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Authentic documents or reference documents of recent times are necessary for professional translators in every domain including literature

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Abstract

Focusing on French to English and vice versa translation, reference documents or authentic documents are always necessary for new professional translators. During their academic experience, they experienced many types of texts and are introduced to new world of specific vocabularies. But Life changes with time, language and vocabularies are also changing. So, in changing scenario, new translators, even experienced translators too, have to research on some recent times materials to know the new things, get familiarize with new vocabularies, introduce new terms using the processes of translation. Each and every domain has some specific and some common vocabularies in formal mails and reports. One can't know about all domain specific vocabularies but wherever he/she works, he/she should have a basic but gradually developing knowledge.

Keywords: Translator, domain specific vocabulary, authentic document, reference material, research

Introduction

“La même page française ne se traduira pas de même en anglais et en bantou. La distance existant entre deux cultures laisse une empreinte inévitable sur la façon de traduire, bien plus que les rapports purement linguistiques.” (E. Cary)

Translation is to send one message to others by changing the language, by remaining the same meaning. If one translates the texts word-to-word, then the meanings will be lost, the “vouloir-dire” of the speaker will be lost. So, to remain the exact sense of the speaker, one need to “réexprimer” not “transcoder” the sense.

The role of a translator is not an easy job. One has to understand the exact sense, after that one can translate it near-properly. No translation can be called proper translation, it always has a better version, which varies man to man. In the field of business, economic, political, technical, non-technical, medical etc., translators need to learn the domain's specific vocabularies in the both languages, source and target. But, is it easy to learn the all the vocabularies beforehand?

In “Translator Self-Training—Hebrew, A Practical Course in Technical Translation”, Morry Sofer mentioned the requisite of a professional translator -

The second requisite is thorough “at-homeness” in both cultures. A language is a living phenomenon. It does not exist apart from the culture where it is spoken and written. It communicates not only the names of objects and different kinds of action, but also feelings, attitudes, beliefs, and so on. To be fully familiar with a language, one must also be familiar with the culture in which the language is used, indeed, with the people who use it, their ways, manners, beliefs and all that goes into making a culture.

Teaching translation techniques are not spoon-feeding vocabularies to students. Teachers can only teach the techniques and give them texts to practice and enhance their skills. Translators should be given opportunity to work and learn in work environment.

Importance of domain specific vocabularies in translation

Each and every field has its own word, identifying their specific characteristics. Translators can't get the knowledge of whole vocabulary but should know the words related to that field or that particular organization.

In technical fields, many new terms are introduced which weren't there before. These terms can't be known by new translators.

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So, they need to research for these new terms and sometimes they can create some new terms in the target language.

Examples

Blacklist – Liste à noir (transposition)

Update – mettre à jour

In all other non-technical fields, translators are forced to know related vocabularies so that they can easily translate those materials in given short time. That's why one needs to research on that particular field, one will try to find some materials which are previously translated.

Ex. FYI – Pour info

Why particularly documents of recent times are needed to research on?

In "Translator Self-Training-Hebrew, A Practical Course in Technical Translation", Morry Sofer mentioned the requisite of a professional translator -

Third, one must keep up with the growth and change of the language, and be up-to-date in all of its nuances and neologisms. Languages are in a constant state of flux, and words change meaning from year to year. A pejorative term can become laudatory, and a neutral term can become loaded with meaning. Thirty years ago the English word "gay" simply meant "joyous." Now it is used to define an entire segment of society. We once spoke of the "almighty dollar." Now as we travel abroad we may find out the dollar is not necessarily everyone's preferred currency.

In journals or in tv-news, sometimes very colloquial terms can be heard, like "clope" (cigarette), "flic" (Police) - these types of words can only be known for native speakers, mainly by youngsters. In journalism, to simplify the language for all types of audiences, many colloquial terms are used which can be new for new translators or even for experienced translators.

In the field of science and technology, everyday new things and new terms are introduced. So many times during translation, "le calque"¹ or "l'emprunt"² is used.

Ex. Le mode plein écran – full screen mode (calque is used here),

fiscal(fr)-fiscal(en) 'l'emprunt' is used here.

