us valuable knowledge about the "other side" – whoever and whatever lies beyond whatever cultural boundary we find or sense or imagine before us. Somehow beliefs, values,

ideas, images, experiences will travel across those boundaries from their heads and bodies into ours, through language, through expression and gesture, through the contagion of somatic response – a communication channel that is very far from universal, but perhaps less culture-bound than language. (A laughing person makes us happy, a crying person makes us sad; a yawning person makes us sleepy, and a frightened or anxious person awakens our fear and unease; see Robinson 1991: 5ff; 2008: 20–3; 2011: 170–3.)

The more of this cultural "data" we gather, the more we know about how cultures work; and what we mainly learn is how different they are, how difficult it is to cross over into another cultural realm and truly understand what is meant by a word or a raised eyebrow. The more "culturally literate" we become, the more *and* the less at-home we feel in foreign cultures. More, because we accept our difference, our alienness, our lack of belonging, and learn to live with it, even to cherish it, to love the extra freedom it gives us to break the rules and be a little more idiosyncratic than the natives. Less, because that freedom is alienation; that idiosyncrasy means not belonging.

> If it's hard to be a stranger, it is even more so to stop being one. "Exile is neither psychological nor ontological", wrote Maurice Blanchot: "The exile cannot accommodate himself to his condition, nor to renouncing it, nor to turning exile into a mode of residence. The immigrant is tempted to naturalize himself, through marriage for example, but he continues to be migrant." The one named "stranger" will never really fit in, so it is said, joyfully. To be named and classified is to gain better acceptance, even when it is a question of fitting in a no-fit-in category. The feeling of imprisonment denotes here a mere subjection to strangeness as confinement. But the Home, as it is repeatedly reminded, is not a jail. It is a place where one is compelled to find stability and happiness. One is made to understand that if one has been temporarily kept within specific boundaries, it is mainly for one's own good. Foreignness is acceptable once I no longer draw the line between myself and the others. First assimilate, then be different within permitted boundaries. "When you no longer feel like a stranger, then there will be no problem in becoming a stranger again." As you come to love your new home, it is thus implied, you will immediately be sent back to your old home (the authorized and pre-marked ethnic, gender or sexual identity) where you are bound to undergo again another form of estrangement. Or else, if such a statement is to be read in its enabling potential, then, unlearning strangeness as confinement becomes a way of assuming anew the predicament of deterritorialization: it is both I and It that travel; the home is here, there, wherever one is led to in one's movement. (Trinh 1994: 13)

Intercultural awareness (rules and theories)

There is a field of study within communication departments called intercultural communication (ICC). One might think that translation studies would be an integral part of that field, or that the two fields would be closely linked. Unfortunately, neither is the case. ICC scholars study the problems of communicating across cultural boundaries, both intra- and interlingually – but apparently translation is not seen as a problematic form of cross-cultural communication, perhaps because the professional translator already knows how to get along in foreign cultures. (For early exceptions to this rule, see Sechrest *et al*. 1972 and Brislin 1972.) ICC scholars are fond, for example, of tracing the steps by which a member of one culture adapts to, or becomes acculturated into, another:

> *denial* (isolation, separation) >
> *defense* (denigration, superiority, reversal) >
> *minimization* (physical universalism, transcendent universalism) >
> *acceptance* (respect for behavioral difference, respect for value difference) >
> *adaptation* (empathy, pluralism) >
> *integration* (contextual evaluation, constructive marginality)
>
> (Bennett 1993: 29)

The first three stages, denial, defense, and minimization, Bennett identifies as "ethnocentric"; the second three, acceptance, adaptation, and integration, as "ethnorelative." (See also Padilla 1980, Hoopes 1981, Gudykunst and Kim 1992: 214–15.)

These models might usefully be expanded to include translation and interpreting, which, though certainly a less traumatic and intimidating form of cross-cultural communication than, say, a monolingual's first trip abroad or an encounter with someone from a very different subculture, are no less problematic. For example:

1. *Ethnocentrism*: the refusal to communicate across cultural boundaries; rejection of the foreign or strange; universalization of one's own local habits and assumptions (the anti-ideal that ICC was developed to combat)
2. *Cross-cultural tolerance*: monolinguals communicating with foreigners who speak their language; members of different subcultures within a single national culture coming into contact and discovering and learning to appreciate and accept their differences; problems of foreign-language learning (unnoticed cultural differences, prosodic and paralinguistic features) and growing tolerance for cultural and linguistic relativism (the main area of ICC concern)
3. *Integration*: fluency in a foreign language and culture; the ability to adapt and acculturate and feel at home in a foreign culture, speaking its language(s) without strain, acting and feeling (more or less) like a native to that culture (the ICC ideal)

4. *Translation/interpreting*: the ability to mediate between cultures, to explain one to another; mixed loyalties; the pushes and pulls of the source and target cultures.

ICC aims to train monoculturals to get along better in intercultural situations; translation/interpretation studies begins where ICC leaves off, at fluent integration. The ultimate goal of ICC is the base line of translator/interpreter training.

	ICC competence NO	*ICC competence YES*
ICC mediation NO	ethnocentrism	integration
ICC mediation YES	tolerance	translation/interpretation

This does not mean, of course, that translators and interpreters are somehow "above" all the complex problems that plague ICC at lower levels of cross-cultural competence and mediation. In fact, the same problems carry over into the high levels at which translators and interpreters work. These problems are the focus of a good deal of recent research in translation.

Since the mid-1970s there have been several surges of what might be broadly termed "sociocultural" approaches to the study of translation. The two main waves are usually described as "the cultural turn" (1980s and 1990s) and "the sociological turn" (2000s); but, as we saw in Chapter 8, there have been two sociological surges in the field (*skopos* theory in the 1980s, the sociological turn in the 2000s), and as we'll see here, there have been (at least) two cultural surges as well, one in the late 1970s and 1980s, the second in the 1990s.

The first group of scholars to begin to move the cultural study of translation out of the realm of *realia* and into the realm of large-scale political and social systems have been variously identified as the polysystems, translation studies, descriptive translation studies, or manipulation school (see Gentzler 1993). This is the approach, or broad group of related approaches, that Lefevere and Bassnett (1990: 1) first termed "the cultural turn." Beginning in the late 1970s, they – people like James S. Holmes (1972/2000, 1975), Itamar Even-Zohar (1979, 1981/1990), Gideon Toury (1980, 1995), André Lefevere (1992), Susan Bassnett (1991), Mary Snell-Hornby (1995), Dirk Delabastita and Lieven d'Hulst (1993), Theo Hermans (1985) – explored the cultural systems that controlled translation and their impact on the norms and practices of actual translation work. One of their main assumptions was, and remains today, that translation is always controlled by the target culture; rather than arguing over the correct type of equivalence to strive for and how to achieve it, they insisted that the belief structures, value systems, literary and linguistic conventions, moral norms, and political expediencies of the target culture always shape translations in powerful ways, in the process shaping translators' notions of "equivalence" as well. (An example of this is given in exercise 1, below,

from André Lefevere's (1992) book *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*.) This "relativistic" view is typical of both sociocultural turns translation studies has taken over the past three decades: away from universal forms and norms to culturally contingent ones; away from prescriptions designed to control *all* translators, to descriptions of the ways in which target cultures control specific ones.

