



TECHNIQUES AND PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATION PRACTICE IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Translation has principles and techniques for its practice, and, this is very interesting when one mastered these principles and the practical techniques for languages translation. But the problem of level of language is always a handicap to successful translation. The objective of the study is to discuss and analysis the principles and the techniques of a practice of as to study the function of each process and techniques. The research was carried out with a questionnaire distributed to students of 200 level BAPES English at the Teachers training school of Porto-Novo. A text was also distributed to students for translation as to appreciate the level of mastering the principles and practice of translation. The result shown that when students really understand the principles and the practical techniques of translation, they produce better results whereas when the procedures are not respected, the students' production in the target language is bad. The researcher suggested therefore that students should be well taught the principles and technics of practical translation as to produce acceptable translation from source language to the target one.

Key words: Translation, principles, technique, practice

RESUME

La traduction a des principes et techniques pour sa pratique, et ceci devient intéressant lorsque l'on maîtrise ces techniques pour la traduction des langues. Mais, le problème du niveau de langue est un facteur majeur dans ce processus car il est toujours un handicap à une traduction réussie. L'objectif de cette étude est de discuter et d'analyser les principes et techniques de la pratique de la traduction pour étudier les fonctions de chaque processus et techniques. La recherche est faite avec un questionnaire distribué aux étudiants de la deuxième année de BAPES 1 anglais à l'École Normale Supérieure de Porto-Novo. Un test leur a été aussi distribué pour traduction afin que nous apprécions le niveau de maîtrise des principes et pratiques de la traduction. Les résultats obtenus que lorsque les étudiants comprennent réellement les principes et la pratique technique de la traduction, ils produisent meilleurs résultats alors qu'en absence du respect des procédures, la production des étudiants en langue d'arrivée est mauvaise. Le chercheur a suggéré cependant que les étudiants doivent recevoir un meilleur enseignement des principes et techniques de la pratique de la traduction pour une traduction acceptable de la langue de départ à la langue source.

Mots clés : Traduction, principes, techniques, pratique.

INTRODUCTION

Translation principles are the conceptual clarification that guide, support and explain what to do and what cannot be done as a translator, at least a good translator¹. When people speak or write two or more languages, does not mean that they are translators as translating a text (message) from one language into another language is more than speaking and writing languages. Sunmonu (2004:18) states that “some or more people believe that a translator is anyone that speak two or three languages. It must be explained here that it is not enough to speak two languages to make a translator for it is not true in all cases. That the ability to speak two or more languages does not make a good translator”. Translation involves mastering the principles, the domains and even the appropriate procedures necessary to translating a message where the level of language is another factor. The research work analysis the principles and technical procedures for successful translation production. The 200 level students of english language at the “Ecole Normale Supérieure (ENS)” of Porto-Novo, University of Abomey-Calavi (UAC) serves as a sample to carry out the research work.

Five key points are discussed in the paper. Firstly, the paper presents the technical clarification as to explain the scientific technicity followed to carry out the research. These include the background of the study, the presentation of the research problem, the objective, the hypothesis, the theoretical framework and the conceptual clarification as well as the research method of the study. The second discussion in the paper is analysis of the principles and techniques used to practically reproduce or express in another language a written text caring a message in the source language. The third point of the research work presents the student evaluation through a text that they translated from source language to target language². The fourth point presents results of the evaluation followed by the results interpretation while the fifth point make some suggestions for better mastering for better mastering of principle and practice translation.

1. Technical clarification of the study

The technical clarification of the study is made up of the background of the study, the problem, the objective and the hypotheses.

1.1. Background of the study

Polyglots are not necessary good of professional translator as when one speaks and write more than a language correctly, he must be able to master the principles and

¹ A good translator is the one that has all the necessary words and useful expressions to transmit the message before him in another language for better understanding of people.

