

PRINCIPLES OF TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH

Lecture 1: Introduction

1.1. Definition of Translation

Translation is replacing a text in one language by another text in another language.

The term "translation" here is given a narrow sense.

First, it is based on text-translation. A text is a linguistic unit, which is higher than a sentence, and consists of one sentence or more. It is highly dependent on the context, and may be oral or written. Secondly, the definition involves two languages, which is translation proper.

The whole text may be replaced;

1. كنت اصغي الى المذياع / الراديو

I was listening to the radio.

In case that the term (الراديو) is mentioned; it would be directly taken from the original. So part of the text may be rendered into another language.

1.2. The Source Language and the Target Language

The language of the original is termed *the source language*, and the language into which a text is translated is called *the target language*. In the following example Arabic is the source language and English is the target language:

1. على تلك الشجرة طير جميل (SL)

2. There is a beautiful bird on that tree. (TL)

Similarly, we may use the term "Source Text" for (1) and "Target Text" for (2).

1.3. The Basis of Translation

Nearly all kinds of translations are based on equivalence between the source text and the target text. Equivalence is considered essential for translation. For a text to be considered a translation of another, it must be equivalent in one way or another to the original; otherwise it will not qualify as a translated text.

The most common, but not the only, basis for equivalence is meaning. The translated text is said to be equivalent to the source text in meaning. This implies that the proposition that they express is the same.

1.4. Meaning and Translation

Meaning is essential for translation, but like equivalence, it raises many problems. Specialists seldom agree *what meaning is* or *how many kinds of meaning there are*.

A distinction will be drawn between three major types of meaning; word meaning, sentence meaning, and text meaning.

Within these main types, several subtypes will be recognized. For example, for **word meaning**, *reference*, *sense*, and *denotation* will be distinguished.

1.5. Types of Texts

The process of translation in fact differs according to the type of the text involved. There are obviously many types of texts, but for the purpose of translation these types may be divided into two main classes; *informative texts* and *creative texts*.

Informative texts basically aim at conveying information for these texts, content is all important, whereas the style of expressing the content (form) is secondary. To this class of texts belongs scientific, commercial and legal writings.

In creative texts, content is not so important as the way which the writer uses to convey the content. These texts do not depend so much on the information which they convey to the reader or hearer as on their aesthetic effect. Literary essays, novels, plays, and above all poetry belongs to the creative class of texts.