

# Development of Strategy of English Translation

Phramaha Saranwat In-Lom

Faculty of Education, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand.

Email: frofern.fair@gmail.com

## Abstract

The purpose of this article is to present the strategy of English translation. In daily life, we normally communicate with people both in native and foreign languages to exchange information, knowledge and others. Due to different languages, translation is required to transfer the message. As a result, there are several kinds of works of translation, e.g., books, magazines, articles, movie subtitles, songs and novels.

In terms of literary works, especially fiction or novels, figurative language is frequently applied in a story to gain the reader's attention. Because of the rising popularity of English magazines, books, novels, they have been translated into target languages including Thai language. Readers expect to understand the story easily, and they may also learn some culture from the source language.

In translating, translators often encounter a variety of problems when they try to transfer the message across different cultures, especially with regard to idioms, metaphors, personifications and other figurative speech. Moreover, to keep the closest meaning of original words, the appropriate techniques or strategies should be applied to render the sense, style and culture of the language.

In this study, it sought to examine the strategies used to translate metaphors in young adult fiction. It is hoped that this study will improve translating skill with regard to both literal and figurative language. Additionally, it could help language learners compare and contrast metaphors and their Thai counterparts, and become familiar with different cultures. Finally, they can adopt a suitable approach for translating metaphors.

**Keywords:** Strategy; English translation

## Introduction

The definitions of translation have been given by a number of scholars as follows: Munday (2001:12) states that translation has a variety of meanings. It can mean the general subject, the translated text or the process of translation. The translation process refers to the activity that translators change the source text into the target text. In other words, translation is the transfer of the meaning of a text, which may be a word or a book, from one language to another for a new readership (Owen, 1996). Meanwhile, Newmark (1981) defines translation as craft that attempts to substitute a written message and/or statement in one language by the same written message and/or statement in another language. He also suggests that there are



three basic translation processes: (1) the interpretation and analysis of the original text, (2) the translation procedures, and (3) the reformation of the text in relation to the writer's intention, the reader's expectation, and the norms of the target language.

For Brislin (1976), translation is the general term referring to the transfer of thoughts and ideas from one language to another, whether the languages are in written or oral form, whether the languages have established orthographies or do not have such standardization, or whether one or both languages are based on signs, as with sign languages of the deaf (cited in Supol, 1992). Similarly, Nida (1964) defines that translation consists of producing the receptor language in the closest natural equivalent to the message of the source language, first in meaning and secondly in style. Other scholar, Catford (1965) states that translation is an operation performed on languages, a process of substituting a text in one language for a text in another, or a replacement of textual material in the source language by equivalent textual material in the target language.

In sum, translation is an art of selecting words of the receptor language that has an equivalent meaning to replace naturally those of the source language.

### **1. Translation Theories**

Translation is explained as multilingual communication. It conveys information from a native language into a foreign language. However, there are some problems found while translating. Translation theories have been developed in order to classify and explain the problems of translation. Moreover, they able to indicate the possible ways to solve the problems encountered in the translation process. Finally, the theories can be a guideline to an appropriate or possible method of translating.

Newmark (1988:6) explains translation theory as a suitable strategy that is used in a certain type of text. The theory is used to review all kinds of opinions and ideas. Moreover, he claims that before sending the message or information, translators must create the structure of text because they have to be concerned about the effect on the receiver. Additionally, as he believes that there is no problem-no translation theory, he summarizes what the translation theory does in four aspects: firstly, the problem is examined or identified and defined; secondly, translators must understand the factors that have to be taken into account in the text to determine the problems; thirdly, all possible theories will be listed; finally, the most suitable and appropriate translation procedure is recommended.

Due to the effect of equivalence in the target language, many researchers have searched for ways to address the difficulties and problems in certain complicated texts. Nida (1976) divides the theories of translation and categorized the theories into three types:

#### **1.1 Philological Theories**

The term "philology" refers to the development of language and standard literary studies, and the theories of philology generally focus on the comparison of a native and foreign language, especially with respect to functional correspondence.