² Here the source language is French and the target language is english.

practice of translation as to be truth feel to the text is been translated. This obligation brings about the problem of teaching to students the theories of translation such as the definitions, the different theories, the principles and procedures to practically handling a translation of a text from one language to another. This is necessary for even language has its one specificity in written and transmitting message. Language are not been spoken and written the way with the same grammatical structures. For example in French one says "la table" which in english is "the table" but same production when reproduce in African language such as "egun langue"³ will ve "Tafo lo". The article "the" or "la" that is placed before the noun table in ffrrench and english is now placed after the noun "tafo" that means table in egun langue.

1.2. Problem of the study

The main problem of the study is that when people are able to master two or more languages in speaking and writing objects, they believe they are translators or interpreters if taken into account the use of oral aspect of the language. That assumption is very scandalous as good translator need to back his oral and written competencies with the principles, rules, regulations and techniques that are backing radical translation.

The research work stands to denounce this, to suggest better way of translation a text from source language to target language.

1.3. Objective of the study

The main objective of the study is to make correction on the general believe that when people are able to speak many languages and write them are good translator. Three objectives are considered here:

- (i) expose and discuss principles and techniques of practical translation as show case their important in producing good translation;
- (ii) analysis the functional principle and techniques of practical translation as to make the values known;
- (iii) Evaluate students with text translation as to conclude on the usefulness of mastering the principles and techniques of practical translation in the process of teaching and learning English as a foreign language.

1.4. Hypothesis

Three hypothesis are stated for the study

³ Egun language is the language spoken in west African particularly in Porto-Novo in Republic of Benin and Badagry in lagos state, federal Republic of Nigeria.

- (i) The exposure and discussion on the principles and technical practice of translation will show case the procedures and translators will like to master them;
- (ii) The analysis of the principles and practical techniques of translation help to understand the good values of the application to doing translation.

1.5. Theoretical framework

The book *Principles and practice of translation*, written by Sunmonu H. S. in 2004 is of good use in writing this paper. While the book presents the principle and technical practices, this paper deeply presents the factors and analyse them with evaluation to practically verify the presentation make by Sunmonu H. S.

The book written by Ojo Adeoya Samuel in 2012, titled *Practical French for Anglophone learners* is also of a help to some extend in the process of written this paper as the book presents the existing submitting some practical examples of the use of the grammatical structures of the two languages. Also Fagbohun, J. A. in 2007 wrote a book titke "*Théorie et pratiques de la traduction: notions élémentaires*" which in english is *Theories and practices of translation. Basic concepts*; is part of the theories of translation analysed in the paper.

1.6. Conceptual clarification

Some concepts related to translation, teaching and learning are clarified here.

1.6.1. Translation

Translation is a mental activity in which a meaning of given linguistic discourse is rendered from one language to another. It is the act of transferring the linguistic entities from one language in to their equivalents in to another language. Translation is an act through which the content of a text is transferred from the source language in to the target language (Foster, 1958). The language to be translated is called the source language (SL), whereas the language to be translated into or arrived at is called the target language (TL). The translator needs to have good knowledge of both the source and the target language, in addition to a high linguistic sensitivity as he should transmit the writer's intention, original thoughts and opinions in the translated version as precisely and faithfully as a possible.

Due to its prominence, translation has been viewed differently. According to Ghazala (1995), "translation is generally used to refer to all the process and methods used to convey the meaning of the source language in to the target language" (P.1.) Ghazala's definition focuses on the notion of meaning as an essential element in translation. That is, when translating, understanding the meaning of the source text is vital to

have the appropriate equivalent in the target text thus, it is meaning that is translated in relation to grammar, style and sounds (Ghazala, 1995).

Translation is a process and a product. Catford (1995:20), states that "translation is the replacement of textual material in one language (SL) by equivalent textual material in another language (TL) ". This definition shows that translation is a process in the sense that is an activity. Performed by people through time, when expressions are translated in to simpler ones in the same language (Rewording and para-phrasing). It can be done also from one language into another different language. Translation is, on the other hand, a product since it provides us with other different cultures, to ancient societies and civilization life when the translated texts reaches us.