Since the late 1980s and 1990s several new trends in culturally oriented translation theory have expanded upon and to some extent displaced descriptive translation studies. In particular, feminist and postcolonial approaches to translation have had a major impact on the field. The innovations they have brought have been many, but methodologically their focal differences from descriptive translation studies are two:

1. Where the descriptivists were neutral, dispassionate, striving for scientific objectivity, the feminists and postcolonialists are politically committed to the overthrow of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism, and determined to play an activist role in that process. As a result, their writing styles are more "passionately engaged" (if seen from within) or "politically correct" (if seen from without). They are also even more tolerant of propagandistic and other highly contested forms of translation than the descriptivists. Their sympathies are always with oppressed minority cultures.
2. The feminists and postcolonialists have also leveled serious criticism at the descriptivist notion that the target culture always controls translation. Especially in a postcolonialist perspective, this idea seems bizarre: the history of colonialism is full of cases in which an imperial source culture like England or France or Spain initiated and controlled a process of translating the Bible and other source texts into the "primitive" "local" target languages of the colonies. This usually involved sending a missionary from the source culture into the target culture to learn the target language (which often meant reshaping it to fit source-linguistic norms – see Rafael 1988/1993, Cheyfitz 1991, Niranjana 1992), invent an orthography for it, and translate the Bible, catechism, and imperial laws into it. Rafael and others have also shown how the colonial target cultures resisted this control in complex ways; but primary control of the translation process was clearly in the hands of the source culture, not the target.

The most succinct and accessible introduction to postcolonial translation studies is offered by Richard Jacquemond (1992; see also Robinson 1997a). Jacquemond is specifically concerned with translation between France and Egypt, but is also interested generally in the power differentials between cultures, in particular between "hegemonic" or dominant or more powerful cultures (usually former colonizers) and "dominated" or less powerful cultures (usually former colonies). The translator from a hegemonic culture into a dominated one, he says, serves the hegemonic culture in its desire to integrate its cultural products into the dominated culture – this is the classic case where the source culture controls translation. Even

when the target culture desires, or seems to desire, the translation, that desire is manufactured and controlled by the source culture. Going the other way, the translator from a dominated culture into a hegemonic again serves the hegemonic culture, but this time not servilely, rather as the "authoritative mediator" (Jacquemond 1992: 156) who helps to convert the dominated culture into something easy for the hegemonic culture to recognize as "other" and inferior.

He covers four broad areas of comparison:

1. A dominated culture will invariably translate far more of a hegemonic culture than the latter will of the former. Only 1–2 percent of works translated into Western/Northern languages are from Eastern/Southern cultures; 98–99 percent of works translated into Eastern/Southern languages are from Western/Northern cultures. Even within the West/North – Europe and the United States in particular – there is a striking imbalance: less than one-twentieth of total book production in the UK and the US comprises translations; in continental Europe it ranges from one-third to one-half. Far more books are translated out of English into other languages – languages perceived as "less international," less well known, less economically viable – than out of those languages into English.
2. When a hegemonic culture does translate works produced by the dominated culture, those works will be perceived and presented as difficult, mysterious, inscrutable, esoteric, and in need of a small cadre of intellectuals to interpret them, while a dominated culture will translate a hegemonic culture's works accessibly for the masses. Asia, Africa, and South America translate a broad spectrum of European and North American works, and they achieve broad-based popularity; Europe and North America translate a tiny segment of Asian, African, and South American works, and they are published in minuscule quantities for a specialist audience by small presses and academic publishing houses.
3. A hegemonic culture will only translate those works by authors in a dominated culture that fit the former's preconceived notions of the latter. Japan, for example, in Western eyes is a place of mysticism, martial arts, and ruthless business dealings, and Japanese books selected for translation into Western languages will tend to confirm those stereotypes. Slangy urban youth novels like those written by Banana Yoshimoto will be perceived as "un-Japanese" and will be more difficult to publish in translation.
4. Authors in a dominated culture who dream of reaching a "large audience" will tend to write for translation into a hegemonic language, and this will require conforming to some extent to stereotypes.

Interestingly, while postcolonial approaches to translation have tended to analyze the power structures controlling translation and call for more resistance to those

structures, feminist approaches have been more oriented toward resistance than to analysis. One of the strongest formulations of a feminist approach to translation, Lori Chamberlain's (1988) article on the metaphorics of translation, does offer a powerful analysis of patriarchal ideology and the sway it has held over thinking about translation for centuries (see exercise 2, below); but by far the bulk of feminist work on translation has been written in a strong activist mode, embodying and modeling resistance to the patriarchy through translation. Three main strands of feminist translation theory can be traced:

1. Recovering the lost or neglected history of women as translators and translation theorists (Krontiris 1992, Robinson 1995, Simon 1995)
2. Articulating the patriarchal ideologies undergirding mainstream Western translation theory (Chamberlain 1988)
3. Formulating a coherent and effective feminist practice of translation: Should feminist translators translate male writers at all, and if so, how? Should male writers and nonfeminist female writers be translated propagandistically? If so, should the feminist translator attempt to highlight the writer's sexism or other traditional value system, or should she convert it to a more progressive view? When translating feminist writers who work to create a new feminist language out of bits and pieces of the source language, how and to what extent should the target language be reshaped as well? (Anderson 1995, Díaz-Diocaretz 1985, Godard 1989, Levine 1992/2009, Lotbinière-Harwood 1991, Maier 1980, 1984, 1989, Simon 1995, von Flotow 1997, 2011).

Because of their willingness to undertake and defend unashamedly propagandistic translation projects against the patriarchy, feminist translators and translation scholars have come under serious fire from conservatives who insist that there is *never* any real justification for distorting the meaning or import of the source text. It is, however, a critical part of the cultural turn of recent translation studies to question all such *nevers* – to explore the ways in which the various requirements and prohibitions placed on translators are not universals, to be obeyed in all circumstances, but culturally channeled lines of force, often intensely local in their impact.

The standard narrative says that the cultural turn became mainstream by the end of the 1990s, and so faded into the woodwork as its successor, the sociological turn, stepped out into the limelight. It might be argued, however, that the cultural turn had a new resurgence in the 2000s, in what might be called the "activist" movement within translation studies. In this approach, the fundamental reigning assumption is that it is impossible for human beings to be morally or ideologically neutral – "value-free" – and that translators therefore *always* intervene in the verbal and cultural actions to which they contribute.

Jeremy Munday's (2007) collection *Translation as Intervention*, for example, brings together a group of very diverse scholars – linguists and literary translators as well

as postcolonial scholars – who focus their attention on the tendentious changes translators inevitably introduce into the texts they translate. And the first decade of the twenty-first century saw a wealth of such work, including Nitsa Ben-Ari's (2000) article "Ideological Manipulation of Translated Text," Galina Bolden's (2000) article "Toward Understanding Practices of Medical Interpreting: Intepreters' Involvement in History Taking," Maria Tymoczko's (2000) "Translation and Political Engagement: Activism, Social Change, and the Role of Translation in Geopolitical Shifts" and (2003) "Ideology and the Position of the Translator: In What Sense is a Translator 'In Between'?", Moira Inghilleri's (2003) "Habitus, Field and Discourse: Interpreting as a Socially Situated Activity" and (2005) "Mediating Zones of Uncertainty: Interpreter Agency, the Interpreting Habitus and Political Asylum Adjudication," David Damrosch's (2005) "Death in Translation," and Jacobus A. Naudé's (2005) "Translation and Cultural Transformation: The Case of the Afrikaans Bible Translations."

