

Where Angels Fear to Tread: What Students of Translation Should Know.

By Mohammed A. Al-Sharawi

Introduction: Translation is ultimately a human activity. It is usually defined as the process of rendering a text from one language (SL) to another (TL): A process that involves transforming thoughts and concepts from L1 to L2. Translation is, in Enani's (1997) view, a modern science at the interface of philosophy, linguistics, psychology, and sociology. Literary translation in particular is relevant to all these sciences, audio-visual arts, as well as cultural and intellectual studies. Translation is, in Chabban's words (1984:5), "a finicky job," as it has not yet been reduced to strict scientific rules, and it allows for the differences that are known to exist between different personalities.

In the final analysis, translation is a science, an art, and a skill: It is a science in the sense that it necessitates complete knowledge of the structure and make-up of the two languages concerned; it is an art since it requires artistic talent to reconstruct the original text in the form of a product that is presentable to the reader who is not supposed to be familiar with the original; it is also a skill because it entails the ability to smooth over any difficulty in the translation, and the ability to provide the translation of something that has no equal in the target language.

Translation problems: can be divided into linguistic problems and cultural problems: the linguistic problems include grammatical differences, lexical ambiguity and meaning ambiguity; the cultural problems refer to different situational features. The first level of translation problems is lexicon, morphology, syntax, textual differences, rhetorical differences, and pragmatic factors. Another level of difficulty in translation work involves over-translation, under-translation, and untranslatability. On the other hand, culture constitutes another major problem that faces translators. A bad model of translated pieces of literature may give misconceptions about the original. That is why Venuti (2001) thought that poorly translated texts distort the original in its tone and cultural references, while Zidan (1994) wondered about the possible role of the target culture content as a motivating variable in enhancing or hindering the attainment of linguistic, communicative and, more importantly, cultural objectives of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) education.

Translator's Work: These problems, and others, direct our attention to the work and the character of translators, how they attack a text so as to translate, and the processes they follow to arrive at the final product of a well-translated text in the target language. Enani (1994:5) defines the translator as "a

writer who formulates ideas in words addressed to readers. The only difference between him and the original writer is that these ideas are the latter's". Another difference is that the work of the translator is even more difficult than that of the artist. The artist is supposed to produce directly his/her ideas and emotions in his/her own language however intricate and complicated his/her thoughts are. The translator's responsibility is much greater, for s/he has to relive the experiences of a different person.

On the procedural level, El Shafey (1985:95) states: "A translator first analyzes the message, breaks it down into its simplest and structurally clearest elements, transfers it at this level into the target language in the form which is most appropriate for the intended audience.

Translation skills for novice translators and students: The present article suggests four main macro-skills for any translator who begins his/her work in the field of translation. These are: reading comprehension, researching, analytical, and composing skills. These macro-skills include many sub- or micro-skills that need to be mastered. Novice translators as well as student translators are advised to master the following basic skills:

A- Reading comprehension:

* Read for gist and main ideas.

* Read for details.

* Identify the meaning of new words and expressions using one or more components of the structural analysis clause; prefixes, suffixes, roots, word order, punctuation, sentence pattern, etc.

* Identify the meaning of new words and expressions using one or more of the contextual analysis; synonyms, antonyms, examples, etc.

* Identify the writer's style: literary, scientific, technical, informative, persuasive, argumentative, etc.

* Identify the language level used in the text: standard, slang, religious, etc.

* Use bilingual dictionaries for looking up meanings of new words.

* Use monolingual dictionaries to check the usage of the new words in the source language and in the target language.

* Use related encyclopedias and glossary lists for specialized terms.

* Use software dictionaries if necessary and available.

* Refer to specialized magazines and journals to help you familiarize yourself with the text, particularly when it is a technical text.

