

## THE AIM OF TEACHING TRANSLATION AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

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There are two important aims in the teaching of the translation coursesl at the university level:

1. Teaching the student the techniques of successful translation as an end in itself
2. Teaching the student the techniques of translation as a means of making him practice and improve his English, especially in the first year courses

Both as an end and as a means, in the translation courses there are certain points which the teachers should stress. These points can be summarized under three headings:

- a. *Structure*: Mastering the grammatical stock
- b. *Vocabulary*: Mastering the lexical stock
- c. *Context of situation*: Being familiar with the ways of the working of language in society

The first point is mastering the grammatical stock of both languages.

Understanding and then relating what is understood are supposed to be all the expectations for a good translation. But this is not sufficient to become a good translator. Since every language has a different grammatical structure, a translator is expected to organize once again, what he has understood in one form, into another. While he is doing so, he moves from deep structure to surface structure. That is, from the meaning to the form. In this way the translator makes the necessary transformations to solve the ambiguities if there are any before he makes the new organizations.

There are some sentences which can have several interpretations. Such sentences present a syntactic ambiguity:

Bu gün / gideceğini söyledi	"He told me today that he would go"
Bu gün gideceğini / söyledi	"He told me that he would go today"
Araba bekledi	"He waited for the car"
	"The car waited for him"

The student should be able to disambiguate such sentences which have one surface structure, but more than one deep structure. He should be able to recognize the syn

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(1) Ahmet Cemal, "Öğretimde Amaç ve Araç olarak çeviri" *Türk Dili Aylık Dil ve Yazın Dergisi*, Çeviri sorunları özel sayısı, 1.7.1978, sayı 222, P. 45

tactic relations between the word groups so as to decide which one of the two different underlying structures he should translate into Turkish when he meets such an English sentence on the surface structure as "visiting relatives can be a nuisance".

Thus he should be able to make his choice before he translates either as "visiting relatives are a nuisance" or as "visiting relatives is a nuisance." Of course reading and understanding first the linguistic context as a whole is important to solve these ambiguities.

Another point, here, that a student who is being trained to become a translator should keep in mind is the fact that every language has its own peculiarities. In Turkish, for example, there is the process of adding suffix to suffix. This process can result in huge words which can be the equivalent of a whole English phrase, clause or sentence:

sınıftakiler  
yenilirken

"Those in the classroom"  
"While they were being eaten"  
"While they were being defeated"

Avrupalılaştıramadıklarımızdanmısınız ?

"Are you one of those whom we could not Europeanize ? "

In order that the student be able to solve such grammatical structures, he must know both languages well.

The second important point which should be stressed in translation courses is mastering the lexical stock, and how to make the best use of the dictionaries.

In translation, the sentence has to be dissolved and atomized first. Then, its elements must be reconstituted in a new form. While the student is replacing the formulation of one interpretation by another formulation as equivalent as possible, he should never forget that grammatical sequences have more than one meaning. The interpretation of each depends upon the linguistic context in which it is used. So when the student looks up a word in the dictionary he should know that he must be careful in his choice of the most suitable meaning to fit into the context. Thus, he will not attempt to translate such a sentence "Meydan senindir" into English as "The public square is yours", but as "Everything is yours". And when he is asked to translate such an English sentence as "It gives me a kick,, he will know that he must replace this formulation of interpretation by another which is either "Beni heyecanlandırıyor" or "Hoşuma gidiyor".

Of course it is difficult to teach the student the whole lexical stock of English at once. Here the student should be given the skill to solve the grammatical structure first and then to use a dictionary.

Words do not have basic standardizations in what they refer to in different languages. That is why it is difficult to translate culturally remote languages. For example, such Turkish expressions as "Şeker bayramı" and "Kurban bayramı" do not have exact equivalents in English because the Turkish and English speaking communities do not share the same religion.