By far the most influential statement in this new "activist" resurgence of the cultural turn, however, comes from Mona Baker, the Egyptian-born chair of translation studies and director of the Centre for Translation and International Studies at the University of Manchester, and founder and owner/editor of both St. Jerome Publishing and the journals *The Translator* and *Translation Studies Abstracts*, who achieved international notoriety by taking the activist step in 2002 of "unappointing" two Israeli translation scholars, Gideon Toury and Miriam Shlesinger, from the boards of her journals. Her 2006 book *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account* is a misnomer in some ways – it is primarily about narrative and conflict, and only occasionally takes examples from translation and interpreting – but it has had the salutary effect of drawing attention to the ways in which all communicative action, including translating and interpreting, participates ideologically in conflict, whether by resisting or by perpetuating various forms of violence.

Conclusion: The cultural and sociological turns, 1976 to present

The impact the two sociocultural turns have had on the field of translation studies since the mid-1970s might best be highlighted by imagining two scenarios:

In the first scenario, God created heaven and earth and everything on it, including translation. To everything He gave a stable form, appearance, and name. To the act of restating in a second language what someone has expressed in a first He gave the name translation; its appearance was to be lowly, humble, subservient; its form fidelity or equivalence, as exact a correspondence as possible between the meaning of the source and target texts. These properties He decreed for all times and all places. This and only this was translation. Anyone who deviated from the form and appearance of translation did not deserve the name of "translator," and the product of such deviation could certainly not be named a "translation."

In the second scenario, translation arose organically out of attempts to communicate with people who spoke another language; its origins lay in commerce and trade, politics and war. Translators and interpreters were trained and hired by people with money and power who wanted to make sure that their messages were conveyed faithfully to the other side of a negotiation, and that they understood exactly what the other side was saying to them. Eventually, when these people grew powerful enough to control huge geographical segments of the world (the Catholic Church, the West), these power affiliations were dressed up in the vestments of universality – whence the first scenario. But translation remained a contested ground, fought over by conflicting power interests: you bring your translator, I'll bring mine, and we'll see who imposes what interpretation on the events that transpire. Today as well, professional translators must in most cases conform to the expectations of the people who pay them to translate. If a client says edit, the translator edits; if the client says don't edit, the translator doesn't edit. If the client says do a literal translation, and then a literal back-translation to prove you've followed my orders, that is exactly what the translator does. Translators can refuse to do a job that they find morally repugnant, or professionally unethical, or practically impossible; they can also resist and attempt to reshape the orders they get from the people with the money. But the whats and the hows and the whys of translation are by and large controlled by publishers, clients, and agencies – *not* by universal norms.

This second scenario is obviously the one advanced by the cultural and sociological turns in translation studies. In both turns, it doesn't matter much how strongly one disapproves of this or that propagandistic move in translating or interpreting, how vociferously one protests or resists this or that partiality in the field: as Baker (2006: 128) writes, "We each make our own decisions on the ground and have to live with the consequences. The main thing to stress here is that neutrality is an illusion, and thus uncritical fidelity to the source text or utterance also has consequences that an informed translator or interpreter may not wish to be party to."

For the sociocultural proponents of the second scenario, there is no return to the first. The first scenario now seems redolent of a more innocent world, in which all the important scholars in the field agreed on the basic moral principles behind the "right" kind of translation for the simple reason that those who didn't agree were denied a voice in it. Most of those scholars were white Western males; most of them were linguists or literary scholars who placed their faith in "neutrality" and "uncritical fidelity to the source text or utterance." The idea that propagandistic translation might be worth studying, even, was shocking, practically unthinkable; the idea that all translation is unavoidably to some degree propagandistic, a vile slander. Now, after over three decades of the various sociocultural turns, translator bias and partiality, propaganda, and ideological sway of all sorts are understood to be endemic, part of the very fabric of our social existence as human beings (see Robinson 2011).

Surely, many readers will say, something valuable is lost in this. Translation is no longer handmaiden to genius, to the motions of the muse; it is a grubby, petty,

greedy mercantile operation, subject to the pushes and pulls of political bias and the whims of the marketplace. What a low, sordid affair, to translate in the interest of who's right and who's wrong! How crass! How far has translation fallen!

Perhaps. For the advocates of the cultural and sociological turns, however, it has been a fortunate fall. The "exalted" state of the translator in more traditional ideologies was not only extremely narrow and confining – indeed, in its exaltation of slavery and invisibility anything but exalted – it was also utterly unrealistic. It had nothing to do with the real world of translation. The picture painted of professional translation by the new scholars in the field may not be as glorious as the old humanistic myths; but it has the advantage of leaving the translator's feet more firmly on the ground.

Discussion

1. How attached are you to the notion that anything that can be thought can be said, and anything that can be said can be understood, and anything that can be thought and said in one culture or language can be said and understood in another? How important is it for you to believe this? Can you imagine being a translator without believing it? If so, how do you think translation is possible? If not, how does talk of radical cultural relativism make you feel?
2. "A first-world translator should *never* assume his or her intuitions are right about the meaning of a third-world text" – or a male translator about a text written by a woman, etc. What is your "take" on this statement? How far do you agree, how far do you disagree? How easy or hard is it *not* to assume your intuitions are right about a text? How much does it depend on the text?
3. Political correctness: serious social reform or liberal silliness?
4. Of the two scenarios in the Conclusion, which do you find more attractive? Why?

Exercises

1. Study the following passage from André Lefevere, *Translation, Rewriting, and the Manipulation of Literary Fame* (1992: 44–5):

   Since Aristophanic comedy is rather radical in attacking certain ideologies and defending others, most of the translators whose "Lysistratas" have been published over the past century and a half have felt the need to state their own ideology. Most of the translators whose work was published during the first half of that century and a half would agree with A. S. Way's statement: "the indecency of Attic comedy, which is all-pervading,

which crops up in every play, and in the most unexpected places, is a sad stumbling-block to the reader, and a grievous embarrassment to the translator" (xix). While most of these translators fervently disagreed with an ideology that condoned this indecency, few went as far as the first translator of Aristophanes during the past century and a half, C. A. Wheelwright, who stated in his introduction that "The *Lysistrata* bears so evil a character that we must make but fugitive mention of it, like persons passing over hot embers" (62). In his translation he simply omits the very crux of the play: the oath the women take at the formal start of their sex strike. Furthermore, he simply ends his translation at line 827 of the original, refusing to translate lines 828 to 1215, one quarter of the play, not because he had suddenly forgotten all his Greek, but because his ideology was incompatible with the one expressed in Greek by Aristophanes.

Most other translators have tried to make *Lysistrata* fit their ideology by using all kinds of manipulative techniques. All of their strategies have been adequately described by Jack Lindsay in the introduction to his translation. Their "effort," he points out, "is always to show that the parts considered offensive are not the actual expression of the poet, that they are dictated externally" (15). Thus J. P. Maine states in his 1909 introduction that "Athens was now under an oligarchy, and no references to politics was [sic] possible, so Aristophanes tries to make up indecency [sic]" (1: x–xi). In his introduction written in 1820 and reprinted in 1909, in the second volume edited by Maine, John Hookham Frere states that "Aristophanes, it must be recollected, was often under the necessity of addressing himself exclusively to the lower class" (2: xxvi). Both Maine and Hookham Frere blame patronage for Aristophanes' woes, but each blames a completely different type of patronage. Two years later Benjamin Bickley Rogers writes that "in truth this very coarseness, so repulsive to ourselves, so amusing to an Athenian audience, was introduced, it is impossible to doubt, for the express purpose of counterbalancing the extreme gravity and earnestness of the play" (x). In this case Aristophanes is portrayed not as the sovereign author, but as the conscientious craftsman who has no other choice than to bow to the demands of his craft, and nothing will prevent (some) readers from wanting to feel that Aristophanes the man would not have done what Aristophanes the craftsman had to do.