Nida's approach (1976: 67-68) relates to the corresponding structure of the source text and the target language and the evaluation of their equivalence. He adds that this is a kind of stylistic feature and rhetorical device.

As-Safi (1994:22-23) studied this approach and divided it into four aspects. Firstly, it is a term of trust or faith, which is involved with the translator's assumptions about the source text. Secondly, referring to aggression, penetration or decipherment, translators attack the original meaning in translating. The third move is termed incorporation, embodiment or appropriative use, with the new part of the target linguistic and cultural systems applied in translation. Finally, compensation, restitution or fidelity refers to restoring to the target language what was missed from the source language in literature.

Although Steiner and Nida explain the translation process in different ways, they are both concerned about the correspondence between the source language and target language. They have their own techniques in order to retain the meaning of original message and the second language. Thus, to communicate effectively in different languages, the meaning of the message must be firstly considered.

### **1.2 Linguistic Theories**

According to the study of Nida's study (1976:70), linguistic theories are used in a comparison of linguistics and the structure of source languages and target languages, and they are improved by two factors. The first is the rapidly expanding application of linguistics, scientific study and other fields of language and teaching translation skills. Meanwhile, the second is the emergence the Machine of Translation (MT), which is used for translation procedures and linguistics analysis with precise descriptions of the source language and target language.

Thus, Nida (1976) recommends a three-stage model of the translation process. The terms of grammar, meaning and connotations are firstly analyzed as the linguistic core structure. Secondly, they are transferred to the target language, and finally the pattern of the TL surface element is restructured.

Similarly, the ideas of Newmark (1988:47-48) are similar to Nida's idea referring to semantic area. He stated that "Communicative Translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the receptors".

Based on the individual perspective, he claims that semantics are personal and individual, and translators follow up on the author's idea and other aspects in order to reproduce a text. Therefore, in order to communicate in society, the message is described simply, clearly, briefly and written in a natural way.

### **1.3 Sociolinguistic Theories**

These theories are linked to the translation relationship between communicative theory and informative theory with a special emphasis, as these theories require that the translator demonstrate language ability as well as a language performance.

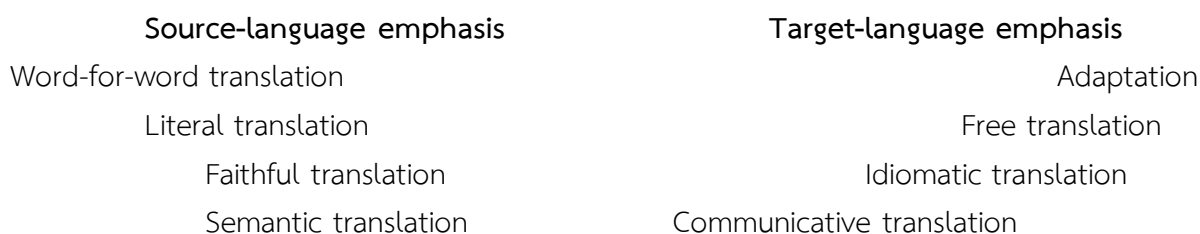


As-Safi (1994) studied Baker's theory and states that it is a general model for understanding, analyzing and describing the function and evaluation of a literary system. The major goal of this model is the application of the study of translation in the field of literature.

After studying the translation ideas of Baker (1994), As-Safi (1994:31) made three insights in regard to translating. Firstly, in terms of focusing on the general phenomena of inter-system transfer, translation should be viewed more specifically in order to get a better result. Secondly, according to the nature of equivalence between the source text and target text, the translation approach should be target-oriented by focusing on the target text and aiming to investigate the nature of the target language. Lastly, one does not simply choose the product from a set of ready-made linguistic options, but it is instead produced by systematic constraints of various types of language structures in addition to genre and literary tastes.