1.6.2. Principles

Principles are rules. They are also seen as a moral rule or strong belief that influences an action. Principles are laws, rules or a theory that is considered in doing something. In this research work the principles discussed are the one that are involved in translating a text from one language called source language to another language called target language. The way translation is done is based on rules regulation and processes through which a message is written from one language to the other. When the good principles of translation are respected, translation is well done.

1.6.3. Theories and techniques

Theories are formal set of ideas that is intended to explain why something happens or exists. The principles on which a particular subject is based. For example and practice of language teaching and language translation. Theories are principles and ideas put in place as to tackle something in a practical way. For example, there are theories and practice of translation.

A technique is a particular method of doing an activity, usually a method that involves practical skills. Technique also is skill and ability in an artistic, sporting, or other practical activity that you develop through training and practice.

1.6.4. Teaching and learning

Teaching is an organized way of transmitting knowledge. Good teaching is causing facilitating and promoting learning. Teaching is based on norms and regulations for qualitative knowledge transmission. For Kocchar (2007:23), « Teaching is considered to be an art. Teaching is a sublime art. » For him, it is impossible to separate the teacher and teaching. The teach, is the mirror that the learner look into as to take him as a model. Kocchar (2007:23) states that « Learners are the raw material with which

the teacher has to deal ». Learning and teaching are interactive activity, as during teaching and learning process a dialogue between the teacher and the learner help to make the teaching process more interesting.

Learning is a process, which involves changes occurring over a relatively shorter period of time which enable the learner to respond more adequately to the situation. It is obvious that the learner is not the passive victim of his environment. Learning states Kocchar (2007:24), « can only take place in response to the felt need of the child. » Learning, surely is a complex process and the learning readiness of learner is quite variable. So far, learning readiness is essential for effective learning. Specific learning will not occur until learners are ready for it. So it is for translation as when the principles are not respected and taken into account, no good and efficient translation can be done. The readiness of both Teacher and the learner is important in the process of teaching and learning.

2. Research method

The research method presents the instrument of research, the target population, the scope of the study as well as the sample and sampling technics.

2.1. Research instrument

Quantitative method of research was used to carry out the study. A questionnaire was produced to confirm whether the students considered mastered or know the principles and practice of translation. The questionnaire is distributed to one hundred and sixty (160) students of two groups to include the German studies students: 30 and the group of French language studies: 130. The questionnaire carries 5 questions couple with the text. A type of test administered to the students is "THEME" that the test is a text to be translated from French language to English language.

2.2. Research question

- (i) Have you ever translate a text ?
Yes or No?
- (ii) Did you know the theories backing the practice of translations;
Yes or No?
- (iii) For what use are the theories to you when you translate?
 - a) Very good use
 - b) Fairley use
 - c) Good use
- (iv) What are the contribution of translation principle to you?
 - a) Excellent

- b) Pretty good
- c) Very good
- (v) Can you to translate without theoretical knowledge?
Yes or No.

2.3. Data presentation and analysis

Table presenting data and the analysis

N°	Questions	Number of responses	Percentage	Analysis and observations
01	Have you ever translate a text; Yes or No?	Yes: 120	75%	One way or the other 75% of the 160 students have practiced translation at least one; against 25%
		No: 40	25%	
02	Did you know the theories backing the practice of translations; Yes or No?	Yes : 140	87,5%	Majority of the students know the theories backing translation practice. The percentage obtained shows that 87,5% know the theories backing translation practice against 12,5% who ignore the theory.
		No : 20	12,5%	
03	For what use are the theories to you when you translate? a) Very good use b) Fairley use c) Good use	a) Very good use: 145	90,62%	145 students given 90,62% know the usefulness of theories of translation against 9,37% whose it less useful without the knowledge of theories no good translation can be done.
		b) Fairly use : 15	9,37 %	
		c) Good use: 00	00 %	
04	What are the contribution of translation principles to you? a) Excellent b) Pretty good	a) Excellent: 146	91,25%	146 students confirmed that the mastering of the principle of translation contribute excellently to the quality of translation done.
		b) Pretty good: 14	8,75%	

	c) Very good	c) Very good: 00	00%	
05	Can you do translate without theoretical knowledge? Yes or No	Yes: 10 No: 150	6,25% 93,75%	It is not possible to do translation with the theoretical knowledge of translation as 93,75% of the student this against 6,25%