It was left to A. S. Way, twenty-three years later, to express the translator's dilemma in the most delicately wordy manner:

The *traduttore*, then, who would not willingly be a *traditore*, may not exscind or alter, but he may well so translate, where possible, that, while the (incorruptible) scholar has the stern satisfaction of finding that nothing has been shirked, the reader who does not know the Greek may pass unsuspectingly over not a few unsavoury spots – not that his utmost endeavours can make his author suitable for reading (aloud) in a ladies' school. (xx)

The translator is caught between his adherence to an ideology that is not that of Aristophanes, indeed views sexual matters in a quite different manner, and his status as a professional who most be able to convince other professionals that he is worthy of that title, while at the same time not producing a text that runs counter to his ideology.

(a) Discuss the ideology prevailing in your culture with regard to overt references to sexual acts in literature and especially on stage, and consider how that might affect Aristophanes translations into your target language.
(b) Go to the library and find as many Aristophanes translations into that target language as you can, and compare them both with each other and with your own assumptions about the ideology controlling them, as formulated in (a). How do the actual translations confirm or complicate your expectations?
(c) Do variations on the translations you found. Pick a scene describing overt sexuality and experiment with different versions: do one that uses the most vulgar terms you know; another that uses more clinical, scientific terms; a more euphemistic one; a moralizing one that shows open disapproval of the acts being described. As you do each variation, pay special attention to how you feel about each: where your own ideological resistances are, to vulgarity, to clinical distance, to euphemism, to moralism, or to several or all of them in different ways. Discuss these ideological resistances with others in the class; alone or in groups, write brief descriptions of them.
(d) Now study the Lefevere passage for the author's resistances to what he is describing. He is working hard to appear neutral and non-judgmental; does he succeed? Does he favor some of the translators (say, Jack Lindsay) over others? Does he disapprove of the radically altered translations of Aristophanes: Wheelwright "simply omits the very crux of the play," other translators have used "all kinds of manipulative techniques," etc.?

(e) Reread the last paragraph, about translators being caught between their own ideology and that of the author, while being judged by readers on how well they extricate themselves from that trap. Is that a fair assessment of the translator's dilemma? Does it seem to apply to your professional situation, or the situation into which you imagine yourself entering in a very short time? Is it true of all translated texts, or only some? If the latter, which texts? Are there ways out of or around the problem?

2. Study the following passage from Lori Chamberlain, "Gender and the Metaphorics of Translation" (1988: 455–6):

> The sexualization of translation appears perhaps most familiarly in the tag *les belles infidèles* – like women, the adage goes, translations should be either beautiful or faithful. The tag is made possible both by the rhyme in French and by the fact that the word *traduction* is a feminine one, thus making *les beaux infidèles* impossible. This tag owes its longevity – it was coined in the seventeenth century – to more than phonetic similarity: what gives it the appearance of truth is that it has captured a cultural complicity between the issues of fidelity in translation and in marriage. For *les belles infidèles*, fidelity is defined by an implicit contract between translation (as woman) and original (as husband, father, or author). However, the infamous "double standard" operates here as it might have in traditional marriages: the "unfaithful" wife/translation is publicly tried for crimes the husband/original is by law incapable of committing. This contract, in short, makes it impossible for the original to be guilty of infidelity. Such an attitude betrays real anxiety about the problem of paternity and translation; it mimics the patrilineal kinship system where paternity – not maternity – legitimizes an offspring.

Another way of expanding the famous Gilles Ménage adage about *les belles infidèles* is not that translations *should* be either beautiful or faithful but rather that the more beautiful they are, the less likely they are to be faithful, and the more faithful they are, the less likely they are to be beautiful.

(a) How true do *you* believe this is about women? Are beautiful women really more likely to cheat on their partners than less beautiful ones? Whether you say yes or no, does your experience bear your opinion out, or is it mainly something you agree with because people generally believe it? What other stereotypes do you (or your culture)

have about beautiful women? Are they respected, scorned, worshipped, loved, feared, hated? What other qualities in a woman will contribute to her being either faithful or unfaithful?

(b) Does the adage work the same way when applied to men? Are good-looking men more or less likely to be faithful to their partners than less good-looking men? Or do looks have nothing to do with it? What other stereotypes do you (or your culture) have about handsome men? Are they ambitious, narcissistic, superficial, controlling, passive, gay, successful, rich? What other qualities in a man will contribute to his being either faithful or unfaithful?

(c) Put yourself in the position of someone who is worried about his or her partner (husband or wife or lover) being unfaithful. How do you react? Are you jealous? What emotions fuel your jealousy? Are you possessive? Do you want to control the other person? Do you try to be open-minded and tolerant? How does that feel?

(d) Now shift all this to translation. Does it make sense to think of translation along similar lines? Which parts of the emotional reactions to (in)fidelity in relationships work when applied to translation, which don't? How do cultural stereotypes of women fit "fidelity" theories of translation? What happens if you think of a translation as a faithful or unfaithful man, or as a handsome or ugly man? What roles do emotions like jealousy and possessiveness or open-minded tolerance play in cultural thinking about translation?

(e) Chamberlain's reading of the gender metaphorics of translation is based on the notion that the translation theorist comparing a translation to a woman – beautiful and unfaithful or faithful and ugly – sides with the source author or "father/husband." This would be an "external" perspective on translation (see Chapter 1). How would an "internal" or translator-oriented perspective see these gender metaphorics? Does the translator have to identify with the translation? If so, does a female translator have to accept the negative image of women *and* translation implied by the adage? Does a male translator have to submerge his patriarchal desire to control in order to identify with a woman, become a woman, accept subordination and disapproval? Is the only alternative to this the scenario Chamberlain traces, in which the translator identifies with the father/husband/original and so becomes a prescriptive theorist? Are these gender metaphors purely harmful for translators, or is it possible to transform the gender politics in ways that create new possibilities for translators' practical work and professional self-image (open marriage? bisexuality?)?

Suggestions for further reading

Introductions to recent translation theories: Gentzler (1993), Munday (2001), Pym (2010), Robinson (1997b)

Realia: Leppihalme (1997), Rheingold (1988)

Intercultural communication: Bennett (1993), Bührig *et al*. (2009), Gudykunst and Kim (1992), Hoopes (1981), Padilla (1980)

DTS: Bassnett (1991), Even-Zohar (1979), Hermans (1985), Holmes (1972/2000, 1975), Lefevere (1992), Schäffner (1999), Snell-Hornby (1995), Snell-Hornby *et al.* (1997), Toury (1980, 1995)

Medieval: Copeland (1991), Ellis (1989, 1991, 1996), Ellis and Evans (1994)

Cultures: Calzada Perez (2002), Cronin (2000, 2003), Hardwick (2000), Pym (1992a), Schulte (2001)

Poststructuralist translation theory: Davis (2001)

Postcolonial studies: Bassnett and Trivedi (1999), Cheyfitz (1991), Jacquemond (1992), Niranjana (1992), O'Hagan and Ashworth (2002), Rafael (1988/1993), Robinson (1997a), Sakai and Solomon (2006), Stierstorfer and Gomille (2008), Trinh (1994), Tymoczko and Gentzler (2002), Venuti (1998)

Feminism: Anderson (1995), Chamberlain (1988), Díaz-Diocaretz (1985), Godard (1989), Krontiris (1992), Levine (1992/2009), Lotbinière-Harwood (1991), Maier (1980, 1984, 1989), Robinson (1995), Simon (1995), von Flotow (1997, 2011)

The activist surge: Baker (2006, 2009), Ben-Ari (2000), Boéri and Maier (2010), Bolden (2000), Damrosch (2005), Inghilleri (2003, 2005), Munday (2007), Naudé (2005), Tymoczko (2000, 2003)

10 When habit fails

In this chapter: Translators can never rely entirely on even the highly complex and well-informed habits they have built up over the years to take them through every job reliably; in fact, one of the "habits" that professional translators must develop is that of building into their "subliminal" functioning alarm bells that go off whenever a familiar or unfamiliar problem area arises, calling the translator out of the subliminal state that makes rapid translation possible, slowing the process down, and initiating a careful analysis of the problem(s).

