

But translators cannot leave it at that; all these reflections upon the SL text as a whole and its units must lead to a target language message. Going through these processes in their mind translators search for a solution. In some cases the discovery of the appropriate TL unit or sentence is very sudden, almost like a flash, so that it appears as if reading the SL text had automatically revealed the TL message. In such a case translators still have to go over the text to ensure that none of the elements from the SL have been omitted before the process is finished.

But it is precisely this process which we have yet to describe in detail. At first the different methods or procedures seem to be countless, but they can be condensed to just seven, each one corresponding to a higher degree of complexity. In practice, they may be used either on their own or combined with one or more of the others.

#### 1.4.1.1 *Direct and oblique translation*

Generally speaking, translators can choose from two methods of translating, namely direct, or literal translation and **oblique** translation. In some translation tasks it may be possible to transpose the source language message element by element into the target language, because it is based on either (i) parallel categories, in which case we can speak of structural parallelism, or (ii) on parallel concepts, which are the result of metalinguistic parallelisms. But translators may also notice gaps, or '**lacunae**' (2.2.1.5), in the TL which must be filled by corresponding elements (4.3.7ff.), so that the overall impression is the same for the two messages.

It may, however, also happen that, because of structural or metalinguistic differences, certain stylistic effects cannot be transposed into the TL without upsetting the syntactic order, or even the lexis. In this case it is understood that more complex methods have to be used which at first may look unusual but which nevertheless can permit translators a strict control over the reliability of their work: these procedures are called oblique translation methods. In the listing which follows, the first three procedures are direct and the others are oblique.

#### 1.4.1.2 *Procedure 1: Borrowing*

To overcome a lacuna, usually a metalinguistic one (e.g. a new technical process, an unknown concept), borrowing is the simplest of all translation methods. It would not even merit discussion in this context if translators did

not occasionally need to use it in order to create a stylistic effect. For instance, in order to introduce the flavour of the SL culture into a translation, foreign terms may be used, e.g. such Russian words as ‘roubles’, ‘datchas’ and ‘aparatchik’, ‘dollars’ and ‘party’ from American English, Mexican Spanish food names ‘tequila’ and ‘tortillas’, and so on. In a story with a typical English setting, an expression such as ‘the coroner spoke’ is probably better translated into French by borrowing the English term ‘coroner’, rather than trying to find a more or less satisfying equivalent title from amongst the French magistrature, e.g.: “*Le coroner prit la parole*”.

Some well-established, mainly older borrowings are so widely used that they are no longer considered as such and have become a part of the respective TL lexicon. Some examples of French borrowings from other languages are ‘alcool’, ‘redingote’, ‘paquebot’, ‘acajou’, etc. In English such words as ‘menu’, ‘carburettor’, ‘hangar’, ‘chic’ and expressions like ‘déjà vu’, ‘enfant terrible’ and ‘rendez-vous’ are no longer considered to be borrowings. Translators are particularly interested in the newer borrowings, even personal ones. It must be remembered that many borrowings enter a language through translation, just like semantic borrowings or faux amis, whose pitfalls translators must carefully avoid (2.2.2 ff.).

The decision to borrow a SL word or expression for introducing an element of local colour is a matter of style and consequently of the message.

#### 1.4.1.3 Procedure 2: Calque

A calque is a special kind of borrowing whereby a language borrows an expression from another, but then translates literally each of its elements. The result is either

- i. a lexical calque, as in the first example, below, i.e. a calque which respects the syntactic structure of the TL, whilst introducing a new mode of expression; or
- ii. a structural calque, as in the second example, below, which introduces a new construction into the language, e.g.:

#### *English-French calque*

Compliments of the Season!	: Compliments de la saison!
Science-fiction	: Science-fiction

As with borrowings, there are many fixed calques which, after a period of time, become an integral part of the language. These too, like borrowings,

may have undergone a semantic change, turning them into faux amis. Translators are more interested in new calques which can serve to fill a lacuna, without having to use an actual borrowing (cf. ‘*économiquement faible*’, a French calque taken from the German language). In such cases it may be preferable to create a new lexical form using Greek or Latin roots or use conversion (cf. “*l’hypostase*”; Bally, 1944:257 ff.). This would avoid awkward calques, such as:

