

The General Principles of Media Translation

- (1) If the sentence has an ambiguous meaning in the source language (which means it has multiple meanings for a grammatical or a lexical reason). Then the translator has to remove its ambiguity in the target language if possible.
- (2) The translator better transmit the effect that was meant by the author of the source language, he has knowledge about it. Was the author mad, sarcastic or vivid? This comes with practice and experience with both languages.
- (3) The translator has to fully understand the text before translating. There is no benefit of a translation that is based on a weak understanding of the text.
- (4) The translator has to commit to the used terms in the target language. The importance of this principle grows larger in the specific texts in science, law or others. Making new terms won't work, you must commit to the common terms in the target language to achieve linguistic understanding.
- (5) The origin of translation is to commit to the source text and this is called literal translation, if not the translator has to translate meaning.
- (6) The translator has to stick to a permanent translation to a certain term if the translator translates X to Y in a sentence then he has to use X instead of Y every time in the source text to achieve consistency.
- (7) Digit numbers (like 300) must be translated to a digit number (3000) and written numbers to written numbers like three hundred to ثلاثة مئة.
- (8) In some cases the term stays the same like phoneme (فونيم), fax stays (فاكس).
- (9) The noticeable phrase or word in the source language must be kept in the target language. Like words in bold or italic can be made with the same way or underline it in the target language. A book's title that is written in italic can be translated into Arabic by underlining it.

(10) Before translating the first sentence in a text, the translator must read the whole text to have a general idea about the subject which makes it easier to translate.

(11) Text words are two types: content words and function words the translator has to render the content words, but he doesn't have to translate the function words directly because they're different. Function words are: to, a, an, the...

(12). If the translator wanted to add a word of his own to the original text, he has to put it between brackets like: there is a lot of (Bacteria) in the human body.

(13) If the translator wanted to explain the text by a long addition or commenting, then he has to put a footnote instead of putting it in the original text.

(14) If the target language has a lot of equivalents for a certain term, an advantage is given to the most common or the most precise.

(15) After the first draft, the translator has to review the text to check if it is out of grammatical lexical, to solve any stylistic inconveniences.

(16) The translator has to avoid making acronyms on his own which are considered unusual because this ruins the connection between the translator and the reader. Still this can be improvable in some cases.

(17) If acronyms occurred in source language, the translator has to transform it to whole words in the target language like: VIP (very important person). But common acronyms like (AIDS) do not have to be translated. It stays the same.

(18) The translator keeps the borders of the text which means one point begins in the source language just like the target language. And by doing so, the points of the source language are matched with those on target language from start to finish.

(19) In punctuating, the two texts have to match from start to finish. Dots, question marks, exclusive marks, quotation marks and commas do stay with small difference in shape.

(20). In internal punctuating (Using punctuation marks in the middle and not at the end). Like Using commas in Arabic is different from its usage in English.

(21) In punctuating direct talk we use quotation marks in English, like, he said " " and by that, It is proven that they are indeed different.

(22) Normally, proper noun cannot be translated. So, محمد remains Muhammad and cannot be interpreted to the praised, Peter is translated into (بيتر) or (بطرس) not to (الصخرة). However, if it was a geographical compound proper noun, then it is better to be translated. Such as the Pacific Ocean is translated into (البحر الأحمر).

(23) If the translator was translating a specialized text, he has to use specialized dictionaries like medical or geometric or legal text cause regular dictionaries will not help him in a specialized translation. Regular dictionary is helpful in translating general text. There are specialized Arabic-English and English-Arabic dictionaries in chemistry, physics, mathematics, biology, education, psychology, philosophy linguistics accounting, management, law, politics, computer and all science branches. Besides there are specialized dictionaries in the sub branches like, theoretical linguistics and practical linguistics and phonetics.

(24) Translator has to seek precision in translation. Especially in translating the approximated terms, terms that have close meanings, but not the same.

(25) Translator should not guess the meaning of a word before checking the dictionary, except if he was interpreting simultaneously or consecutively. In this case, he has no other choice but guessing. However if he was translating, then he has no excuse if he did not use the dictionary to make sure the meaning.

(26) We rarely find a word with one meaning because meanings are much more than words in all languages. Words are polysemous, Translator's duty is to understand the intended meanings in the source language to choose an equivalent in the target language. And this is the hard challenge in translation: to understand the text of the source language and make an equivalent in the target language.

(27) Sometimes it is impossible to produce a perfect translation, but satisfactory translation is always possible. It requires precision, knowledge and experience.

(28) Prose is translated into prose. Poetry is either translated into poetry if it was possible or to prose, if it was not possible.

(29) Translator should have a good command on both languages: source and target language. Mastering the source language to understand the text and mastering the target language to write using it. Obviously, not mastering the first one would make the second unclear, and not mastering the second one would make the writing full of mistakes. Things would be terribly bad if the translator was bad in the two languages: here many mistakes would emerge in understanding the source language, and a lot of mistakes in expressing it in the target language.

(30) In specialized translation, like medical and geometric translation, it is better for the translator, beside mastering the two languages, he has to have a knowledge in the field he is translating from and into. We can call the knowledge in the field as the specialized knowledge and the knowledge of the two languages as the linguistic knowledge, for example, medical knowledge does not make the doctor a translator. However linguistic knowledge may take the place of specialized knowledge. Therefore, the translator can translate a medical text without being specialized in medicine. Best translators are these who have the specialized and linguistic knowledge, certainly, but such translators are rare.

(31) Translation process is a process of making decisions in every moment, so translator has to make a decision every time he translates a word. Of course, good decision making depends on translator's linguistic ability and his knowledge in translation. In many situations, the process of translating recalls a retry, which means translating forward then backward then forward, until the translator feels that his product is settled and became satisfactory semantically and syntactically.

(32). For the Arab student, translating from English into Arabic is much more easier than translation from Arabic into English, because translating from English requires an English understanding and an Arabic expressing, however translating from Arabic requires an Arabic understanding and an English expressing. The difficulty of the first one is the English understanding. And difficulty of the second is more difficult than understanding, in most of the cases.