Rules and theories: all through Chapters 4–9, the sequence has been intuitive leaps first, then pattern-building, and rules and theories last. When the alarm bells go off, the sequence is reversed: the first thing you check is the lexis (look up words in the dictionary) and the syntax (is the word order coherent?), or what you remember consciously of the norms governing this type of translation task, etc.

Pattern-building: if the rules don't come to you consciously, or the ones that do occur to you don't seem to fit this problem, you begin to review possible alternative solutions to it.

Intuitive leaps: ultimately, though, you have to choose, and choosing often means going with your intuition.

The importance of analysis

It probably goes without saying: the ability to analyze a source text linguistically, culturally, even philosophically or politically is of paramount importance to the translator.

In fact, of the many claims made in this book, the importance of analysis probably goes *most* without saying. Wherever translation is taught, the importance of analysis is taught:

- Never assume you understand the source text perfectly.

- Never assume your understanding of the source text is detailed enough to enable you to translate it adequately.
- Always analyze for text type, genre, register, rhetorical function, etc.
- Always analyze the source text's syntax and semantics, making sure you know in detail what it is saying, what it is not saying, and what it is implying.
- Always analyze the syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic relationship between the source language (especially as it appears in this particular source text) and the target language, so that you know what each language is capable and incapable of doing and saying, and can make all necessary adjustments.
- Always pay close attention to the translation commission (what you are asked to do, by whom, for whom, and why), and consider the special nature and needs of your target audience; if you aren't given enough information about that audience, ask; if the commissioner doesn't know, use your professional judgment to project an audience.

These analytical principles are taught because they do not come naturally. A novice translator attempting his or her first translation is not likely to realize all the pitfalls lurking in the task, and will make silly mistakes as a result. In translating from a language that we know well, it is natural to assume that we understand the text; that the words on the page are a fairly easy and unproblematic guide to what is being said and done in the text. It is also natural to assume that languages are structurally not all that different, so that roughly following the source-text word order in the target language will produce a reasonably good translation.

Natural as these assumptions are, they are wrong, and experienced translators learn to be wary of them – which inevitably means some form of analysis. Because this analytical wariness does not come naturally, it must be taught – by experience, or by a translation instructor.

The "accelerated" approach developed in this book also assumes that experienced professional translators will gradually move "beyond" analysis in much of their work, precisely by internalizing or sublimating it. It will seem to professional translators as if they rarely analyze a text or cultural assumptions, because they do it so unconsciously, and thus so rapidly. The analytical procedures taught in most translator training programs are not consciously used by professional translators in most of their work, because they have become second nature. And this is the desideratum of professional training: to help students first to learn the analytical procedures, then to sublimate them, make them so unconscious, so automatic, so fast, that translation at professional speeds becomes possible.

At the same time, however, the importance of *conscious* analysis must never be lost. Rapid subliminal analysis is both possible and desirable when (1) the source text and transfer context are unproblematic and (2) the translator possesses the necessary professional knowledge and skills. It is not possible when the source text and transfer context are problematic; and it is not desirable when the translator's

knowledge base and skills are inadequate to the task at hand. In these latter cases it is essential for the translator to shift into the conscious analytical mode taught in schools.

In the ideal model elaborated in Chapter 3, professional translation proceeds subliminally, at the unconscious level of habit (which comes to feel like instinct), as long as the problems faced are covered by the translators' range of internalized experience. As long as the problems that arise are ones they have faced before, or close enough in nature to ones they have faced before that analogical solutions are quick and easy to develop, the wheel of experience turns rapidly and unconsciously; translation is relatively fast and easy. When the problems are new, or strikingly difficult, alarm bells go off in the translators' heads, and they shift out of "autopilot" and into "manual," into full conscious analytical awareness. This will involve a search for a solution to the problem or problems by circling *consciously* back around the wheel of experience, running through rules and precepts and theories (deduction), mentally listing synonyms and parallel syntactic and pragmatic patterns (induction), and finally choosing the solution that "intuitively" or "instinctively" *feels* best (abduction).

This is, of course, an *ideal* model, which means that it doesn't always correspond to reality:

1. The less experience translators have, the more they will have to work in the conscious analytical mode – and the more slowly they will have to translate.
2. Even in the most experienced translators' heads the alarm bells don't always go off when they should, and they make careless mistakes (which they should ideally catch later, in the editing stage – but this doesn't always happen either).
3. Sometimes experienced translators slow the process down even without alarm bells, thinking consciously about the analytical contours of the source text and transfer context without an overt "problem" to be solved, because they're tired of translating rapidly, or because the source text is so wonderfully written that they want to savor it (especially but not exclusively with literary texts).

In scenarios (1) and (2) there, the translator's real-life "deviation" from the ideal model developed here is a deficiency to be remedied by more work, more practice, more experience; in (3), it is a personal preference that needs no remedy.

Ideal models are helpful tools in structuring our thinking about a process, and thus also in guiding the work we do in order to perform that process more effectively. But they are also simplifications of reality that should never become straitjackets.

The reticular activation system: alarm bells

Our nervous systems are constructed so that oft-repeated actions become "robotized." Compare how conscious you were of driving when you were first learning

with how conscious you are of it now – especially, say, how conscious you are of driving a route you know well, like your way to or from school or work. For that, our bodies no longer need our conscious "guidance" at all. No route-planning is required; our nervous system recognizes all the intersections where we always turn, keeps the car between the lane lines, maintains a safe distance from the car in front; all the complex analyses involved, what those brake lights and yellow flashing lights mean, how hard to push on the accelerator, when to push on the brake and clutch and how hard, when to upshift or downshift, are unconscious.

But let the highway department block off one lane of traffic for repairs, or send you on a detour down less familiar streets; let a child run out into the street from between parked cars, or an accident happen just ahead – *anything* unusual – and you instantly snap out of your reverie and become painfully alert, preternaturally aware of your surroundings, on edge, ready to sift and sort and analyze all incoming data so as to decide on the proper course of action.

This is a brain function called reticular activation. It is what is often called "alarm bells going off" – the sudden quantum leap in conscious awareness and noradrenaline levels whenever something changes drastically enough to make a rote or robotic, habitual or subliminal state potentially dangerous. The change in your experience can be outward, as when a child runs into the street in front of your car, or a family member screams in pain from the next room, or you find your pleasant nocturnal stroll interrupted by four young men with knives; or it can be inward, as when you suddenly realize that you have forgotten something (an appointment, your passport), or that you have unthinkingly done something stupid or dangerous or potentially embarrassing. When the change comes from the outside, there are usually physical outlets for the sudden burst of energy you get from noradrenaline (which works like an amphetamine) pumping through your body; when you suddenly realize that you have just done something utterly humiliating there may be no immediate action you can take, but your body responds the same way, producing enough noradrenaline to turn you into a world-class sprinter.