## 2. Translation Methods

Newmark (1998) has presented translation methods in a V diagram as follows:



**Figure 1 A translation diagram (Newmark, 1998)**

Source: Newmark, P. (1988). A textbook of translation. p. 39

From the above figure, Newmark (1998) divides translation into two main groups: the source language emphasis and target language emphasis. Each group is divided into four subgroups as follows:

2.1 Translation with the source-language emphasis comprises the following:

2.1.1 Word-for-word translation: With this kind of translation, the word order of the source language is preserved and the words translated singly by their most common meanings, out of context.

2.1.2 Literal translation: With this kind of translation, the grammatical constructions of the source language are converted to their nearest target language equivalents, but the lexical words are again translated singly, out of context.

2.1.3 Faithful translation: This kind of translation attempts to produce the precise contextual meaning of the original text within the constraints of the target language grammatical structures.

2.1.4 Semantic translation: This kind of translation differs from 'faithful translation' since it must take more account of the aesthetic value of the source language text.

2.2 Translation with the target-language emphasis comprises the following:

2.2.1 Adaptation: This kind of translation is the freest form of translation, and is used mainly for plays (comedies) and poetry. The themes, characters, plots are usually preserved,

the source language culture is converted to the target language culture and the text is rewritten.

2.2.2 Free translation: This kind of translation produces the target language text without the style, form, or content of the original.

2.2.3 Idiomatic translation: This kind of translation reproduces the message of the original but tends to distort the meaning slightly using colloquialisms and idioms where these do not exist in the original.

2.2.4 Communicative translation: This kind of translation attempts to render the exact contextual meaning of the original in such a way that both content and language are readily acceptable and comprehensible to the readers.

To summarize, theorists classify the translation theory differently, depending on each one's own principle. According to the Thai theorist, Saibau (1997), translation can be classified into two main parts, i.e. literal translation and free translation. For Larson (1984) and Newmark (1998), the translation theories are different because the former emphasizes form-based and meaning-based translations whereas the latter emphasizes translation with focuses on the source language and the target language.

### 3. Translation Strategies

Translation is difficult for translators because of the differences in culture, language structure, and meaning. As a result, translation scholars attempt to find strategies to deal with problems of non-equivalence. Baker (1992) presents eight translation strategies at word level. They are as follows: translation by a more general word, translation by a more neutral word/less expressive word, translation by cultural substitution, translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation, translation by paraphrase using a related word, translation by paraphrase using an unrelated word, translation by omission, and translation by illustration.

#### 1) Translation by a more general word (superordinate)

This strategy is a general way to cope with the problem of non-equivalence, especially where the propositional meaning concerns general words, covering the meaning of specific words in the target language.

Example I:

SL:	สีม่วงดอกรัก
BT:	color purple flower love
TL:	purple

Example II:

SL:	ฝอยทอง
BT:	Foi tong
TL:	Thai desserts

Example III:

SL:	แพนกวิน
-----	---------



BT: hit head

TL: hit on the head

(Note: the word แพบ in the example refers to hit with a heavy blow, to intrude violently.)

## 2) Translation by a more neutral word/less expressive word

When there is no word in the target language that expresses the exact meaning as the source language, the translator instead may use a near equivalent which is both less expressive and more formal.

Example I:

SL: เกรงใจ

BT: fear heart

TL: to have consideration for

Example II:

SL: ทุกขระทม

BT: tormented and suffered

TL: sad

From the above examples, there is no word in the target language that can express an exact meaning in the source language. Thus a near equivalent that but less expressive word is used.

## 3) Translation by cultural substitution

The problem of a culture-specific concept may be solved by replacing a culture-specific item with a target language item which does not have the same propositional meaning but has a similar impact on the target reader.

Example I:

SL: ไชโย

BT: chaiyo

TL: cheers

Example II:

SL: ขอให้มีความสุขในวันเกิด

BT: Wish have happiness in day birth

TL: Many happy returns of the day

Example III:

SL: to be in bed

BT: อยู่ในเตียง

TL: นอน/นอนบนเตียง

4) Translation using a loan word or loan word plus explanation. This strategy is usually used to deal with culture-specific items and modern concept. A translator can give an explanation of a loan word when it first appears in the text, and then it can be used on its own.

