

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATION

Translation is a process and the result of turning a text from one language into another, which means expressing the same by the signs of a different language. Bearing in mind that every sign has two planes (plane of expression and plane of content) the essence of translation could be described as changing the elements of the plane of expression while the plane of content remains constant.

The study of proper principle of translation is termed as translation theory. This theory, based on a solid foundation on understanding of how languages work, translation theory recognizes that different languages encode meaning in differing forms, yet guides translators to find appropriate ways of preserving meaning, while using the most appropriate forms of each language. Translation theory includes principles for translating figurative language, dealing with lexical mismatches, rhetorical questions, inclusion of cohesion markers, and many other topics crucial to good translation.

Basically there are two competing theories of translation. In one, the predominant purpose is to express as exactly as possible the full force and meaning of every word and turn of phrase in the original, and in the other the predominant purpose is to produce a result that does not read like a translation at all, but rather moves in its new dress with the same ease as in its native rendering. In the hands of a good translator neither of these two approaches can ever be entirely ignored.

Conventionally, it is suggested that in order to perform their job successfully, translators should meet three important requirements; they should be familiar with:

- the source language
- the target language
- the subject matter

Based on this premise, the translator discovers the meaning behind the forms in the source language and does his best to produce the same meaning in the target language – using the forms and structures of the target language. Consequently, what is supposed to change are the form and the code and what should remain unchanged is the meaning and the message.

One of the main difficulties of translating lies in the fact that the meaning of the whole text is not exhausted by the sum of meanings of its elements. The meaning of a text is made up by words (characterized by their denotative and connotative meanings and stylistic reference), syntactic meaning of sentences and utterances larger than sentences, suprasegmental elements and lexical-semantic connections between words and phrases.

Every language is characterized by a specific structure of its lexical-grammatical fields and has its own lexical, morphological and syntactic systems. It may result in lack of coincidence between the means of expressing the same content in SL (source language) and TL (target language).

That is why good practical knowledge of the two languages is quite necessary but not sufficient for translating. Besides this knowledge one must possess a number of skills and be guided by a number of principles worked out by the theory of translation. These principles are connected both with linguistic and extra linguistic aspects. While translating one must keep in view typological characteristics of both the languages and remember that the same idea may be expressed lexically in one of them and grammatically in the other.

Concrete ways and means of overcoming such difficulties depend on the structural peculiarities of SL and TL, therefore when translating one must employ one's theoretical knowledge of phonetic, morphological, lexical and syntactic systems of the two languages.

Besides purely linguistic difficulties, translation involves a great number of problems caused by numerous extra linguistic factors. The content of any text is based upon extra linguistic reality, the text itself reflects the cultural background of the author and of the whole people speaking the language, it also reflects the

history of the people, their habits and traditions, a peculiar national way of thinking, etc. All these things should necessarily be taken into consideration in order to translate the text adequately.

It is also most essential to remember that nations speaking different languages have different experience, and things naturally known to one nation are quite unknown to another.

One of the main demands upon a person translating any text is that he should be well acquainted with its subject matter. The translator should understand perfectly the content and intention of the author whom he is translating. The principal way to reach it is reading all the sentences or the text completely so that you can give the idea that you want to say in the target language because the most important characteristic of this technique is translating the message as clearly and natural as possible.

The translator should have a perfect knowledge of the language from which he is translating and an equally excellent knowledge of the language into which he is translating. At this point the translator must have a wide knowledge in both languages for getting the equivalence in the target language, because the deficiency of the knowledge of both languages will result in a translation without logic and sense.

If all these principles are taken into consideration there will be no danger of so-called "literal" translation, which means a word-for-word translation. This type of translation with all its seeming accuracy ignores both linguistic and extra linguistic factors discussed above. It leads to preserving the meanings of separate words and at the same time it distorts the meaning of the whole text or sentence, thus often creates an undesirable comic effect.

The translator should employ the forms of speech in common usage. The translator should bear in mind the people to whom the translation will be addressed and use words that can be easily understood.

These are the main principles one should follow in the process of translating.