ENGLISH-FRENCH TRANSLATION: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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Abstract: French translation and localization are essential for any company or organization aiming to expand because of its extensive reach and profound roots, particularly if the focus is on Europe. It is obvious that high-quality, on-brand translation and localization are required, as the majority of consumers claim that having access to information about a product or service in their native tongue can be more significant than pricing. Even though French is a language that is spoken by many people, there are still some translation issues that come up. We will go over a few of these issues and their fixes in this paper.

Key words: French translation, translation skills; translation teaching; translation techniques, lexical words, grammatical structure.

INTRODUCTION

Translation as a concept in language is about meaning. It refers to a word, speech, written text et cetera that has been put into one language from another. Translation is broadly defined as the act of conveying meaning from one language to another. One of the English professors sees translation as the rendering of something written in one language into another which does not misinterpret the meaning or sacrifice the feeling of the original [1]. This viewpoint is strengthened by that of Araki who stated that translation had to do with the conversion of verbal and written expression from one language into another-equivalent in meaning, tone, and idiomatic level and so forth [2]. English language is comprised of around 45% of French origin? The French language, derived from Vulgar Latin, is a Romance language and boasts a huge population of 280 million speakers worldwide. In fact, the French language is the only language besides English in all the continents with this many speakers, with 68 million speakers. Not surprisingly, it is the second most widely spoken language in Europe. Need English to French translation? We have got you covered. Due to its Romance origin, French has a Germanic heritage and lends many words to the English language. It is also referred to as a 'global language of reference' and is the only other working language among the 6 official languages of the United Nations, besides English. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that it is one of the 3 procedural languages in the European Union and is used in its proceedings as well. With this much global reach and acclaim, it's not difficult to see why businesses are interested in translating their English language content into

the French language. As more people join the fold to hire expert French translators, the popularity of English to French translation is increasing. However, it is important to note here that translating a modern language like English to the Romance language of French is no easy task, particularly due to the varying linguistic roots of these languages. Vallejo makes the definition simple and concrete when he states that translation is the finding of appropriate ways of preserving meaning, while using the appropriate forms of each language [3].

From the above definitions we notice that translation is about capturing meaning in a language and expressing it the way the native speaker of another language would. From the above also, we see that translation involves at least two languages. We will then designate the first language in which the text has been written as the source language and the one into which the message has been conveyed as the receptor or target language. From this perspective, we can then define translation as the conveyance of meaning from a source text into a target language.

As already stated, the word 'meaning' in our usage should be regarded as the clear understanding of the message of a writer or a speaker in a given context or situation. Some of the messages may be explicit while others may be implicit. To understand the message, therefore, the translator has to understand the following:

1. Lexical words used in the text,
2. Grammatical structures used,
3. Cultural context of the text,
4. Communication situation involved,
5. Emphasis the writer makes.

When all the above have been examined and the message is grasped, the translator will then use appropriate lexical words and grammatical structures in the target language to capture the message that he has discovered in the given text [4]

Using the incorrect gender is one of the most problems which you may face to face during the translation. The French language uses grammatical gender which means each French noun is either masculine or feminine. Other parts of speech, such as articles and adjectives, must agree with the nouns they modify in gender as well.

For example:

- un homme *bon* – a good man
- la voisine est *bonne* – the neighbour is good

Just like English, French has both the indefinite and the definite articles, however, the difference here is that French has different forms for different genders:

- masculine and singular (le, un)
- feminine and singular (la, une)
- plural (les, des)

French adjectives also have distinct forms for different genders, both in the singular and the plural:

- grand – (great) – masculine, singular
- grands – masculine, plural
- grande – feminine, singular
- grandes – feminine, plural

English is less inflected than French so learning how to use grammatical gender correctly may take some time. The gender of most nouns is not based on any physical traits or features, it's purely grammatical, which makes it a little harder, but not impossible, to memorize.

Here are some of the French sounds and letters that cause the most difficulties [5]:

- The French [r] is pronounced at the back of your throat, almost like a gurgling sound.
- The letter [h] is silent and not pronounced at all in French
- The endings of many French words are not pronounced: froi(d), peti(t). The ending is pronounced only if the French word ends in C, R, F, or L, with some exceptions.
- French nasal vowels – these can make you sound a bit like your nose is blocked, but they are also a common and important feature of the French language

METHODS

There are basically three (3) methods of translation. These are [5-6]:

1. Literal translation: This involves the type of translation in which the translator follows the grammatical pattern of the source text and pays strict attention to every detail in the text. This was the first of the methods of translation. It was quite useful especially in the area where the two languages involved in the translation had the same origin. At the same time, this method led to the production of renditions which meant little or nothing at all to the foreign language learner.

2. Idiomatic Translation: This is where the translation follows idioms peculiar to the language into which the translation is made.

3.	Paraphrased Translation: This is the type of translation in which the sense in the source text is restated by the translator, using his own thoughts and words.

Each of these methods has come out with some generalizations which have been tested and accepted as principles that should guide translators. In all, there are 36 of these principles that have come about as a result of the Eclectic Theory that says that materials and ideas should be selected from a wide range of sources and authorities for use by the modern translator [4; 7-8]. These are regrouped into four (4) namely:

1.	General concepts or laws
2.	Stylistic principles
3.	Idiomatic principles
4.	Grammatical principles

In this work, since our focus is on translation from French into English, we shall be concerned with the first and foremost of all the principles, that is, the principle of Accuracy. This states that the translator should give accurate transcription of the substance of the original. 'Accuracy' in this sense implies equivalence of thoughts, concepts, phrases and even sentences. All the remaining thirty-five (35) other principles aim at helping the translator at fulfilling this first principle. In this regard, therefore, instead of examining one principle after the other, we will consider some techniques that we can adopt to help us translate accurately. They will be followed by exercises [8-9].

TECHNIQUES OF TRANSLATION

Basically, these techniques will enable the learner:

1.	Appreciate the pattern of words in the source text.
2.	Observe any change that may have taken place in patterning the words in the receptor language.
3.	Observe the use of words in different contexts with different meanings.
4.	Apply the knowledge gained in the translation work.

Thus these techniques emphasize the point that translation is about re-expressing meaning using the forms and structures of the target language

The implication of these levels of language for us is that anytime translators have to do their work, they have to identify their audience. Then they should use words that the audience can understand in order to capture the message that has been derived from the source text for his/her public.

Having understood the message of a text, the translator will then continue to translate that very message in the target language. He neither adds nor tries to embellish the message. He changes the code and he may also change the form of the source text, but maintains the message. According to Larson, the translator reproduces exactly as possible the meaning of the source text. He uses the natural forms of the target language in a way that is appropriate to the kind of text being translated. Finally, he expresses all aspects of the meaning in the way that is readily understandable to the intended audience. In short, if at any given time, the translator is able to retain the message, the mood and points of emphasis in the original work, his rendition will be considered as being a faithful translation.

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