Types of Translation /Interpreting and Constraints

1. Translation Types According to Code

Roman Jakobson (1959 in Schulte and Biguenet, 1992:145) distinguishes three ways of interpreting a verbal sign: it may be translated into other signs of the same language, into another language, or into another code that is nonverbal system of symbols. These three types are succinctly put as follows:

1.1. Intralingual translation or rewording: It is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of other signs of the same language.

1.2. Interlingual translation or translation proper: It is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of some other language.

1.3. Intersemiotic translation or transmutation: It is an interpretation of verbal signs by means of signs of nonverbal sign system.

The first type is exemplified by synonyms in the same linguistic code or language, paraphrase or replacing an idiom such as **'pass away'** by **'die'**. The second type is seen in replacing certain code-units in the source language **SL** by equivalent code-units in the target language **TL**. The third refers to the use of signs or signals for the purpose of communication; the most important semiotic system is human language in contrast to other systems such as sign language and traffic signals. Obviously, this type lies within Jakobson's framework in which translation is perceived as the conversion of a sign into another alternative or equivalent sign, be it verbal or nonverbal.

2. Translation Types according to Mode

2.1. Written vs. Oral: Translating/Interpreting: General Remarks Nida and Taber's above definition, may best accommodate interpreting as the reproduction of **"the closest natural equivalent"** of the **SL** message in the **TL** serves as a common ground or interface of translating and interpreting", the former is not mainly or exclusively concerned with the accurate, semantic transference. The translated text should, at least ideally and theoretically, be as **semantically accurate**, **grammatically correct**, **stylistically effective** and **textually coherent as the source text**. On the other hand, we may analogously postulate the following workable definition for interpreting: Interpreting consists in conveying to the target language the most accurate, natural equivalent of the source language oral message.

2.2. Convergent/Divergent Requirements for Translating/ Interpreting Competence

There are at least **five** common or interfacial requirements for both translating and interpreting competence vis-à-vis ten for interpreting. The five requirements for competent translators are: *mastery or proficiency of*

*SL and TL, thorough knowledge of source and target cultures, familiarity with the topic/register, vocabulary wealth, and finally awareness of the three–phase process, i.e., **SL** <u>decoding</u>, <u>transcoding</u> or **SL-TL** transfer and **TL** <u>encoding</u>.* Interpreting, on the other hand, requires at least **five more**: *short-term memory for storage and retrieval, acquaintance with prosodic features and different accents, quick wittedness and full attention, knowledge of short-hand writing for consecutive interpreting and finally self-composure.*

3. Translating/Interpreting Constraints

The constraints imposed on the interpreters are more and greater than those on the translator. They also vary in type and degree of intensity as regards the direction of translating or interpreting, i.e., whether from L1 into L2 or the other way round. Below are the main constraints.

3.1. Linguistic Constraints: They subsume:

3.1.1. Syntactic Constraints: The different word order in **SL** and **TL** puts a heavy burden on the interpreter. A case in point is when interpreting a verbal sentence from Arabic into English. The verb may introduce a long nominal phrase. The interpreter has to store the verb and wait for the whole subject before he could retrieve and start the English rendition. Deprived of the sufficient time for manipulation, structural asymmetry often obliges the interpreter to commit pauses and delays among other things.

3.1.2. Semantic Constraints

These constraints compel the interpreter to exert a far more laborious effort than those originated by syntactic constraints, for as Jackendoff (1991: 96) puts it, "once one understands the meaning, the syntax follows naturally and automatically." Lexical incompatibility between **SL** and **TL** gives rise to slips, hesitations and even pauses, due to the interpreter's struggle with a difficult jargon term, a neologism or a blended word as in interpreting words like Macdonalization or the 1980s Reagonomics.

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To mitigate semantic constraints, the interpreter should be fully familiar with the speaker's topic and/or register.

