



## Lecture 1: Introduction to Translation & the Translator

### 1. What Is Translation?

Several scholars have attempted to define translation. Nida and Taber (1969) define translation as the reproduction of the closest natural equivalent of the source language message, first in terms of meaning and secondly in terms of style. This definition highlights that meaning takes priority over form in successful translation.

Translation is the process of transferring meaning from a source language (SL) to a target language (TL) while respecting context, culture, and the communicative purpose of the text. Translation is not a word-for-word replacement. The translator's main task is to convey meaning accurately and naturally.

- Source Language (SL): the original language of the text
- Target Language (TL): the language into which the text is translated

### 2. Translation as Process and Product

Translation can be viewed both as a process and as a product. As a process, it involves comprehension of the source text, transfer of meaning, and reformulation in the target language. As a product, it refers to the final translated text produced by the translator (Hatim & Munday, 2004).

### 3. Translation vs Interpretation

Translation and interpretation are related forms of cross-linguistic communication that differ mainly in mode and process. Translation involves the written transfer of meaning from a source text to a target text, allowing time for analysis, revision, and the use of reference materials to ensure accuracy and stylistic appropriateness (Newmark, 1988; Munday, 2016). Interpretation, in contrast, refers to the oral rendering of spoken discourse in real time, requiring immediate comprehension and production with no opportunity for revision (Pöchhacker, 2004). Consequently, translation prioritizes textual precision and coherence, whereas interpretation emphasizes speed and communicative clarity under time constraints (Hatim & Munday, 2004).

Aspect	Translation	Interpretation
Mode	Written	Spoken
Time Constraint	No immediate time pressure; allows revision	Performed in real time
Primary Focus	Accuracy, style, and textual coherence	Speed, clarity, and communicative effectiveness
Possibility of Revision	Yes	No
Use of Resources	Dictionaries, glossaries, corpora, reference materials	Memory and note-taking
Typical Contexts	Books, articles, legal documents, media texts	Conferences, meetings, interviews
Cognitive Demand	Analytical and reflective	Immediate and intensive



Module: Translation  
Level: Master 1  
Instructor: Dr. ABBAS

<b>Main Product</b>	Target text (TT)	Oral target message
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#### 4. Who Is a Translator?

The translator plays an active role as a mediator between languages and cultures. According to Venuti (2008), translators make interpretive choices that shape how texts are received in the target culture. Therefore, translators must possess linguistic competence, cultural awareness, textual sensitivity, and strong research skills.

#### 5. Literal Translation: Advantages and Limitations

Literal translation focuses on word-for-word correspondence between the source and target languages. While it may be appropriate in limited contexts, excessive reliance on literal translation can result in unnatural or misleading target texts. Meaning-based translation, on the other hand, prioritizes communicative effect and naturalness in the target language (Newmark, 1988).

#### Practice Activity

Translate the following expressions into the target language and explain your choice:

1. He kicked the bucket.
2. Break the ice.

#### Reflection

- What makes translation difficult?
- Why is meaning more important than words in translation?