<i>French calque</i>	<i>English source</i>
thérapie occupationnelle	: occupational therapy
Banque pour le Commerce et le Développement	: Bank for Commerce and Development
les quatre Grands	: the four great powers
le Premier Français	: The French Premier
Le mariage est une association à cinquante-cinquante.	: Matrimony is a fifty-fifty association.
<i>(Les Nouvelles Littéraires, October 1955)</i>	
l’homme dans la rue <i>(Revue des Deux Mondes,</i> May 1955)	: the man in the street [instead of ‘l’homme de la rue’ or ‘le Français moyen’]
compagnon de route <i>(Le Monde, March 1956)</i>	: fellow-traveller
La plupart des grandes décisions sur le Proche-Orient ont été prises à un moment où Sir Winston Churchill affectait de considérer comme “vide” la “chaise” de la France sur la scène internationale. <i>(Le Monde, March 1956)</i>	: Most major decision regarding the Near-East were taken when Churchill pretended that the chair occupied by France on the international scene was empty. [instead of: ‘la place’ or ‘le fauteuil’]

#### 1.4.1.4 Procedure 3: Literal Translation

Literal, or word for word, translation is the direct transfer of a SL text into a grammatically and idiomatically appropriate TL text in which the translators’

task is limited to observing the adherence to the linguistic servitudes of the TL.

I left my spectacles on the table downstairs.	: J'ai laissé mes lunettes sur la table en bas.
Where are you?	: Où êtes-vous?
This train arrives at Union Station at ten.	: Ce train arrive à la gare Centrale à 10 heures.

In principle, a literal translation is a unique solution which is reversible and complete in itself. It is most common when translating between two languages of the same family (e.g. between French and Italian), and even more so when they also share the same culture. If literal translations arise between French and English, it is because common metalinguistic concepts also reveal physical coexistence, i.e. periods of bilingualism, with the conscious or unconscious imitation which attaches to a certain intellectual or political prestige, and such like. They can also be justified by a certain convergence of thought and sometimes of structure, which are certainly present among the European languages (cf. the creation of the definite article, the concepts of culture and civilization), and which have motivated interesting research in General Semantics.

In the preceding methods, translation does not involve any special stylistic procedures. If this were always the case then our present study would lack justification and translation would lack an intellectual challenge since it would be reduced to an unambiguous transfer from SL to TL. The exploration of the possibility of translating scientific texts by machine, as proposed by the many research groups in universities and industry in all major countries, is largely based on the existence of parallel passages in SL and TL texts, corresponding to parallel thought processes which, as would be expected, are particularly frequent in the documentation required in science and technology. The suitability of such texts for automatic translation was recognised as early as 1955 by Locke & Booth. (For current assessments of the scope of applications of machine translation see: Hutchins & Somers 1992, Sager 1994.)

If, after trying the first three procedures, translators regard a literal translation unacceptable, they must turn to the methods of oblique translation. By unacceptable we mean that the message, when translated literally

- i. gives another meaning, or
- ii. has no meaning, or

- iii. is structurally impossible, or
- iv. does not have a corresponding expression within the metalinguistic experience of the TL, or
- v. has a corresponding expression, but not within the same register.

To clarify these ideas, consider the following examples:

He looked at the map.	: Il regarda la carte.
He looked the picture of health.	: *Il paraissait l'image de la santé.
	: Il avait l'air en pleine forme.

While we can translate the first sentence literally, this is impossible for the second, unless we wish to do so for an expressive reason (e.g. in order to characterise an Englishman who does not speak very good conversational French). The first example pair is less specific, since '*carte*' is less specific than 'map'. But this in no way renders the demonstration invalid.

If translators offer something similar to the second example, above, e.g.: "*Il se portait comme un charme*", this indicates that they have aimed at an equivalence of the two messages, something their "neutral" position outside both the TL and the SL enables them to do. Equivalence of messages ultimately relies upon an identity of situations, and it is this alone that allows us to state that the TL may retain certain characteristics of reality that are unknown to the SL.

If there were conceptual dictionaries with bilingual signifiers, translators would only need to look up the appropriate translation under the entry corresponding to the situation identified by the SL message. But such dictionaries do not exist and therefore translators start off with words or units of translation, to which they apply particular procedures with the intention of conveying the desired message. Since the positioning of a word within an utterance has an effect on its meaning, it may well arise that the solution results in a grouping of words that is so far from the original starting point that no dictionary could give it. Given the infinite number of combinations of signifiers alone, it is understandable that dictionaries cannot provide translators with ready-made solutions to all their problems. Only translators can be aware of the totality of the message, which determines their decisions. In the final analysis, it is the message alone, a reflection of the situation, that allows us to judge whether two texts are adequate alternatives.

