

Lecture 5 PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATION LEVELS OF EQUIVALENCE AND THE CONCEPT OF ADEQUATE TRANSLATION

Problems for discussion:

1. Principles of translation
2. levels of equivalence. adequate translation
3. Equivalence. semantic and stylistic
4. translation as a communication process

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATION

although this is a theoretical subject we think that the following guidelines will help the students to evaluate their own work on translation. Below are some general principles which are relevant to all translation.

1. Meaning. The translation should reflect accurately the meaning of the original text. Nothing should be arbitrarily added or removed, though occasionally part of the meaning can be “transposed”, for example: He has limp with fatigue..

Ask yourself:

is the meaning of the original text clear? if not what does the uncertainty mean? are any words “loaded”, that is, are there any underlying implications?/ “correct me if I’m wrong...” suggests I know I’m right”/.

- Is the dictionary meaning of a particular word the most suitable one?/ should *субверсия* be subversion in English?/
 - does anything in the translation sound unnatural or forced?
2. Form. The ordering of words and *de* in the translation should match the original as closely as possible/ this is particularly important in translating legal documents, guarantees, contracts and etc./ But differences in language structure often require changes in the form and order of words. When the doubt underline in the original text the words on which the main stress falls.
 3. Register. Languages often differ greatly in their levels of formality in a given context /say the business letter/. To resolve these differences, the translator must distinguish between formal or fixed expressions/ *Le vous prie , madame, d’agrier l’expression de mes sentiments distinguis, or please find enclosed/ and personal expressions in which the written or speaker sets the tone.*

Consider also:

- would any expression in the original sound too formal /informal , cold /warm , personal / impersonal / ... if translated literally
- What is the intention of the speaker or writer / to persuade / dissuade, apologize /criticize?/ Does come through in the translation?

4. Source language influence. One of the most frequent criticisms of translation is that “It doesn’t sound natural. This is because the translator’s thoughts and choice of words are too strongly molded by the original text.

A good way of shaking of the source language /SC/ influence a few sentences aloud, from memory. This will suggest natural, patterns of thought in the first language /LI/ which may not come to mind when the eye is fixed on the SL text. Style and clarity. The translator should not change the style of the original. But if the text is stoppily written, for the reader’s sake, correct the defects.

5. Idioms. Idiomatic expressions are notoriously untranslatable. These include similes, metaphors, verbs and sayings /as good as gold/, jargon, slang, colloquialisms / user – friendly, the Big Apple, Yuppir, etc/, and / in English/ phrasal verbs. If the expressions cannot be directly translated, try any of the following:

- retain the original word, in inverted commas: “yuppie” replain the original expression, with a literal expression in brackets; Indian summer /dry, hazy weather in late autumn/
- use a close equivalent: talk of the devil =veek na oratima/literally/ the wolf at the door.
- use a non- idiomatic or plain prose translation: a lot over the top = undue excessive.

The golden rule is: if the idiom does work in the LI, do not force in into the translation./The principles outlined above are adopted from Frederic Fuller, the translator’s handbook. For more detailed comments, see Peter Newmark: Approaches to translation./

LEVELS OF EQUIVALENCE AND CONCEPT OF ADEQUATE TRANSLATION

LEVELS OF EQUIVALENCE: This problem was briefly discussed in previous lecture in connection with the distinction between semantic and programmatic equivalence. In the theory of translation. For instance: V.G.Gark and I.N.Levin distinguish the following types of equivalents: formal semantic and situational. Formal equivalence may be illustrated by speech cases as: The sun disappeared behind a cloud – солнце скрылось за тучей.

Here we find similarity of words and forms in addition to the similarity. The differences in the plane of expression are in fact, those determined by overall structural differences between Russian and English. The use of articles in English, the use of perfective aspect, gender, forms, etc., in Russian.

Semantic equivalence exists when the same meanings are expressed in the two languages in a way.