Our brains are built to regulate the degree to which we are active or passive, alert or sluggish, awake or asleep, etc. Brain scientists usually refer to the state of alert consciousness as "arousal," and it is controlled by a nerve bundle at the core of the brain stem (the oldest and most primitive part of our brains, which controls the fight-or-flight reflex), called the *reticular formation*. When the reticular formation is activated by axons bringing information of threat, concern, or anything else requiring alertness and activity, it arouses the cerebral cortex with noradrenaline, both directly and through the thalamus, the major way-station for information traveling to the "higher thought" or analytical centers of the cerebral cortex. The result is increased environmental vigilance (a monitoring of external stimuli) and a shift into highly conscious reflective and analytical processes.

The translator's reticular activation is generally not as spectacular, physiologically speaking, as some of the cases mentioned above. There is no sudden rush of fear,

shock, or embarrassment; the noradrenaline surge is small enough that it doesn't generate the frantic need for physical activity, or the feeling of being about to explode, of those more drastic examples. Still, many translators do react to reticular activation with increased physical activity: they stand up and pace about restlessly; they walk to their bookshelves, pull reference books off and flip through them, tapping their feet impatiently (a good argument against relying exclusively on online lexicographical aids: it's good to have an excuse to walk around the room!); they rock back violently in their chairs, drumming their fingers on the armrests and staring intently out the window as if expecting the solution to come flying in by that route. Many feel a good deal of frustration at their own inability to solve a problem, and will remain restless and unable to sink fully back into the rapid subliminal state until the problem is solved: it's the middle of the night and the client's tech writer isn't at work; the friends and family members who might have been able to help aren't home, or don't know; dictionaries and encyclopedias are no help ("Why didn't I go ahead and *pay* that ludicrous price for a bigger and newer and more specialized dictionary?!"); every minute that passes without a response from Lantra-L seems like an eternity.

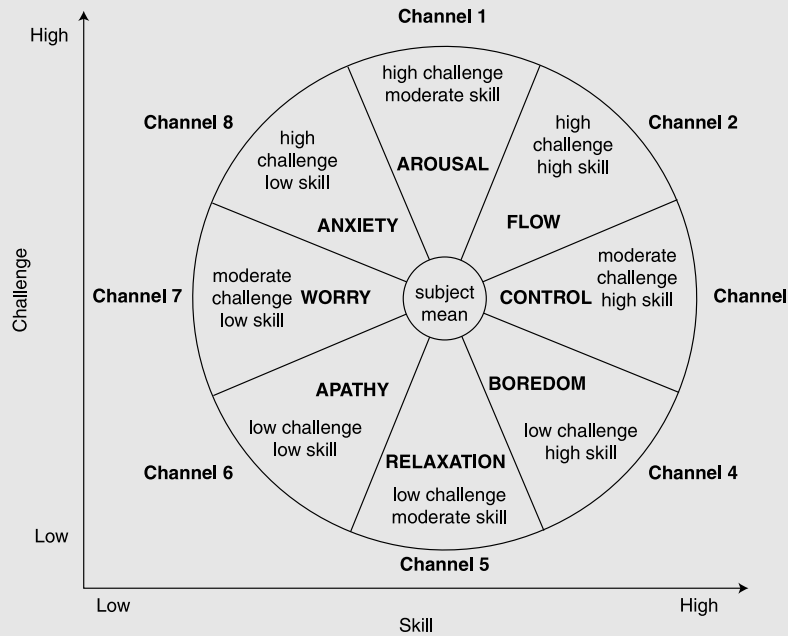

Figure 6 The systematic assessment of flow in daily experience
Source: Massimini and Carli 1995: 270 (with permission from Cambridge University Press)

In this diagram, channels 1 and 2 are the optimal states for translators and interpreters; channels 3–8, because they involve varying degrees of mismatch between challenge and skill, are less desirable (though quite common). Channels 3–5 are found in competent translators whose work isn't challenging or varied enough; channels 6–8 are found in translators of various competence levels in overly demanding working conditions (impossible deadlines, badly written source texts, angry and demanding initiators, inadequate support).

The channels might also be used to describe translator and interpreter training programs: the best programs will shuttle between 1 and 2; those that are too easy will bore students in channels 3–5, and those that fail to maintain the proper balance between challenge and student skills (fail, that is, to keep the former just slightly higher than the latter) will demoralize students in channels 6–8.

Channel 1, Arousal: full conscious analytical awareness, activated by the reticular formation. When the challenge posed by a translation task exceeds the translator's skills by a small but significant amount, when a problem cannot be solved in the flow state, s/he must move into full arousal or conscious awareness. The subject of this chapter.

Channel 2, Flow: the subliminal state in which translating is fastest, most reliable, and most enjoyable – so enjoyable that it can become addictive, like painting, novel-writing, or other forms of creative expression. The ideal state explored by most of this book.

Channel 3, Control: a state of calm competence that is mildly satisfying, but can become mechanical and repetitive if unenhanced by more challenging jobs. Common in corporate translators after a year or two in the same workplace. New variety and new challenges are needed for continued or increased job satisfaction.

Channel 4, Boredom: the state that develops in translators who rarely or never work anywhere close to their capacity levels.

Channel 5, Relaxation: a state of calm enjoyment at the ease of a translation job, especially as a break from overwhelmingly difficult or otherwise stressful jobs. The key to the pleasantness of this channel is its shortlivedness: too much "relaxation," insufficient challenges over a long period of time, generate boredom.

Channel 6, Apathy: a state of indifference that is rare in translators at any level – except, perhaps, in undermotivated beginning foreign-language students asked to translate from a textbook twenty sentences with a single grammatical structure that is easy even for them.

Channel 7, Worry: a state of concern that arises in inexperienced translators when faced with even mildly difficult problems that they feel they lack the necessary skills to solve.

Channel 8, Anxiety: a high-stress state that arises in any translator when the workload is too heavy, the texts are consistently far too difficult, deadlines are too short, and the emotional climate of the workplace (including the family situation at home) is insufficiently supportive.

When the solution finally comes, *if* it feels really right, the translator heaves a big sigh of relief and relaxes; soon s/he is translating away again, happily oblivious to the outside world. More often, some nagging doubt remains, and the translator works hard to put the problem on hold until a better answer can be sought, but keeps nervously returning to it as to a chipped tooth, prodding at it gently, hoping to find a remedy as if by accident.

Checking the rules (rules and theories)

Until fairly recently, virtually everything written for translators consisted of rules to be followed, either in specific textual circumstances or, more commonly, in a more general professional sense.

King Duarte of Portugal (1391–1438, reigned 1433–8) writes in *The Loyal Counselor* (1430s) that the translator must (1) understand the meaning of the original and render it in its entirety without change, (2) use the idiomatic vernacular of the target language, not borrowing from the source language, (3) use target-language words that are direct and appropriate, (4) avoid offensive words, and (5) conform to rules for all writing, such as clarity, accessibility, interest, and wholesomeness.

Etienne Dolet (1509–46) similarly writes in *The Best Way of Translating from One Language to Another* (1540) that the translator must (1) understand the original meaning, (2) command both the source and the target language perfectly, (3) avoid literal translations, (4) use idiomatic forms of the target language, and (5) produce the appropriate tone through a careful selection and arrangement of words.

Alexander Fraser Tytler, Lord Woodhouselee (1747–1813), writes in his *Essay on the Principles of Translation* (1791) that the translation should "give a complete transcript of the ideas of the original work," "be of the same character with that of the original," and "have all the ease of original composition."

For centuries, "translation theory" was explicitly normative: its primary aim was to tell translators how to translate. Other types of translation theory were written as well, of course – from the fourteenth through the sixteenth century in England,

for example, a focal topic for translation theory was *whether* (not how) the Bible should be translated into the vernacular – and even the most prescriptive writers on translation addressed other issues in passing. But at least since the Renaissance, and to some extent still today, the sole justification for translation theory has most typically been thought to be the formulation of rules for translators to follow.