#### 1.4.1.5 Procedure 4: Transposition

The method called transposition involves replacing one word class with another without changing the meaning of the message. Beside being a special translation procedure, transposition can also be applied within a language. For example: “*Il a annoncé qu’il reviendrait*”, can be re-expressed by transposing a subordinate verb with a noun, thus: “*Il a annoncé son retour*”. In contrast to the first expression, which we call the base expression, we refer to the second one as the transposed expression. In translation there are two distinct types of transposition: (i) obligatory transposition, and (ii) optional transposition.

The following example has to be translated literally (procedure 3), but must also be transposed (procedure 4):

Dès son lever...	: As soon as he gets / got up...
As soon as he gets up...	: Dès son lever...
	: Dès qu’il se lève...

In this example, the English allows no choice between the two forms, the base form being the only one possible. Inversely, however, when translating back into French, we have the choice between applying a calque or a transposition, because French permits either construction.

In contrast, the two following phrases can both be transposed:

Après qu’il sera revenu...	: After he comes back...
Après son retour...	: After his return...

From a stylistic point of view, the base and the transposed expression, do not necessarily have the same value. Translators must, therefore, choose to carry out a transposition if the translation thus obtained fits better into the utterance, or allows a particular nuance of style to be retained. Indeed, the transposed form is generally more literary in character.

A special and frequently used case of transposition is that of **interchange** (3.3.2.1).

#### 1.4.1.6 Procedure 5: Modulation

Modulation is a variation of the form of the message, obtained by a change in the point of view. This change can be justified when, although a literal, or even transposed, translation results in a grammatically correct utterance, it is considered unsuitable, unidiomatic or awkward in the TL.

As with transposition, we distinguish between free or optional modulations and those that are fixed or obligatory. A classical example of an obligatory modulation is the phrase, “The time when...”, which must be translated as, “*Le moment où...*”. The type of modulation which turns a negative SL expression into a positive TL expression is more often than not optional, even though this is closely linked with the structure of each language, e.g.:

It is not difficult to show... : Il est facile de démontrer...

The difference between fixed and free modulation is one of degree. In the case of fixed modulation, translators with a good knowledge of both languages freely use this method, as they will be aware of the frequency of use, the overall acceptance, and the confirmation provided by a dictionary or grammar of the preferred expression.

Cases of free modulation are single instances not yet fixed and sanctioned by usage, so that the procedure must be carried out anew each time. This, however, is not what qualifies it as optional; when carried out as it should be, the resulting translation should correspond perfectly to the situation indicated by the SL. To illustrate this point, it can be said that the result of a free modulation should lead to a solution that makes the reader exclaim, “Yes, that’s exactly what you would say”. Free modulation thus tends towards a unique solution, a solution which rests upon an habitual train of thought and which is necessary rather than optional. It is therefore evident that between fixed modulation and free modulation there is but a difference of degree, and that as soon as a free modulation is used often enough, or is felt to offer the only solution (this usually results from the study of bilingual texts, from discussions at a bilingual conference, or from a famous translation which claims recognition due to its literary merit), it may become fixed. However, a free modulation does not actually become fixed until it is referred to in dictionaries and grammars and is regularly taught. A passage not using such a modulation would then be considered inaccurate and rejected. In his M.A. thesis, G. Panneton, from whom we have borrowed the term modulation, correctly anticipated the results of a systematic application of transposition and modulation:

La transposition correspondrait en traduction à une équation du premier degré, la modulation à une équation du second degré, chacune transformant l'équation en identité, toutes deux effectuant la résolution appropriée. (Panneton: 1946)

#### 1.4.1.7 Procedure 6: Equivalence

We have repeatedly stressed that one and the same situation can be rendered by two texts using completely different stylistic and structural methods. In such cases we are dealing with the method which produces equivalent texts. The classical example of equivalence is given by the reaction of an amateur who accidentally hits his finger with a hammer: if he were French his cry of pain would be transcribed as, “Aïe!”, but if he were English this would be interpreted as, “Ouch!”. Another striking case of equivalences are the many onomatopoeia of animal sounds, e.g.:

cocorico	: cock-a-doodle-do
miaou	: miaow
hi-han	: heehaw

These simple examples illustrates a particular feature of equivalences: more often than not they are of a syntagmatic nature, and affect the whole of the message. As a result, most equivalences are fixed, and belong to a phraseological repertoire of idioms, clichés, proverbs, nominal or adjectival phrases, etc. In general, proverbs are perfect examples of equivalences, e.g.:

Il pleut à seaux/ des cordes.	: It is raining cats and dogs.
Like a bull in a china shop.	: Comme un chien dans un jeu de quilles.
Too many cooks spoil the broth.	: Deux patrons font chavirer la barque.