Example:- Troops were airlifted to the battlefield- войска были переброшены по воздуху на поле.

The English word “airfield” contains the same meaning as the Russian phrase перебросить по воздуху. Although different linguistic devices are used in Russian and in English /a word group and a compound word/ the sum of semantic components is the same situational equivalence is established between that both linguistic devices but, nevertheless, describe the same extralinguistic situation: to let someone pass- уступит дорогу. It should be noted that formal equivalence alone is insufficient. In fact the above examples pertain to two types of semantic equivalence: Semantic equivalence and formal equivalence.

1. Semantic equivalence without formal equivalence.

As to “situational equivalence”, it is in our view another variety of semantic equivalence that differs from the first type in that it is based on the same semantic components may be semantically equivalent /a+b/=c+d/, upside down= вверх ногами.

We shall therefore speak of two types of semantic equivalence; componential /identity of semantic components/ and referential /referential equivalence of semantic components/. The later is preferable to “situational equivalence” for descriptions of the same situation are not necessary semantically equivalent.

We may thus distinguish the following levels of equivalence:

Formal equivalence	Semantic equivalence	Pragmatic equivalence	Component equivalence
+	+	+	+
-	+	+	+
-	-	+	+
-	-	-	+

Lecture 6 EQUIVALENCE SEMANTIC AND STYLISTIC

Let us add to the definitions we have given so far a third which, in its extended form, takes us directly into the problem we must address: the nature of equivalence.

Translation is the replacement of a representation of a text in one language by a representation of an equivalent text in a second language.

The authors continue and make the problem of equivalence very plain.

Texts in different languages can be equivalent in different degrees/ fully or partially equivalent/ in respect of different levels of presentation /equivalent in respect of context, of semantics, of grammar, of lexic, etc./ and at different ranks /word-for-word, phrase-for-phrase, sentence-for-sentence/.

It is apparent and has been for a very long time indeed, that the ideal of total equivalence is a chimera. Languages are different from each other; they are different in form having distinct codes and rules regulating the construction of grammatical stretches of language and these forms have different meanings. To shift from one language from another is, by definition, to alter the forms. Further, the contrasting forms convey meanings which cannot but fail to coincide totally; there is no absolute synonymy between words in the same language, so why should anyone be surprised to discover a lack of synonymy between languages?

Something is always lost / or, might one suggest “gained”?/ in process and translators can find themselves being accused of reproducing only part of original and so “betraying” the authors intentions. Hence the traitorous nature ascribed to the translator by the notorious Italian proverb: Traduttore traditore. If equivalence is to be “preserved” at a particular level at all costs, which level is to be? What are the alternatives? The answer, it turns put, hinges on the dual nature of language itself. Language is a formal structure – a code –which consists of elements which can combine to signal semantic “sense” and, at the same time, a communication system which uses the forms of the code to refer to entities/in the word/and create signals which possess communicative “value”.

The translator has the option, then, of focusing on finding formal equivalents which “preserve” the context –free semantic sense of the text at the expense of its context-sensitive communicative value of the text at the expense of its context- free semantic sense.

Each of these questions defines one or more parameters of variation.

What is the message contained in the text; the content of the signal; the propositional content of the speech act. Why? orients us towards the intention of the sender, the purpose for which the text was issued, the illocutionary forces of the speech acts which constitutes the underlying structure of the text, the discourse. These run the whole gamut from informing through persuading to flattering... and, as we shall see, it is rare for a text to possess a single function. Multiply functions are the norm rather than the exception for adult language so our task as receivers of text, is to find out the primary function from those which are secondary. When? is concerned with the time of the communication realized in the text and setting it in its historical context; contemporary or set in the recent or remote past or future.How? is ambiguous, since it can refer to:

1. manner of delivery; the tenor of the discourse; serious; flippant or ironic.
2. medium of communication; the mode of the discourse; the channel.