Example I:

SL: ทองหยอด

BT: Thong yod

TL: Thong yod, a kind of Thai dessert made from egg yolk, coconut milk and sugar

Example II:

SL: ครุฑ

BT: Garuda

TL: Garuda, a mythical man-bird in Hinduism

#### 5) Translation by paraphrase using a related word

This strategy is used when a concept expressed by the source item is lexicalized in the target language, but in a different form.

Example I:

SL: ความประพฤติของผู้หญิง

BT: behavior of women

TL: code of conduct for women

The phrase ความประพฤติของผู้หญิง (Back Translation: behavior of women) is paraphrased as code of conduct for women by using related words onto the same concept.

Example II:

SL: ศึกษาภาพชีวิต

BT: study picture life

TL: study the lives reflected

In the target language, the translator used the phrase study the lives reflected to convey the meaning of study picture life. It is plausible that the translator wanted to clearly explain the study by showing people's attitude or feeling.

#### 6) Translation by paraphrase using an unrelated word

If the concept expressed by the source item is not lexicalized at all in the target language, the paraphrase strategy can be used. The main advantage of the paraphrase strategy is to achieve a degree of precision in exact propositional meaning. However, this strategy has two disadvantages. Firstly, a paraphrase does not have the status of a lexical item, so it cannot carry expressive, evoked and associative meaning.

Secondly, it is awkward because it fills one slot with an explanation consisting of several items (Baker, 1992:42).

Example I:

SL: ควบคุมสังคม

BT: control the society

TL: enhancing the community

The concept of ควบคุมสังคม (Back Translation: control the society) is expressed by a paraphrase using unrelated words as enhancing the community. It is plausible to explain that in

the translated text, a clearer explanation is given to make the audience visualize the picture of improving of the community.

Example II:

SL:	ระยะหนึ่ง
BT:	for a while
TL:	for a long time

The phrase ระยะหนึ่ง (Back Translation: for a while) is paraphrased using unrelated words as for a long time.

#### 7) Translation by omission

If the meaning conveyed by a specific item or expression is not necessary for the reader in his/her understanding of the text, the translator can omit that particular word or expression from the translation.

Example I:

SL:	จับดูเห็นยังขึ้นอยู่ยายเลยพาดราวไมรวกตากไว้อย่างเกา
BT:	touch see still damp, grandma put on pole bamboo hang as earlier
TL:	feeling them still damp, she left them where they were

(Saewong, 2004:17)

The target language does not have the concept of ราวไมรวก, which is a dry bamboo stick used for hanging clothes. As a result, it is omitted in the translated text, but the whole meaning of the source text is still maintained.

Example II:

SL:	หนึ่งเดือนต่อมา ศาลาฮ้อยเค้าก็เป็กรูปเป็นร่างขึ้น ณ สถานที่แห่งใหม่ ริมแม่น้ำเจ้าพระยา
BT:	at place new
TL:	One month passed. Sala Hoi Khao took shape on the bank of the Cha Phraya River

(Duangloy, 2006)

From the example above, though the translator omits the word ณ สถานที่แห่งใหม่ (BT: at place new) the whole meaning of the source text is still maintained.

#### 8) Translation by illustration

If a word in the source language lacks an equivalent in the target language, and the requirement is that the text remains to the point, short, and concise. An illustration may prove to be a useful alternative.

Example:

SL:	chain restaurants
BT:	ลูกโซ่ร้านอาหาร
TL:	รานอาหารที่มีสาขาทั่วโลกเช่น Star Bucks, Mc Donald' และ Kentucky Fried Chicken (KFC) เป็นต้น



## Knowledge from the Study

English is a worldwide language. Thus, it is one of the most preferred languages in the business world. Because of its high utilization, the translation in this language has also become a vital factor. Number of websites, marketing collaterals and other documents get translated into English for a better co-ordination of business terms in different nations or countries. Thus, the responsibility over English translators also increases. Those who have little or no experience in the translation industry must be aware of few factors or kinds of translation that forms the backbone of translation.