Especially in the translation of the work of literature the student should be able to make a choice between the literal and the literary.<sup>2</sup>

When the nearest translation equivalents of individual words are taken in isolation and put together in sentences, they are not attractive, and they do not represent the original. That is because the grammatical form of sentences and sometimes the phonetic form of words which the author has already chosen can be taken as the parts of the literary form of the whole work. Therefore constructing version which is as near to the original as possible requires a good and sensitive appreciation of all aspects of both languages. That is the reason why the student should keep in mind that as a translator. He must have an individual feeling for the artistic and cultural possibilities of the two languages.

When the student is asked to translate such a sentence as "He quitted this mortal stage" he must make a choice between the following possible Turkish equivalents:

"Öldü"  
 "Vefat etti"  
 "Dünyadan ayrıldı"  
 "Bu fani dünyayı terketti"

Of course this kind of choice is due to his personal feelings as it is due to the context in which the sentence takes place.

The third point which should be stressed is being familiar with the contexts of situation of both languages.

Language serves a great number of purposes and utterances perform many functions. Thus, the context of situation, that is, the ways of the working of the language in society is an important factor<sup>3</sup> which the student should also keep in mind. The contexts differ according to the cultural differences between communities. The student must be aware of the fact that he may come across the different uses of the language that he is studying. Some of these uses can be summarized as:

a. Poetry of all kinds

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(2) Robins R.H. *General Linguistics: An Introductory Survey*, Longman Group Limited, London, 1971, p. 29

(3) Robins, P. 25

- b. Rhetoric, narrative and historical records
- c. Ritual and ceremonial utterances
- d. The forms of legal, political, commercial and administrative operations
- e. The professional intercourse of technical, learned and academic persons
- f. The ways of talking and writing of the individuals in their cooperation with their families and the other members of the community. This also includes idle chatter, modes of greeting and utterances produced where silence would be taken for discourtesy<sup>4</sup>

As it can be seen, language embraces more than the formal discourse of philosophy and the works of written literature. The mastery of a foreign language also involves the command of its uses in different environments. Therefore in the translation courses the teacher may expect the student to become familiar with at least some of these different uses of language.

The courses of American and English literature which the students take during their studies in the department of English language and literature help them to become acquainted with the total ways of living and thinking of English speaking societies to some extent as they read the written products of these cultures.

Thus, when they are asked to translate the following dialogue by W. Faulkner, they won't be puzzled thinking that a famous American author is writing ungrammatical sentences in one of his works:

"Yes you is" Dilsey said. "You done something to him. Where you been!

"Over yonder under them cedars." Luster said.

"Getting Ouentin all riled up." Dilsey said. "Why can't you keep him away from her. Don't you know she don't like him where she at."

"Got as much time for him as I is," Luster said.<sup>5</sup>

As it is already known, the expression of our thoughts and knowledge is tied by vocabulary, by syntax, by jargon words to the language in which we acquired the knowledge and mastered certain skills. Therefore as a translator the student should never forget that he himself is a means of transference of both the essence and the form of the written work, whether it is literary or technical, into the other language. He should be able to select the best which is the most suitable among the words and expressions of the target language, for the original text.

Since every author has his own style, every translator should try to imitate or carry over this style into the target language. Here it seems that his cultural

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(4) Robins, P. 26

(5) Faulkner, W. *The Sound And Fury*; Penguin Books, 1971, p. 56

background is also important in doing this. That is why a passage is translated in different forms with different words and expressions. Therefore the student should be encouraged to study different translations of the same work, by different translators so as to point out and criticise different tastes to modify his approach.

At the university level the students are expected to come to class having translated the given assignments and participate in class discussions on the analysis and the comparison of the structures, vocabulary and contexts of situation of the two languages.

### SUMMARY

The students at the departments of English language and literature should be taught the techniques of translation both as an end and as means to improve their English.