Table 1: Presentation of data and their analyses ; **Source:** KODJO SONOU T;G., 2022

2.4. Interpretation of the results

The results obtained from question one to five have shown that without the knowledge of the principles and theories of translation, the quality of the text translated will not be good quality, so, it is necessary for translators Teachers of translation studies as well as students to know what is translation, its origin and importance as well as the theories and principles before carry out translation.

The practice that consist of translating just a text without any knowledge of the theories and principles is not to be encouraged. Somebody who speaks two languages can not be a translator if he has not studied translation and masters the theories and the principles.

3. Principles of translation practice

With these a fore-mentioned definitions and hints on translation, we can now proceed to define the attributes of a good translator. Some or most people believe that a translator is anyone that speaks two or three languages. It must be explained here that, it is not enough to speak two languages to make a translator for it is not true in all cases. The ability to speak two or three languages does make a good translator. To have a total adequate translation, one has to study foreign language and as well have a systematic study of the culture, civilization, scientific and racial description of the country that uses this foreign language as a means of communication. Despite certain or some likely resemblances, a given language does not necessarily express in the same way the sale fact, idea, view or notion in another language.

Finally, it must be noted from all previously said, that techniques of translation can be acquired only by constant practice, and mastery attained after long training. Twelve major principles are underlined in the study as follows:

- (i) The translator should have firstly a mastery of his own language, know his subject and the target language (TL) in that order. Excellence in the first often saves him from hideous mistakes in the second and the third.
- (ii) The translator must fully understand the sense and the meaning of the original author, although he is freed from to clarify obscurities.
- (iii) The translator should have a perfect knowledge of both source language (SL) and target language (TL).
- (iv) The translator should be sensitive to languages including his own language.
- (v) The translator should use forms of speech in common use.
- (vi) The translator should take note of the consumer i.e. Age, sex, education and then / the milieu / the area / the country or the place.
- (vii) The translator, in the use of his own language should choose and order words appropriately to produce the correct tone. In other words, he should be elegant and sensitive.
- (viii) The translator should be very resourceful and flexible with the use of words.
- (ix) The translator should be current and accurate i.e. In constant touch with day-to-day international events and happenings.
- (x) The translator should pursue facts as well as words.
- (xi) The translator should avoid word for word rendering, when not appropriate. (Literal or Direct Translation is regarded as the best when possible and adequate. For example, "give me an apple" in English becomes "donne-moi une pomme" in French).
- (xii) The translator should avoid over loose translations i.e. he must base his translation on a sound scholarly investigation of other versions and glossary.

3.1. Methods of Translation Practice

There are three main fields of translation as follows: Scholarly, Professional and Linguistic Research.

3.1.1. Scholarly Translation

Scholarly translation has to do with education and training of student to Master translation. This is a means of verification or acquisition (indirect method) of a foreign language. It is already condemned and outdated in our time. "This permits one to know if the students have assimilated the words or the styles of the foreign language, or if they are capable of grasping and rendering the learnings and differences of a foreign text". It is also done for translation/ evaluation of certificates.

For example, a francophone wishing to continue his education in an Anglophone country must have his certificate translated into the language of the host country. Both the contents and the value and gradings must be translated to match the host evaluation of their certificates. If this is done by a competent evaluation body, the individual concerned will be rightly placed.

3.1.2. Professional Translation:

This is advanced level translation which is practiced with norms and more respect to the translation deontology. Outside the school, the goal of translations is to make known to others what has been said or written in a foreign language. The translator does not translate for his own understanding but he is to be understood. He understands before translating. A living is made out of this professional translation. Translation of text books, official, national and international documents are done by professional translators who are most of the times specially employed for this purpose. Most professional translators work for international organizations.

