

## Lesson one: What is translation?

### Definition

If you check the codification of the term **translation** in dictionaries, you will most definitely find that is basically the act or process of changing something from one form to another. More precisely, translation is the process whereby a meaning or message, a style or information of a written or spoken text called **source text**, in one language, called **source language**, is rendered in the form of another text written or spoken, called **target text**, in another language, called **target language**. As such, translation can be written or oral. The written form is known as **translation**, the oral one is known as **interpreting**. Generally interpreting is used in conferences and can be by whispering, simultaneous or consecutive.

### Types of translations

The process of translation is usually regarded, according to **Roman Jakobson**, as **interlingual** in that the message in the source language text is rendered as a target text in a different language, and it is in this sense that we have referred to translation so far. But sometimes the term, translation, is also used to refer to an **intralingual** translation, a process whereby a text in one variety of the language is reworded into another (paraphrase). This would be the case where the message of a text in, say, Old English is reworked into a text in Modern English. And we can also speak of translation, when the replacement involves not another language but another, non-linguistic, means of expression, in other words a different semiotic system. In this sense we can say for instance that a poem is translated into a dance or a picture, a novel into an opera or a film. Such transmutation is an example of **intersemiotic** translation (Cited in house, 2009).

### History of translation

Interest in the history of translation has grown in recent years. Studying the history of translation is not a new Endeavour. Just as translators have frequently reflected on their art, so have they often cast a glance at the history of their profession?

It is most definitely known that the first phase of the history of translation started with **Cicero's** works (46 B.C) to **Friederich Schleiermacher's** era (1813). The second period was hermeneutic and started with **Friederich schlegel, Wilhelm Von Humboldt** and **Walter Benjamin** and lasted till 1946 with **Valery Larbo's** book ( **Sous l'invocation de St Jerome**). The third phase is known as the era of modern studies, itknew the beginning of automatic translation thinking. finally, the last period started in the sixties and is lasting to nowadays (Steiner, 1978)

How to be a good translator

It is reasonable to assume that there are some appropriate, legitimate and permissible norms that we expect from translators. Translation is, primarily, a matter of communication. As such it constitutes a form of social behavior requiring a degree of interaction and cooperation. Therefore, a translator needs acquire **social norms**; they are inculcated as part of a process of socialization. It is a must to learn how to anticipate, accommodate, calculate and negotiate the expectations of the members of the society. As such the product of the translation process (translated text) will comply both with the translational and with textual norms regarded as pertinent to the dominant values and attitudes of the social and cultural domain.