As we saw Karl Weick suggesting in Chapter 3, there are certain problems with this overriding focus on the rule. The main one is that rules tend to oversimplify a field so as to bring some sort of reassuring order to it. Rules thus tend to help people who find themselves in precisely those "ordinary" or "typical" circumstances for which they were designed, but to be worse than useless for people whose circumstances force them outside the rules as narrowly defined.

The most common such situation in the field of translation is when the translator, who has been taught that the only correct way to translate is to render faithfully exactly what the source author wrote, neither adding nor subtracting or altering anything, finds a blatant error or confusion in the source text. Common sense suggests that the source author – and most likely the target reader as well – would prefer a corrected text to a blithely erroneous one; but the ancient "rule" says not to change anything. What is the translator to do?

It was not clear in the original what was meant. That is, I could have "translated" the French, but it alone didn't satisfy the logic of the situation. So I asked the author, and the "additional" English is what he gave me. I guess my point is, we sometimes have to go above and beyond the source text, when logic requires, and with the assistance of the necessary resources, to provide clear meaning in the target text.

Josh Wallace

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Couldn't agree with you more. There are indeed situations where the original does not suffice and the translator has to don his Editorial hat and contact the client. But it is editorial work, not translational. The translator is bound to the original, while the editor can, and does, change the text to suit the actual physical world. I've encountered several incidents where the original contradicted itself, or wasn't specific or clear enough. But as I've said, this is professional editing and not translation.

All the best,

Avi Bidani

Most professional translators today would favor a broader and more flexible version of that rule, going something like: "Alter nothing *except* if you find gross errors or confusions, and make changes then only after consulting with the agency or client or author." There are, however, translators today who balk at this sort of advice, and are quick to insist that, while it is true that translators must occasionally don the editor's hat and make changes in consultation with the client, this is emphatically *not* translation. Translation is transferring the meaning of a text *exactly* from language to language, without alteration; any changes are made by the translator in his or her capacity as editor, not translator.

Still, despite the many problems attendant upon normative translation theory, translation theory as rules for the translator, it should be clear that there are rules that all professional translators are expected to know and follow, and therefore that they need to be codified and made available to translators, in books or pamphlets or university courses. Some of these rules are textual and linguistic, but very far from all.

The translator's authorities

1 *Legislation governing translation*
Lawmakers' conception of how translators should translate; typically represents the practical and professional interests of end-users rather than translators; because it has the force of law, however, these become the practical and professional interests of translators as well.

2 *Ethical principles published by translator organizations/unions*
Other translators' conception of how translators should translate and otherwise comport themselves professionally; typically represents the profession's idealized self-image, the face a committee of highly respected translators in your country would like all of their colleagues to present to the outside world; may not cover all cases, or provide enough detail to help every translator navigate through every ethical dilemma.

3 *Theoretical statements of the general ethical/professional principles governing translation*
One or two translation scholars' conception of how translators should translate and otherwise comport themselves professionally; like (2), typically represents the profession's idealized self-image, but filtered now not through a committee of practicing translators but through a single scholar's (a) personal sense of the practical and theoretical field and (b) need to win promotion and tenure in his or her university department; may be more useful

for scholarly or pedagogical purposes than day-to-day professional decision-making.

4 *Theoretical studies, often corpus-based, of specific translation problems in specific language combinations, comparative grammars*
One or two translation scholars' conception of the linguistic similarities and differences and transfer patterns between two languages; may lean more toward the comparative-linguistic, systematic, and abstract, or more toward the translational, practical, and anecdotal, and at best will mix elements from both extremes; like (3), may be more useful for scholarly or pedagogical purposes than for practical decision-making in the working world, but at best will articulate a practicing professional translator's highly refined sense of the transfer dynamics between two languages.

5 *Single-language grammars*
One or two linguists' conception of the logical structure governing a given language; typically, given the rich illogicality of natural language, a reduction or simplification of language as it is actually used to tidy logical categories; best thought of not as the "true" structure of a language but rather as an idealization that, because it was written by an expert, a linguist, may carry considerable weight among clients and/or end-users.

6 *Dictionaries, glossaries, terminological databases*
A scholar's or committee's conception of the logical structure governing the semantic fields of the words that s/he or they consider the most important in the language or (in a bilingual dictionary or database) language pair; given the vast complexity of language, always a best guess based on limited knowledge and an interpretation based on limited experience and perspective; always by definition incomplete, almost always by necessity at least slightly out of date; with those provisos, undeniably valuable, a translator's best friend.

7 *Previous translations and other materials obtained from the client, agency, database, library*
Other translators' and tech writers' conception of the specialized discourse that the translator will be attempting to imitate; typically an extremely useful but potentially unreliable source of words and phrases; when obtained from the client, this material carries authoritative weight even when the translator feels that it is inaccurate or misleading (and even when the client wants the translator to reinvent the target-language terminology), as it reflects the target-language discourse that the client has been using.

8 *Expert advice and information from people who have worked in the field or have some other reliable knowledge about it*
A conception of the field formed, and shared with the translator, by people who use the relevant discourse every day in their jobs, as front-line practitioners or as translators; typically obtained by the translator by phone, text, or online inquiry, from a circle of experts that the translator knows personally or picks out of the telephone directory (need a legal term, call a lawyer or legal secretary), or that subscribe to the same online translator discussion group.

By the same token, I tend to leave "commune", "canton" and words like that in French. But somehow "département" rubs me up the wrong way. What do you think?

I usually translate "la Communauté Urbaine de Bordeaux" by "the Bordeaux Urban Community" (a local authority responsible for managing the city and suburbs). Do you agree with me there?

Alex Rychlewski

* * * * *

Département is the typically French administrative unit that has become known in the English-speaking world. You're more likely to lose readers by translating it. Of course its similarity to the English faux-ami "department" is a drawback: make sure English-language typesetters put in the accent-aigu and the extra e in the French word.

How about something on the lines of "the Greater Bordeaux Council"? Community sounds more like the people, not the government.

Tony Crawford

* * * * *

In Quebec, we say "Communauté urbaine de Montréal" and "Montreal Urban Community".

As for "département", I would say "department of Martinique", just as I would say "state of Hawaii" or "province of Ontario".

This is the usage found in the Geographical Names section of the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary. That dictionary defines "department" as "a major territorial administrative subdivision".

Furthermore, the words "commune" and "canton" are also English words. The first means the smallest administrative district in many European countries and the second means, according to the context, (1) a small territorial division of a country, (2) one of the states of the Swiss confederation or (3) a division of a French arrondissement. The last term is also an English word and means either an administrative district in some large French cities or the largest division of a French department.

None of these terms should be italicised or otherwise marked as foreign words in an English text, unless some special effect is being sought.

Regards,

K.-Benoit Evans

Should *faux amis* like *département*/department be used in translation just because in some areas (like Quebec) they have become standard? (Indeed, *are* they *faux* amis? Is their "friendship" or semantic kinship false?) Or should the nearest acceptable equivalent be used instead? It is a knotty problem, especially since different end-users in different times and places and circumstances will want or need or demand different solutions – and all rules in this area are attempts to codify those needs in general and universal ways, something that can never be done to everyone's satisfaction. Still, translators facing a word like *département* in French and recognizing how problematic it is (or could be) need to know what to do with it. Should they just do whatever they think best? In many cases, yes. But when? Should they call the client or agency and check? Clients and agencies will get very tired of translators who call every day with a dozen such queries; but clearly there are times when it is essential to call. What are those times? How do you know? Online translator discussion groups are an excellent source of help, but as we see from the above exchange over French administrative units, the sort of help they can mostly provide is a *range* of answers, the sorts of rules other professional translators have either set up for themselves or been taught or told in the past, with lots of room for disagreement. Still, for the translator wondering how to proceed, even that can be very useful indeed.