3.1.3. Linguistic Research

The comparison of two or three languages, if practised with enough consideration and thought, permits one to get out the nature, quality and the behaviour of each language. Here, what counts is not the meaning of the statement but the manner in which the language goes about in getting the meaning. For example, "up in your room" can be hardly translated literally in French. It seems the French language does not take into consideration these pronouns in most cases. So we will now translate

- "up in your room" as
- "dans votre chambre".

This leads us to the question of gains and losses. The comparison of French and English that has just been made has permitted us to see clearly from French, and by contrast, from English, some characteristics which are invisible to the linguist working on only one language. One sees that translation is neither for one's understanding nor is it just to be made understood but it is also about observing the working or operation of a language with reference to another one which makes it an investigative procedure. It permits the clarification of some definite phenomena which would have been ignored without linguistic research. The style of a translator may be different from another translator either from the angle of the choice of words, adages, proverbs and idiomatic expression. It is the linguistic research that gives us an insight into the correctness of any word so used.

3.2. *Useful Expressions in Translation*

There are ten (10) useful expressions that we discussed in this part of the work.

- (i) There are several Foreign Languages (FL) which are not languages of the countries. There are the second language learnt in the country like Republic of Benin after the Mother Tongue (MT) and the official language.
- (ii) Translation from **FL** to **MT** is termed **VERSION**, while Translation from MT to FL is termed **THEME**
- (iii) Translation as academic activity is written. While interpretation which can either be simultaneous or consecutive is oral activity. Written is Translation and oral is interpretation.
- (iv) In the type of translation there intralingual translation i.e. translation in one and the same language and interlingual translation i.e. translation between different languages.
- (v) In translation, one takes care of the sense, and the words will take care of themselves. For example, one does not translate a novel in the same way as a poem.
- (vi) To make the translator work duty easy and to get the best translation, it is advised that a translator translates in the right direction i.e. translating into his mother tongue (MT) or the official language of his country. For it is a known fact that in lost cases, one understands very well in one's mother tongue (MT) compared with a foreign language. This goes to say that what one understands very well will be clearly announced and easily explained while the necessary words will come easily, fluently and naturally.
- (vii) Translation is an art as well as a science. An art, because for a text there can be several translations amongst which the translator chooses the one adjudged the most faithful and rejects others as being bad. Now, the fact that there is a choice, shows an artistic view which leads to what we now call stylistics because different styles will be taken into consideration, resulting into the choice of one as being the most faithful. A science, because it disposes of a certain number of principles for translators i.e mastery of working languages, high level of language acquisition, high intellectual ability, personal interest in the study of languages etc., it can therefore be rightly said to belong to applied sciences because of these principles, and because it can be theorised.
- (viii) Translation can be compared to changing money from one currency to the other, one can never get the total monetary value for its previous loney. It is either a loss or a gain and it is the same of translation where you either

add or reduce, yet the message is delivered, depending on the competence of the translator. For the loss or gain not to be apparent in translation, some translators over translate or do not translate well . We can therefore conclude this part by saying that no one is totally wrong in this profession or art of translations, as there can and will never be a total, perfect translation. It is impossible because of some linguistic, cultural, social, religious, ecological and material problems. Not even Lachine aided translation as a sort of aid in translation can ever give the full intended translation considering the same factors mentioned above.

- (ix) Nevertheless, a translator is your lost faithful friend; he is right as he does the right thing by translating the global and full meaning of the total message and not word for word. A translator is a creator and his translation is a creation. He is a bridge builder as he makes known to other what has been said or written in a foreign language. He does not translate for his understanding alone, but for him to be understood since he understands before translating.
- (x) Lastly, we would suggest here that team work is the best option for a thorough and effective translation as it gives at least 80° near perfect translation since after a series of comparison of several translations, one can now choose and marry according to styles and techniques used.