The method of creating equivalences is also frequently applied to idioms. For example, “To talk through one’s hat” and “as like as two peas” cannot be translated by means of a calque. Yet this is exactly what happens amongst members of so-called bilingual populations, who have permanent contact with two languages but never become fully acquainted with either. It happens nevertheless, that some of these calques actually become accepted by the other language, especially if they relate to a new field which is likely to become established in the country of the TL. For example, in Canadian French the idiom “to talk through one’s hat” has acquired the equivalent “*parler à travers son chapeau*”. But the responsibility of introducing such calques into a perfectly organised language should not fall upon the shoulders of translators: only writers can take such liberties, and they alone should take credit or blame for success or failure. In translation it is advisable to use traditional forms of expression, because the accusation of using Gallicisms,



Anglicisms, Germanisms, Hispanisms, etc. will always be present when a translator attempts to introduce a new calque.

#### 1.4.1.8 Procedure 7: Adaptation

With this seventh method we reach the extreme limit of translation: it is used in those cases where the type of situation being referred to by the SL message is unknown in the TL culture. In such cases translators have to create a new situation that can be considered as being equivalent. Adaptation can, therefore, be described as a special kind of equivalence, a situational equivalence. Let us take the example of an English father who would think nothing of kissing his daughter on the mouth, something which is normal in that culture but which would not be acceptable in a literal rendering into French. Translating, “He kissed his daughter on the mouth” by “*Il embrassa sa fille sur la bouche*”, would introduce into the TL an element which is not present in the SL, where the situation may be that of a loving father returning home and greeting his daughter after a long journey. The French rendering would be a special kind of overtranslation. A more appropriate translation would be, “*Il serra tendrement sa fille dans ses bras*”, unless, of course, the translator wishes to achieve a cheap effect. Adaptations are particularly frequent in the translation of book and film titles, discussed in detail in section 4.8, e.g.:

Trois hommes et un couffin.	: Three men and a baby. [film]
Le grand Meaulne.	: The Wanderer. [book title]

The method of adaptation is well known amongst simultaneous interpreters: there is the story of an interpreter who, having adapted “cricket” into “*Tour de France*” in a context referring to a particularly popular sport, was put on the spot when the French delegate then thanked the speaker for having referred to such a typically French sport. The interpreter then had to reverse the adaptation and speak of cricket to his English client.

The refusal to make an adaptation is invariably detected within a translation because it affects not only the syntactic structure, but also the development of ideas and how they are represented within the paragraph. Even though translators may produce a perfectly correct text without adaptation, the absence of adaptation may still be noticeable by an indefinable tone, something that does not sound quite right. This is unfortunately the impression given only too often by texts published by international organizations, whose members, either through ignorance or because of a mistaken insistence

on literalness, demand translations which are largely based on calques. The result may then turn out to be pure gibberish which has no name in any language, but which René Etiemble quite rightly referred to as “*sabir atlantique*”, which is only partly rendered by the equivalent ‘Mid-Atlantic jargon’. Translations cannot be produced simply by creating structural or metalinguistic calques. All the great literary translations were carried out with the implicit knowledge of the methods described in this chapter, as Gide’s preface to his translation of *Hamlet* clearly shows. One cannot help wondering, however, if the reason the Americans refused to take the League of Nations seriously was not because many of their documents were un-modulated and un-adapted renderings of original French texts, just as the “*sabir atlantique*” has its roots in ill-digested translations of Anglo-American originals. Here, we touch upon an extremely serious problem, which, unfortunately, lack of space prevents us from discussing further, that of intellectual, cultural, and linguistic changes, which over time can be effected by important documents, school textbooks, journals, film dialogues, etc., written by translators who are either unable to or who dare not venture into the world of oblique translations. At a time when excessive centralization and lack of respect for cultural differences are driving international organizations into adopting working languages *sui generis* for writing documents which are then hastily translated by overworked and unappreciated translators, there is good reason to be concerned about the prospect that four fifths of the world will have to live on nothing but translations, their intellect being starved by a diet of linguistic pap.

#### 1.4.1.9 *Application of the seven methods*

The following chapters show that these seven methods are applied to different degrees at the three planes of expression, i.e. lexis, syntactic structure, and message, to be discussed in chapters two to four. For example, borrowing may occur at the lexical level — ‘*bulldozer*’, ‘*réaliser*’, and ‘*stopover*’ are French lexical borrowings from English; borrowing also occurs at the level of the message, e.g. ‘*O.K.*’, and ‘*Five o’clock*’. This range of possibilities is illustrated in Table 1, where each procedure is exemplified for each plane of expression.

