

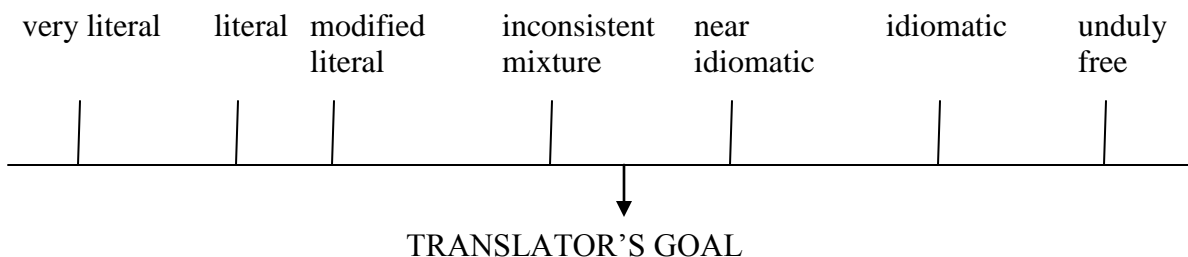
SOME THEORIES ON TRANSLATION (A Summary)

Translation

- An operation performed on languages: a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another. (Catford, 1965: 1)
- To translate is to change a text from one state or form to another, or to turn a text into one's own or another language. (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 1989: 1)
- A translation consists of transferring the meaning of the source language into the receptor language. This is done by going from the form of the first language to the form of the second language by way of semantic structure. It is the meaning which is being transferred and must be held constant, as meaning is a variable of greatest importance in a translation process. The source form carries the meanings ---- meanings which are encoded and recorded in the source wordings ---- which should be re-expressed and maintained in the target form. In other words, only the form changes. These meanings should then be transferred, encoded, and recorded into the new target wordings. (Larson, 1984: 3)
- Translation is the super ordinate term for converting the meaning of any utterance of any source language to the target language. (Newmark, 1988: 32)

Models of Translation

- Form-based and meaning-based. (Larson, 1984: 15) A form-based translation is usually referred to as a literal translation, in which translators are attempting to follow the form of the source language. The meaning-based translation is the one which is known as the idiomatic translation – the meaning of the source text is expressed in the natural form of the target language.
- Translations fall on a continuum from very literal to literal, to modified literal, to near idiomatic, to idiomatic, and may even move on to unduly free.
- **The goal of a good translator is to translate idiomatically, by means of making many adjustments in the forms. In other words, the translator's goal should be to reproduce a text in the target language which communicates the same message as the source language but using the natural grammatical and lexical choices of the target language.**



Translation as a continuum (Larson, 1984: 17),

Principles of Translation

Duff (1989:10-11) proposes some general principles which are supposed to be relevant to all translations.

1. **The translation should reflect accurately the meaning of the original text.** Nothing should be arbitrarily added or removed, though occasionally part of the meaning can be transposed. The following questions will be very helpful.
 - a. Is the meaning of the original text clear?
 - b. If not, where does the uncertainty lie?
 - c. Are any words loaded, that is, are there any underlying implications?
 - d. Is the dictionary meaning of a particular word the most suitable one?
 - e. Does anything in the translation sound unnatural or forced?
2. **The ordering of words and ideas in the translation should match the original as closely as possible.** (This is probably essential in translating legal documents, guarantees, contracts, etc). But differences in language structure often require changes in the form and order of words.
3. **Languages often differ greatly in their level of formality in a specific context.** To resolve these differences, the translator must distinguish between formal or fixed expressions and personal expressions in which the writer or speaker sets the tone.
4. **Many translations do not sound natural.** This is because the translator's thoughts and choices of words are too strongly influenced by the original text. A good way to avoid this is to set the text aside and translate a few sentences from memory in order to get the natural patterns of thought in the target language.
5. **The translator should not change the style of the original as much as possible.** Changes are likely to happen if it necessary such as, many repetitions or mistakes in writing.
6. **Idiomatic expressions** ---- including similes, metaphors, proverbs, sayings, jargon, slang, colloquialisms, and phrasal verbs ---- are commonly hard to translate. To solve this problem, try any of the following.
 - a. Keep the original word between inverted commas.
 - b. Keep the original expression, with a literal explanation in brackets.
 - c. Use a close equivalent.
 - d. Use a non-idiomatic or plain prose translation.