3.3. Procedures of Translation

There are three basic translation procedures as discussed below.

Reading and getting into contact which leads eventually into the interpretation and analysis of the source language text (SL). Conception of ideas as to the translation procedure to use. It is either direct or on the basis of SL and TL corresponding syntactic structures or indirect processes.

Writing and evaluation which leads to reformulation of the text in relation to the writer's intention, the readers' expectation and the appropriate norms of the TL.

3.3.1. Reading and Getting into Contact with the text to translate

This first phase consists of the first reading which permits the translator to have global view of the work to be translated and as well as to determine the category to which the text belongs. A text can be a general one as against a literary work. There are also scientific texts talking of various branches of science. Finally, there are technical texts which are not necessarily scientific and they have their own proper registers, for example, legal, commercial and insurance texts.

The second reading gets the translator going thereby using both his intellectual and cultural knowledge of SL into TL; the replacement or mental transposition of certain units of the text into the TL since he is believed to be in perfect touch with both the SL and TL.

The third reading leads to the interpretation and analysis of the SL text. His experience as a translator as well as previous translations already done by him will give him an idea of the series of information of the extra linguistic pattern of the language, the terminologies and the pattern of expression in use for a particular sector.

3.3.2. Conception of Ideas as to the Translation Processes to use

This is the second compulsory phase in the three phases of translation processes. It is the phase where concepts are given to what is understood from the reading phase. The main points, ideas and messages will be seriously reflected upon in order of importance and reasonability and this will eventually lead to the thought and decision on which translation procedures to use in getting the message conveyed to the listener of the TL. This is the most important aspect of the translation processes and much thinking is **Writing and Evaluation:**

3.3.3. Writing and Evaluation

This is the third and final phase of the translation processes. It is the phase where the concepts developed in the second phase are now turned into writing and reformulation from the SL into TL in relation to the writer's intention, the reader's expectation and the appropriate norms of the TL. Much thinking is needed as in the second phase of conceptualization of ideas because what is written down in the TL text must really and compulsorily be meaningful and be related to the SL text. The reader must feel the sense and objectivity in the TL rendering. If the reader is convinced and made to understand the TL rendering, then one can say the translator has really finished and made a success of the translation since understanding of the text in the TL is the goal of translation.

4. Suggestions

Under this subtitle 10 suggestions are made to make translator learners and others who like translation.

- (i) For good and even excellent that is a perfect translation to be done, the translator learner must carry out a serious study in knowing very well the theories and principles of translation.

- (ii) It is necessary to master at least two languages before a good translation can be done.
- (iii) The level of language and the culture of the practice the languages mastering is also necessary.
- (iv) The socio-cultural expressions must be known by a translator.
- (v) Language immersion in the countries where the languages of work of the Translator is used is necessary for the translator, set it learner or a professional to master the culture of the language of work.
- (vi) A translator must read different texts written in his language of work.
- (vii) A translator must translate regularly texts as to be in permanent practice.
- (viii) Some expression must be known to the translator. An example is: “le développement durable” this means in English “sustainable development”.
- (ix) A translator must lapses in his work as a simple word can be a source of conflict between communities.
- (x) A translator must not reveal a secret of work.

CONCLUSION

Translation as an aspect of applied linguistics is a linguistic exercise aimed at reproducing the message in the SL in the TL in such a way that the content and form of the original is retained in the translation. This is usually achievable through semantic approach to translation as we have seen. However, there are some other approaches to translation, which are not handled in this write-up on account of time and space, such as communicative approach to translation, which aims at achieving a dynamic equivalence; that is, the spirit of the source text is recaptured in the target text in such a way that the optimum communicative equivalence is attained in the translation, TL-text. Finally, it ought to be emphasized that no single approach is usually used alone in text rendition. Translation usually involves the application of many approaches. The explication of semantic approach in this write-up serves an informative purpose, but not a recommendation as the only good approach to text translation.

Translation principles and theories are the basic knowledge a translator must development in the process of translation practice mastering.

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