It is obvious that several of these methods can be used within the same sentence, and that some translations come under a whole complex of methods so that it is difficult to distinguish them; e.g., the translation of ‘paper weight’

Table 1. Summary of the seven translation procedures  
(Methods in increasing order of difficulty)

	LEXIS	STRUCTURES	MESSAGE
1. Borrowing	F: <i>Bulldozer</i> E: Fuselage	<i>science-fiction</i> à la mode	<i>Five o' Clock Tea</i> Bon voyage
2. Calque	F: <i>économiquement faible</i> E: Normal School (C.E.)	<i>Lutetia Palace</i> Governor General	<i>Compliments de la Saison</i> Take it or leave it
3. Literal Transl.	F: <i>encre</i> ↕ E: ink	<i>Le livre est sur la table.</i> The book is on the table.	<i>Quelle heure est-il?</i> What time is it?
4. Transposition	F: <i>Expéditeur</i> ↕ E: From	<i>Depuis la revalorisation du bois</i> As timber becomes more valuable	<i>Défense de fumer</i> No smoking
5. Modulation	F: <i>Peu profond</i> ↕ E: Shallow	<i>Donnez un peu de votre sang</i> Give a pint of your blood	<i>Complet</i> No vacancies
6. Equivalence	F: (Mil.) ↕ <i>la soupe</i> E,UK: (Mil.) Tea E,US: chow	<i>Comme un chien dans un jeu de quilles</i> Like a bull in a china shop	<i>Château de cartes</i> Hollow triumph
7. Adaptation	F: <i>Cyclisme</i> ↕ E,UK: Cricket US: Baseball	<i>En un clin d'oeil</i> Before you could say Jack Robinson.	<i>Bon appétit!</i> US. Hi!

by 'presse-papiers' is both a fixed transposition and a fixed modulation. Similarly, the translation of PRIVATE (written on a door) by DÉFENSE D'ENTRER is at the same time a transposition, a modulation, and an equivalence. It is a transposition because the adjective 'private' is transformed into a nominal expression; a modulation because a statement is converted into a warning (cf. Wet paint : Prenez garde à la peinture, though 'peinture fraîche' seems to be gaining ground in French-speaking countries); and finally, it is an equivalence since it is the situation that has been translated, rather than the actual grammatical structure.

#### 1.4.2 *Documentation*

The degree of difficulty which provides the ordering sequence for Table 1, listing all translation methods, is based on the growing need to consider metalinguistic information. Literal translation and transposition presuppose a solid knowledge of the linguistic structures of both languages; the successful application of the methods of modulation, equivalence and adaptation require translators to have additional experience. They must be able to locate a text in its social environment and be informed about the current state of literature, science, politics etc. of both language communities which are reflected in the texts they are asked to translate. This knowledge can be supported by appropriate techniques of documentation.

Documentation is an indispensable support for translators which is, however, useful only to the extent that it has been personally collected. This means that a translator's work is never done, that it starts again with every new text, and that lack of direct and regular contact with the countries of the two languages can lead to serious misinterpretations and inappropriate TL expressions. Documentation is of two major types:

##### a. *General documentation*

This is concerned with placing the language in its social setting.

Travel abroad was at one time considered the classical means of acquiring a language. This was not perceived as remedying a shortcoming of teaching, but rather as a recognition that it is easier to teach the forms of a language than its usage which is dependent on metalinguistic information. Travel permits a constant adjustment to the situation, which formal grammar teaching cannot achieve.

Human contacts provide the necessary context for the emanation of messages; they motivate them and give them their meaning. As part of their training and ongoing formation, translators collect pairs of equivalents and adaptations which they can use in their professional work. They will also see all around them news headlines, posters and notices and film titles typical of the nature of the language.

A substitute for travel are documentaries and other films which capture the spirit of a place or a people in natural settings. In both French and English considerable attention must be paid to regional variations in the language. Canadian French, for example, has created words for objects and phenomena unknown in France, (e.g. the words '*poudrerie*' for 'blizzard' since snow storms are common occurrences in Canada but rare in France) and there are words of French customs and traditions which are not used in Canada. When dialogues are written in contemporary colloquial language, they serve as examples of current usage and provide ready-made situation-conditioned utterances which are difficult to identify in dictionaries. Older films or films set in a historical period can even provide evidence of the evolution of a language. Specialised books on customs and traditions, specially when they are written with a keen sense of observation, are equally important for translators. Phrase books are equally very useful as are specialised vocabularies with contextual examples which alone can illustrate the use of a word in its context. (Cf. the excellent *Vocabulaire de géomorphologie*, by H. Baulig, Paris, Belles Lettres, 1956 and the more recent *Vocabulaire de l'édition*, Walton on the Naze: GnoufGnouf 1990).