C-Analytical skills: The translation process is characterized by an analysis stage and a synthesis stage. During analysis, the translator refers to the prototext in order to understand it as fully as possible. The synthesis stage is the one in which the prototext is projected onto the reader,

or rather, onto the idea that the translator forms of who will be the most likely reader of the metatext. Translators are, therefore, advised to use the following strategies in the analysis stage:

* Identify beginnings and endings of ideas in the text and the relationships between these ideas.

* Identify the "best" meaning that fits into the context.

* Identify the structure in the Target Language that "best" represents the original.

* Identify transitions between ideas and the "best" connectors in the target language that represent the original.

D- Composing skills: At this point, the mental construction resulting from interpretation seeks an outer expression. The expression stage involves two sub-stages. One is aimed at expression, the other at cohesion. The translator, having finished his/her interpretative work, has two needs: first, to externalize the set of impressions caused by the text and translate into speech elements the impressions the mind produced by contact with the prototext; and second, to make this product coherent within itself, i.e., transform the set of speech elements into a text (the metatext).

As a novice translator, or a student translator, you are invited to make use of the following basic strategies:

* Use correct word order as used in the target language.

* Use correct sentence structures as used in the target language.

* Transmit the ideas of the text in clear sentences in the target language.

* Rephrase certain sentences to convey the overall meaning translated.

* Make changes to the text as a whole to give it a sense of the original without distorting the original ideas.

* Try one or more of the following strategies when facing problems of untranslatability.

a. Syntactic strategies:

o Shift word order.

o Change clause/sentence structure.

o Add or change cohesion.

b. Semantic strategies:

o Use superordinates.

o Alter the level of abstraction.

o Redistribute the information over more or fewer elements.

c. Pragmatic strategies:

o Naturalize or exoticize.

o Alter the level of explicitness.

o Add or omit information.

The Holy Month of Ramadan

For over one billion Muslims worldwide, Ramadan-the ninth month of the Islamic calendar-is the most special month of the whole year. Ramadan took its name from

the Arabic word iar-ramadī in reference to intense heat and shortness of rations. It gains its specificity from being the month in which the first verses of the holy Qur'an were revealed to Prophet Mohammad may peace be upon him in laylat al-Qadr. The other reason which makes this month a unique one is the event of fasting practiced by observant Muslims everyday during the month. Muslims get up before dawn to have their Suhoor, the pre-dawn meal, and perform the fajr prayer. They do not eat or drink anything after this prayer is said. They break their fast after the fourth prayer of the day, Maghreb (sunset), is due. Muslims may continue to eat and drink after the sun has set until the next morning's fajr prayer. Although it requires participating Muslims to stop eating or drinking anything from dawn until sunset, fasting is meant to teach people much more valuable lessons. The fast is intended to be an exciting act of deep personal worship in which Muslims seek a raised level of closeness to God Almighty. It also redirects the heart away from worldly activities in order to clean the inner soul and free it from harm. This redirection can be achieved by putting more effort into following the teachings of Islam, avoiding obscene and obtaining purity of both thought and action. Fasting also allows Muslims to experience self discipline, sacrifice and sympathy for those who are less fortunate. Such experiences make Muslims more generous and charitable. In addition to fasting, Muslims are encouraged to read the entire Qur'an and hold special prayers called Tarawih. Tarawih prayers are held in mosques every night of the month after night Isha' prayer. Muslims also pay Zakat which is only applicable if one can afford it. Although Zakat can be paid any time of the year, it has to be calculated on a year to year basis and many Muslims use Ramadan as the month of calculation and distribution. The end of fasting period of Ramadan and the first day of the following month is marked by the Islamic holiday of Eid ul Fitr. During Eid ul Fitr a special celebration is made where everyone wears new clothes and communal prayers are held in the early morning followed by feasting and visiting relatives and friends. Muslims pay donations to donate Zakat ul Fitr to the poor.