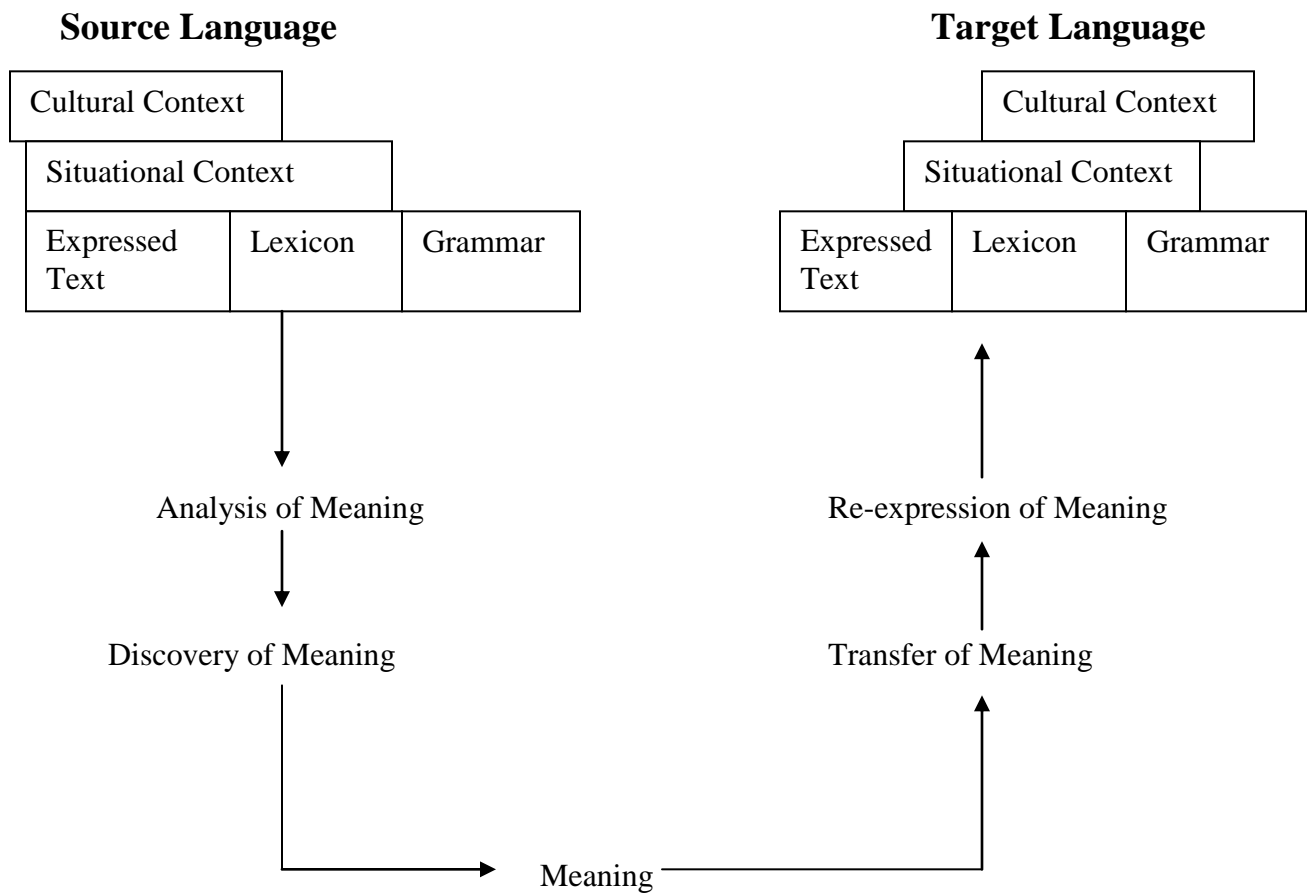
But what is the most essential is that if the idiom does not work in the target language; do not force it into the translation.

Nida as quoted by Hatim and Mason (1990: 16) proposes four basic requirements of translation, namely,

1. making sense;
2. conveying the spirit and manner of the original;
3. having a natural and easy form of expression; and
4. reproducing a similar response

Translation Process

Tou (TEFLIN, II, 1989: 134) mentions four main stages to be followed by translators in order to move the source into the target, i.e. the analysis of meaning, the discovery of meaning, the transfer of meaning, and the re-expression of meaning of the source into the target. He, however, proposes a model of translation.



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