Finally there is the documentation which in the United States is called 'realia', i.e. photographs, drawings and other objects which have a direct relationship with a particular text or author. The associated meaning and power of explanation of some of these items is undeniable. The visual bilingual dictionary by J.-C. Corbeil and A. Archambault (*Dictionnaire thématique visuel français-anglais*, Montréal: Québec-Amérique, 1987) was created in this perspective. Without personal experience or a photograph it is impossible to imagine what an English country lane looks like or the campus of an American university, or even these strange combinations of chemist shops and ironmongers called 'drugstores'.

Clippings from newspapers and magazines, e.g. photographs, drawings, advertisements, caricatures etc., are the simplest way of associating a text with a situation. There are however some pitfalls. The deliberate or unconscious

imitation of American magazines we find in the French press, tends to vitiate the presentation of some messages and some are, of course, translations. It is, however, relatively easy to identify texts which have been translated from English by their use of the false comparative, artificial prestigious allusions, certain uses of emphasis and an unusual verbosity.

It is regrettably often the case that a translator's client is responsible for the awkward effects of a closely calqued translation which could have been avoided by a judicious use of transposition or modulation.

b. *Parallel texts*

Though we can always learn from other translations, translators should be suspicious of the, normally unconscious, influence an original can exert. Even if the target language terminology is flawless, it is always possible that parts of the metalinguistic attitudes of the SL have discoloured the TL text, especially in official international documents where the pressure on closeness of structures is great.

The advantage of parallel documentation lies in the fact that it can yield monolingual elements which correspond to an identical situation. In principle, translators must assume that writers' intentions are fully covered and recoverable from the language of the message and its metalinguistic background, except in cases of cultural contamination. (For example, a French-Canadian text may contain English-Canadian metalinguistic information, even if the author himself does not know English.)

Research into parallel texts can be carried out along two lines:

a. Comparison of texts dealing with identical or parallel situations.

*Examples:*

- Shipwreck of an ocean liner:  
Edouard Peisson, *Parti de Liverpool*, Paris: Grasset 1934;  
W.C.Wade, *The Titanic, End of a Dream*, New York: Rawson 1979.
- Description of a tropical storm:  
Henri Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, *Paul et Virginie*, Paris: Flammarion 1972;  
Richard Hughes, *A High Wind in Jamaica*, London: Chatto 1960.
- War situations:  
Ernest Hemingway, *Men at War*, New York: Crown 1942;  
Henri Barbusse, *Le feu*, Paris: LFG 1988.
- Descriptions of Venice:  
John Ruskin, *The Stones of Venice*, London: Allen 1892;  
Marcel Proust, *La fugitive*, Paris: Gallimard 1954.

b. comparable stylistic features as revealed in source texts and their translations, e.g. John Ruskin, *The Bible of Amiens*, and the translation produced by Marcel Proust.

#### 1.4.3 Terminology and key words

So far we have considered the support translators can derive from the environment of the text to be translated. Another type of support, provided this time from inside the text, has also to be considered, namely the terminology. Every text is dominated by a number of key words which are usefully identified at the outset. This is self-evident in a technical text. For example, in text 5 (in the Appendix) the terms of naval construction can be separately identified. But the need for identification of key words in a text applies equally to general language words which play a major role in the articulation of ideas expressed in a text, e.g.:

Une averse de soleil tombait sur ce désert blanc, éclatant et glacé, l'allumait d'une flamme aveuglante et froide; aucune vie n'apparaissait dans cet océan de monts; aucun mouvement dans cette solitude démesurée; aucun bruit n'en troublait le profond silence. (Maupassant)

We identify the four dominant impressions of cold, light, vastness and immobility. We can also single out the key words which create this effect:

cold:                *glacé, froid*  
 light:              *averse de soleil, blanc, éclatant, allumer, flamme aveuglante*  
 vastness:         *désert, océan de monts, démesurée*  
 immobility:      *désert, aucune vie, aucun mouvement, solitude, aucun bruit, le profond silence*

Once translators understand the mood of this text, the quality of the translation depends less on the literal rendering of each word than on an equivalent effect, even if the words which create it do not correspond to each other. We propose:

The sun shone fiercely over this frozen desert of glittering ice and snow, now ablaze with a blinding, inhuman light. The mountains stretched away in their emptiness and showed no sign of life. Nothing stirred in this boundless solitude. The silence lay unbroken.