Written by: Marwa Abdul Hamid Shumo

سُنُونٌ أكاَدِيمِيًّا يَنْظُمُونَ إِلَى الْهَيْئَةِ الْتَدْرِيسِيَّةِ بِالْجَامِعَةِ



استقبلت جامعة نزوى الشهر الماضي حوالي ٦٠ عضواً أكاديمياً من حملة الدكتوراه والماجستير في تخصصات متنوعة من عدة جنسيات مختلفة من أرجاء العالم.

يأتي ذلك من حرص الجامعة على توفير هيئة أكاديمية على مستوى عال من الكفاءة والخبرة العلمية، وإرساء لأهمية تطبيق مبادئ الجودة الشاملة، التي لها الدور الرئيس في الإسهام في تحقيق أهداف الجامعة التي يقع في طليعتها الإعداد العلمي والعملي المتقن والمميز للطالب الجامعي.

وقد صرح محمد بن سالم المعولي - موظف في دائرة الموارد البشرية- بأن الجامعة تسعى إلى جلب موظفين وأكاديميين أكفاء يعتمد عليهم في تطبيق رسالة الجامعة وترسيخ أهدافها التي يأتي في مقدمتها بناء الإنسان العُماني، وهذا لا يتأتى إلا بتعليم ذي جودة شاملة وكفاءة عالية.

وأضاف: إن الجامعة منذ نشأتها استجلبت ما يقارب ٢٠٧ أكاديميين من أنحاء مختلفة من العالم، ففي الجامعة أكاديميون من دول أوروبية، وأمريكية، وآسيوية، بالإضافة إلى الأكاديميين من الدول العربية.

الجامعة تقيم إنظاراً جماعياً بمشاركة أطياف المجتمع



سعيًا إلى تطوير العلاقات الاجتماعية وزيادة الترابط بين المجتمع الجامعي والمجتمع الخارجي؛ أقامت الجامعة في الثامن من شهر رمضان الفضيل الموافق ٩/٩/٢٠٠٨م إنظاراً جماعياً حضره عدد من ولاة وشيوخ وأعيان المنطقة ومديري العموم، وأعضاء الهيئة التدريسية والأكاديمية بالجامعة والطلاب؛ يأتي ذلك استجابة لما دعا إليه ديننا الحنيف من الترابط بين أفراد المجتمع، وتوكيداً للعلاقة الوطيدة بين جامعة نزوى والمجتمع العُماني بكل أطيافه.

مجموعة التآدي العلمي تزور جامعة ظفار

ومن خلال التجوال داخل الكلية اطلع الطلاب على الفصول الدراسية والتخصصات التي تدرس فيها، أما



في كلية الهندسة فقد شاهد الطلاب الإبداعات والاختراعات والتصميم الجرافيكى الطلابي، وكانت المرحلة الأخيرة في مبنى الإدارة الذي هو المحرك

كتب- هلال بن علي التوبي:

من منطلق حرص جامعة نزوى على التواصل الطلابي بينها وبين الجامعات العمانية الأخرى نظمت زيارة طلابية لمجموعة التآدي العلمي إلى جامعة ظفار؛ وذلك لغرض التعارف والتواصل بين طلاب الجامعتين، وقد تعرف الطلاب من خلال هذه الزيارة على الكليات الموجودة وتخصصاتها المختلفة، كما اطلعوا على نظام القبول والتسجيل وشروطه المتبعة داخل جامعة ظفار. انتقل بعدها الطلاب إلى جولة تفقدية لكليات الجامعة، تعرفوا من خلالها على كلية الآداب والعلوم التطبيقية وما تحويه من فصول دراسية، ومختبرات علمية، ومكتبة فيها كتب لجميع التخصصات بالجامعة، بالإضافة إلى قاعة شبكة الانترنت.

ثم توجه الطلاب إلى دائرة القبول والتسجيل تعرفوا فيها على النظام الأكاديمي في الجامعة وشروط القبول وكيفية التسجيل وكيفية احتساب المعدلات.

بعد ذلك تعرفوا على كلية التجارة والعلوم الإدارية،