Most translators do not, perhaps, consult translation "rulebooks" very often. Indeed most do not possess such things – compilations of the laws governing

translation in their country, or publications of their translator organizations or unions detailing the ethical principles governing the profession, or theoretical books listing specific translation problems between two specific languages and how to handle them, like Vinay and Darbelnet (1977) or Newmark (1987). Most pick up a rather general sense of the laws and ethical principles and preferred methods of translation from other people, in practice, and when faced with a gray area must frequently ask what to do. This is the "alarm bell" or reticular activation phenomenon: you suddenly stop, realizing that there is something that you need to know to proceed, but don't.

There are many "authorities" that the translator may need to consult (see box on pp. 206–8).

Checking synonyms, alternatives (pattern-building)

There is not much to say about reticular activation in the other two modes, pattern-building and intuitive leaps: both are so common, so ordinary, as to be barely perceptible to the translator who relies heavily on them every day. The most typical form of a pattern-building approach to a problem that arises in a translation job is the mental listing of synonyms: the "right" word doesn't come to mind immediately, so the translator runs quickly down through a mental list of likely possibilities. As has been noted throughout this book, translators tend to collect such lists; they are the people who can not only give you a definition for words like "deleterious" or "synergistic" or "fulgurated," but can quickly and casually rattle off a handful of rough synonyms for each. The translator knows, perhaps better than anyone, that there are never perfect synonyms in a single language, let alone between two different languages; hence the importance of gathering as many different *rough* synonyms for every semantic field that ever comes up, and keeping them somewhere close to the surface of memory, ready to be called up and compared at a moment's notice. Translators go through life alert to language, always looking to fill in gaps in their lists, or to add to already overflowing lists, knowing that some day they might need every word they have ever stored.

"What kind of fish is that?"
"I have no idea."
"In Finnish we call it *siika*."
"Oh! Whitefish."
"Thanks."

These mental lists, sometimes methodically stored in personal or corporate databases for rapid and reliable access, constitute one essential inductive process of accumulating semantic experiences that translators use when habit fails – when the

autopilot shuts down and they must go to "manual." But there are many others as well: mental lists of ethical principles ("Should I correct this?" "Should I notify the agency about this?"), good business practices ("I can't finish this by the deadline, what should I do?" "I really need to charge extra for this, but how much, and how do I present it?"), moral beliefs ("Do I really want to do a translation for an arms manufacturer, a tobacco company, a neo-Nazi group?"), and so on. In each case, the problem translators face is too complicated to deal with by rote, subliminally, uncritically; so they shift into a conscious analytical mode and begin sifting back through the pattern-building layers of their experience, exploring patterns, comparing and contrasting, articulating to themselves – in some cases for the first time – the principles that seem to emerge from the regularities.

Picking the rendition that feels right (intuitive leaps)

And at last, of course, they have to make a decision. Language is an infinitely fascinating subject for translators, and many of them could go on worrying a problem area for days, weeks – perhaps even forever. Fortunately or unfortunately, clients and agencies are rarely willing to wait that long, and at some point translators must put a stop to the analytical process and say "that's good enough" (see Pym 1993: 113–16).

Just when that point is, when translators will feel comfortable enough with a solution to move on, is impossible to predict – even for the translators themselves. The feeling of being satisfied with a solution, and of knowing that you are satisfied *enough* to move on, is rarely subject to rational analysis. It comes to us as an intuitive leap; the swirl of certainties and uncertainties, the mixture of conviction ("this seems like a good word, maybe even the right word") and doubt ("but I *know* there's a better one"), eventually filter out into a sudden moment of clarity in which a decision is made. Not necessarily a perfect or ultimate decision; the translator may have to go back and change it later. But a decision nonetheless. A decision to move on.

Conclusion

And in the end it does come down to this: with all the professional expertise and craftsmanship in the world, with decades of experience and a fine, even perfectionist, attention to detail, every translator does finally translate by the seat of his or her pants, picking the rendition that *feels* right. This may not be the ultimate arbiter in the translation process as a whole – the translator's work will almost certainly be checked and edited by others – but it is the ultimate arbiter for the translator as a trained professional, working alone. The translator's "feeling" of "rightness" draws on the full range of his or her professionial knowledge and skill; but it is in the end nevertheless a feeling, a hunch, an intuitive sense. The translation *feels right* – or it feels right enough to send off. It is made up of thousands of decisions

based ultimately on this same criterion, most made quickly, subliminally, without analytical reflection; some made painstakingly, with full conscious awareness, checking of authorities, and logical reasoning; but all relying finally on the translator's intuitive seal of approval: okay, that'll do.

The difference between a good translator and a mediocre one is not, in other words, that the former translates carefully, consciously, analytically, and the latter relies too heavily upon intuition and raw feels. Both the good translator and the mediocre translator rely heavily on analysis and intuition, on conscious and subliminal processing. The difference is that the good translator has *trained* his or her intuitions more thoroughly than the mediocre one, and in relying on those intuitions is actually relying on years of internalized experience and intelligent reflection.

On the other hand, no one's intuitions are ever fully trained. Good translators are lifelong learners, always looking for more cultural knowledge, more words and phrases, more experience of different text types, more transfer patterns, more solutions to complex problems. Translation is intelligent activity requiring constant growth, learning, self-expansion.

In that sense we are all, always, becoming translators.

Discussion

1. Just how rule-governed should a translator's work be? Is the translator's creativity ever hampered or diminished by adherence to the rules of the marketplace? If so, what should the translator who feels hampered do about it? In aspects of translation where the marketplace does not impose specific rules on the translator, to what extent should the translator impose those rules on himself or herself?
2. Just how conscious should a translator's analytical processes be? Should translators slow down their translations in order to be more analytically thorough and cautious? Should the initial translating work be rapid and more or less subliminal, and the editing process be conscious and slow and analytical? Should even the editing proceed more or less subliminally, unless a problem arises?

Exercise

Translate the following text into your target language. Let yourself sink into a reverie state while you translate: relax, breathe rhythmically, listen to music, let your mind wander to the shirts you've put on in your life.

> Buttoning a shirt: take the two sides of the shirt front in your two hands and line them up, starting from the bottom. Move your fingers on one

> hand up the shirt to the bottom button, and the fingers on the other hand up the shirt to the bottom buttonhole. Push the button through the buttonhole. Slide your fingers up to the next button and buttonhole, and then button it through the hole. Keep moving up the shirt, one button and one buttonhole at a time, until you read the ladder but on and button the top button. Or, if you like, leave the top button undone.
>
> What happened when you reached the problem area ". . . until you read the ladder but on"? What did you do? Could you feel yourself coming out of your reverie state and starting to analyze? Did the two mental states feel qualitatively different?

Suggestions for further reading

Anderman *et al.* (2003), Chesterman and Wagner (2001), Fuller (1973), Jones (1997), Kraszewski (1998), Mossop (2001/2007), Picken (1989), Sofer (1996/2009), Tirkkonen-Condit and Jääskeläinen (2000), Wilss (1996)

For a list of translator resources, point your browser at www.routledge.com/9780415615907.

For a teacher's guide to this book, point your browser at www.routledge.com/9780415615907.

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