Chargement – loading

GB (en.) – GO (fr.)

MB (en.) – MO (fr.)

Flight mode – La mode avion

Fwd (forward) – Tr(transféré)

But sometimes, equivalent terms are also introduced for some such words, and one can know those words only by researching recent times documents.

Ex. Faire signe – to wave/flag

Workshop – atelier

La Média and la bibliothèque – La médiathèque – Media Library

In art and culture, there are so many new words like examples, art urbain (street-art), boîte (disco). These words are very new in Indian culture and only Gen Y can understand these terms mostly.

What is 'la recherche documentaire' ?

« La recherche documentaire est essentiellement une recherche de références de documents qui correspondent à une question documentaire. L'accès aux documents eux-mêmes est une étape ultérieure même si, de plus en plus fréquemment, des solutions techniques donnent directement accès à ces documents. »

When new translators are going to translate some documents, they usually face some difficulties. To avoid that, one should go for "La recherche documentaire" where one can take a look on some other translated documents to familiarize with the vocabularies and also the way of writing in that particular field.

In technical fields, new translators even non-specialized already know the "notion de base", the basic concept of translation and techniques. The text itself consists of information about that particular thing. Only the difference is, when the thing is already known by the translator then the research process takes a fast pace, but when the matter is unknown to him/her, then it takes a more time to understand and to work on.

Translators can avoid to go for voluminous documents to research on, but encyclopaedia or dictionaries don't help always. So, one can go for some authentic documents to research on and they can take help from those, obviously from recent times, not only for that particular text, also to know the topic and for knowledge.

In chemistry or medical fields

Chemistry or medical fields also have some domain specific words. Each and every day new diseases are forming and their treatments are being invented. Like

Tube à essai – test tube

L'erenmeyer – conical flask

L'azote – nitrogen

This type of words is very particular in chemistry domain. Day by day new equipments are introduced and new technical terms are introduced in these fields. So, one has to learn the related vocabularies of this domain.

In business translation or economic sectors

In business sectors or economic sectors, there are many specific terms and many new terms are introduced day by day and new types of strategies are also developing and also these things have some specific vocabularies. Sometimes translators need to invent new terms in target language like GAAS (Generally Accepted Auditing Standards) – NVGR (normes de vérification généralement reconnues) GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) – PCGR (principes comptables généralement reconnus) which are calqued in target language.

Some other words "denrée", "accroissement" are not new in target language but reference docs are always helpful for new translators.

Also, for literature?

In literary translation too, translators need to read so many translated texts to familiarize with the vocabularies not only any specific domain. The domain of literature is so vast that each and every domain has an impact on it. It's not about only for literary terms. Some texts like science-fiction, crime stories, stories written to focus on particular business section or economic section have some domain related terms that one has to know during translation.

¹ Is a process of translation where it's translated word-to-word only keeping the structure of the sentence in that language properly.

² Is a process of translation where the word is borrowed from the source language.

As literature needs to keep the beauty and culture of the target language same as in the source language, always translators need to “réexprimer” the whole thing with true sense.

There are some words in same language but in different regions, like G'day/Giddy (En. Informal in Australia & NZ) – Good Day (En. Formal) – Salut (Fr. Informal).

Translators need to learn the local language terms and their equivalent terms in target language. As sous-traduction and Sur-traduction are the faults that can be made by the translators. If we take that example of “G'day” and the translation can't be made as “Bonjour” as it'll be Sur-traduction where level of language increases; if translator translates “Salut” or “coucou” then it follows the level of language.

Conclusion

So, in each and every field, translators should be very dynamic in a sense that they should update their vocabularies thus their abilities in their work field. Sometimes companies hire only experienced translators in that specific domain so that they're already familiarized with that domain specific vocabularies and their work can be more efficient. In each domain, translators should be given time to research on that domain specific recent times documents. It's impossible to teach everything in class, so translators need to practice some materials given or taken from somewhere. It's better to go for an internship for at least six months where they can undergo methodically from easier to harder and learn about the practical environment of translation.

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