In the translation courses the teachers should make an emphasis on the following points:

1 – *The structure*: (Mastering the grammatical stock) The students must be aware of the fact that since every language has a different grammatical structure they must move from the deep structure to the surface, that is, from meaning to form, making necessary transformations to solve certain ambiguities in both languages.

2 – *Vocabulary*: (Mastering the lexical stock) The student has to replace the formulation of one interpretation by another formulation as equivalent as possible. While doing so he should never forget that grammatical sequences have more than one meaning and the interpretation of each depends upon the linguistic context in which it is used. So when the student looks up a word in the dictionary he should know that he must be careful in his choice of the most suitable meaning to fit into the context.

3– *The Context of situation*: Being familiar with the ways of the working of language in society) The contexts differ according to the cultural differences between communities. The student must be aware of the fact that he may come across the different uses of the language he is studying such as poetry, rhetoric, ritual and ceremonial utterances etc. So the student is expected to become familiar with at least some of these different uses of language. The student should also be encouraged to study the different uses of language. The student should also be encouraged to study the different translators so as to point out and criticise different tastes in order to modify his own taste. This is because the translator's cultural background influences his way of carrying over the style of the author into the target language. That is the reason why a passage is translated in different forms with different words and expressions.

In the class the students are expected to participate in class discussions on the

analysis and comparison of the structures, vocabulary and contexts of situation of the two languages after having translated the given assignments beforehand.

### ÖZET

Universite düzeyindeki çeviri derslerinde özellikle İngiliz dili ve edebiyatı bölümlerinde öğrencilere çeviri teknikleri, hem iyi bir çeviri yapabilme hem de İngilizcelelerini iletirmek gibi iki amaca yönelik olarak öğretilmelidir.

Öğretmenler çeviri derslerinde şu noktalara ağırlık vermelidirler:

1 - *Dil yapısı*: (Dilbilgisi bilgisini artırmak) Öğrenciler her iki dilin birbirinden farklı dilbilgisi yapısına sahip olduklarını, bu yüzden de her iki dilde ortaya çıkabilecek ve anlam karşılıklı olan dil yapılarını (Araba bekledi": "o araba bekledi" ve "araba onu bekledi" gibi) çözebilmek için derin yapıdan yüzeyle yapıya, diğer bir deyişle, anlamdan hareketle biçime gerekli değişimleri yaparak ulaşmaları gerektiğinin farkına varmalıdırlar.

2 - *Sözcük dağarcığı*: (Sözcük dağarcığını genişletmek) Öğrenci bir dildeki dil yapılarını diğer bir dildeki yapılarla olabildiğince yakın bir şekilde aktarabilmek durumundadır. Bunu yaparken de dil yapılarının birden fazla anlam taşıyabildikleri ve her birinin yorumunun da kullanıldıkları dil ortamına göre değişebileceği gerçeğini göz önünde bulundurmalıdır. Bu yüzden öğrenci sözlüğe bakarken sözcüğün içinde bulunduğu dil ortamına en çok uyabilecek anlamını bulmakta dikkatli olmalıdır.

3 - *Dilin kullanıldığı durumlar*: (Dilin toplum içindeki kullanım farklılıklarını tanımak )

Toplumlar arası kültür farklılıklarına bağlı olarak öğrenci dilin (şiir, düzyazı, tören konuşmaları, tiyatro dili vs. gibi)değişik kullanımlarının çevirilerini yapmayı denemelidir. Öğrenciyi aynı zamanda bir eserin birden fazla çevirilerinin karşılaştırmasını yapması için teşvik etmelidir. Böylece değişik çevirmenlerin aynı esere yaklaşımlarını eleştirerek kendi çeviri uslubunu geliştirebilecektir.

Sınıfta öğrencilerin, önceden çevirisini hazırladıkları parçaların yapıbilgisi, sözcük kullanımı ve seçimi ve dilin toplumiçi kullanımını açısından yapılan tartışmalarına katılmaları sağlanmalıdır.

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