As a second example we have chosen an essay by Hugh MacLennan, *The Challenge to Prose*, published in the *Mémoires de la Société royale du*

*Canada, June 1955.*

Today the current of communication between serious writers and serious readers must seep through a variety of blockages. Some of the channels are fouled by a lot of extremely foolish criticism. Some have been clogged by unnecessarily obscure language. All, to a greater or less degree, have been hampered by the strange conditions within the book trade.

The idea of obstacle is conveyed through ‘to seep through’, ‘blockages’, ‘fouled’, ‘clogged’, ‘hampered’. These words do not have to be translated literally. It is not even necessary to preserve the same image if the analysis has identified the chief idea and its way of expression. We could, for example, use a river as an image to make the same point.

Entre les écrivains sérieux et leurs lecteurs, les communications ressemblent aujourd’hui à un fleuve dont le lit est étranglé ou engorgé par toutes sortes d’obstacles. Une critique souvent absurde, une langue inutilement obscure sont autant d’entraves à l’échange des idées. À des degrés divers, c’est la situation anormale de la librairie qui est responsable de cet état de choses.

This method is more useful to students than to professional translators who do not have the time to undertake the kind of written analysis we have performed here. We believe, however, that translators carry out this form of analysis subconsciously if their training has made them aware of this approach to textual analysis.

In general this form of analysis is yet another demonstration of the principle that the requirements of rendering meaning override those of form and that translators must free themselves from formal constraints in order to retain meaning. The full capture of the terminology or key words of a text is the most efficient way of dealing with texts because this method systematises the process of going from words to thought and from thought to words.

#### 1.4.4 *Segmentation*

In section **1.3.1** we have tried to explain the importance of units of translation and given the term ‘segmentation’ to the division of a text into its units of translation. We can distinguish between segmentation and neutralisation (*démontage*) which reduces the SL text to a neutral language whose semantic elements are simply annotated with respect to their structural functions. This technique has its place in a study of comparative syntax, but exceeds the needs of translators.



Segmentation also permits translators to verify that every unit has been translated. It is especially needed in cases of complex sentences, where the SL and the TL units can be numbered in order to control their full correspondence. We demonstrate this technique in the following examples.

1 Fortunato,	1 Fortunato
2 lorgnant	2 kept darting
3 la montre	4 longside glances at
4 du coin de l'oeil,	3 the watch,
5 ressemblait à	5 like
6 un chat	6 a cat
7 à	
8 qui	7-8 who,
9 l'on	
10 présente	9-10 presented with
11 un poulet	12 a whole
12 tout entier.	11 chicken
	and
13 Comme il sent qu'	13 suspecting that
14 on se moque de lui,	14 she is being made fun of,
15 il,	
16 n'	15-7 dares
17 ose	16 not
18 y porter la griffe,	18 reach out for it,
19 et	19 and
20 de temps en temps,	20 at times
21 il détourne les yeux	21 looks away
22 pour	
23 ne pas	
24 s'exposer à	
25 la tentation;	22-5 to resist temptation,
26 mais	28 all the while
27 il se lèche les babines	27 licking her chops
28 à tout moment,	
29 et	29 and
30 il a l'air de	30 wanting to
31 dire à	31 tell
32 son maître:	32 her master
33 "Que	33 how
34 votre plaisanterie	36 mean
35 est	34-5 he is.
36 cruelle!" (Mérimée)	

Considering its length, this passage offers a great variety of units of translation which serve as basis of translation. The analysis identifies the following morpho-syntactic groups:

a. prepositional verbs:

*ressembler à, se moquer de, s'exposer à, succomber à*

b. unified groups:

*du coin de l'oeil, de temps en temps, à tout moment, avoir l'air de*

c. affinity groups:

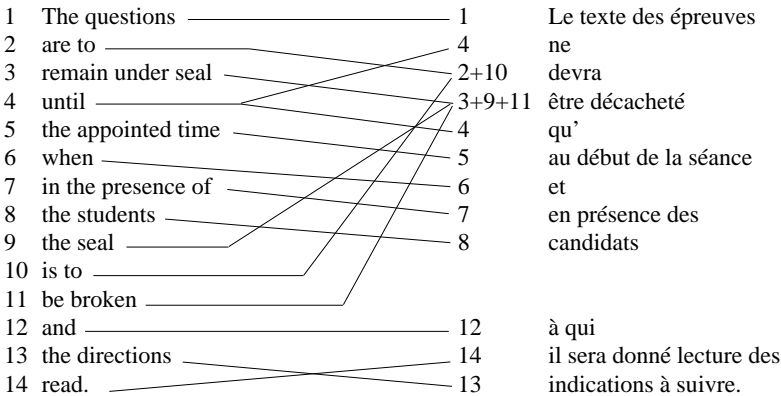
*lorgner du coin de l'oeil  
tout entier  
détourner les yeux*

*porter sa griffe sur  
se lécher les babines  
s'exposer à la tentation*

Without any loss of meaning the French units | *ne pas* | *s'exposer à* | *la tentation* | have been merged into a single unit |resist temptation|.