Hence, every translator or an aspiring translator must be aware of the following, in order to deliver a quality driven output:

### 1. Information Vs. Publishing

Any business firm opts for translation services in English either for information purposes or for publishing. If you are translating for spreading information, then you just need to concentrate on delivering or conveying the correct message across. On the other hand, if it is for publishing, then besides the meaning, you must make sure that the style and tone of the translation is such that it attracts the target audience.

### 2. Translation Vs. Interpretation

Although, the difference between the two is very well understood by a major proportion of language learners, but, still it is worth mentioning. In translation, you need to translate the English text in written form. However, interpretation is the oral form of what is being said. One message is conveyed to the other party orally in the target language.

### 3. General Vs. Expert Translation

If you are translating a non-technical document, then it would be a general translation. It is not essential to be a master of a certain field to translate such documents. On the contrary, for an expert translation, you need to be versed in different specialization areas. This expertise is what every professional English translation company in India and other countries look for. If you are an expert in technical, legal, medical or other specific translation, then the chances of a great career also increases.

### 4. Translation Memories

Translators usually utilize the translation memories. It is important for you as a translator to keep track of different words, synonyms of the source and target language. But, many translators often make use of translation memories to make sure that they deliver consistent quality of translation. This also saves time.

### 5. Globalization Vs Internationalization Vs. Localization

Translation is generally required when you need to communicate with multilingual clients, or expand your business across the national boundaries. So, while you are translating your English text, you must know whether the text is for globalization, internationalization or localization. Clients are generally interested in hiring those English translation services providers



who help them transcending linguistic and cultural barriers easily. As per the need for globalization, internationalization or localization, perform your translation accordingly.

## Conclusion

A professional language translator helps eliminate the barriers imposed by unfamiliar languages and allows you to communicate directly with your foreign audience without the fear of distorting the original message's meaning. But even as you hire a language translator, you need to keep in mind that they are human beings, and they are likely to make mistakes, some of which may prove to be costly, so it can be wise to always have a second pair of eyes on any important documents that you have translated. From language translators to expert advisor programmers, find the expert you need on Guru.

## References

- Baker, M. (1992). *In Other Words. A coursebook on translation*. London, NY: Routledge.
- Brislin, R.W. (Ed.). ((1976). *Translation: Applications and research*. New York Gardner Press, Inc. Supol, 1992:4
- Duangloy, M. (2006). *An analysis of translation strategies in the novel 'Behind the Painting'*. Master's Project, M.A. (English). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University.
- Meetham, A. R., & Hudson, R. A. (Eds.). (1969). *Encyclopedia of linguistics, information, and control*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Muangyai, N. (2001). *Strategies in Translating Foreign News at Manager Newspaper*. Retrieved January 15, 2023, from [http://www.culi.chula.ac.th/Research/e-Journal/article\\_05.htm](http://www.culi.chula.ac.th/Research/e-Journal/article_05.htm)
- Newmark, P. (1981). *Approaches to translation*. Oxford: Pergemon Press.
- Newmark, P. (1988). *A text book of translation*. London: Prentice Hall International Ltd.
- Nida, E. A. (1976). *A Framework for the Analysis and Evaluation of Theories of Translation*. Translation: Applications and research, 47, 91.
- Owen, R. (Ed.). (1996). *The translator's handbook* (3rd ed.). London: Aslib.
- Saewong, J. (2004). *An analysis of translation strategies used in the short story 'The Song of the Leaves'*. Master's Project, M.A. (English). Bangkok: Graduate School, Srinakharinwirot University.
- Sager, J. C. (1994). *Language engineering and translation: consequences of automation* (Vol. 1). John Benjamins Publishing.