3. verbal / non-verbal, speech/ writing – selection to carry the signal

Where? is concerned with the place of communication the physical location of the speech level realized in the context.

Who? refers to the participants involved in the communication; the sender or receiver/s/. Both spoken and written texts will reveal to a greater or lesser extent characteristics of the speaker or writer as an individual and also, by inference, the attitude the sender adopts in relation to the receiver/s/ and to the message being transmitted; tabulated above are the following major types of translation equivalence/ formal equivalence + semantic componential equivalence +pragmatic equivalence; semantic componential and/or referential equivalence +pragmatic equivalence; pragmatic equivalence alone.

Pragmatic equivalence which implies a close fit between communicative intent and the receptor's response is required at all levels of equivalence. It may sometimes appear alone, without formal or semantic equivalence, as in the case: С днём рождения! – Many happy returns of the day!

Lecture 6 TRANSLATION AS A COMMUNICATION PROCESS

The translator, as we have been saying, is by definition a communicator who involved in written communication. We might, therefore, begin by providing a rough, general model of the process of written communication before moving on to the special and particularly problematic process in which translators are involved.

The model of communication process may contain 9 steps which take us from encoding the message through its transmission and reception to the decoding of the message by the receiver. It provides us with a starting point for the examination of the process of communication, always limited to the monolingual and, by implicating, to dyadic interaction; one sender and one receiver:

CODE

SENDER channel SIGNAL/MESSAGE/ channel RECEIVER

CONTENT

Monolingual communication. Even with these limitations, however, it contains within it the elements and process which need to be explained and raises a large number of questions which require an answer. If we are to succeed at all in our attempt to make sense of the phenomenon of translation. We could describe this process in terms of 9 steps:

1. the sender selects message and code
2. encodes message
3. selects channel
4. transmits signal containing message
5. receiver receives signal containing message
6. recognizes code

7. decodes signal
8. retrieves message
9. comprehends message.

We ought not, however, to assume that this is a simple, unidirectional and linear process nor that each step must be completed before the next can be started.

Processing is by its very nature both cycling / the sender/ sends more message at the receiver takes over the sender's role/ and cooperative/ the sender may well begin again at step 1 while the receiver is no future advanced than step 5 or 6.

The model of translating process is as follows:

1. Translator receives signal I containing message
2. Recognizes
3. Decodes signal I
4. Retrieves message
5. Comprehends message
6. Translator selects code II
7. Encodes message by means of code II
8. Selects channel
9. Transmits signal II containing message.

We might commit here. There are several crucial points of difference between the monolingual communication and bilingual communication involving translation/we are sticking to written communication in both cases/: there are two codes, two signals/ or utterances or texts/ and given what we have been saying about the impossibility of 100 % equivalence, the sets or content/ i.e more than one message/.

It follows, then that in our modeling of translating, we shall need two kinds of explanation:

1. Psycholinguistic explanation which focuses mainly on steps 7 – decoding and encoding – and,
2. A more text – linguistic or sociolinguistic explanation which successes more on the participants, on the nature of the message and on the ways on which the resources of the code are drawn upon by uses to create – carrying signals and the fact socio-cultural approach is required to set the process in context.

QUESTIONS FOR SELF-CONTROL:

1. What are general principles which are relevant to all translation? Name

them.

What are the reasons for using translation in the classroom?

2. Speak about the levels of equivalence.
3. What is semantic equivalence?
4. What is stylistic equivalence?
5. What is formal equivalence?
6. What is situational equivalence?
7. What is a communication process?

INDEPENDENT WORK:

1. Different levels of equivalence in source language and target language
2. The role of translation into communication process

OBLIGATORY LITERATURE:

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4. Peter Newmark. Approaches to translation. London. - 2019
5. Levitskaya T.R, Fiterman A.M. The problems of translation on the material of the contemporary English language. M.192010
6. Language Transfer Cross – Linguistic influence in language learning. Cambridge University Press. 1992003

ADDITIONAL

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