Such a verification is especially useful when literal translation methods have to be put aside in favour of oblique procedures.

In the next example the lines connecting the units permit tracing their movement in oblique translation and verifying their full preservation in the TL. The numbering permits us to show the concentrations achieved in the French translation, which is shorter because the translator has been able to rethink the message instead of following step by step the sequence of the SL text.



## Notes

- a. '*devra*' covers both 'are to' and 'is to';
- b. '*être décacheté*' renders both 'to remain under seal' and 'the seal (is to) be broken';
- c. '*et*' conveys 'when' which introduces an apposition with a coordinating function, in the sense of 'when... and then';
- d. '*à qui*' which replaces 'and' is a modulation which changes the coordination into subordination;
- e. '*ne que*' replaces 'until';
- f. French is more explicit when it says:
 

texte des épreuves	for:	questions
début de la séance	for:	appointed hour
candidats	for:	students
donner lecture	for:	read.

## 1.5 Further Reading

This short listing of recent writings concentrates on translation studies, leaving the discussion of the three levels of expression to the other chapters.

For general reference the new dictionary of linguistics by Dubois (1994) is strongly recommended.

For general questions of linguistics and language analysis in section 1.1, the following titles may provide a wider background: Beneveniste (1974), Hjelmslev (1966), Jakobson (1956), Lyons (1977), Martinet (1966). For further reading on French stylistics see Sumpf (1971) and Guiraud (1980).

The selection of books dealing specifically with translation problems is limited to books written in English or French and to those which make explicit reference to the work of Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelnet, and which we can therefore consider to follow the same or a similar orientation in translation studies.

Contrary to all expectations, books on translation written in English seem to be produced by monolingual speakers or at least by people who dislike reading other languages. So it is not surprising that only exceptionally do we find a full discussion, rather than a passing reference, to this book in English publications, while the opposite is certainly not true. The result is that until recently Vinay and Darbelnet were almost completely ignored by English-speaking writers in the United States and are only cursorily referred to in Great Britain. It must, however, also be observed that concern with translation in the English-speaking world has only very recently turned to applied aspects.

*English books:*

In his applications-oriented books Newmark (1981, 1988 & 1991) gives full explanations of the methods of transposition and modulation. Nida, whose principal concern is Bible translation, nevertheless refers to the authors in Brislin (1976).

In his many German books, Wilss makes numerous references to the work of Vinay & Darbelnet; here we cite only the English version of one of his fundamental works, i.e. Wilss (1982). Bell (1991) and Sager (1993) present and discuss the seven methods of translation.

Among recent books written in English brief references can be found in: House (1977), Bassnet-McGuire (1980), Snell-Hornby (1988), Gutt (1991), Robinson (1991), Hervey (1992).

*French books:*

Books referring to Vinay & Darbelnet fall into two groups. There are a number of course books, some of which, for example Gouadec (1974), cite several pages virtually verbatim. Others which are substantially inspired by Vinay & Darbelnet are Sparer & Larose (1978) and Chuquet & Paillard (1987). Grellet (1991) and Ballard (1992) advise students to study the 7 methods. Guillemin-Flescher (1981) explains the methodological principles underlying the analyses.

Jean Delisle (1980) fully recognises the influence Vinay & Darbelnet have had on the teaching and evolution of theories of translation. In his book of 1990 he traces the historical evolution of SCFA and fully adopts its principle in (1993).

Georges Mounin (1963 & 1976) seems to have been the first French linguist to fully recognise the important contribution made to the theory of translation by the approach chosen by the authors. The *Grande Encyclopédie Larousse* (1976) discusses the seven methods of translation in some detail in the article 'Traduction' written by J.-R. Ladmiral. Of particular relevance to the background to translation is Clas & Safair (1992). Other more theoretically oriented references are Duneton (1972 & 1978, 2nd ed.), Margot (1975), Seleskovich & Lederer (1984), Garnier (1985) and Taton (1986).

Among recent French books brief references are to be found in: Ladmiral (1979), Pergnier (1980), Kocourek (1982), Lederer (1990).