3.1.3. Phonological and Prosodic Constraints

They include features that are non-existent in either **SL** or **TL** pertaining to segmental phonemes (vowels, consonants, consonant clusters, and diphthongs), suprasegmentals and prosodic features such as stress, intonation, pitch, rhythm and tempo. Many scholars rightly maintain that translating/interpreting is an intercultural communication act that requires bicultural competence .

3.1.4. Cultural and Phatic Constraints to cope with culture specificities whether religious, political or social such zakat, intifada, autocracy and disco in addition to institutional nomenclature exemplified in the different compounds with the Arabic dar (house) as in guesthouse. دار الضياف، rest house, dar al-istiraha دار

The hereafter دار الإذاعة, radio/3 broadcasting station dar al-idaa دار الأيتام, orphanage dar al- aytaam الإستراحة, دار البقاء 'dar al-baqa 3.

Other examples of culture specificities are the modes of address such as Mr. Miss. Mrs. Lord, أبو Abu or أُمّ Umm plus proper noun as in Abu Ahmed أبو أحمد , Umm Ahmed أم أحمد, or honorary titles such as فخامة fakhamat, and phatic expressions of courtsey and salutaion such as the opening and closing greeting: As-salam alaikum wa rahmutul-lahi wa barakatuhu : السلام عليكم ورحمة الله تعالى وبركاته whose natural equivalent in English could be no more than 'good morning / evening' or 'thank you'.

3.1.5. Paralinguistic and Psychological Constraints

These constraints include the speaker's tone and loudness of voice, the tempo of delivery and gestures as well as the psychological state of the interpreter and/or speaker as regards nervousness instead of self – composure. The laborious task of simultaneous decoding and encoding and his/her concern over accuracy of rendition puts him/her in a very stressful situation. The act of interpreting is inversely proportional to the above constraints and to such psychological factors as fatigue, timidity or stage fright for interpreters who have to directly address the audience. The3 constraints often trigger omissions, hesitations and even time lag.

3.1. 6. Time Lag

Time lag refers to the time between the interpreter's reception of the speaker's utterance and his/her production. It is ear-tongue or hearing-voicing span. Time lag varies according to the nature of the SL message and the number, type and intensity of the aforesaid constraints. For example, the syntactic and lexical complexities and the pile-up of information segments may oblige the interpreter to lag behind the speaker to get a clear understanding, or at least the gist, of the message so as to reformulate it in the TL. Such lag puts a heavy burden on the short-term memory of the interpreter who might inevitably miss the subsequent segments of information and produce poorly cohesive structures and/or rushed sentences.

1.2.5.Interpreting Strategies :

3.1.7. Quality Assessment and Audience Reception

Only bilingual readers, listeners or critics can accomplish translating/interpreting quality assessment. To be objective, the assessment has to be based on certain criteria, the most obvious of which is the semantic/stylistic fidelity to the original text/message. Fidelity entails such parameters as accuracy, grammaticality, acceptability, idiomaticity, and naturalness among others. Interpreting, however, requires other non – linguistic criteria for assessment.

On the other hand, monolingual audience who justify the act of translating/interpreting judge it in terms of other parameters, none of which pertains to fidelity which explicitly necessitates full knowledge of the two languages involved. The monolingual TL receptors, i.e., readers, judge translation in terms of their own

language: style, grammar and TT intelligibility. The oral message receptors, i.e., listeners judge the interpreting act according to not only the above mentioned, but to non– linguistic criteria, at the top of which comes the message comprehensibility, which cannot be gauged in either-or terms but graded along a spectrum ranging from fully comprehensible when the interpretation is clear and easy to understand to partially comprehensible and to totally incomprehensible. Besides, the audience rate the interpreting quality according to other criteria pertaining to smooth and fluent delivery, immediateness, pleasant voice, natural intonation and articulation, speech rate (whether fast or slow), self–composure, and idiolectal features such as the use of exaggerated fillers like emmm, errr…